



Travel Newsletter

Institute
for Study
Abroad
BUTLER UNIVERSITY

MEXICO

Spring 2012

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Important Reminders

Documents

Before you get on a plane, make sure you have:

- Your **passport**

Remember, you will not be allowed to board your flight and/or clear immigration in Mexico without your passport.

Payments

Make sure you have paid your **program fee** and/or taken care of your financial aid. We can't place you in housing if your program fee isn't paid.

Travel notification form

Send us your **travel notification form** if you haven't already done so. We need to know when to expect you in case you don't arrive on time.

Check In and Boarding Passes

Allow plenty of time

You should plan to arrive at the airport three hours before your international flight. This will allow you enough time to check in, get a boarding pass, clear security and make it to your gate.

Check in!

You must check in for your flight. Otherwise, the airline can assign your seat to someone else.

Checking your baggage

At your domestic airport, find out if your domestic airline has an agreement with your international carrier to check baggage. If so, your domestic airline may be able to check your bags all the way through to London, and you will also receive your international flight boarding pass at your domestic airport.

If your bags can't be checked through to your final destination, you'll have to do the following once you arrive at your international departure airport: Claim your luggage, check in and re-check your luggage with your international airline and go through security again to re-enter the gate area.

Get to the gate in plenty of time so you don't miss your flight!



Travel Problems?

If you are delayed and might miss a flight, you'll need to make arrangements to get on the next available flight. Contact your airline (not travel agent!) to make alternate flight plans.

Any student with a change in travel plans must call IFSA-Butler at 800-858-0229 to let us know about the change in plans. We will then inform our Mexico office of any delays on your behalf. We monitor messages on flight days, so please leave a detailed message if you do not speak with someone directly.

Be sure to include your name, location, airline, new flight number(s), departure and arrival times, and the name, telephone number and room number of your hotel (if necessary).

Call IFSA-Butler on our general line at 800-858-0229 to ensure that the correct person gets the message. Please do not leave a message about travel problems on your program advisor's voicemail.

Baggage Allowances

Check with your domestic and international airlines for baggage allowances. If you try to check luggage that exceeds their limits, you may have to repack or pay an excess baggage fee. Do not overpack!

We do not recommend bringing items such as bikes. If you feel you must bring your own, call both your international and domestic carrier for information about packing and excess baggage fees.

Do not lock your luggage. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has asked travelers to keep suitcases unlocked so they can be easily searched. Putting locks on your luggage can result in damaged, lost or delayed bags.

Security Check

You will have to undergo numerous security checks. Do not joke about having weapons or explosives. Be patient and cooperative with all airport personnel.

You may be required to turn on electronic equipment or remove batteries from electronics. Be sure your electronics are fully charged, and include the power cord or battery in your carry-on.

Your Carry-On Bag

Be sure to pack:

- Passport*
- Plane tickets or e-ticket confirmations*
- Cash, ATM card, credit cards*
- This newsletter
- Insurance coverage details*
- List of contact names, phone and fax numbers, and email for:
 - Parents and relatives
 - Study abroad advisor at your home college
- Camera
- Medications and prescriptions*
- Spare glasses/contacts
- Academic documents
 - Updated transcript
 - Course descriptions from home college
 - Rules of transfer credit from home college
- Toiletries (liquids, gels and/or aerosols must be 3.3 ounces or less and fit comfortably in one clear, re-sealable quart-sized plastic bag)
- Something to read/listen to
- Water (purchased after clearing security)
- Change of clothes in case your luggage is lost

** Keep these items and other valuables secure and with you at all times.*

Host Family Packing

You should pack a small gift for your host family. Past students have found that something from their home state—chocolates, professional sports paraphernalia or scenic calendars—make good gifts. Many host families also enjoy products printed in English, such as t-shirts.

Travel Tips

Below are some tips for staying comfortable during your long flight and once you land:

- Wear loose, layered, comfortable clothes.
- Try to sleep as much as possible on the plane.
- Drink as much water as possible on the plane.
- Avoid drinking alcohol, which will dehydrate you.



Customs Forms

As your plane descends into Mexico, your flight attendants will hand out a tourist card and agricultural declarations (*declaración de aduanas*). They limit the amount of alcohol and cigarettes that you can bring into the country. Do not take any fruits or vegetables with you on the plane. Remove the price tags and wrappings from any purchases; you don't want to pay customs charges on new items.

Remember, it's not a problem to declare something you don't have to. However, if customs officers discover that you neglected to declare something required, they can fine, deport or imprison you..

Clearing Immigration

When you go through customs, an official will ask for the purpose of your visit. Explain that you are a student and present your **passport, tourist card and *declaración de aduanas*** (customs declaration form) from the plane. The immigration form is called the *forma migratoria (FMM)* and it allows you to legally stay in the country. It is an important document, so please keep it in your passport and **do not throw it away**.

An officer will stamp this card with a number of days you are legally allowed to stay in Mexico. Ask very politely if the immigration officer will give you a 180-day entry permission. If he or she doesn't, don't worry; the IFSA-Butler Mexico office can help you extend your 30-, 60- or 90-day entry permit later.

If an official asks for your address, say that you are a study abroad student with UADY and give the address of our Mexico office:

Student name
IFSA-Butler Mexico Office
c/o Diana Arízaga
Calle 25 No. 560 x 66
Colonia Jardines de Mérida
Mérida, YUC 97134
México
Telephone: (999) 196-2246

If you are bringing any prescription medicines with you to Mexico, pack your doctor's prescription, as well

as a letter from your doctor explaining your need for the medication. This letter must be accompanied by a translation. Have both ready to show to the customs officers. They usually don't ask about medicines, but have your prescription ready just in case.

Customs is generally a quick procedure. We recommend you dress casually but conservatively, and be respectful and as cooperative as possible at all times.

Lost Luggage

If your luggage is missing, don't panic. As you come out of immigration and customs, go to the airline counter to file a lost luggage claim form. Give your host family's address; your luggage will be delivered to that address when it shows up.

Arrival Information

The IFSA-Butler orientation will take place in Cancun and begin on January 2, so students must either travel directly to Cancun or, for those arriving in Mérida before the program starts, ride to the orientation site with our resident director, Diana Arízaga. See the following page for more details.

If you are arriving on January 2 at the Cancun International Airport, Diana will pick you up at the airport and transport you to the orientation site in Cancun.

You can reach Diana at + 52 1 999 970 0958 if you have problems, questions or concerns after your arrival in Cancun.

Orientation hotel:

Hotel Faro Viejo
Av. Juárez y Playa S/N
Isla Holbox
(52) (984) 875 2217
www.faroviejoholbox.com.mx



If You Arrive Early

If you arrive in Mexico before January 2, you will need to make arrangements for hotel accommodations and luggage storage for all nights prior to the program start date. If you are staying in Cancun prior to orientation, Diana Arízaga will pick you up from your hotel on January 2 on the way to meet the rest of the group at the airport.

If you plan to arrive in Mérida (rather than Cancun) before January 2, contact Emily Beck prior to December 21 to make arrangements to ride to Cancun with Diana.

After you make hotel reservations, please provide Emily Beck with details. Diana recommends the following hotels in Cancun and Mérida:

Cancun

Comfort Inn Cancun Aeropuerto

Carretera Cancún-Aeropuerto SM 301 M 4 L 5
52-998-272-5200

Courtyard Cancun

Blvd. Luis Donaldo Colosio, Km. 12.5, Lot 1, SMZA. 301
52-998-287 2200

Ramada Cancun City

Av. Yaxchilan 41 SM 22
52-998-881-7870

Hotel Barceló Costa Cancún

Boulevard Kukulcan KM 4.5
52-998-849-7100

Mérida

Hotel Medio Mundo

Calle 55 #534 por 64 y 66 Centro
Tel. 999-924-5472

Hotel Maison Lafitte

Calle 60 #472 por 53
Tel: 999-928-1243

Hotel Santa Ana

Calle 45 #503 entre 60 y 62
Tel: 999-923-3331

Currency

Do not change money until you have cleared customs and have met with our Mexico staff, unless you arrive before the program start date (January 2).

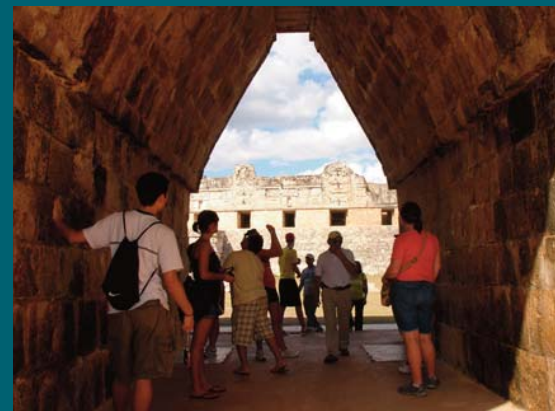
If you arrive before the program start date, exchange your currency at the airport. Banks give a better rate of exchange, but they are not open on weekends or holidays. *Casas de cambio* (official money exchange offices) are open on the weekends, but their exchange rate is usually lower than that available through banks. See *Preparing to Study Abroad Mexico* for more information about exchanging money.

Updated Calendar

We've included an updated Mexico program calendar in this mailing. Please check to see if any dates have changed. Remember all exam dates are provisional; you should verify exam dates after arriving at your host university before confirming your plane ticket home.



Questions? Call us at 800-858-0229 or visit us online at www.ifsa-butler.org.



Program Calendar

Mexico Spring 2012



Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán

Arrive in Cancun	January 2
Program Starts	January 2
IFSA-Butler Orientation	January 3-14
Classes Begin	January 9
Classes End	May 4
Exam Period	May 7-11
Program Ends	May 12
Departure Date	May 12

These dates are correct as of October 12, 2011, but must be regarded as provisional, given the mutability of Mexican university calendars.

Upon arrival at your host institution, check the end dates for changes before confirming return travel plans. Ending dates vary from department to department, and you must complete all course obligations prior to departure. In addition, you should not make plans to travel on the final day of exams since there may be exams on that day.

Program housing is available only until the date listed as "Program Ends" on the calendar.

Exams must be taken where and when scheduled. Under no circumstances may students request that an exam time be changed. In Mexico exams are taken under formal examination conditions, and changes cannot be made for individuals.