



***Mexico from August until Dec. 2023***

***TEC DE MONTERREY CDMX***

***(Mexico City)***

**Mexico:**

**Capital:** Mexico City

**Population:** 130 million<sup>1</sup>

**Language:** Spanish<sup>2</sup>

**Currency:** Mexican Peso (MXN)

**Area:** 1,97 million km<sup>2</sup><sup>3</sup>

**Climate:** varies depending on the region, tropical in the south, desert climate in the north.<sup>4</sup>

**Religion:** Catholicism is the predominant religion, but there are also minorities of Protestants and other denominations.

**Economy:** Mexico is one of the largest economies in Latin America and a major producer of automobiles, electronics, oil and gas, and agricultural products.

**Culture:** Mexico has a rich and diverse culture, ranging from the pre-Columbian advanced civilizations of the Maya and Aztecs to Spanish colonization and modern pop culture. Music, dance, crafts, literature, and cuisine are important components of Mexican culture.<sup>5</sup>

**Mexico City:**

Mexico City is the capital and largest city of Mexico. It is a vibrant metropolis with a rich history, culture, and architecture. The city offers a wealth of opportunities to learn and experience a new language and culture.

**Tec de Monterrey:**

The Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, also known as Tec de Monterrey or ITESM, is a private university located in Monterrey,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/country/mexico>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/MX/languages>

<sup>3</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/country/mexico>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/maps/mexico-climate-regions/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.visitmexico.com/de/>

*Mexico. The university was founded in 1943 and has since become one of the most prestigious universities in Latin America. The Tec de Monterrey also emphasizes the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship and promotes the development of leadership skills among its students.*

***Mexican Slang:***

*Chido → cool, nice*

*Chamba → work*

*Guey (sounds like wey) → friend*

*No manches → oh man!*

***What did you have to consider in advance during the organization? As an expert, what advice would you give to subsequent students?***

In the run-up to my semester abroad, there was a relatively large amount to plan and organize. For example, I had to book health insurance with my university (SURA), which was mandatory. Apart from that, everything was the normal application process.

***Funding for the exchange:***

Regarding funding, I would recommend everyone to apply for all possible scholarships and also Auslandsbafög and definitely in time, because this supports someone extremely if you get it.

Otherwise, I would of course recommend everyone to save in time and have as much as possible in the budget for their stay abroad, because you can simply do more and also countries like Mexico appear at first sight much cheaper than Germany, but in reality it is only relative. I spent a total of about 10000€ for my semester abroad. And I also did quite a lot of activities and traveled a lot in the country, which has a corresponding

effect on the costs. It can be made cheaper in any case. I would find a budget of 1500€ on site as good depending on what you are doing.

### **Aommodation and Transportation:**

The university is in the Talpan/ Coapa district which is in the south of the city and about 60/70 minutes away by metro. The area around the university is not nice in my opinion and is not considered very safe (I never felt unsafe at any time). I lived in different parts of the city during my time, including Centro Coyocan, Roma Sur and Roma Norte/Condesa. All places were relatively far away from 60 minutes to 90 minutes by public transport. It is very cheap to get around by public transportation, a one-way ticket costs about 75 cents to the university from Roma Norte (as of December 2022; exchange rate 1 euro = 20 pesos).

I decided after a month to buy a scooter and ride it to the university every day. I bought the scooter used for 700 euros and sold it at the end of my semester abroad for 300 euros. With the scooter I needed 25 minutes to get to the university.

IMPORTANT I would generally not recommend driving a scooter, because the Mexican traffic is not comparable with the German and the roads sometimes have very deep potholes and it can also be very dangerous.

Apart from that, I recommend using Uber and Didi instead of Pink Taxis, because in Uber and Didi you have ratings and know who is driving and how much the ride costs.

I have also taken pink taxi and had no problems with it would still go back to uber and didi for the latter reasons.

My different accommodations have cost from 280 to 320 € per month. I have spent most of my time in Roma Norte and condesa and would recommend it to anyone because in these neighborhoods is everything from good restaurants, bars, clubs, theaters and much more.



*Figure 1 My apartment frontview (Roma Norte)*

## What did I like? What not?

I have been very satisfied with everything. Most of all I will remember the people in Mexico, who are very warm and friendly. I have rarely met such helpful people in my life. When you have a problem and ask for help, you have the feeling that the person you are asking is making it their business to solve the problem.

### **Food:**

Mexico is very well known for its rich variety of food. There is street food in almost every place in Mexico City. The most popular food is tacos. You can't imagine Mexico without tacos. Besides tacos, there are also "tortas" which is like a sandwich. There is a lot of different food, most Mexican food is not vegetarian or vegan. There are also restaurants that offer Mexican food in vegan or vegetarian. For eating, I would recommend the street food. I never had any problems with it. The street food is very cheap can easily get full for 3 to 5 euros very tasty and cheap.

**Which courses did I take? What differences were there from the lectures at FRA-UAS? How were the exams at the host university?**

I really liked the university in Mexico. The campus is up to date and very modern. On the campus there is really everything from a gym to a very modern library with Vr glasses and the latest meeting rooms. I have taken mostly business courses and It courses because I study business informatics. The courses and the level of courses is like Germany. My courses were in Spanish and English, so I was able to improve my English and Spanish. The university system is more like a school system because you get homework and do a lot during the semester. Also, in some cases you don't have final exams.

There is compulsory attendance (you must be there 75% of the time). But you can also ask the professors if it is okay not to be there, they usually don't mind.

**How well were you prepared for your stay abroad in terms of language?**

**Were you able to follow the lectures well?**

I recommend anyone going to Mexico to learn Spanish beforehand, at least B1 or B2 level, because it simply makes communication very pleasant in the country, since not everyone speaks English. I had a spanish-language level of B2 before my trip and was able to at least consolidate or improve it. My English was already good before and it is also sufficient from the level.

If you only speak English, this is not a problem, many Mexican students at the university can speak English and many lectures are offered in English.

**What were your expectations and have they been met?**

I had no expectations of Mexico and was rather open to get to know everything in Mexico. If I had had high expectations, Mexico would have definitely met them.

### **My recommendation are for a semester abroad:**

- **Apply early for all scholarships**
- **save early**
- **look for an apartment on arrival, because it is quite easy to find an apartment on arrival.**
- **otherwise just enjoy**
- **take Uber and Didi late at night**
- **do everything early for the university**

### **What did the semester abroad bring for you personally, professionally and for your later professional life?**

I made many friends during my semester abroad, with whom I still have contact today. Personally, I have learned a lot. What I took away from the Mexicans, that it is sometimes very pleasant to live a little in the day and not to worry about everything. Therefore, I also learned to appreciate that in Germany the education system in relation to Mexico is really as good as free and access to education here is possible for everyone.