

THE QUETZAL

CLASSIC DESIGN: 100 YEARS IN GUATEMALAN PHILATELY

The original design dates from 1879, engraved and printed by the American Bank Note Company of New York. That year, two denominations were printed: one for a quarter of a Real and one for a Real. In 1881, these were overprinted, the quarter-real overprinted on a centavo and the one-real overprinted on 10 centavos. Also in 1881, the American Bank Note Company of New York printed a new series of five denominations, with a design similar to the 1879 version but now bearing the inscription "UNION POSTAL UNIVERSAL." In 2024, a one-peso stamp was issued, lithographed by the Castillo Hermanos Printing House. In 1935, two three-centavo stamps of different colors were printed by photogravure by Johan Enschede and Sons. These stamps were overprinted in 1937. In 1939, a series similar to the 1935 series was issued with two 3-centavo values, but larger in size, always printed by photogravure by the Johan Enschede and Sons Printing House. In 1951, a commemorative sheet was printed by the National Printing Office of Guatemala. In 1954, a one-centavo stamp was issued, with the design that remained until the last stamps printed featuring the Quetzal on a pedestal until the mid-1980s; there were printings in the years 1957, 1958, 1960, 1984, 1986, and 1987.

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References:

THE POSTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY OF GUATEMALA handbook by THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF GUATEMALA COLLECTORS Michael I. Bloom
Version 2.0 September 2024.

From the Harald Poech collection. In memory of a great philatelist and a great person, Harald Poech.

1. ISSUE OF 1879



Design
dimensions:
20 x 25 mm.



Printing proof

Recess engraved and printed by the American Bank Note Company, New York. $\frac{1}{4}$ real brown and green—200,000 copies printed. 1 real black and green—100,000 copies printed.



The dimensions of the
stamps on the lower line
vary by two millimeters,
these being 23x 30 mm.



30 mm high.



2. OVERPRINT OF 1881



The overprinting was done on
the stamps of the 1879 issue.
Surcharges were printed in
black. Printer, date of issue, and
quantities printed is unknown.

3. ISSUE OF 1881

One cent:

Printing proofs.



Recess engraved and printed
by the American Bank Note
Company, New York.
1c black and green—1,500,000
printed.



Imperforated proof.



Inverted center proof.



Chimaltenango - Chinique, Quiché, May the 7th 1888,
transit in Sololá. 5 cent rate for domestic service.

Two cents:



2c yellow brown
and green -
1,500,000 printed.

Designer and engraver
unknown.

Unwatermarked white
paper, perforation 12.
Issued in sheets of
100, arranged 10 by
10, presumably from
printing plates of the
same format

Imperforate Printing proof.



Thick margins at the
top and bottom.



Local service, Guatemala City. 3 cent rate for local service.

Five cents:



5c red and green -
1,500,000 printed.



**Inverted center. The
most iconic stamp in
Guatemalan philately.**



Printing proof.



Guatemala City – Retalhuleu, August 16th 1888. 5 cent rate for domestic service.



Guatemala City – Antigua , August 16th 1888. 5 cent rate for domestic service.

Printing on
folded paper.



Thicker lower
margin.



Escuintla - Guatemala City, August 16th 1888. 5 cent rate for domestic service.

Ten cents:



10c dull purple
and green -
500,000 printed.

Design of all
denominations
measures 20¼ by
25½ millimeters.

Imperforate Printing proof.



Difference in colors:
lighter lilac, darker
green, the quetzal's
shadow is larger.



*Guatemala City, August 5th 1888. 10 cent rate for
international service, fragment of circulated letter.*

Twenty cents:



20c orange yellow and green—500,000 printed.



Inverted center. Is one of the most iconic stamp in Guatemalan philately.



Imperforate Printing proof.



Variations in color: brown, normal size and size with a large border at the bottom.

4. ISSUE OF 1924



Lithographed by Castillo Hermanos (Castillo Brothers), Guatemala City. 1peso blue green 680,390 printed.

Fragment of a certified letter, with a pair of imperforated stamps.



Issue on heavy, opaque white unwatermarked paper. Designer unknown. Line perforation 12.0. Design of the 1p. 18½ by 22½ mm.

One peso stamp in light green color.



Guatemala – Paris, France, March 1924.

5. ISSUE OF 1935

5,250,000 were printed of each value. Printed in photogravure by Johan Enschede and Sons. On white wove paper with smooth white gum in sheets of 100, perforation 12.6. The stamps measure 23¾ by 19 mm.



Certified mail, Guatemala – Hamburg, Germany, June the 8th 1937.

6. OVERPRINT OF 1937

20,000 of each value were surcharged by Tipografía Nacional, for semipostal issue.



7. ISSUE OF 1939



3,000,000 were printed of each value. Printed in photogravure by Johan Enschede and Sons. It measures $37\frac{1}{2}$ by $23\frac{1}{2}$ mm.



Guatemala – Basilea, Switzerland, June the 7th 1941.

8. ISSUE OF 1951

Imperforated sheet of two stamps, with marginal inscriptions in light blue. 100,000 issued and printed by Tipografía Nacional, on white unwatermarked paper. The imperforate sheet measures 114 by 69 mm.



Certified mail, Guatemala – Naarden, Netherlands, June the 12th 1956.

9. 1954-1958 ISSUES



Recess engraved by the Bureau of Engraving,
printings were from 50-subject plates (ten by five).



El Quetzal, San Marcos, Guatemala – Pennsylvania, USA, March the 24th 1958.

10. 1960-1963 ISSUES



Recess engraved by the Bureau of Engraving in the same design as the 1954 Quetzal regular issue. Different quantities of stamps were printed for each value.



Guatemala- Columbus, Ohio, USA, December the 7th 1960.

11. OVERPRINT OF 1964

Overprinted in Guatemala, the Quetzal design, 500,000 stamps were overprinted December 29, 1964, in sheets of 50 (ten by five).



12. ISSUE OF 1972

Recess engraving by the Bureau of Engraving with the imprint "T N DE GRABADOS EN ACERO GUATEMALA-CHY". No record of the production or issuance of this stamp has been found.



13. OVERPRINT OF 1972

1951 Universal Postal Union souvenir sheet trimmed to approximately 60x45mm. 40,000 sheets were overprinted.



Color variation of the overprint in gold

14. 1984-1987 ISSUES



Recess engraving by the Bureau of Engraving, with imprint "T N DE GRABADOS EN ACERO GUATEMALA-CHY". 1,000,000 were printed of each stamp.



Domestic mail, Retalhuleu - Guatemala, May the 15th 1985 uses the rate of 8 cents.