



Your soft life starter guide

MOVING TO MEXICO 2026

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SO... YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT MOVING TO MEXICO. NOT JUST VISITING. NOT JUST A QUICK TRIP. ACTUALLY BUILDING A LIFE HERE.

I moved to Mexico City and quickly realized most of the advice online was outdated, overly romanticized, or just not that helpful when it came to real life.

This guide is everything I wish I had before moving.

Simple. Honest. Actually useful.

Think of this as your friend who already did it, giving you the exact steps so you don't feel lost.

Sheri Lyee

LET'S DO IT!



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know exactly what to do**

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should**

Moving to Mexico

CHECKLIST

01

FIGURE OUT YOUR VISA SITUATION

Before anything else, understand how you're legally staying in Mexico.

Options:

- Tourist stay (up to 180 days—but not guaranteed)
- Temporary residency (1–4 years)
- Permanent residency

2026 reality: You may not automatically get 180 days anymore. Always have a plan.

02

CHECK YOUR DOCUMENTS

Make sure you have:

- Passport (valid at least 6 months)
- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate (if applicable)

If applying for residency, your documents will need an apostille.

03

SAVE MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU NEED

Startup costs add up fast.

Plan for:

- Deposits + rent
- Furniture (many places are unfurnished)
- Flights + temporary housing
- Unexpected expenses

Reality: Mexico isn't as cheap as it used to be, especially in major cities.

04

SET UP YOUR MONEY SYSTEM

Figure out how you'll access your money.

Options:

- Home country debit/credit cards
- Wise or similar international accounts
- Mexican bank account (requires residency)

Tip: If you're from the U.S., many people use Charles Schwab since they reimburse ATM fees worldwide.

05

GET HEALTH INSURANCE

Healthcare is more affordable, but still important.

Options:

- Private insurance (most common for expats)
- Public systems (slower, limited access)

Reality: Emergencies can still be expensive.

06

START LEARNING SPANISH NOW

This will impact your experience more than anything else.

- Daily life becomes easier
- You connect with people faster
- You feel more confident

07

FIND YOUR PEOPLE EARLY

Start building connections before you arrive.

- Join Facebook groups
- Follow local creators
- Reach out to people living there

Even one connection makes a difference.

08

DECLUTTER YOUR LIFE

You don't need as much as you think.

Ask: → Does this fit my life in Mexico?

Most things can be replaced once you arrive.

09

BOOK TEMPORARY HOUSING

This is important:

Do not rent long-term before seeing a place.

Instead:

- Book Airbnb for 2–4 weeks
- Explore neighborhoods first

10

PREPARE EMOTIONALLY

This is more than a move, it's a life shift.

Take time to:

- Say proper goodbyes
- Mentally prepare
- Set expectations

11

PACK SMART

Always assume your luggage could be delayed.

Carry-on essentials:

- Documents
- Medication
- Change of clothes
- Chargers

FAQ

Is Mexico still cheap?

It depends on where you live and your lifestyle.

- Mexico City & beach towns → more expensive
- Smaller cities → more affordable

Typical monthly range:

- \$800–\$1,200 → budget
- \$1,200–\$2,000 → comfortable
- \$2,500+ → higher-end

Do I need Spanish?

Even learning some basics will help you a lot.

Without it:

- Renting is harder
- Daily life is more limited
- You rely more on expat spaces

What's the biggest mistake?

Moving too fast.

- Renting without seeing a place
- Choosing a city without visiting
- Not giving yourself time to adjust

Is it safe?

Safety depends on the area.

Best practices:

- Stay in well-known neighborhoods
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Use common sense



SPANISH



CHEAT SHEET

Cuánto cuesta? → How much does it cost?

Dónde está...? → Where is...?

Cómo se dice...? → How do you say...?

Me puede ayudar? → Can you help me?

No entiendo → I don't understand

Puede repetir, por favor? → Can you repeat, please?

Dónde está el baño? → Where is the bathroom?
Dónde está el metro? → Where is the metro?
Cuánto cuesta el Uber? → How much is the Uber?

Tiene menú? → Do you have a menu?
Qué recomienda? → What do you recommend?
Sin picante, por favor → No spice, please
La cuenta, por favor → The bill, please

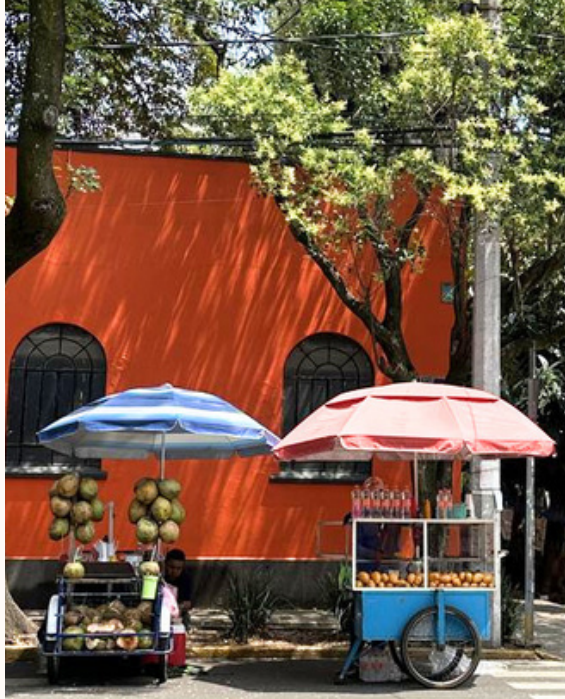
Perdón / Disculpe → Excuse me
Con permiso → Excuse me (passing through)
Muchas gracias → Thank you very much





Things no One tells you...

- Things take longer than expected.
- Systems can feel different (and that's okay).
- Flexibility will make your experience better.
- "Mexibelly" is real, ease into street food at first (your stomach will thank you).
- Keep an eye on your belongings in crowded places (metros, markets, busy streets).
- You can see a doctor at a pharmacy for \$2 for minor issues.
- Traffic is very real. The metro, bus, or biking is often faster than driving.
- Not everything runs on strict timing, things happen when they happen.



See you in Mexico

Moving to Mexico can genuinely change your life.
The best version of that life isn't rushed, it's
intentional.

Take your time. Explore your options. Then build
something that actually works for you.

Follow along for real, everyday life in Mexico (not
just the highlight reel).

