

City Guide: México City





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Discovering México City

Bienvenidos! Welcome!

Whether you are a veteran or a novice, relocation can be both an exciting and challenging experience. This Dwellworks resource guide is intended to provide important information to consider as you relocate to México City. Your assigned Destination Services Consultant will assist you as you transition into your new community. Additionally, your consultant will expand on the topics covered in this guide according to the guidelines of your authorized program.

Founded on November 18th, 1824, México City, also known by Mexicans as CDMX (acronym for Ciudad de México), is home to the federal powers, and the capital of México. It is the most populated city in the country. The city is a major financial, political and cultural center in the world. Given that México has taken important steps to draw both foreign and local investors in every sector, it has become a very attractive place for investors worldwide.

From architecture, art, and music to cuisine, the city offers a wide range of opportunities for new experiences. México City has a very rich history and with it a variety of people who came together and created a unique culture. Starting with pyramids dating back to the ancient tribes who lived here, Spanish baroque architecture, all the way to modern skyscrapers, this city has its history recorded all over it.

On behalf of the Dwellworks team, we welcome you to México City and hope you will find this information helpful.

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Orientation

México City is the capital of México. The city lies in a valley surrounded by mountains and volcanoes. The country has a wide variety of climates and terrains.

With a total extension of 1,485 km², the city has grown exponentially, spanning to the neighboring municipalities of bordering states. CDMX altitude ranges from 2,240 meters over sea level up to 3,930 meters over sea level.

City Design and Layout

The city is divided into 16 *delegaciones* (boroughs) and 350 *colonias* (neighborhoods). An address is formally indicated by the street address followed by the *colonia* and the *delegación* to which it belongs.

Each *delegación*, is a decentralized and autonomous in their government actions. Each one is led by a *Jefe Delegacional*, or boroughs/suburb chief.



Highways

There are two types of highways: *libres* (free) or *de cuota* (toll). To facilitate travel through toll roads, you can purchase an electronic Tag from [I+D Mexico](#), which you paste on your windshield to allow immediate access to the toll road through a system of electronic payment or pre pay. If you do not have a Tag, you can still pay the toll in cash at the end of the route.

The following are frequently traveled highways inside the city and metropolitan areas:

- + **Anillo Periferico** was intended as the outer beltway of México City; however, the city has continued to grow outside of the limits of this highway.
- + [Autopista Urbana Sur](#) is the second level of the Anillo Periferico from San Jerónimo to the intersection with the Calzada de Tlalpan in the south of the city.
- + [Autopista Urbana Norte](#) is also the second level of the Anillo Periferico; it goes from Toreo at the north of the Federal District to San Antonio in the southwest.
- + [Supervia Poniente](#) connects Santa Fe area in the west of the city with the Anillo Periferico at Luis Cabrera in the south.
- + **Viaducto Miguel Aleman** runs east to west across the middle of the city.
- + [Arco Norte](#) links the México-Puebla toll road on the east with the México-Querétaro toll road on the west.
- + **Autopista Lecheria – Chamapa – La Venta** connects the northern edge of the metropolitan area at the junction with the México City-Querétaro highway to the western edge of the city, near Santa Fe. It goes through the municipalities of Naucalpan, Huixquilucan and the México City borough of Cuajimalpa.

Frequently travelled highways to exit the city

- + Libramiento Toluca
- + México – Cuernavaca - Acapulco
- + México – Queretaro – Zacatecas
- + México – Veracruz – Oaxaca

Weather

The city has nice weather year-round, with no drastic temperatures – neither hot nor cold. The temperature rarely falls below 3°C (37 °F) or reaches above 32.2°C (90 °F). The only snow is at the top of the volcanoes surrounding the city. The average annual temperature varies from 12.2°C to 20.5°C (54 °F to 69 °F). The rainy months span from June through September or October, during which it would be strange to go one day without some degree of precipitation; however, the rest of the year sees practically no rainfall.

Season	Description	Average High	Average Low
Spring	Dry and hot	24.7°C (76.3°F)	9.3°C (49.0°F)
Summer	Rainy	23.0°C (73.3°F)	12.0°C (54.0°F)
Fall	Rainy	22.7°C (72.6°F)	9.7°C (49.7°F)
Winter	Dry	21.0°C (70.0°F)	5.3°C (41.2°F)

Time Zone

México City falls in the Central Time Zone (GMT/UTC -6h during Standard Time and GMT/UTC -5h during Daylight Saving Time).

Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00AM local time on the first Sunday of April, and falls back to Standard Time at the same time on the last Sunday of October.

Neighborhood Overview

Neighborhoods

Real estate in México City has become very expensive. It is a fast-paced market and therefore requires quick decisions due to the lack of properties available. Internet information is neither reliable nor accurate, as most properties have not been updated. Be sure to contact your consultant, who can provide you with more current information on listings.

Desirable neighborhoods for transferees include:

- + Polanco
- + Condesa
- + Santa Fe
- + Bosques de las Lomas
- + Lomas de Chapultepec
- + Interlomas
- + Zona Esmeralda (North)
- + Coyoacán & San Angel (South)

Polanco and **Condesa** are very trendy and expensive neighborhoods. Most available properties are two-bedroom apartments that have few additional amenities. These neighborhoods are filled with parks, popular outdoor cafés, and restaurants.

Santa Fe, **Bosques de las Lomas**, and **Interlomas** are located in the suburbs and continue to grow rapidly. Properties tend to be newer with larger spaces and very good amenities. These neighborhoods have large malls and restaurants for family dining. Santa Fe in particular has become a major business district; it consists mainly of residential and office buildings, as well as hotels that surround the Santa Fe mall. Due to the heavy traffic of people that live and work in the vicinity, the area is filled with a wide variety of restaurants, bars, cinemas, and gyms.

Lomas de Chapultepec is one of the most expensive neighborhoods. Most properties are large houses that stand alone. There are a few streets with added security, although the area is quite safe. This neighborhood is mainly residential.

Zona Esmeralda is located to the north of the city. It is one of the nicest growing suburbs and least expensive due to the longer commute to downtown México City. People working in the northern industrial area of the city generally prefer this neighborhood. Houses here have large lots of land; there are very few apartment buildings. There are also two golf courses in the area: Chiluca and Valle Escondido.

Coyoacan and **San Angel** are located in the south of the city. They are very old neighborhoods; most of the houses are colonial, Mexican style. These neighborhoods are filled with parks, bazaars, galleries, restaurants, and cafes. Other popular neighborhoods for employees further south are **Pedregal** and **Jardines de la Montaña**.

Entertainment and Dining

Dining

Like any other metropolis, and as one of the largest, most vibrant cities, México City has countless options for eating out. There are options for budget dining, mid-price dining, and more expensive restaurants listed among the best in the world. You can find a budget Japanese restaurant next door to a glamorous, expensive Asian restaurant like Nobu or Shu, just like you can find a delicious taco stand outside an upscale Mexican fusion restaurant. México City offers a wide variety of cuisines from everywhere in the world, suited for all kinds of occasions.

Some helpful websites for finding restaurants all over the city include:

- + www.queremoscomer.rest
- + www.chilango.com/comida

Tipping

Tipping of a few pesos to all delivery people is usual. You should also give a small tip (5-10 pesos) to the people in the supermarkets who pack your groceries. You may also want to tip gas attendants the same amount. In a restaurant, unless the service was very poor, you should tip 10 to 15% of the total bill.

Nightlife

México City has a very active nightlife. Neighborhoods like Condesa, Roma, and Polanco are the trendiest; they feature many restaurants, bars, and nightclubs filled with people every night.



Helpful Hint: Bartenders or waiters in bars expect the same tip as in a restaurant, which is 12-15%.



Travel

Getting In

By Plane

There are two airports that serve México City. The largest is the Benito Juárez International Airport located inside the city. It is the second busiest airport in Latin America; on a regular day, the number of passengers that go through its terminals exceeds 85,000. There are 46 airlines in this airport that fly to over 100 destinations worldwide.

There is also a smaller airport in the city of Toluca, located 30 minutes away from the Santa Fe area in México City. The Lic. Adolfo López Mateos International Airport, as it is called, supports mostly domestic airlines. However, there are flights to a few popular destinations in the United States, including Las Vegas, Dallas, and Los Angeles.

Car rental options:

Rental Agency	Website	Telephone
Avis	www.avis.mx	01800 500 28 47
Budget	www.budget.com.mx	01800 462 83 43
Europcar	www.europcar.com.mx	01800 201 20 84
Sixt	www.sixt.com/car-rental/México	01800 830 10 10
Hertz	www.hertz.com/rentacar/car-rental/México	01800 709 50 00

Getting Around

There are several options for traveling via public transportation. We recommend you don't use public transportation, however in case you do, be sure to ride with caution, keeping in mind that it can be crowded, arrive sporadically, and sometimes be unsafe.

By Subway

The city has a very good subway system that runs throughout the central areas, although it does not cover a large part of the city. The subway's 12 lines and 195 stations are located along the northeastern boroughs of the city and their bordering municipalities in the State of México.

The major stations include:

- + Cuatro Caminos
- + Indios Verdes
- + Pantitlán
- + Tacubaya
- + Constitución de 1917

The subway runs on weekdays from 5:00AM to 12:00PM, Saturdays from 6:00AM to 12:00PM, and Sundays and holidays from 7:00AM to 12:00PM. For more information on the subway, please visit: www.metro.df.gob.mx/#

By Bus

There are three types of busses that run through México City:

The **metrobus** is the newest and fastest method of public transportation. These are modern, more technologically advanced busses that have their own lane where no other busses or cars are allowed to circulate. Currently the metrobus only runs through Avenida de los Insurgentes, from the metro station in Indios Verdes all the way to Doctor Gálvez near University City.

The **RTP** busses go from all major metro stations to the points of greatest influx of people in the city.

The **microbus** or “peseros” are smaller busses that run through all large and medium streets, making frequent stops upon request by the passengers. These buses are generally older vehicles and can become overcrowded with people.

There are four major bus terminals located at opposite corners of the city: Terminal de Autobuses de Pasajeros del Oriente (TAPO), Terminal Central del Norte, Terminal Central del Sur (Tasqueña) and Terminal Central de Poniente (Observatorio).

By Taxi

It is advised that you never take a taxi from the street; rather, you should call a taxi company to send a taxi to your location. There are many safe taxi companies throughout the city. Some of these companies include:

Company	Contact
Taxis Lilas	55700399, 52571861
Taxi Santa Fe	21674248
Taxis La Ranita	58122547
Taxis Polanco	52804352
Taxis Condesa	52779743
Taxis Roma	52647881
Taxis Lomas	52519285

There is also a smart-phone app called UBER, which allows you to request a ride from safe taxis all over the city. Once requested, you’ll get picked up in minutes. Rather than pay the taxi driver directly, you pay through the app using your credit card or Paypal account, thereby eliminating the need to carry cash. When you arrive at your location, UBER sends you an email with the receipt for that ride.



Helpful Hint: If the taxi does not have a taximeter, we recommend you ask the driver or the operator on the phone the cost of the ride before getting in the car to avoid getting an overpriced rate upon arrival. Additionally, while it is not required to tip taxi drivers, it is customary to tip an extra 10%.

By Car

Before driving, it is recommended that you obtain a Mexican driving license. Licenses are issued at Delegaciones. You will need to go to your nearest Delegacion:

www.finanzas.df.gob.mx/oficinas/directorioLicencias.html#

You will need to bring with you a copy and the original of the following:

1. Official ID (Passport)
2. Proof of residence (telephone or water receipt)
3. Proof of payment (Fee)
 - + Type of License: A (Automobiles and Motorcycles for 3 years)
 - + Pay at authorized banks or commercial centers
4. For expatriates, it is necessary to present a document that attests to his/her legal stay in the county

Finally, you will need to sign under oath that the information you are providing is true and correct.

Driving in México City can be a challenging experience for foreigners at first. Mexican drivers tend to be more aggressive than drivers in Europe or the United States. You should always be alert and on the lookout for drivers changing lanes or trying to get around you. Keep in mind that people often don't use turn signals; your turn signal probably won't have any effect on other drivers, so be extra careful and make sure you have enough space to change lanes, and don't expect other drivers to slow down for you.

México City is a large city with millions of vehicles on the streets, and unwritten rules are followed over traffic laws and speed limits, so always be cautious at stop lights and intersections even if you have the right of passage. Pedestrians tend to cross highways and streets at any point, so, regardless of signs, watch out for people crossing.

If you ever need to rent a vehicle, you have several options:

Rental Agency	Website	Telephone
Avis	www.avis.mx	01800 500 28 47
Budget	www.budget.com.mx	01800 462 83 43
Europcar	www.europcar.com.mx	01800 201 20 84
Sixt	www.sixt.com/car-rental/México	01800 830 10 10
Hertz	www.hertz.com/rentacar/car-rental/México	01800 709 50 00



Helpful Hint: As in any city, there is a lot of traffic. Patience is key. Try to avoid rush hour if you can.

Helpful Information for Driving in México City

- + **Parking fees:** As of March 2013, the México City government installed parking meters in some of the busier areas of the city. You can identify the parking spaces by the white line on the pavement drawn parallel to the sidewalk. The parking meters must be used Monday through Friday during work hours (8:00 – 20:00). The minimum fee is charged by pesos per minute. Every peso after that allows you to park for a period of 7 minutes. The longest a car is allowed to be parked in the same spot varies from 4 to 6 hours depending on the area in which you are parked; be sure to check the rules on the specific parking meter you are using. The penalty for parking in one of these allotted spaces and not using the parking meter varies; you will likely either receive a fine or have your car towed. If you have a hard time finding a parking space on the street, there are public parking lots all over the city. It is also common for people to leave their cars in empty lots called *pensiones*, where they get charged for parking by the hour or for the whole day.
- + **Valet services:** Most restaurants and bars in the city provide valet services, which are located outside and can be identified by the umbrellas on the street. Make sure to get a valet ticket when you hand over your car keys and specify any valuables you are leaving inside the car.
- + **Driving at night:** As in any other large city, there are safety issues when driving alone at night. We recommend staying on the main roads and being aware of your surroundings at all times. From Thursday to Saturday and on holidays you will find police checkpoints all over the main roads of the city trying to identify and detain drunk drivers. If you get pulled over, cooperate with the authorities; if you have not been drinking they will not hold you for long.
- + **City-specific regulations:** In order to reduce traffic and promote methods of transportation that pollute less, the city enacted a system banning specified vehicles off of the roads on a specific day of the week or during certain hours of the day. The cars that aren't allowed to circulate during the given time are chosen based on the number of years, the type of motor, and the origin of the car (states outside of the city and metropolitan area). If you have a car in the city, make sure you know the regulations that apply to your vehicle, as there are fines for circulating on days that you are not supposed to. For more information, visit:
www.mexicocity.gob.mx/contenido.php?cat=11200&sub=0

By Bicycle

Due to the size of the city and lack of bicycle lanes, it is rare to find people traveling around on a bicycle outside of the downtown, Polanco, and Condesa areas, which have recently been fitted to promote this type of transportation.

The city has installed a program called ECOBICI, which is a system of shared public bicycles in the central areas of the city. The objective is to give people the ability to move short distances without having to spend hours in traffic and to provide a sustainable means of transportation. There are 275 bicycle stations. To take bikes from these stations, you must be registered and pay a small annual fee. You return the bikes at a station near your destination.

By Foot

Due to the long distances and constant changes in elevation, it can be difficult to get around the city on foot. Unless you are moving short distances in the same neighborhood, walking is generally not an option.

Weekend Trips

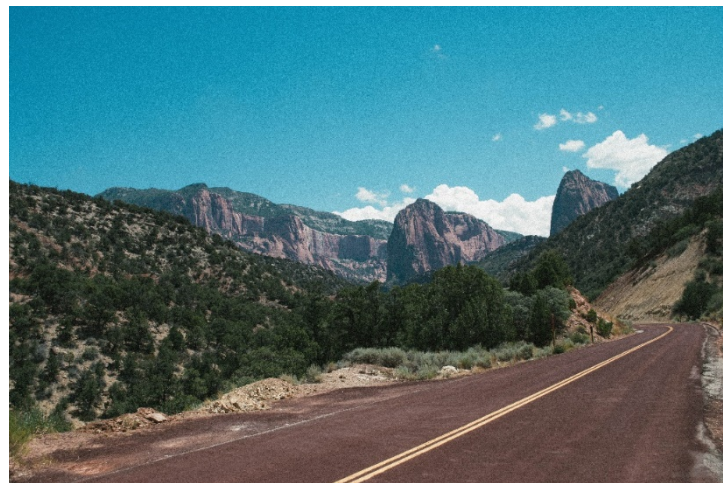
México City has several destinations nearby where people go to spend their weekends.

Valle de Bravo is a typical Mexican town in the State of México located one hour and 45 minutes southwest of the city. It lies on the banks of one of the largest lakes in the country and is completely surrounded by mountains. This makes it an ideal location for outdoor activities like skiing and mountain biking. The town itself is also very beautiful; most streets are cobblestone and everything has a rustic feel.

Cuernavaca, the capital and largest city of the state of Morelos, is just an hour drive from the city. Many of the country's wealthy citizens own houses and haciendas here. It provides a great break from the city, especially because it has nice, warm weather year-round.

Acapulco is the closest beach to México City, located in the state of Guerrero. It is a four-hour drive or half-hour flight, so it is the favorite beach escape for people living in the city.

Ixtapan de la Sal is in the State of México, one hour and 30 minutes outside of the city. It is a popular tourist destination due to its thermal springs. Many hotels are located there and have built great spas that offer guests massages, beauty treatments, and baths in volcanically-heated waters, among other services.



San Miguel de Allende is in the eastern part of the state of Guanajuato, three hours outside of México City. This small, picturesque town has attracted many artists with its beauty and has become a cultural and artistic hub, filled with shops that sell art, handcrafts, furniture, and decorative items. It also features impressive galleries; one attraction is The Fabrica La Aurora, an old textile mill that has been converted into galleries and shops selling art, furnishings, and antiques.

Taxco, located in the state of Guerrero, is three hours outside of the city. It is heavily associated with silver, both with the mining of it and the crafting of it into jewelry, silverware, and other items.

Taxco has a long history dating back to the Spanish rule, so it is filled with colonial constructions. Additionally, the city of Taxco is on the top of a mountain, so it is surrounded by beautiful scenery.

The following websites have helpful local insight if you would like to travel around México:

- + www.mexperience.com/lifestyle/transport/México-toll-roads
- + www.idMéxico.com.mx/idMéxico
- + www.lonelyplanet.com/México
- + www.ontheroadin.com

México has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. If you have time to visit, these beaches include: Cancun, Cozumel, Ixtapa, Isla Mujeres, Las Bahias de Huatulco, Los Cabos, Playa del Carmen, Puerto Escondido, Tulum, and Puerto Vallarta in Jalisco.

You can visit these beaches year-round at an affordable price by using a low-cost airline such as Volaris or Viva-Aerobus.



Shopping

Shopping Centers

There are shopping malls in most neighborhoods in the city with offers on clothing, electronics, and sportswear, as well as specialty shops. Some options for malls include:

Shopping Mall	Details
Centro Comercial Santa Fe https://centrosantafe.com.mx	Prol Vasco De Quiroga 3800, Cuajimalpa de Morelos
Paseo Interlomas www.paseointerlomas.mx	Av. Vialidad de la Barranca No. 6, Col. Ex Hacienda Jesús del Monte
Antara (Polanco) www.antara.com.mx	Ejército Nacional 843-b, Granada, Miguel Hidalgo
Arcos Bosques www.paseoarcosbosques.mx	Paseo de los Tamarindos 400
Perisur https://www.galerias.com/perisur	Anillo Periférico Sur 4690, Ampliación Pedregal de San Ángel, Coyoacán
Plaza Satellite http://plazasatelite.com.mx/inicio	Circuito Centro Comercial 2251 CD. Satélite
Reforma 222 www.codigoreforma222.com.mx	Paseo de la Reforma 222, Juárez, 06600 Ciudad de México, CDMX
Magnocentro	Blvd. Magnocentro N°35 Huixquilucan de Degollado Centro (Interlomas)

Grocery

Supermarkets

People in México do most of their grocery shopping at supermarkets. There are a wide variety of supermarkets ranging from low prices like Wal-Mart and Costco to organic high-end foods at City Market. Common supermarkets are Chedraui, Superama, and Comercial Mexicana.

Markets

You might see open air mobile neighborhood markets known as *mercado sobre ruedas*, or markets on wheels. They are normally held on a specific day of the week in a particular location.

A few local markets include:

- + [La Merced Market](#) is the largest traditional food market in the entire city. Located in the center of the city, like most Mexican traditional markets, it is a favorite place to eat Mexican street food.
- + **Bazar Sabado**, open on Saturdays only, is located outside of the Plaza San Jacinto in San Angel. Here you'll find blown glass, jewelry, clothing, folk art, and delicious Mexican food.
- + [La Lagunilla](#) is a traditional public market with three sections: one for clothes, one for furniture, and another for food.
- + [Central de Abastos](#) is the city's largest market for produce and other food items.
- + [Mercado de Coyoacán](#) is a popular souvenir market in the South of the city.
- + [Mercado de la Ciudadella](#) is a popular tourist destination; here you can find many kinds of handcrafts from all over México.
- + [Mercado Roma](#) is a new specialty market in Colonia Roma.

Drugstores and Pharmacies

Supermarkets normally have a pharmacy inside, and there are also many other smaller pharmacies available throughout the city. The following is a list of the larger chains of pharmacies that can be found all over the city:

- + Farmacia San Pablo
- + Farmacias del Ahorro
- + Farmacias Benavides
- + Farmacias Especializadas

24-hour Services

- + Au Pied de Cochon, an elegant French restaurant in Polanco, is open 24 hours
- + The following five Wal-Mart branches are always open: Villa Coapa, Universidad, Tepeyac, Lomas, and Plaza Oriente
- + Farmacia San Pablo keeps a window open at all times
- + OXXO convenience stores

Arts and Culture

Museums, Cultural Centers, and Art

México City is a major cultural center, filled with many museums and galleries. Some of the most famous include the following:

Palacio de Bellas Artes in the west side of the historic center is a stunning building in itself and the most important cultural center in the country. Groups that perform in this theatre include the Ballet Folklórico de México, Compañía Nacional de Opera de Bellas Artes, and the National Symphonic Orchestra. The museum portion consists of the permanent murals by Diego Rivera and Siqueiros in addition to other artwork and some temporary exhibits.

Franz Mayer Museum in the in the former San Juan de Dios Monastery displays artwork, books, furniture, ceramics, textiles, and other items that Franz Mayer collected during his life.

Memory and Tolerance Museum is located in México City's downtown on Avenida Juárez. The museum displays the history of genocides in the world with the purpose of transmitting tolerance through historical memory.

National Art Museum in the downtown exhibits a large collection of Mexican art from the mid-sixteenth century through the mid-20th century.

Frida Kahlo Museum or the **Blue House** is the house where artist Frida Kahlo was born and raised. It has since been turned into a museum and exhibits her artwork as well as art by her husband Diego Rivera and other artists of the time.

Anthropology Museum has one of the largest collections of archaeological artifacts from pre-Hispanic civilizations.

Museum of Modern Art in Chapultepec Park has a permanent collection and hosts temporary exhibitions of contemporary artists.

MUAC inside University City exhibits the collection of temporary art of the UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México).

Tamayo Museum in Chapultepec Park is mainly dedicated to the private collection of the artist Rufino Tamayo and some temporary exhibitions of contemporary art.

Theaters

There are over 100 theaters in the city, including:

- + Teatro de la Ciudad de México, Esperanza Iris
- + Teatro de los Insurgentes
- + Teatro Banamex Santa Fe
- + Teatro Telcel
- + Teatro Ofelia
- + Centro Nacional de las Artes
- + Teatro Coyoacán
- + Teatro Aldama

Music

Concerts in the city are normally held at the following venues:

- + Palacio de Bellas Artes
- + Auditorio Nacional
- + Foro Sol
- + Palacio de los Deportes

Events

México City entertains a wide variety of events for all kinds of preferences; there are year-round performances by the philharmonic orchestra, ballet companies, the opera, and concerts ranging from classical music to the most popular bands and DJs.

- + Each October, the city hosts an annual music festival, the Corona Capital, with a unique international lineup.
- + Every year during the Day of the Dead festivities, the downtown area fills itself with traditional, colorful, artistic Mexican altars with offerings for those who have passed away.
- + During the winter, the México City government builds an ice-skating rink in the middle of the main plaza downtown with several other wintery activities, including building snowmen.
- + There are several NASCAR auto races that take place year-round, and the city also plays host to the Gran Premio de México, one of the concluding Formula One World Championship rounds each season.

Libraries	
Biblioteca Central (UNAM)	Biblioteca Miguel Lerdo de Tejada
Biblioteca Francisco Xavier Clavigero	Biblioteca Gonzalo Robles
La Ciudadela (ciudad de México)	Biblioteca México José Vasconcelos
Biblioteca Nacional de México	Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia
Hemeroteca Nacional de México	

Tourist Attractions

Places to visit in México City:

- + **Turibus**, a panoramic passenger double-deck bus that travels through some of México City's most beautiful areas, is a great way to see the city. This bus offers a fun experience to view, from the comfort of your seat, the bustling life of this great city. Users can get on and off the bus at any of its stops; they can stay at a place they find interesting and get back on another [Turibus](#) a few hours later.
- + **Templo Mayor** was one of the Aztec's main temples in their city of Tenochtitlan. It was destroyed by the Spanish and forgotten until it was excavated in the 20th century. The temple was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1987.
- + **Teotihuacan** was the largest city in the pre-Columbian Americas. Built around 100BC, it is known today for its architecturally stunning pyramids as well as the residential compounds surrounding them. Located approximately 40 kilometers northeast of the city, it is the most visited archaeological site in México.
- + **Chapultepec Castle** is the only Royal Castle in North America, built for the Mexican Emperor Maximilian and his wife Carlota.
- + **Historic Downtown**, known as **Centro Historico**, mostly consists of streets filled with Spanish colonial buildings surrounding the main plaza called the Zocalo. Aside from the tourist attractions here like the Zocalo, Palacio Nacional, the Cathedral, Templo Mayor, Bellas Artes, Alameda Central, and many museums and galleries, you will also find countless stores, restaurants, and markets.
- + **Paseo de la Reforma** is a wide avenue that crosses the city diagonally. It was commissioned by Emperor Maximilian to link the historical center to his residence, the Chapultepec Castle. Today Reforma is filled with famous monuments, important buildings, and a large median strip decorated year round.
- + **San Angel** is a neighborhood in the southwest of the city; it has a large number of historic buildings and plazas that attract many tourists.

For more information about México City, visit: www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico/mexico-city or www.chilango.com.

Recreation and Outdoors

Athletics

The Mexican first division football league has two tournaments a year. The city has 3 teams, and each one has its own stadium. Pumas play for UNAM University in their stadium at University City; Cruz Azul is a team that was founded by the workers of the cement maker, Cemento Cruz Azul, and its home venue is the Estadio Azul; and, finally, America, owned by media company Grupo Televisa, plays in Estadio Azteca. Baseball season goes from March to August. México City's team is called Diablos Rojos, and they play at the Foro Sol.

There are several foot races that take place in the city each year, such as the México City full and half Marathons, Father's Day half marathon, 5k and 10k charity runs, as well as Warrior and Spartan dashes. For information on dates and entry fees please visit: <https://web.asdeporte.com>

On the last Sunday of every month the city closes down a 32-kilometer route starting at Paseo de la Reforma for the Cicloton. The Cicloton promotes sports and athletics as well as enjoying the city because it allows people to bike, skate, or run through the streets that are normally filled with cars and traffic.

Although it does not take place in the city, The Abierto Mexicano Telcel (Mexican Open), which takes place in Acapulco, a 4-hour drive from the city, is one of 11 ATP World Tour 500 series tournaments. The tournament normally attracts many of the city's residents for a week of watching professional tennis.

Parks

People who visit México City for the first time are often surprised to find so many green areas in the city. Some of the largest and most popular parks in the city include the following:

- + **Chapultepec** is located in the center of the city; it is considered the lungs of México City. The park is just over 686 hectares. In the colonial period, the Chapultepec Castle was built in this area.
- + **Parque México**, which is located in the center of Condesa, is filled with green areas and paved trails, so that you can enjoy the trees and the architecture of the neighborhood at the same time.
- + **Parque España** lies on the border between Condesa and La Roma. It is great for walking your dog, going for a run, and just hanging out.
- + **Desierto de los Leones** is an escape within the city. It is neither a desert nor does it have any lions, but it is a large forest in the city filled with fresh air and trails for hiking and biking.
- + **Bosque de Tlalpan** is 200 hectares of forest in the south of the city; it is perfect for exercising, taking a walk, or having a picnic.
- + **Alameda Central** is a park in the center of the city, next to the Palacio de Bellas Artes; it is a popular tourist destination.

Education

Schools

The Mexican public school system is very limited; foreigners coming to México with children generally enroll their kids in private schools. There are a wide variety of options for private schools, from religious to non-denomination and same sex as well as co-ed schools. The school calendar runs from August to June.

The city is filled with both public and private universities. Some of the largest are Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Universidad Iberoamericana (UIA), Anahuac, Tecnológico de Monterrey, (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM), Universidad del Valle de México (UVM), La Salle University, and Universidad Panamericana (UP).

- + **UNAM** is a public university – the largest in Latin America and the oldest in the continent. UNAM contributes many different publications in areas such as mathematics, physics, and history.
- + **Universidad Iberoamericana, Anahuac, and UP** are private, Catholic universities founded by religious groups like Jesuits, Legionaries of Christ and Opus Dei.
- + **La Salle University** is also a religious, private university founded by the educational community of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, founded by Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle; they have also founded many other higher education institutions in several countries.
- + **UVM** is a private university with several campuses throughout the city; it offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the fields of Medicine, Engineering, Business, and Law, among others.
- + **Tecnológico de Monterrey** is the largest private, non-denomination, co-ed higher education institute in Latin America, although based in Monterrey; it has 31 campuses in 25 cities throughout the country. It is a leader in patent applications among Mexican universities.
- + **ITAM** is considered the best private university in Mexico, with the most demanding undergraduate and graduate programs in the country. It is well known that most of the prominent positions in government and the Mexican Foreign Service are filled by ITAM alumni.

Learning Spanish

There are a number of language schools where you can learn Spanish, including:

- + International House México in Condesa
- + The Frida Spanish School in Condesa
- + Centro de Enseñanza Para Extranjeros in University City

International Schools

With an increased global assignee population from the US, Canada, Latin America, Europe, and Asia, as well as a rising middle class, spaces at international schools are in great demand. Destination Consultants in México report that parents arrive in the country expecting their children to be admitted to high-profile schools such as Greengates and The American School, only to learn that the schools are highly competitive and space is limited. Parents may also think that either Destination Services companies or corporate employers have leverage and influence over the school decision, but that is not the case. Admissions follow a strict protocol and the schools expect the parents to own the process and be involved every step of the way.

Dwellworks recommends that parents follow these steps to avoid surprises or disappointments regarding school placements:

- + Research the schools online as soon as the relocation assignment is offered
- + Apply online in advance of the home finding tour
- + Apply to more than one school
- + Be prepared to act on acceptance with short notice, as admittance is on a rolling basis and availability is subject to frequent changes
- + Be ready to talk to schools directly regarding individual student applications; schools will only talk to parents and guardians (not employers or service providers)

Schools with International Baccalaureate® (IB) programs	
West of the city	ASF, Westhill, Peterson, Eaton
South of the city	Edron
North of the city	Greengates

The bilingual schools, some of which offer IB programs, include:

- + Sierra Nevada
- + Ciudad de México
- + Alexander Bain
- + Pinecrest (Catholic)
- + Colegio Aleman (German)
- + Liceo Frances (French)

Additional Useful Information

The admissions process starts online or by a phone call to the school. International schools require that parents complete the admission process to ensure confidentiality. Academic documents must be translated, notarized, and certified. It is recommended that transferees start this process as soon as they know that they will be transferred to México.

Note that most of these schools are private and require an extra fee that in other cities is considered the cost of enrollment. The school calendar in México goes from August to June, with breaks for the Catholic holidays of Christmas and Easter.

Health

Health System

Healthcare in México is usually very good, and in some places, it is top of the line. Most doctors and dentists in México today received at least part of their training in the U.S. and continue to travel to the U.S. and Europe for ongoing training.

First-rate hospitals are located in at least every medium to large city throughout México. Healthcare in México is also generally less expensive than what one can expect to pay in the U.S. and other first world countries.

Hospitals

All major hospitals accept well-known health insurance and are staffed with people who speak English. Both of the hospitals listed below are considered among the modern and prestigious hospitals in the city, with some of the most well-respected doctors on staff. They have a reputation for excellent service and an efficient emergency room.

Hospital	Area	Website	Telephone
Centro Médico ABC	Observatorio Santa Fe	www.abchospital.com/en	5230 8000 1103 1600
Hospital Ángeles	Pedregal Interlomas	https://hospitalesangeles.com/mexico	5449 5500 5246 5000

In Case of Emergency

In case of emergency, **dial 911**, 065, 5395 1111, or 5557 5757 for the Red Cross, or dial the emergency line for the hospitals listed in the chart above. The best option, in case of health emergency, is going directly to the hospital listed above, or to call a particular service or ambulance.

Safety and Security

At Home

Normally your company will provide a security briefing prior to your move to México. In some cases they also hire a security specialist to review the property before signing any lease.

Some neighborhoods do offer gated communities, but it is still advised that residents be aware and cautious and realize that break-ins are always a possibility no matter where you go or how good your security may be.

On the Streets

Regarding safety, it is recommended to keep a low profile and exercise caution as in any other major city in the world. Be aware of where to go and not to go. Use extreme caution at all times; many accidents occur when it rains because the roads are extremely slick and hazardous. Be a cautious driver.

In the Car

In case you are in an accident, do not move your vehicle. Immediately call your company lawyer and insurance agent, then wait for police to arrive. If you are pulled over for a traffic violation, be polite, accept the ticket, and ask where you can pay it (*Donde pago?*) Don't offer to pay the ticket to the police officer. It could be seen as a bribe, and you could be required to pay a fine as well as the ticket.

Emergency Contact

- + Emergency (Radio Police) – 911, 060, or 080
- + Fire Department – 068 or 57 68 37 00
- + LOCATEL – 56 58 11 11
- + PROFECO – 56 25 67 00 or 55 68 87 22
- + Stolen Vehicles – 51 30 80 00 or 51 30 86 46
- + Police Prevention – 56 84 21 42, 54 81 43 26, or 52 56 06 06

Utilities and Services

Upon moving to México City, transferees are generally responsible for arranging their telephone, cable, and Internet. There are several providers that offer different plans.



Helpful Hint: Be flexible and patient, as repairs usually take longer than expected.

Telephone

There are only a few companies in México that provide telephone landlines. Each company has its own offers on plans and prices. The companies you can hire for this service are [Telmex](#), [Cablevision](#), [Izzi](#), [Axtel](#), [Movistar](#), and [Maxcom](#).

The international telephone country code for México is +52, and the city code for México City is (855). Therefore, local telephone numbers have the following format: +52 (55) 0000-0000. In the case of mobile phones the format is +52-1- (55) 0000-0000. If you are making local calls, the +52 or +52-1 prefix should be dropped.

Mobile Phones

Companies that offer mobile plans are [Telcel](#), [AT&T](#), and [Movistar](#). International calls are very expensive, so most people use internet based telephone or calling cards as an alternative.

Roaming charges are also extremely high. It is recommended that before leaving the country you contact your cell phone service provider and ask for international coverage. Your provider will be able to activate an international plan for a minimal charge. Upon return to your country, you can cancel the international coverage and the plan charges will be prorated on your bill. The international coverage allows you data usage and reduces the charges for texts and phone calls.

Television

The following are cable television providers in México:

- + [Cablevision](#) (In addition to watching TV at home, users can have access to online streaming of their channels on mobile devices through Veo for a small monthly fee)
- + [Dish México](#)
- + [SKY México](#)

On-demand Internet providers of streaming media in México are:

- + [Netflix](#)
- + [Cinopolis Klic](#)
- + [Crackle](#)
- + [Telemex](#)
- + [Veo](#)

Internet

High-speed internet providers include [Izzi](#), [Totalplay](#), [Telmex](#) with its [Infinitum](#) product, and [Cablevision](#), which provides Internet via cable and is usually a bit faster for uploads and downloads. Infinitum users also have access to the Prodigy WiFi access from thousands of hotspots around México. Additionally, many cafes and restaurants in the city have free WiFi for customers.

Yard and Trash Services

Waste collection vehicles make frequent stops around each neighborhood in the city; residents are responsible for leaving their trash bags outside the house before the vehicle passes. It is expected that you give the waste collectors a weekly tip for their services. If they are municipal workers, however, you do not have to pay; only provide a tip around Christmas. Unless you live in a gated community, you will need to hire a private company or a gardener to do your lawn.

Gas

A private company such as [Zeta Gas](#) distributes gas and the building administration charges the tenants. Houses normally have a private contract with gas companies and receive the service depending on their consumption. All bills can be paid in cash at service provider offices or with the delivery truck, or credit card at service provider offices or designated banks.



Helpful Hint: Transferees should maintain records showing proof of payment of all services, particularly water and electricity.

Electricity and Water

Water and electricity bills always stay under the landlord's name. The water is paid to [SIAPA](#) (Sistema Intermunicipal de los Servicios de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado). It can be paid online and sometimes it is paid through the neighbor associations. Electricity bills are paid every 60 days. These companies are government owned; for this reason, there is a lot of bureaucracy that can create frustration when dealing with inaccurate invoices or meter readings. Convenience stores and supermarkets receive payments of undue bills some with a small service charge.

Hiring Household Help

It is common for people in México to hire household help. Many houses and apartments have a room for the maid in case you choose to hire a live-in maid. There is also the option of just having a maid during the day for cooking and cleaning. Many people also hire drivers and gardeners.

Dwellworks does not provide assistance hiring household help. We recommend you talk to the owner of the property to see if he or she can recommend people who have worked in the house or apartment before, or check with other expats from your company who have hired these services. The safest way to hire a maid is through friends who can give you recommendations.

Housing

Leases and Deposits

Landlords keep showing properties until they have a signed lease and/or get payment for a security deposit.

The process is as follows: once the property is selected, lease conditions are determined. This includes details such as the delivery date, appliances that will be included, and the condition of the property in which it was found. Next, the parties involved proceed to review the lease agreement usually provided by the landlord. Sometimes the landlord may accept the contract provided by the company for which the executive works. Once negotiations are finished, you proceed to the signing as well as the payment of the security deposit. A move-in date will be established. It is important to note that you must pay the first month's rent in advance before you receive keys to the property.

In most transactions, it is necessary to have a lease guarantor (usually the company) that person or the company guarantees the owner that all commitments agreed upon in the contract will be kept. Having a lease guarantor increases the number of properties available.

As part of the requirements to lease a property, it is necessary to provide financial information, such as proof of income. This financial information is required as a result of new legislation, ID resident card, personal references, and copy of your passport.



Polanco



Condesa



Bosques de las Lomas



Interlomas

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