

Mexico Travel Information

What do I need to enter Mexico?

If you are from the U.S. or Canada, you will need your passport or notarized birth certificate with state issued ID. You will also need a tourist card unless you are traveling for less than 72 hours within the border zone (usually no further than 20 miles south of the U.S. border except in Baja California and Sonora which have extended their zones).

The Sonora "Free Zone":

The Sonora Free Zone program for vehicles and tourist cards has been expanded!!

This means that those who plan to travel with vehicles in the state of Sonora north of Empalme / Guaymas, no longer have to register and obtain a vehicle permit. Also, if you plan to travel to the San Carlos-Guaymas area and no further into Mexico, a valid U.S. Passport is all you need for stays up to 72 hours. It's a good idea to purchase Mexican Auto Insurance as unless your American insurance company covers you in Mexico, you might need it.

Passport Requirements:

By Land & Sea: A passport or other qualified travel document will be required at all land border ports-of-entry prior to June 1, 2009. The final exact date has not been set. If you do not have a passport, visit the US State Department website. It has information on obtaining passports for citizens of the USA, Canada and Mexico.

What to expect when traveling in Mexico:

Always remember we are guests in the country and the laws and customs are not the same as in the U.S. The people of Mexico are friendly and helpful, but sometimes shy. Always treat people with kindness and respect and never argue with officials. They are very easy going and helpful, but they do expect respect.

DO NOT attempt to bring any weapons, ammunition, fireworks, shell casing, etc into Mexico. The authorities will treat this with severe penalties and jail time.

DO NOT attempt to bring ANY DRUGS into Mexico. This too will result in heavy fines and jail time. Prescription drugs in original packaging are OK, but do not attempt to bring any "recreational" or unpackaged drugs into the country. Boarder searches and roadside Federal searches are common. Remember, we are guests and we are welcome in Mexico, but we are expected to follow their rules.

Restroom facilities can be primitive while traveling. Be prepared to pay 5 to 10 Pesos to use some facilities. (.5 to .10 cents) and in some places wash barrels are used for cleaning up. We will have hand sanitizer with us for hygiene and some Pesos for those occasional facility fees.

LAND AND SEA TRAVEL

The following summarizes information available on the Department of Homeland Security's website.

JANUARY 31, 2008

U.S. and Canadian citizens will need to present either a WHTI-compliant document, or a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license, plus proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate. DHS also proposes to begin alternative procedures for U.S. and Canadian children at that time.

SUMMER 2008

At a later date, to be determined, the departments will implement the full requirements of the land and sea phase of WHTI. The proposed rules require most U.S. citizens entering the United States at sea or land ports of entry to have either a U.S. passport; a U.S. passport card; a trusted traveler card or a valid U.S. Military identification card when traveling on official orders.

The implementation date will be determined based on a number of factors, including the progress of actions undertaken by the Department of Homeland Security to implement the WHTI requirements and the availability of WHTI compliant documents on both sides of the border. DHS and DOS expect the date of full WHTI implementation to be in the summer of 2008. The precise implementation date will be formally announced with at least 60 days notice.

WHTI:

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative is a result of the Intelligence Reform and Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA), requiring all travelers to present a passport or other document that denotes identity and citizenship when entering the U.S.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on February 22 its intent to propose, as part of the Notice of

Proposed Rulemaking on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), significant flexibility regarding travel documents required for U.S. and Canadian children as part of WHTI requirements for U.S. land and sea border entry in 2008.

The goal of the initiative is to strengthen U.S. border security while facilitating entry for U.S. citizens and legitimate foreign visitors by providing standardized documentation that enables the Department of Homeland Security to quickly and reliably identify a traveler.

N Depth Scuba travels into Mexico with a cellular phone that can be used in the event of an emergency.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS AND INFORMATION

Tourism Secretariat Tels. (662) 217-0076 and (662) 217-0269

Touriste Information Tel. 01 (800) 716-2555

Red Cross Tel. (662) 214-5535