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Local legend credits the founding of the famous *Cuahtémoc-Moctezuma* Brewery in 1890 for much of Monterrey's early development. Now part of *Grupo Visa*, it was founded by Francisco Sada, who was joined by his brother-in-law, Isaac Garza. It is now one of the biggest beer producers in Latin America. In 1900, a steel company, *Compañía Fundidora de Hierro y Acero de Monterrey*, was founded to supply the brewery with bottle caps. This company was the cornerstone for an industry that has made Monterrey a major steel centre. In 1909 *Vidriera Monterrey*, a glass factory, was established to supply the brewery with bottles. It expanded into flat glass products, and Monterrey now supplies three-quarters of Mexico's glass. A packaging industry also sprung up to facilitate shipping of the brewery's product. To support all of this development, the cement-maker, *Cementos Hidalgo*, began operations in 1907, leading the way for an industry that now produces 60 percent of Mexico's cement. While this story may be an oversimplification, it is certainly true that isolation and a need for self-reliance played a major role in the development of the region's diversified industrial base. It also explains the ubiquitous Sada and Garza family names that appear everywhere in descriptions of Monterrey's business and social environment.

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Today, the Monterrey region is Mexico's second-largest industrial centre, after the Mexico City area. It boasts a well-developed infrastructure, including a modern subway and a system of industrial parks.

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Culturally, Monterrey is regarded as being the most "Americanized" of Mexico's major cities. Business visitors report that modern business methods and a northern concept of time and punctuality prevail. The influence of the American media has led to a preference for foreign goods and sporting activities. Although soccer remains Mexico's most popular sport, professional baseball and basketball teams are a rapidly growing phenomenon in Monterrey.

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In spite of the advanced industrial development of the Monterrey region, the city itself retains much colonial charm. The *Gran Plaza* is noted both for its size and for its unusual mixture of architectural styles. Several of the city's religious sites, most notably *Templo de la Purísima*, are among the most important in Mexico. The cultural environment includes a blend of traditional and modern architecture and art forms. For example, the Museum of Contemporary Art is the most comprehensive of its kind in Latin America, while the *Centro Cultural Alfa* features a major collection of pre-Columbian art.

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Natural tourist attractions include the García Caves, the Cola de Caballo waterfall and the Huasteca Canyon.

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The *Museo de Ciencia y Tecnología*, science and technology museum, is symbolic of Monterrey's leadership in the development of technology and modern image. The city is home to *Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey*, (ITESM) the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education, one of the nation's leading technical universities, as well as four other universities.

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