



The Academy of American and International Law

2008 LATIN AMERICAN ALUMNI MEETING

México

FEBRUARY 27 – MARCH 2

ABOUT MEXICO

Mexico offers a broad range of activities, including pre-Hispanic archaeological sites, the unrivaled beauty of its beaches, the fusion of its different cultures and extensive natural areas, all of which make Mexico unique in the world, as well as a modern tourist infrastructure. Mexico holds 7th world place in terms of the number of foreign visitors.

To know more about Mexico go to: <http://www.visitmexico.com>

Weather: At this time of year the average temperatures are:

Mexico City: HI 24°C, LOW 8°C

Cuernavaca: HI 32°C, LOW 15°C

Visas and Passports: To apply for a visa you can check the Mexican Embassy's website: www.sre.gob.mx . You can also consult Immigration Services at www.migracion.gob.mx .

Transportation: Mexico has an excellent highway system, airports in many major cities, and bus terminals in nearly every municipality. For local transport, most cities offer taxi and bus services. Mexico City and Monterrey have underground metro services.

SAFETY NOTE: To prevent any unsafe incident, when in Mexico City, do not use regular taxis off the street, but rather "certified" taxis (known as Radio Taxis). Any hotel or information booth will call one certified taxi for you. At the Mexico City airport use only the certified taxis, recognizable by their yellow/white colors and airplanes on the doors.

Social Customs: When greeting someone in Mexico, it's common to shake hands with men and women that you have just met; women also greet men or women with a kiss on the cheek.

Population: More than 100,000 inhabitants, with the largest populations concentrated in Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey (and their surrounding areas). According to some estimates, the population of the area around Mexico City is about 23 million, which would make it the largest demographic concentration in the world. Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world and the second most-populous country in Latin America after Brazil. Ethnic groups: Indian-Spanish (mestizo) 60%, Indian 30%, Caucasian 9%, other 1%.





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Official Language: Spanish, although still spoken are some 66 indigenous languages, which come from pre-Hispanic cultures.

Currency: Peso(s) bills come in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000. US dollars are only accepted in mayor establishments, but to acquire pesos, foreign currencies (e.g. US dollar, Euros, Canadian dollars) are accepted at the airport and all money exchange bureaus across the country.

Leaving Tips: Generally, you should tip waiters, bellhops, skycaps (about US\$1 per bag), tourist guides and valet parking attendants. In restaurants, leave 15% or 18% of the bill. Taxi drivers usually don't expect tips.

Systems of Measurement: Metric (for distances), Celsius (for temperatures), and the 60-cycle, 120-volt system (for electricity).

Making a Phone Call: The country code when dialing to Mexico is 52 and the long distance code within Mexico is 01. When calling the United States and Canada, you must first dial 001. To place other international calls, dial 00, followed by the country and city codes. You will find pay telephones in most cities, some are coin-operated phones and others require prepaid cards that cost 30, 50 or 100 pesos.

Time Zone: Mexico City and Cuernavaca are on Central Standard Time (GMT –6 hours).

Customs: To obtain information concerning items that you are allowed to bring into the country, visit: www.aduanas.sat.gob.mx .

Internet Access: Mexico offers plenty of Internet cafes and public sites with connections ranging from standard dial-up to high-speed DSL. The Hotels Camino Real and Hacienda de Cortés have wireless connection in the rooms.

ABOUT TEPOZTLÁN

Tepoztlán is a small ancient town south of Mexico City. One of the main attractions of Tepoztlán is the **market** on the main plaza, which is especially attractive during the weekends. The main plaza is also the location for the beautiful **XVI century Augustinian church and convent**. The convent hosts a small and delightful archaeological museum. Also worth visiting is the **Tepozteco** mountain, on its peak is the archaeological site of the same name. The main pyramid was erected in honor of Tepoztecatl, god of the **Pulque** (an alcoholic beverage made from the sap of agave). Also the god of Fertility was adored at this site, which by the XII century was a very



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sacred place for the ancient cultures and many pilgrims came from as far as Guatemala. According to myth, Tepoztlán is the birthplace over 1200 years ago of Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent god widely-worshipped in ancient Mexico and Mesoamerica. Even nowadays Tepoztlán is also known as a mystical center.

Things to do in Tepoztlán:

- **Tepozteco Archeological Site:** The site can only be reached by foot following a sloping path on the side of the hill. Follow our tour guide and take a 2 hour hike to the archeological site and climb the pyramid.
- **Market:** Walk through the stands of the weekend market at the main plaza and neighboring streets of downtown.
- **Augustinian church:** If you would like some rest from the crowds of the market, visit the beautiful XVI century church right down town in the main plaza.
- **Archaeological Museum:** The convent of the Augustinian church hosts a small and delightful archaeological museum that exhibits artifacts from the Tepozteco Archeological site.

Don't forget to try:

- **Tepoznieves** aptly translates to "Ice Cream of the Gods." You need to try at least one of more than 70 flavors! (Av. 5 de Mayo).
- **"Pulque":** Tepoztlán, the reputed place of origin of "Pulque", the royal drink of the Aztecs, is the perfect place to try some for yourself. There are only a few sites to do so, one of which is conveniently located on the Avenida Del Tepozteco just beyond the pink-fronted Los Colorines Restaurant. Up to three liters of "agua de miel" can be scooped from the heart of a Maguey/Agave plant each day. Allowed to ferment, it becomes the rather pungent "pulque" which mixed with fruits becomes sweeter and more palatable. You can taste a shot glass full of each flavor to determine your preferred form of the Aztec's royal drink. ¡Salud!

HOTEL HACIENDA DE CORTÉS

The heart of the Mexican colonial period glows in this old sugar cane country property founded by Hernán Cortés in 1530. This architectural treasure in Cuernavaca is a magnificent example of the XVI century architecture and after a detailed restoration, the Hotel's 23 rooms and suites offer comfort and technology without affecting the construction's historical value. www.haciendacortes.com