

Welcome to Mexico!

Mexico, officially known as the United Mexican States, is a country located in North America. Its name is derived from the term "Mexico-Tenochtitlan," the ancient Aztec (Mexica) capital. The official currency is the Mexican peso (MXN).

Mexico offers a great diversity of natural and touristic attractions to visitors. It has beautiful beaches along its Pacific, Atlantic, and Caribbean coasts, such as Los Cabos, Puerto Vallarta, Acapulco, Veracruz, and Cancun. Additionally, it has a rich history and culture, represented in some of its archaeological sites, such as Chichen Itza and Teotihuacan. It also boasts charming colonial cities like Guanajuato, Oaxaca, Queretaro, and San Miguel de Allende, which offer historical architecture and cultural festivals.

In terms of its territorial extension, Mexico covers approximately 1,964,375 square kilometers, making it one of the largest countries in the Americas. It shares borders with the United States to the north, Guatemala, and Belize to the south, and its coastlines are bathed by the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea. Mexico has diverse lakes, lagoons, waterfalls, rivers, deserts, jungles, and forests. An interesting fact is that until the mid-19th century, the U.S. states of Texas and New Mexico were part of Mexico's territory.

Mexico City is the capital city, and it is in the Valley of Mexico, in the country's center. It is a vibrant metropolis, surrounded by mountains and volcanoes, blending modernity with pre-Hispanic and colonial history.

Mexico has several sites declared World Heritage by UNESCO, such as the Historic Center of Mexico City and Xochimilco (1987), the archaeological sites of Teotihuacan (1987) and Chichen Itza (1988), the historic center of Oaxaca (1987), Chapultepec Castle and Hill (2001), as well as the University City of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (2007), to name just a few (To learn more: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/mx/>)

Mexican cuisine is recognized worldwide. Traditional dishes include tacos, enchiladas, mole, tamales, pozole, and guacamole, to name just a few. Mexican cuisine is known for its intense flavors, the use of various spices, and fresh ingredients such as chili peppers, corn, beans, and tomatoes, blending the mix of indigenous and Spanish influences. In Mexico City, you can find cuisine from countries like France, Italy, Peru, India, Argentina, Pakistan, Japan, and China, among others.

In the 16th century, Mexico underwent a process of evangelization by different religious orders. The Franciscans (1524), Dominicans (1526), Augustinians (1533), Carmelites

(1585), Jesuits (1572), and Mercedarians (1593) were some of the orders that actively participated in the evangelization and conversion of indigenous people to Christianity. These religious congregations built churches and convents throughout the country, leaving a religious, spiritual, educational, artistic, and architectural legacy as vast as it is significant.

A historically significant date for Mexico is December 12, 1531, when, according to Catholic tradition, the Holy Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to the indigenous Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac, where indigenous peoples from the Texcoco lake basin came to worship and pay tribute to Tonantzin, the female deity known as the mother of all gods. (San Juan Diego was canonized by Pope John Paul II at the Basilica of Guadalupe on July 31, 2002, at the foot of the hill of Tepeyac). This apparition is considered a fundamental event for the evangelization of Mexico, and the Virgin of Guadalupe became the patron saint of the country. She is also recognized with the title of Empress of America.

Mexico's independence was proclaimed on September 16, 1810, marking the beginning of a long struggle against Spanish rule. Finally, on September 27, 1821, Mexico's independence was consummated, leaving behind the era of New Spain.

The arrival of the Jesús-María Congregation to our country took place on December 24, 1902, with the arrival of the first religious sisters at the Port of Progreso near the city of Mérida in the present state of Yucatán. It is there that the educational work of the Congregation began, and two years later, on January 27, 1904, it extended to Mexico City to open a school in the capital city. It is worth noting that the events narrated below directly affected the apostolic mission of Jesús-María in Mexico, leading to their departure from the country at two different times, resulting in the foundation of Havana, Cuba (1914 and return in 1926), and El Paso, Texas, USA (1926), as well as their return to Mexican lands, later expanding the action of their apostolic work at different moments in the history of the Province of Mexico-Cuba in cities or small towns: Mérida (1902), Mexico City (1904), Havana (1914), El Paso (1926), Foundation of Colombia in the city of Medellín (1957), Estipac (1965), Guadalajara (1966), Guachochi (1968), San Carlos (1976), Balancán (1992), Sancti Spíritus, Mantua, Amacuzac, and Tuzantla. Some houses have already closed; however, the apostolic mission of Jesús-María in Mexico continues to make the legacy of Saint Claudine Thévenet present through its educational work in different ways and accompanying different realities wounded by violence (abducted people, migrants, women, children, the elderly, the poor, and the excluded).

The Mexican Revolution, one of the most important events of the 20th century, took place in Mexico between 1910 and 1920. It was a social and political movement of great magnitude that aimed to end the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz and establish a more just and equitable political system. During the revolution, different leaders and groups fought for social, economic, and political reforms, resulting in significant changes in the country's structure and laying the foundations of modern Mexico.

The Cristero War, also known as the Cristero Rebellion, took place between 1926 and 1929. It was an armed conflict that arose in response to the religious persecution and restrictions imposed by the Mexican government on the Catholic Church and its followers. The war was mainly fought in central and western Mexico and was marked by violent clashes between government forces and the Cristeros (citizens with a deep and strong Catholic faith) who defended their right to freely practice their religion.

In this context, the figure of Blessed Father Miguel Agustín Pro SJ stands out. He was a Mexican Catholic priest and martyr during the Cristero War. Pro stood out for his pastoral work and for providing spiritual support to the faithful amidst religious persecution. He was arrested and executed in 1927 by the government authorities due to his faith and pastoral work. His remains are located in the Church of the Holy Family under the care of the Society of Jesus in the Roma neighborhood, Mexico City. (For more information: <https://padrepro.com.mx/> only available in Spanish)

After these conflicts, Mexico has undergone a process of transformation toward modernity. Throughout the 20th century and up to the present day, the country has sought to consolidate its democracy, strengthen its institutions, and promote economic and social development. However, Mexico also faces persistent challenges such as violence related to organized crime, social inequality, and corruption.

Currently, Mexico is a secular state, a multicultural and diverse nation, with a growing economy and a strategic geographical position. The country strives to promote social inclusion, consolidate its democracy, address persistent challenges, promote economic and social development, protect human rights, preserve its cultural heritage, and promote environmental sustainability. Additionally, Mexico seeks to strengthen its cooperation and dialogue both regionally and internationally to face global challenges.

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