

INFOSHEET

**NAT/LTV 05 CENTRO
PEQUEÑO SOL**



NATATÉ



San Cristobal de las Casas; Chiapas, Mexico.



Practical Information

Mexico: Officially, United Mexican States, has its limits at North, with the United States of America; at East, with the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea; at the Southeast, with Belize and Guatemala; and at West with the Pacific Ocean. It is composed by 32 federative entities and has an area near 2 million km², placing itself in the 14th position worldwide, ordered by area, has 107.1 million residents, so it is the Spanish speaker nation with more population.

It is distinguished since it is a country with great diversity of weather; it is also one of the 18 countries in the world with great diversity. With about 200,000 different species, Mexico is the home of the 10-12% of the world biodiversity. It has the first place in biodiversity in reptiles with 707 known species; second place in mammals with 438 species; fourth place in amphibious with 290 species, and in flora with 26,000 different species; it is also considered the second country in the world in ecosystems and the fourth country in total of species. 170,000 square kilometers of the total of the territory are considered "Protected Natural Areas", including 34 reserves biospheres (not altered ecosystems), 64 national parks, 4 natural monuments, 26 areas to protect flora and fauna, 4 areas for natural protection and 17 sanctuaries (zones with great diversity of species).

Due to its geography, history, gastronomy and weather, Mexico is one of the world powers in the touristic aspect; it is located in the eighth position of the countries with most tourism worldwide. Besides, it is a country with a great range of ethnic groups in the entire territory, in contrast with other countries of Latin America, where the native towns correspond, in its majority, to just one linguistic group; in Mexico, there are around 62 native towns speaking approximately 72 different languages.

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

Chiapas: It is located at the southeast of Mexico, borders Guatemala to the East, Oaxaca to the West; Tabasco to the North, Pacific Ocean to the South and Veracruz to the Northeast. It is divided in 118 municipalities. The state is known for its touristic zones which include natural attractions, like the Agua Azul Waterfalls, archeological zones like Palenque, colonial cities and the direct contact with different cultural groups who cohabit in this state.

The state of Chiapas is one of the most biodiverse of the country, it hosts the Lacandona Jungle which covers almost 1'000,000 hectares, adjoining to the border with Guatemala; it has the 20% of the Mexican species and hosts almost 3,000 species of plants.

The official language is Spanish and dialects coming from the Mayan trunk like chol, tojolabal, tzeltal, tzotzil, mam and lacandon are spoken, and are related with dialects of the Yucatan Peninsula and Central America, and also the dialect zoque.

The most prominent economical activities are the national and international tourism, the production of coffee, honey and sugar cane; the handcrafts production like the production of jewelry made of ambar, the handling of wood, mud, lacquer and the traditional leather work.

Touristic and culturally, the most important city in the state is San Cristobal de las Casas, multicultural city where a lot of ethnics, races and cultures are combined. Located in a beautiful zone of the plateau, which is part of the mountains of the North of Chiapas.

Today,, San Cristobal de las Casas is one of the most beautiful and authentic of the region called Altos de Chiapas (and America), and it is worth to add the colonial image that has been kept through the centuries. It also has a traditional everyday life, with its market and its people and a lot of native people with their colorful clothing, coming from different communities nearby the city and they arrive to the place to sell their products.

Transportation: To travel to Mexico, it is advisable to verify the prices of the flights, since they may be very expensive. Several airlines fly to Mexico, such as:

- Mexicana: www.mexicana.com
- Aeromexico: www.aeromexico.com
- Lufthansa: www.lufthansa.com
- Air France: www.airfrance.com.mx
- Japan Air: www.jal.com
- United: www.united.com
- KLM: www.klm.com
- Alitalia: www.alitalia.com

If you have to make an scale in the United States you shall process your VISA, besides, there are flights Paris-Cancun, which may be cheaper.

Accommodation in Mexico City: there are several hostals located in different zones of the city, the prices swing between 100 and 200 pesos (5 € and 11 €) each/per night, such as:

- **Coyote Flaco Backpackers:** located a few blocks from the Historical Downtown in Coyoacan, near the subway station and the international airport.
- **Hostal amigo:** located in the heart of the historical downtown, less than 5 minutes of the main interest points and the subway station.

- **YWCA Centro Historico:** located near downtown and the principal avenues, museums.
- **Hostal Catedral:** located a few steps of downtown, a few minutes of the subway station.
- **Hostal Moneda:** located half block from the Main Square of the city.

For more information about hostals, visit: www.travellerspoint.com

National transportation: To move to Chiapas capital (Tuxtla Gutierrez), you could go by:

- **Plane:** The International Airport "Angel Albino Corzo", has flights coming from Mexico City. The travel lasts around 1 hour and 20 minutes. Between the mentioned airlines there are:

Click Mexicana: www.clickmx.com

Interjet: www.interjet.com.mx

- **Bus:** Tuxtla Gutierrez, it is located approximately 1,080 kilometers from Mexico City. The travel lasts around 14 hours. In Mexico, the buses leave from the "Terminal de Autobuses Poniente Oriente" (TAPO), located on Avenue Ignacio Zaragoza 200, Colonia 10 de mayo, telephone number (52) 5762-5983. The units, in its majority, are equipped with air conditioned, TV and hygienic services. The buses arrive to Tuxtla, Chiapas' capital, the prices can vary depending on the season, to have more information about prices, visit: www.occbus.com.mx.

If you travel by air, you could take a bus which may move you from the airport to Tuxtla's downtown and after going to the bus station located on the 9th South (behind

the Mercado de los Ancianos' parking lot) to take a bus which will drive you to San Cristobal de las Casas.

Accommodations in San Cristobal de las Casas: there are several hostals in the city, the prices vary depending on the services they offer, and some of them are:

- **La Casa Di Corto Maltese:** located on Ejercito Nacional N° 12 telephone number: 9676740848, it offers accommodations from \$70.00 pesos each, it includes thé, coffee, purified water and an available kitchen.
- **Qhia Hostel:** located on Calle Tonalá N° 5 a few minutes from the main square of the city, it gives accommodation from \$60 Mexican pesos each (including breakfast): www.qhiancristobal.blogspot.com
- **Hotel Posada 5:** located on Calle Comitán N° 13 Barrio del Cerrillo (one of the oldest neighborhoods of the city), it offers comfortable rooms from \$100 Mexican pesos each, also a camping area (\$ 60 pesos), to have more information, please visit the website: www.posada5.com
- **Rosco Backpackers Hostel:** located on Real de Mexicanos street n° 16, the price varies between 6 € and 8 € each/per night.

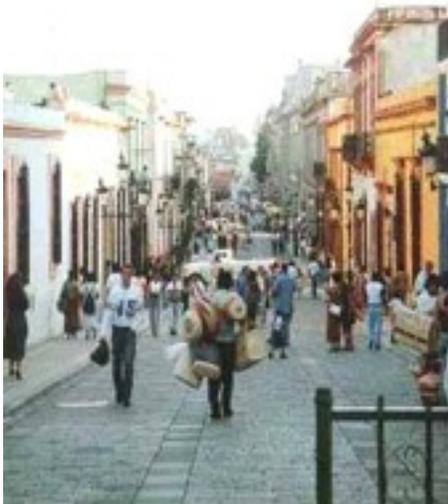
For more information about hostals and inns, please visit: www.travellerspoint.com

San Cristobal de las Casas:

The municipality of San Cristobal de las Casas is located in Los Altos in Chiapas, a mountainous region in the Sierra Madre of Chiapas. San Cristobal de las Casas is located in the center of Chiapas State, 85 km at east of Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of the State, in a zone of warm and humid weather with rain in summer providing it of an annual medium temperature of 15°C.

It limits at North with Chamula and Huixtan; at East with Teopisca; at south with Totolapa and San Lucas; and at West with Zinacantan. The registered population, until 2005 was of 186.416 residents, of which the 38.89% in native population from which the 19.24% is monolingual.

San Cristobal de las Casas is the main touristic locality of Chiapas and has all the services, it is considered "**The cultural capital of Chiapas**". The vegetation that prevails in the municipality is pine and oak tree woods. Part of the municipal territory covers the Private Reserve: Cerro Huitepec and the Zone Subject to Ecological Conservation: Rancho Nuevo.



Since 2001, San Cristobal de Las Casas City is another venue of the Festival Cervantino-Barroco, which is annually celebrated at the last week of October, and in some years, that week may cover until the first days of November.

The city has the Cultural Center "El Carmen", a small Palacio de Bellas Artes (Beaux Arts Palace), with workshops and expositions rooms, the Theater "Daniel Zebadua" and



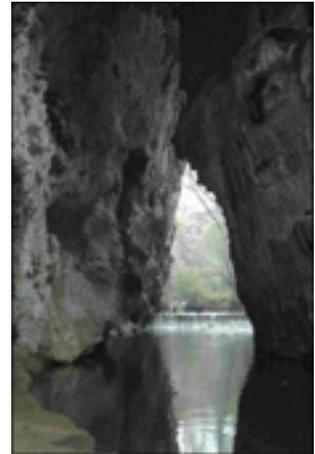
the City Theater "Hermanos Dominguez", besides independent forums as "Casa Blues", "Kinoki", "Casa Teatro".

Places of Interest:

San Cristobal, offers a no end of touristic places

as "**The Arcotete**" a touristic park located 3 km from the city, it is an

impressive arch of natural stone that the river cut during hundreds of years, in its formation there was also influence of the antique caves that were exposed because of the erosion effects and the collapses, in this park you can practice the adventure and hiking tourism.



Besides, you can have the opportunity of knowing native communities where you can

meet the lifestyle, handcrafts and traditions, between the nearest and most

interesting are: **San Juan Chamula** located

6 Km. from San Cristobal de las Casas, it is a

small town which stands out for its unique

festivities, it is a town that still has its

native traditions, besides the textiles they

make.





Another nearby municipality is **Zinacantan** 10 Km. away from San Cristobal the same way to San Juan Chamula, it is another town which keeps indeed its native traditions. In these two towns you can watch a lot of textiles, since it is one of the main activities.

Another of the closest places are the **Grutas de Rancho Nuevo** 10 km away from the city, these grouts are in a great park rounded by mountains with pines and it is the ideal place for a picnic.

152 km away from San Cristobal de las Casas and parallel to the dividing line with Guatemala, there are the **Lagunas de Montebello**, a national park since 1959, also known as the lagoons of Colors, they constitute a lake zone, of great beauty, not only in the Mexican Republic, but also in the entire world. They are rounded of pine, oak and



jungle wooded mountains, and also orchid and bracken. The fauna includes species like deer, rabbits, reptiles and a wide variety of birds and insects. This splendid landscape serves to admire the pale blue color of the **Laguna Bosque Azul**, the intense violet color of the **Laguna Aguatina**, the emerald color of this

lagoon and the crystalline water of the major lagoon called **Tzicao**. Five of the lagoons are next to the asphalted road and the others, are communicated by rough dirt tracks, which do not represent any problem for any type of vehicle.

Before arriving to the lagoons, around 2 km of rough dirt track, there is an interesting archeological zone, **Chinkultic**, a semi-explored beautiful zone worth to be visited. All

the services are found in Comitán. Besides, since San Cristóbal you can move to different places in the state, visit the **Palenque** archeological zone, the **Agua Azul** waterfalls or, if you like adventure, climb to the top of "**Las Cotorras**".

Project

The "**Pequeño Sol**" School was created in 1984 by mothers who wanted to create a new educative alternative where all the boys and girls, no matter their culture, social level, coexist and their identity is respected, a community service school and for the community itself.

Since then, a non-profit organization was constituted, who directed all its efforts to the building of a school which offers an education balanced between the academic performance and the integral human education for Day Care Center, Preschool, Elementary and Middle School. Se are incorporated to the Public Education Bureau and we have 23 years of service.

Mission: To educate autonomous and self responsible individuals, with others and with their environment.

Since 1994 the Pequeño Sol School belongs to **PEA, Plan de Escuelas Asociadas (Associated Schools Plan)** to the **UNESCO**, so in the activities and development of the academic program themes, we include themes related with:

- ❖ Worldwide problems and solution search
- ❖ Comprehension and appreciation of other cultures.
- ❖ Human rights and democracy (Education for peace)
- ❖ Environment education

Nowadays we are **54 contributors** between teachers, administrative and maintenance personnel who assist **334 girls and boys between 2 and 15 years old.**



Our school has a compromise with environment education and the actions that help to a minor ecologic impact in our planet. Besides, 5 years ago, we have a space to collect reuse material, "**Casita de Reciclado**"

The volunteers will participate in the implementation and follow-up of the environmental programs with the school's educative community.

ACTIVITIES.

Activities planning, schedule and responsible of each activity.

Establishment of the team work.

Follow-up meetings.

To keep clean the collection reuse and recycling material center of our school.



To support in the awareness and information of parents of our school about the operation and importance of separate the garbage and that way to help to an environmental care culture.

To participate in school activities which help the environmental care, with students and also with parents, reforestation actions, river cleaning, extracurricular campaigns in this issue.



To participate in the maintenance of a school plant nursery.

To participate in the maintenance of the organic compost.

To follow-up garden, plant nurseries and ecological track constructions, inside the school helping teachers and students.

To sow trees and plants.

Accommodations: In a house in San Cristobal de las Casas.

| The accommodation place has: | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| | YES | NO |
| Water | x | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Water heater | x | |
| Electricity | x | |
| Restrooms | x | |
| Showers | x | |
| Place for laundry | x | |
| Place to hang laundry | x | |
| Place to cook | x | |
| Cook utensils | x | |
| Place to storage food | x | |
| Refrigerator | x | |
| Beds | x | |
| A safe room where valuable things can be kept. (Passports, plane tickets, etc.) | x | |

| Clothes | Work accessories |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Light clothes and for cold weather | Tennis shoes (thick sole) or work shoes or plastic boots |
| Jacket | Cap, hat |
| Raincoat | Job gloves |
| Special Products | Other items |
| Mosquito Repellent | Games or any other recreational material |
| Sunscreen | Sleeping bag |

Useful accessories to bring:

Language: it is not required a complete ability of Spanish language, but it is expected the interest of volunteers to learn it.

Age: Being over 18 years old.

Participation rate: the participation quote is **\$1200.00 Mexican pesos**, which will be distributed in accommodation fees, administrative fees, and solidarity funds, among others. The food is the volunteer's responsibility.

Insurance: The volunteers will have to deal their medical insurance.

Meeting point: in Natate's office: Calle Real de Mexicanos No 10, Barrio de Mexicanos, San Cristobal de las Casas

By plane: Arrival airport - Tuxtla Gutierrez. From the airport you can take a collective taxi or a bus until San Cristobal de las Casas.

By bus: Arrival to San Cristobal de las Casas, OCC bus station and from there to walk until the office or take a taxi (see map)

Contact in Pequeño Sol:

Adelina Gonzalez: 967 678 49 79

Emergency telephone numbers:

Natate's office: 01 967 631 69 18

Nicolas Aguilar: 044 967 1025947

Location of Natate's office:

