

**The Heart of Travel**  
**Authentic & Ethical Adventures in Latin America**



# **TRAVEL IN OAXACA**

Welcome Packet  
Oaxaca 2017

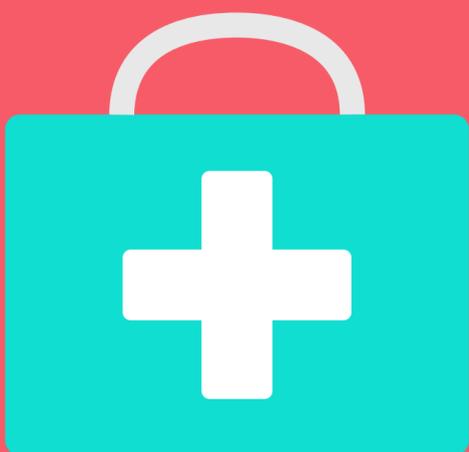
**CREATED BY THE HEART OF TRAVEL**

# FLIGHTS, IMMIGRATION, TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS



A variety of commercial airlines offer daily flights in and out of Oaxaca from major U.S. cities. We recommend searching for flight options on Google Flights and then booking directly with the airline or via a third party site, like Cheapoair. Online check-in will be available for most of these flights. Please arrive to the airport 2.5 - 3 hours early.

When you go through immigration you will have to fill out a tourist visa form. This will likely be given to you on the airplane, free of charge. While at immigration, the officer will tear off the bottom and give it back to you. This piece of paper is your tourist visa and you will need to show it at the airport when you exit México, otherwise you will be fined! It is very important you don't lose it, so affix it to your passport with a paper clip.



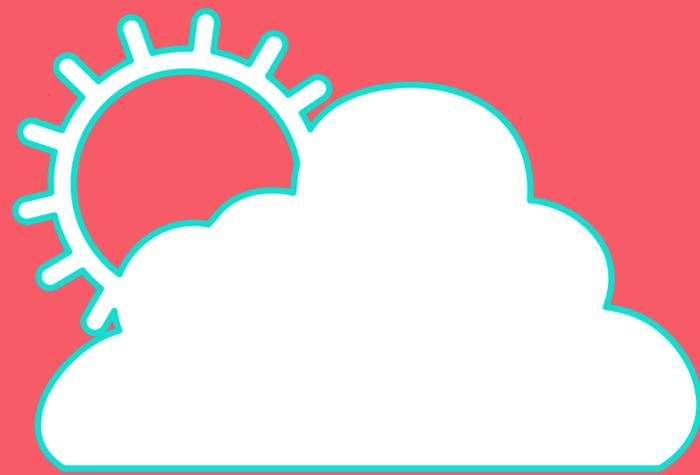
Mexico doesn't require any specific vaccines, such as yellow fever, in order to enter the country. However, we recommend being up to date on all of your shots and discussing any potential health concerns pertaining to travel in Mexico with your doctor.

# HOW TO PACK IN OAXACA



We recommend traveling with a large backpack or a light weight roller case, but keep in mind there may be times where you have to walk 5 - 10 minutes on cobblestone roads or dirt terrain with your baggage. Make sure you have a separate day pack to take on excursions!

The dry season runs from October to April and the wet season from May to September. During dry season days will be mild and can be as warm as the mid-80's fahrenheit. Nights, however, can be chilly and it can be breezy, even windy, throughout the day. You will need to bring clothing to transition from day to evening. Think layers.



## SUGGESTED PACKING CHECK LIST

- 1-2 pairs of shorts
- 4-5 cotton shirts/t-shirts
- 1 pair of long trousers/pants
- Comfortable hiking pants/shorts
- Lightweight jacket or fleece top
- Hat with a good brim
- Comfortable hiking/walking shoes
- Comfortable sundress/skirt
- Sandals/flats for walking in the city
- Swimwear + cover up
- Sunglasses
- Camera
- Spanish/English dictionary
- Daypack
- Sunscreen
- Chapstick/lipstick with sun protection
- Personal Medication + Toiletries
- Powerbank to charge devices
- Hand sanitizer
- Luggage lock
- Device with alarm clock
- Insect repellent
- Ear plugs
- Rain jacket (rainy season)

# TRAVEL TIPS



Schedule an appointment with your doctor or travel nurse to discuss the upcoming trip.



Credit cards are accepted at most restaurants, hotels, and indoor shops. However, there is still a fairly large cash economy so be prepared for that!



Mind your step while exploring the city as streets are notorious for having cracks or being uneven due to overgrown tree roots.



Contact your cellphone provider to discuss options for international plans for use in Mexico.



Oaxaca City has an elevation of 5,100 feet. Take it easy the first day to acclimatize!

## CURRENCY

The Mexican peso (\$) is the local currency. We recommend against exchanging money at the bank or airport as the exchange process can be timely. Instead, you can bring pesos from the US or pull out cash from an ATM, which will be faster and easier. Make sure you call your bank to let them know you will be in Mexico. If you would still like to exchange money at the bank once in Mexico, you will need your passport. Don't exchange money at the airport, as they usually offer an unfavorable exchange rate.

# HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS



Tap water is not safe for drinking. Use purified water only. We will provide water to refill your bottle on the van! The tap water is fine for showering and brushing your teeth.



All the places we eat at are clean and safe in terms of food handling. Still, you may experience mild traveler's diarrhea. If it persists please let your program director know.



Most of our lodging will have a safe to lock up valuable items. If your room doesn't, ask your program director to help you find an alternative to safely store any valuable items.



Dress modestly and don't display excessive jewelry or flashy items that call attention to you.



During the daytime it is safe to walk around Central Mexico City on your own. Nevertheless, we recommend walking in groups at night and taking a cab if you're far from the hotel.

## CULTURAL ETIQUETTE

As with travel to any foreign destination, it's important to remember that you are a guest in that country. You're likely to encounter social and cultural differences and we ask that you remain respectful, open minded and willing to learn about the country you are visiting. Travel is a great privilege and therefore it comes with responsibility. Mexicans are extremely friendly and welcoming to visitors and we hope you make new friends on this trip. Here are some things to keep in mind!

- Don't photograph people's faces without permission.
- Tipping, while not required, is greatly appreciated. 10% is standard.
- Cat calling on the street is more culturally accepted in Mexico. Unless you feel threatened of physical assault, it's best to ignore it, look ahead and continue walking.
- Tourism is a large part of the economy and we encourage you to buy from local vendors to support the local economy. However, you should never feel pressured to do so. A polite "no gracias" is fine!

# WANT TO LEARN MORE BEFORE YOUR TRIP?



**Zapotec Women: Gender, Class, and Ethnicity in Globalized Oaxaca by Lynn Stephen** - This book explores the intersection of gender, class, and indigenous ethnicity in southern Mexico.

**Oaxaca Journal by Oliver Sacks** - The eminent neurologist is also a fern lover, and this book is his record of a ten-day "fern foray" in southern Mexico.

**Moon Oaxaca by Bruce Whipperman** - Seasoned travel writer Bruce Whipperman covers the best of Oaxaca, from bargaining at the Mercado Juárez to exploring the Castillo de Moctezuma Aztec pyramid.

**Visions of the Emerald City by Mark Overmyer-Velázquez** - An absorbing historical analysis of how Mexicans living in Oaxaca City experienced "modernity" during the lengthy "Order and Progress" dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz.

**Dancing with the Tiger by Lili Wright** - When 30-year-old Anna Ramsey learns that a meth-addicted looter has dug up what might be the funerary mask of Montezuma, she books the next flight to Oaxaca.