

“Wish I’d Known” Survey
Puebla, Mexico

PACKING AND TRAVELING

Specifically, what kind of LINENS did you need to bring?

- Sheets, pillowcase, pillow, and blanket
- None

What are you glad you packed from home?

- Pictures, various shoes, stuff to sew with, tape and glue for scrapbook, journal, and Pepto Bismal!
- Everything that I packed—clothes, toiletries

What do you wish you had left at home?

- Lots of “winter” clothing
- Nothing

Do you have any travel tips to pass on (planning advice, safety considerations, guidebooks, train vs. bus, etc.)?

- Get a current travel book! Make sure it’s not old!!
- Have enough space to bring back a lot of extras

What places would you advise future students to see and why?

- Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca, Teotihuacán, Cuernavaca, and Taxco.
- A Mexican village—it is very interesting to see the difference between the city and the village.

MONEY AND COMMUNICATIONS

How much money in U.S. currency would you recommend students have at their disposal for their whole time abroad?

- \$6000+
- I started with \$10 and was able to take money out with my debit card. That worked well for me.

*How much money did you have in foreign currency when you left for your program?
Was it enough?*

- \$50 in US cash, \$600 in US traveler’s checks, and \$3000 in my checking account
- I exchanged \$100 right away it worked well.

*How did you manage your money (credit cards, traveler’s checks, bank accounts etc.)?
How and where did you access your money?*

- Traveler’s checks and check card
- Debit cards and ATM machines—they are wonderful.

How much money did you spend on books?

- \$30-40 US per semester
- None

How did you communicate with the U.S.? What would you recommend to future students (e.g. calling card, set up e-mail account and where, etc.)?

- Mostly by email, this is most practical. Have an email account with hotmail, yahoo, or excite.com. Use a public phone with a calling card if you need.
- E-mail and calling cards.

SCHOOL WORK

How did your academic experience abroad differ from your U.S. experiences concerning:

Relations with professors/Classroom Instruction?

- The Spanish professors were very laid back.
- EXCELLENT

Grading?

- It's on a 10 point scale instead of 100
- Great

Study habits?

- Studying for Spanish classes is not difficult at all
- I studied every afternoon

Library?

- Not open as much.
- I wasn't university affiliated (summer internship program)

Computer Access?

- Computers are open 24 hours. Sometimes they are offline and don't work though.
- About every couple blocks there was a computer.

Other?

What enabled/hindered your successful academic experience?

- There were too many foreigners here. Make sure you meet Mexicans.
- Nothing

SOCIAL LIFE

How did you meet students from your host country?

- Taking non-Spanish language classes with Mexicans.
- I didn't.

How did you like to spend your free time and why? Is there anything you regret not doing more of in your free time?

- I liked to go out dancing.
- I needed to take naps every day to adjust to the language. That was something I was not prepared for. Also, I would walk or tour something everyday.

What opportunities for social, recreational, and cultural events that the host university or program offered did you like the best? Why?

- I liked going on University sponsored trips at the beginning of the semester to meet people
- I was able to see a lot of Museums and cultural activities that I really enjoyed. My program also offered a trip to a small Mexican village, which I really enjoyed.

What piece of advice would you give future students regarding their non-academic life while abroad?

- Travel with different people to lots of different places.
- Take advantage of every opportunity that you can!

CULTURAL ISSUES

Are woman treated differently in your host country than in the U.S.? If so, what advice would you pass on to women who are thinking of studying in your host country?

- Be careful of what kind of men you hang out with because some treat women like all they're good for is housekeeping.
- In Mexico, the women are treated very well. The guys always open your doors and carry your bags. I enjoyed it; however, there are some people who may not in that case explain to the people your beliefs.

Are minorities—racial, religious, sexual identity—treated differently in your host country than in the U.S.? If so, what advice would you pass on to members of any minority group that are thinking of studying in your host country?

- The minority in Mexico are whites, blondes, and tall people. There are Mexicans like that there, so just dress like them and blend in.
- Didn't have an opportunity to observe this.

OTHER COMMENTS

- No—I had a wonderful experience!