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MEXICO

TRAVEL GUIDE

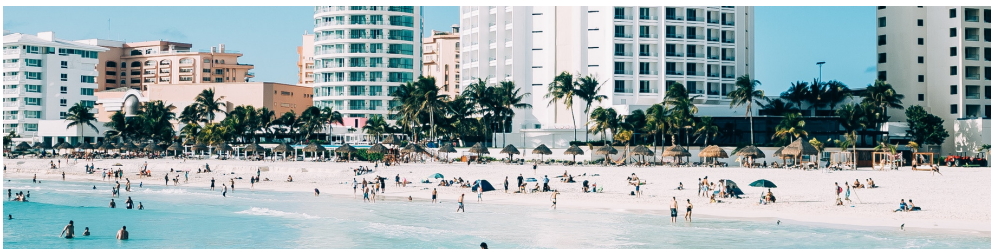
WELCOME



Welcome to Mexico – the 14th-largest country in the world, and the 10th most populated. And it's a sadly misunderstood country, especially by its neighbor to the north. There's a lot more than burritos and tacos here!

Mexico has beautiful mountains, stunning deserts, virgin jungles, and world-class beaches – complete with surfing, snorkeling, diving, and water sports galore, not to mention relaxation and sunbathing.

Come to Mexico – not once, but many times over – and discover the best of what this wonderful country has to offer.



QUICK INFO

CAPITAL:

Ciudad de México
(Mexico City)

POPULATION:

128 million (2020 estimate) – the 10th most populated country in the world!

CURRENCY:

Mexican Peso ([click here](#) for current conversion rates)

VISA:

Most people from the Americas, Australia, or Europe can enter without a visa and stay up to 180 days.

SAFETY RANK:

#137 on the [Global Peace Index](#) (the USA is #121)

LANGUAGES:

Mexico has no official language. Most people speak Spanish, or one of over 60 indigenous languages.

TIME ZONE:

Mexico's time zones roughly correspond to the USA's. They range from UTC – 5:00 to UTC – 8:00.



SO WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT MEXICO?

Mexico is a huge country, and the weather across it varies a lot! So, naturally, the best time to visit depends on where in Mexico you're going. At sea level, especially down south in places like Cancún, the weather is warm pretty much all year round – perfect beach weather! However, at higher elevations (like at Mexico City) it can get quite chilly in the winter (November to January).

SPRING (APRIL TO JUNE)

Spring in Mexico is quite pleasant. However, many places will be crowded, as it's a popular “spring break” destination for university students.

SUMMER (JULY TO SEPTEMBER)

Many parts of the country are hot and/or humid in the summer. It's also the rainy season for a lot of Mexico. However, the month of September (as things cool down and the rain ends) may be the best time to visit.

FALL (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

End of hurricane season on the beach and Día de Muertos (Day of the dead)

WINTER (JANUARY TO MARCH)

Peak season for Caribbean beachgoers.



DON'T MISS THESE TOP FIVE ATTRACTIONS IN MEXICO

But keep yourself sane. Don't try to cram everything into one single trip!

The Pacific Ocean

There are a number of key places along the Pacific: **Ensenada** is a great destination right up near the border, but far enough south of Tijuana to avoid any unpleasantness there. **Cabo** is legendary. Need more be said about it? Avoid the spring break crowds, and stay at one of the resorts – rather than in the city itself – for the best experience. **Puerto Vallarta** is much further south, and much more of a jungle than desert – which gives it almost a Caribbean feel, but with the wonderful Pacific sunsets over the water!

Mexico City

The capital city may be hectic and wild, but it's really a must if you want to feel like you've seen this country. Furthermore, Mexico city isn't all dog fighting and dirt. There's a fair amount of glam here – and some exquisite dining, which will redefine your conception of "Mexican food." Add loads of history (because this used to be the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan), and the sites to see could fill a notebook! Don't miss out on a sojourn to Mexico's beating heart, the D.F. (distrito federal; "federal district").



The Caribbean

The highlight here is Cancún – home to incredible nightclubs and even more incredible beaches. But it's also worth it to take a trip along the coast, down the marvelously flat Yucatán Peninsula to Playa del Carmen (from which you can take a ferry to Cozumel for a relaxing stay on a Caribbean island) or Tulum (home of some great Mayan ruins). And – of course – the coconut-palm-lined beaches all along this stretch of coast are magnificent!

Guanajuato

This city, in the mountains of Mexico's centre, has earned itself a listing as a UNESCO World Heritage site. And well does it deserve that! From unbelievable, picturesque houses, to its famed subterranean tunnels, Guanajuato has something to impress anyone. Speaking of – if you're a Mexican foodie – the dining options here are simply stellar.

The cenotes

On the Yucatán Peninsula there isn't only swimming at the beach. (Or snorkelling, or even diving!) The cenotes – caves filled with water – are a must-see for any Mexican traveller who makes it down to the state of Quintana Roo. Geologically unique, they were once sacred sites to the Mayan people – transformed into wonderful swimming holes today. If you get to the far south of Mexico, don't miss the cenotes!



BUT MEXICO IS HUGE! THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO SEE AND DO

It's the world's 14th-biggest country, after all!

Mérida: Across the Yucatán Peninsula from Cancún, Mérida is a far less touristy city, and far older. Stay in one of the grandiose, exquisite old colonial buildings, and dine on some of the most deluxe Yucatecan delights. And avoid the spring break crowds!

Huatulco: Not far from Oaxaca, you'll find this charming town, where you'll feel free to spend all day – or even all month – chilling out at the beach!

Zacatecas: A wonderful, old town slightly off the beaten track, here you can experience the “real” Mexico in the mountains.

Firefly Forest: In the state of Tlaxcala, near Mexico City, if you come in the summer you won't be able to believe your eyes!

Calakmul Biosphere Reserve: Yes, Mexico also has the jungle. Come here for an incredible nature experience, in one of the country's largest protected reserves.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TRAVELERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEXICO

DO

- Do learn a little Spanish. ¡La lengua no es muy difícil!
- Do keep your wits about you. It's a touristy country, and pickpockets are common in some areas.
- Do use sunscreen. Yes, even if it's cloudy!

DON'T

The things that terrify too many U.S. citizens (kidnappings and such) aren't really a concern here, especially in the touristy parts of the country. Mexico is no more dangerous than most of the USA's big cities. But when you're in Mexico, there are some points that you should consider:

- Don't drink the tap water. The water that makes it to city taps is contaminated by a variety of bacteria, some of them are deadly.
- Don't stick out like a sore thumb. Dress appropriately, not like the textbook image of a Western tourist.
- Don't forget to have a great time!





EAT SOME *REAL* MEXICAN FOOD

Mexican food – real Mexican food – is a blend of European and indigenous flavors, and it varies wildly by region. In 2010, Mexico’s food was recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of the world.

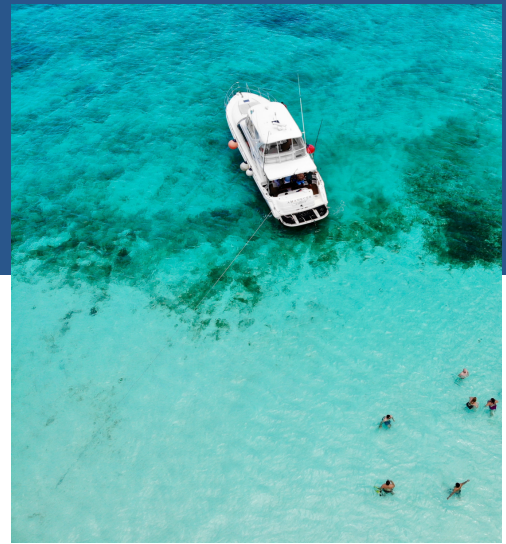
Here are the staples of Mexican food:

Corn: The grain of choice across the country is corn – from tortillas to the wrappings for tamales. In addition, corn is sold whole as grilled street corn.

Chili peppers: While Mexican food has a reputation for being incredibly spicy, the peppers actually give it a variety of flavors.

Mole (“moh-lei”): from the Nahuatl word for sauce, Mexican food isn’t complete without this (often spicy!) addition. In Mexico, meals may be a little different than what you’re used to.

Mexicans eat a big breakfast, and then wait until 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. for “lunch”, the main meal of the day. “Dinner” is generally a much smaller affair at night.



HOW TO GET AROUND MEXICO

Buses

Mexico's buses are large, comfortable, and frequent, and serve most destinations. However, the country is huge – and buses are not really a realistic way to get from Ensenada to Cancún!

Private car

Hiring a car (and a driver!) is the best way to get around on your own schedule, and see off-the-beaten-path destinations. There are numerous options; your travel agent can arrange one.

Boats

Travel by boat is really only possible if you're going to one of the islands, or are taking a cruise.

Or just fly

Planes are definitely the best and fastest way to get around. There are a number of local airlines, but sometimes booking a flight can be challenging. Go through your travel agent, or be fluent in Spanish with a phone that can make calls in Mexico!



TIPPING - SHOULD I?

Tipping in Mexico IS customary – unlike most of Europe, and unlike many places across the globe. Service workers make very low wages, and often rely on their tips to get by.

You can tip in pesos or U.S. dollars, though local currency is always more practical for the recipient.

Spas: 15-20%

Tour guides: 10-20%

Restaurants: 10-20%

Bars: About \$1 per drink

Hotel staff: 25-50 pesos for porters, and 25-50 pesos/night for the housekeepers.

READY TO GO TO MEXICO?

So that's Mexico. It's a huge, wonderful country, full of so much to do and so much to see. Thirty-one states and the federal district – and endless opportunities!

Whatever your interests, and whatever your budget, there's a place for you here. So don't wait. Contact me today to book your trip to this delightful, colorful country!

Jenita Lawal



LET'S PLAN YOUR
MEXICO VACATION
TODAY!

Jenita Lawal

Book a call today to get a
complimentary travel consultation.

CONTACT ME TODAY!

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