

INFOSHEET

NAT/LTV11

TZAJALA

2010

NATATÉ



Practical information

México: officially the Mexican United States. It has 32 federal states and has a surface near the 2 million km², being placed in the fourteenth position at world-wide level, ordered by surface; it counts with 107.1 million inhabitants, which makes it the largest Spanish-speaking nation.

It is a country with a great climatic diversity, is also one of the 18 megadiverse countries of the world.

Due to its geography, history, gastronomy and climate; Mexico is one of the world-wide powers in the tourist branch, is located in the eighth position of the countries with more tourism in the world. Besides being a country with the great range of ethnic groups in all the territory, in contrast to other countries of Latin America, where the indigenous towns correspond in their majority to a single linguistic group; in Mexico there exist around 62 indigenous groups that speak approximately 72 different languages.

More information on Mexico in <http://www.sectur.gob.mx/index.jsp>

Chiapas: It is located in the south-east of Mexico; it limits to the east with Guatemala, is divided in 118 municipalities. The State is known by its tourist zones that include attractive natural places, like Agua Azul cascades, archaeological zones like Palenque, colonial cities where direct contact with the human warmth of its inhabitants certainly enrich your experience in this state.

You'll be surprised no doubt, of the cultural wealth available to the state to have more than a ten indigenous languages: Chol, Tojolabal, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Mam, Lacandon and Zoque, most of these coming from the trunk Mayan, you will also discover a impressive array of costumes full of tradition and history.

Within local economic activities are the production of coffee, honey and sugar cane; development of unique pieces of amber, clay, wood, cotton and most of these activities are still carried out using traditional methods.

The city's major tourist attraction in the state is without doubt San Cristobal de Las Casas, multicultural city where social groups converge from different indigenous communities.

Today the city of San Cristobal de las Casas is one of the most beautiful and original in the region, something to which we must add the evocative colonial image that has kept the passage of centuries. This also has a traditional daily life, with its market and its people.

CURRENT CONTEXT.

One of the most spoken issues is about swine flu A H1N1, however, although in previous months this was a barrier to travel to Mexico, today, this disease is controlled through preventive measure taken by both the government federal and state levels, coupled with this, the distribution of vaccines for treatment of influenza, so that traveling to Mexico is much safer now.

In regard to the southeast of the country (Chiapas, specifically), we can say that is one of the safest states in comparison with other states. In particular, San Cristobal, a distinction is part of being a colonial city to be a fairly safe place to walk both day and night, except for those areas far from downtown.

Lodging in Mexico: several hostels are located in different zones of the city, the prices oscillate between the 5 € and 11 € by person/per night.

Lodging in Tuxtla Gutierrez: the state capital offers endless hotels, prices vary depending on your location and services at their disposal.

National Transport: To go to the San Cristobal de las Casas is possible to do it by :

Airplane: the “Ángel Albino Corzo” International Airport is about 1 and a half hours flight from Mexico City. From the airport it's possible to catch a collective taxi or a bus to San Cristobal de las Casas.

By land, San Cristobal de las Casas, It is a long trip of around 14 hours. In Mexico, the buses leave from the Autobuses Poniente Oriente Terminal (TAPO), located in Ignacio Zaragoza Road 200, Colony 10 of May, telephone (52) 5762-5983. Most of the buses are equipped with air conditioning, toilet services, television and services.

Tzajalá

Tzajalá is located in the municipality of Ocosingo, at 51 km from San Cristóbal de las Casas. It is at the border of the Central High Plateau and the Northern Mountains. There are only 184 inhabitants, the language spoken is tseltal and it is situated at 1300 m high.

THE PROJECT

The cooperative COTZASELCH has already organized several workcamps this year with very enriching experiences. This is a sustainable project and with its traditional jewelry workshops, its agro-experimental farm (horticulture, seeding, coffee and medicinal plants, etc) the cooperative develops projects in total equilibrium with the nature.



The volunteers will do some agricultural work -preparing the land- as well as construction and renovation work of the cabins of the Ha O Mek Ka center. They will also have the opportunity to do some manual work in horticulture, compost, lombriculture and will learn the ancestral Bajereque construction technique. Walls will be done using this technique.

The volunteers work on the setting of a farmyard for the goats and in support of the members of the community they will be working on the improvement of an area and will dig a ditch. They will also help in the construction of a floor to the apiary and signage will be developed for medicinal plants.



Accommodation: Volunteers will be staying in the Ha O Mek Ka center which is located also in the Tzajalá community in wooden cabins with all services at disposal. Toilettes are latrines and there will be the possibility to experience the traditional temazcal.

Places of interest: If you go to Ocosingo you have the possibility of visit several natural reserves that are part of the Lacandon Forest such as Nahá, Metzabok or Chan-kin; you can also visit the archaeological areas of Toniná o Bonampak. At 10 minutes there are the waterfalls of El Corralito. The village of

Oxchuc is at 20 minutes, with its main plaza and its traditional market, it is a good occasion to get to know the Tzeltal culture.

Meeting place: You have to arrive to San Cristobal in the office of Nataté in San Cristóbal de las Casas: Real de Mexicanos street Number 10, Barrio de Mexicanos. Please inform us about of the details of your arribal (time, dates).



Participation fee: The fee is \$2500 pesos (monthly) which cover accommodation, food, some material, administration costs, solidarity fund, etc.

Insurance: Volunteers are responsible for their own insurance.

Age: 18 and over

Language : there is no language skills required but it is expected volunteers get interested and practice the Spanish language.

DRUG USE Drug use is strictly prohibited in the house where volunteers NATATE hosts or any of its projects. NATATE anyone not tolerate drug use. Disregard of this rule will be reason enough to be asked on a voluntary or withdraw their participation in the project.



Tzajalá

Camp leaders :

Sylvianne Bernand

Note : *In Tzajalá there is no Internet access and there is no telephone signal.
The nearest place to have these services is Oxchuc.*

Emergency numbers:

Nataté Office : 01 967 631 69 18

Nicolas Aguilar: 044 967 1025947