

# Navigating Mexico

## Tips and tricks for a smooth adjustment



# Hooking up the utilities

Plan on a personal visit to each office

- Take your property deed with you (*escritura*)
- Take your passport or residency card



# Hooking up the utilities

Plan on a personal visit to each office

- Take your property deed with you (*escritura*)
- Take your passport or residency card
- Phone and cable companies are easy... Electricity is like pulling teeth
- Be prepared for repeat trips



# Hooking up the utilities

**Sign up for direct-debit and electronic statements**

# Landline Phones

- **Easy to sign up with Telmex, and can print statement right away**
  - **Use this statement as proof of residency for other purposes**

# Landline Phones

- Easy to sign up with Telmex, and can print statement right away
  - Use this statement as proof of residency for other purposes
- Take your property deed (*escritura*)
- Installation happens quickly, and service is cheap (with free calls to US and Canada)
- Internet service too, if desired

# Mobile Phones

- **Offices and kiosks are all over**
- **You'll (supposedly) need ID, either passport or residency card**
- **Activation takes about 5 to 10 minutes**
- **Online account management and direct debit available (even for prepaid accounts)**
- **Data charges very inexpensive (I'm paying \$10 per month)**

# Mobile Phones

- **Dual SIM phones are available, so you can have a Mexican number and home country number active at the same time.**



# Internet Service

- Available from landline phone company, mobile phone company, or cable TV company
- Can get ADSL, Cable, or Fiber Optic in many locations
- For about \$30 per month, you can get 150Mb internet service with a landline phone... \$27 without the phone (Telmex).

# Cable TV

- **Cable is available anywhere, but...**
- **The price goes up if you want a good selection of English-speaking channels. Prices vary from \$13 to \$50 per month.**
  - **Bundles are available and are less-expensive than individual subscriptions**
- **Dish Mexico and Sky Mexico offer English language satellite service**

# Moving money to Mexico

- If you have a local bank account, you can wire directly
  - Charles Schwab, good service and good exchange rates
  - Wires in pesos get better rates than dollars and avoid fees

# Moving money to Mexico

- If you have a local bank account, you can wire directly
  - Charles Schwab, good service and good exchange rates
  - Wires in pesos get better rates than dollars and avoid fees
- Use Moneycorp, or other FX service
  - Can allow you to lock-in rates
  - Best rates for many areas

# Finding a local bank

**With residency, it's easy... without residency, go with whoever will take you**

- **Activer offers best package of services and currencies I've seen**
- **CIBanco and InterCam also offer accounts to non-residents**

## What you may need

- **Passport/cédula; utility bill; possibly tax returns**
- **Bank statement; pension statement or SS**
- **Explanation of where the money came from**

# Finding a local bank

- **Look for direct debit of utilities (they don't all have it)**
- **Look for online bill payments (most have this)**
- **Pick one that's convenient to where you live**

# Hiring local craftsmen

Get a good recommendation

- Ask an expat who shares your expectations and standards
- Talk to a real estate agent
- Ask material suppliers



# Hiring local craftsmen

- Make sure you put everything you want in writing
- Standards and included items differ
- Be there when the work is going on
- Find these guys before you need them



Bring plenty of patience



# Shopping

- **You'll find anything you want in Mexico... American brands and American stores (if you want them)**
- **For best prices, avoid where concentrations of expats shop**
- **I no longer maintain a list of things to buy while in the US**

# Tipping

- **Restaurants: Local tipping is 10%... Expats maybe 15%... Visitors, *the sky's the limit!***
  - **Normally, do not tip at buffets**

# Tipping

- **Restaurants: Local tipping is 10%... Expats maybe 15%... Visitors, *the sky's the limit!***
  - **Normally, do not tip at buffets**
- **Do not tip taxi drivers, but “round it up”**
- **I do tip Uber drivers, to maintain my 5-star rating**

# Tipping

- **Restaurants: Local tipping is 10%... Expats maybe 15%... Visitors, *the sky's the limit!***
  - **Normally, do not tip at buffets**
- **Do not tip taxi drivers, but “round it up”**
- **I do tip Uber drivers, to maintain my 5-star rating**
- **Tip hotel porters at about 20 pesos per bag**

# Transportation

## Taxis:

- Inexpensive and plentiful. Most rides under \$2.50
- (Don't tip drivers, but "round up" the fare)

# Transportation

## Taxis:

- Inexpensive and plentiful. Most rides under \$3.50
- (Don't tip drivers, but "round up" the fare)

## Buses:

- Pay when boarding, about 50 to 75 cents
- Stand up and tell driver when you want them to stop

# Transportation

## Taxis:

- Inexpensive and plentiful. Most rides under \$2.50
- (Don't tip drivers, but "round up" the fare)

## Buses:

- Pay when boarding, about 50 to 75 cents
- Stand up and tell driver when you want them to stop

## Uber:

- **Varies by city, may not be available where taxi meters are used**



# Transportation

## Personal Cars:

- Obtain car permit where required (i.e., inland from the border)
- Car permits are good for as long as you are authorized to stay
- Buy Mexican insurance
  - Novamar provides insurance for non-Mexican cars
  - Baja Bound Insurance service is one I've used in the past

# Car Permits

- **You can drive your car or truck into Mexico, with a vehicle import permit**
- **Available for tourist entries and temporary residents (not permanent residents or citizens)**
- **Temporary Residents must stop at the border for car permits**
- **Non-residents can use the border station, or get them in advance online at <https://www.banjercito.com.mx/registroVehiculos/>**

**Would you like to stand out?**



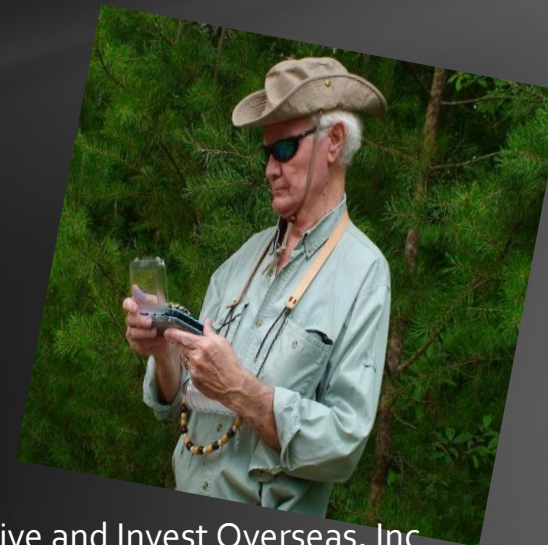
# Would you like to stand out?

White sneakers

Shorts on men

Fanny packs

Safari Jackets and fly-fishing hats



# At the restaurant

“Please wait to be seated”



**“Please... if it’s not too much trouble...May I have some water?”**



**“Please... if it’s not too much trouble...May I have some water?”**



**Well...hummph... I'll just I'll find your waitress and let her know.**

***Any server is happy to help!***

# At the restaurant

## Getting the check



[www.forrestbrown.com](http://www.forrestbrown.com)



# At the restaurant



# Restaurant behavior

## Tips:

- **Locally 10%... Expats 15%... Visitors 20% and beyond!**
- **Ask if they'd prefer the tip separate from the CC charge**

# Restaurant behavior

## Tips:

- **Locally 10%... Expats 15%... Visitors 20% and beyond!**

## Seating:

- **Reservations often not used**
- **YOU get to pick your seat!**
- **The table is yours until you leave**

# Restaurant behavior

## Tips:

- **Locally 10%... Expats 15%... Visitors 20% and beyond!**

## Seating:

- **Reservations often not used**
- **YOU get to pick your seat!**
- **The table is yours until you leave**

## Paying:

- **They will not bring the bill until you ask (*La cuenta, por favor*)**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
  - **Both maintain your shows, but content differs and Amazon offers more via PPV**
  - **Forget VPN, try Smart DNS**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**
- **Amazon.mx (use different account)**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**
- **Amazon.mx (use different account)**
- **Cable TV**



# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**
- **Amazon.mx (use different account)**
- **Cable TV**
- **GPS service**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**
- **Amazon.mx (use different account)**
- **Cable TV**
- **GPS service**
- **Sirius XM**

# Final Odds and Ends

- **Netflix and Amazon Prime Video**
- **Pesos use the dollar sign... be careful!**
- **Amazon.mx (use different account)**
- **Cable TV**
- **GPS service**
- **Sirius XM**
- **Paying Bribes**

# Questions?