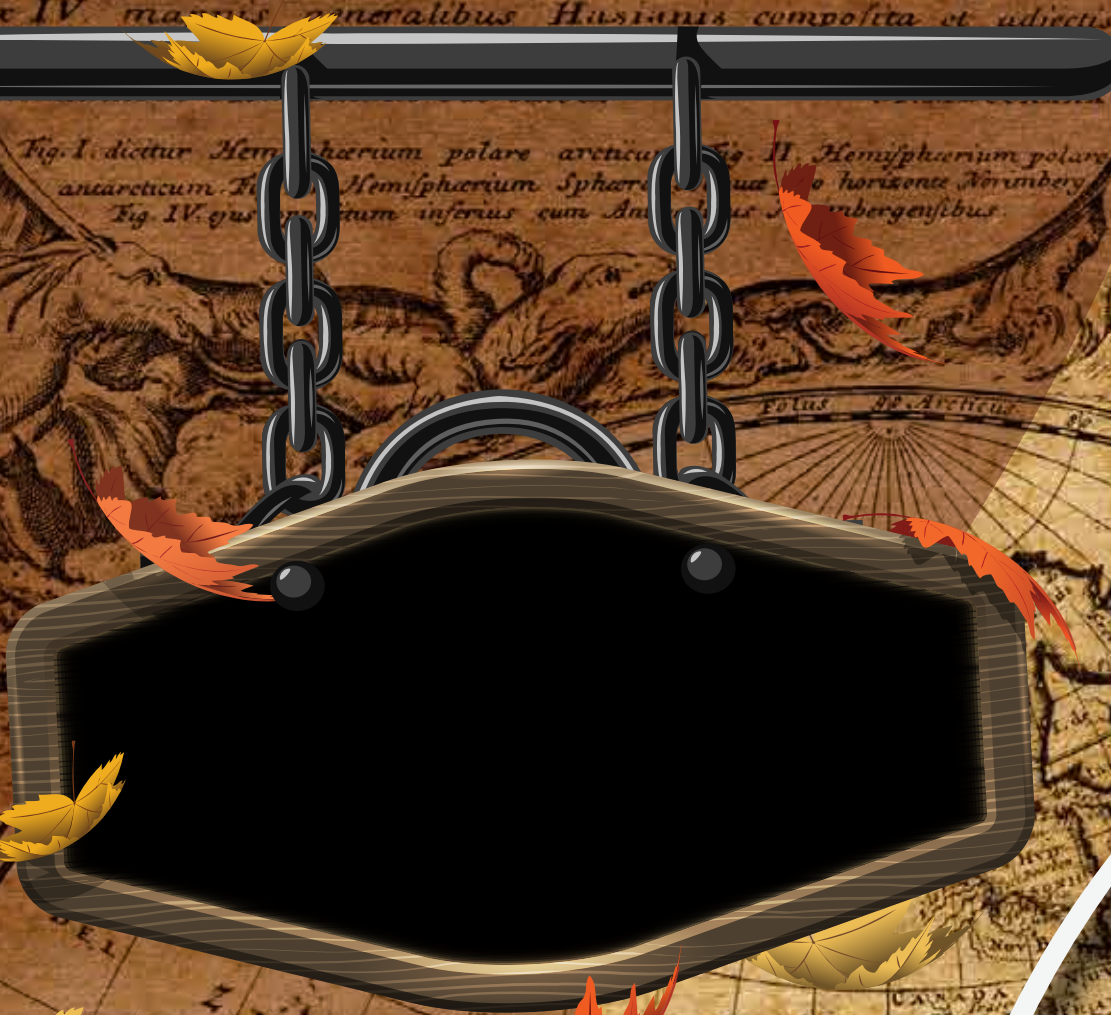




Intercultura
México, A.C.



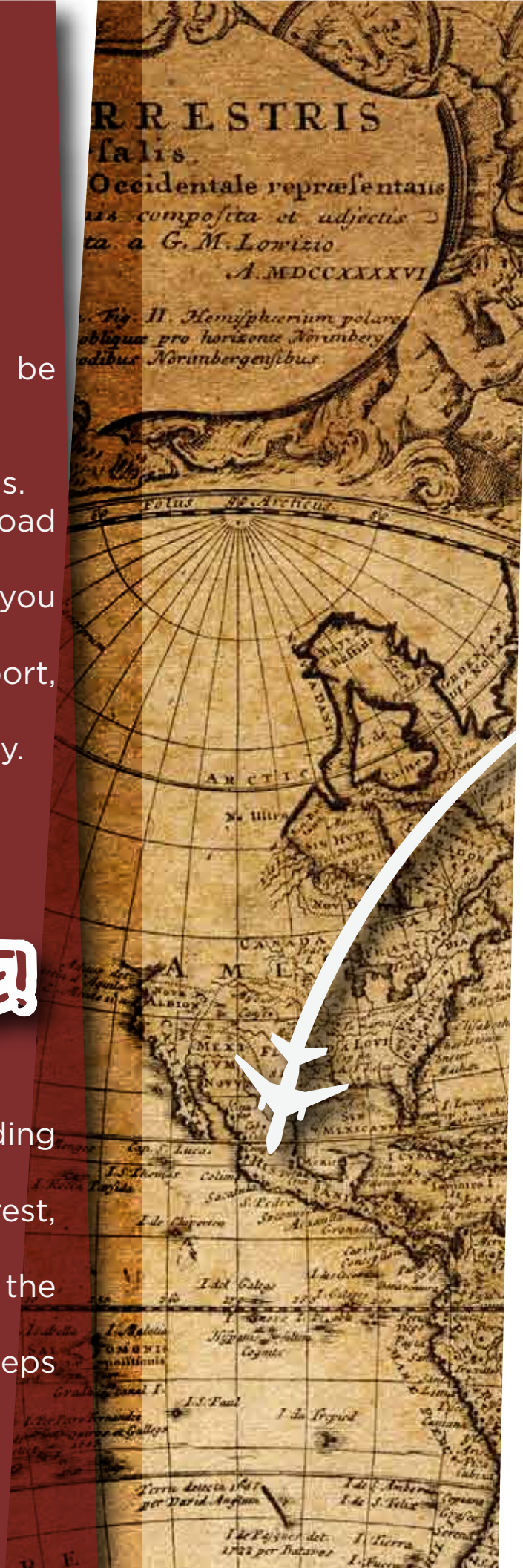
Mexico

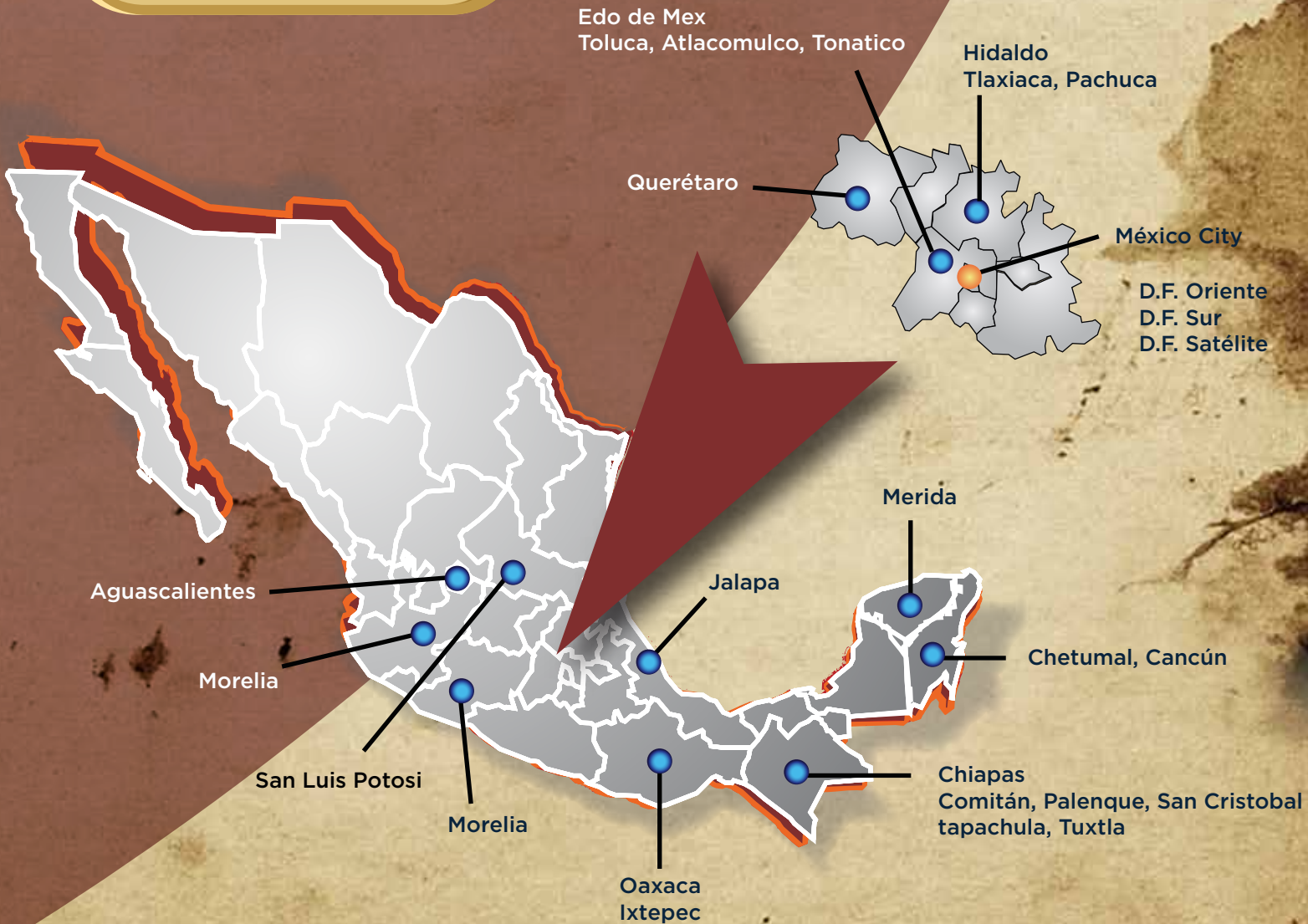
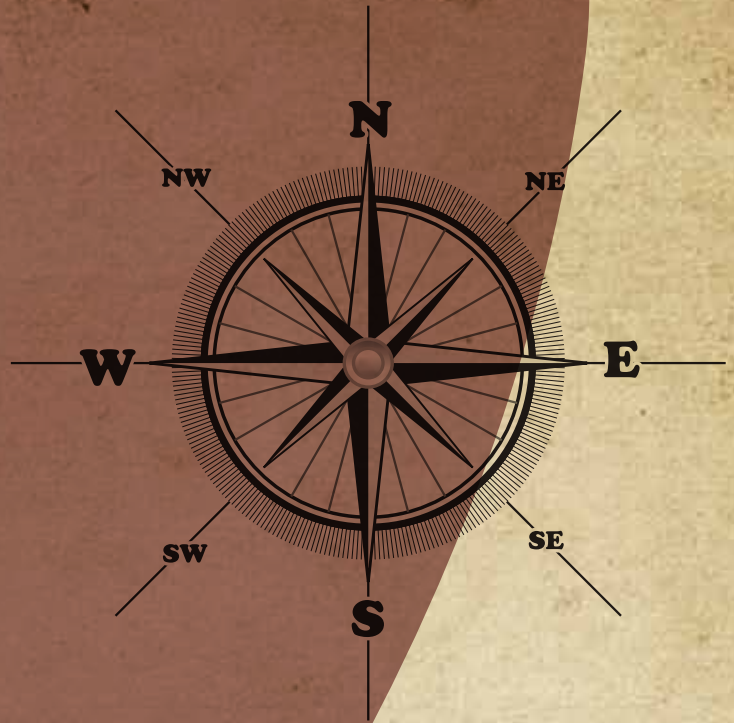
Welcome to Mexico

You are beginning a journey that will be beyond your expectations and different to that which you expect. The key? Be flexible with your expectations. There will be many challenges along this road that are going to test you and help you discover abilities that you didn't know you had. We are here to provide you with support, guidance, tips and any kind of help you may need through your journey.

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME!

The Republic of Mexico is vast, extending through nearly two million square miles of coastline, desert, rain forest, mountains, and fertile plains. From the American borderlands of the north, the country narrows gently as it sweeps south and east.







History and Culture

Somewhere around 1500 BC, the first of Mexico's ancient civilizations, the Olmecs, established themselves in what are now the states of Veracruz and Tabasco.

1

After the Olmecs came the Teotihuacans, the Zapotecs and Mixtecs, the Mayas, the Toltecs, Aztecs, and dozens of smaller cited groups: Purépechas, Totonacas, Apaches, Rarémuris. Many of these civilizations practiced human sacrifice, but only for religious and ritual purposes.

2

None of Mexico's pre-Columbian civilizations is more storied, however, than the Aztecs. Though it is arguable that other civilizations in Mexico achieved greater artistic and scientific feats, none advanced as quickly or ruled as much territory as the Aztecs. Their capital, Tenochtitlan, set in a lake, was a picturesque city of pyramids, mile-long floating roads, aqueducts, animated marketplaces, and around fifty thousand residents.

3

When the Spanish conqueror Hernan Cortés and his army arrived in 1519, the rich city perfectly meshed their thirst for conquest. He compared Tenochtilan with Venice or Constantinople.

4

The man who turned words into actions was a Catholic priest named Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who led an armed rebellion in 1810 with the help of Captain Ignacio Allende and Catholic Priest José María Morelos.

5

Hidalgo's leadership began the war of independence that culminated on September 27, 1821, (eleven years later) when General Vicente Guerrero and the royalist General Agustín de Iturbide signed the Treaty of Cordoba. Having fought for independence, and with Agustín de Iturbide and some other reactionaries attempts to go back to an imperialism, Mexico began to increasingly support the slogan of "freedom and progress"; the country was divided between Conservatives and Liberals. Conservatives brought emperor Archduke Maximiliano de Habsburgo to rule the country but Liberals with Benito Juárez as their leader eventually won. Juárez remained president until his death in 1872; several presidents came and went until, in 1876, one of the greatest generals, Porfirio Díaz, rose and established a dictatorship that lasted 30 years. His government though, gave peace and industry to México.

6

But as with any dictatorships, people were unhappy, so Francisco I. Madero started The Mexican Revolution, one of the bloodiest internal conflicts in world history. He wasn't alone, men like Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, Álvaro Obregón and Felipe Ángeles took the fight and the ideals and dreams when Madero was murdered.

7

Mexico's post-revolution history is marked by the tenacity of a single political party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, or PRI. But the party's most loved president was General Lázaro Cárdenas. In 1934 Cárdenas instituted widespread land reform, strengthened unions, and nationalized the petroleum industry.

8

PRI ruled the country for almost 70 years and during this period of time Mexico experienced the so called "Mexican miracle" which distinguishes for being a period in which Mexico built itself as a modern and industrialized nation, although with little democracy.

9

Only until 2000 when another political party won the presidency. It was Vicente Fox from the PAN who led the "change" although in 2012 PRI regained the government.

10

Mexican Holidays



January 1st
New Year's Day

February 5th
Constitution Day

March 21
Birth anniversary of
Benito Juarez

May 1st
Labor Day

September 16th
Independence Day

November 20th
Revolution Day

December 25th
Christmas Day

Climate

NORTH:

A big variation in temperature during the year. A very hot and dry summer with a very cold winter. Temperatures are between -10°C and 45°C . There is only little rain during July and September.

CENTER:

Climate is more moderate. During winter it can get very cold at night, reaching sometimes temperatures below 0°C .

The average temperature lies from 10°C and 25°C . The rainy season is from July to October.

SOUTH:

The variation in temperature is not that big. Almost all year long it's pretty warm and there is lots of rain. Temperatures can vary from 8°C to 45°C . Hurricane season in the coast is from July to October.

Language

As you probably know the official language is Spanish. There are lots of indigenous dialects that are spoken throughout the country in different indigenous populations. Sometimes these populations don't speak Spanish or not all the people in the community do. Please, be careful when you speak Spanish; many words have different meanings, depending on the situation or the inflection of it. The following words will help you to start a conversation:

¿De dónde eres?
Soy de...
Perdón/ Lo siento
Tengo sueño
Tengo hambre
Good morning

Me llamo...
Mucho gusto
No entiendo
¿Cómo se dice?
¿Qué significa?
¿Dónde está el baño?

Estoy enfermo
Me siento mal
Necesito un doctor
Necesito ayuda
Es una emergencia

Buenos días
Buenas tardes
Buenas noches
Hola
Hasta luego

Sí
No
Gracias
¿Cómo estás?
¿Cómo te llamas?

Religion

Catholic (Majority)
Christian (Second majority)

Prices

\$ 1 meal at a regular restaurant per person: 100 to 150 pesos

\$ 1 Coca-cola: 10 pesos

\$ 1 subway ticket: 5 pesos

\$ 1 ticket to the movies: 77 pesos

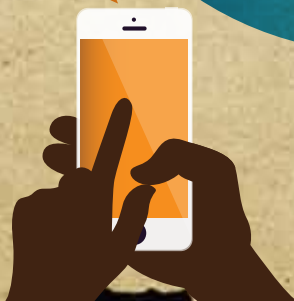
\$ 1 kilogram of apples: 30 pesos

\$ 1 Cup of coffee: 30 to 50 pesos

\$ 1 kilogram of apples: 30 pesos

\$ 1 public bus ticket: 3 to 5 pesos

\$





Culture

Customs vary tremendously from one community to the next and from one family to the next. We recommend that you consult your family and school friends for advice when in doubt. This will keep you from stepping on toes and at the same time will allow them to learn more about your background and lifestyle. Also there are some specific social customs that are common through Mexico. They will become part of your Mexican way of life.

Meeting people

We always shake hands when we meet and when we say goodbye. When greeting a close friend or relative, it is common that a kiss on the cheek accompany this greeting. Younger people extend the kiss towards elders, as well as visitors first. Men often embrace a close friend or relative.

How to greet

When we enter a home, it is necessary to greet each person individually and to say goodbye to each person on an individual basis, as well. Yes, this means 15 handshakes to say hello and another 15 to say goodbye! A simple group hello and goodbye is not always acceptable.

Shower

We shower on a daily basis unless particular circumstances -like running out of water. Be sure to pick up your bath stuff before leaving the bathroom. A quick but effective shower will be enough; please, don't waste water.



Washing clothes

Ask your host family about washing clothes, where the washing machine is and the washing tools are. We recommend you to become responsible about washing your own clothes, especially your underwear!

Housework's

Maybe your host family wants to treat you like a guest or a special person, but you're not. You will become a member of the family. So, ask your host family which housework will be your responsibility and please do it. Offering you to do one or two housework's will be nice for them. Making your own bed and keeping your room clean are your responsibility, don't forget it.

Friends and going out

We know that you will make a lot of friends. Some ones will be there for the rest of your life. Others will be only for this year. Make sure that you will choose your friends wisely. Host family will want to know each one of your friends; don't get mad, they only want to keep you safe. If you want to go out with your friends, do these three things:

- Ask for host parents' permission (really important)
- Inform your host mom or dad where you will be and with whom you are.
- Respect the curfew.

Special friends



If you meet a special person in your year abroad, follow these tips and you won't have problems:

- Relationships between persons with a big difference of age are not good. If you are a minor and your boyfriend or girlfriend is adult they could be in legal problems.
- Introduce your boyfriend or girlfriend to your host family; they will be very interested to know them.
- Don't spend all your time with your special friend. Host family want to learn about you and spend time with you. Don't be rude...
- Always inform your host family your whereabouts and please respect the curfews.

Sexuality

Sexual manners are very different in your country than in Mexico. Most mexican families are very conservative and Will not always accept sexuality issues as you do. Some are more open-minded and will accept this without a problem. In some communities, teenager's active sexual life is not good looking or even accepted, so you have to be very careful with this. Use your sexuality wisely.

Independence

Young people in México have less independence than you in your country. If one of your expectations in this year abroad is to become more independent. Be careful! Independence is a process that you will learn stepby- step, throughout your life. Independence is very different than freedom. Independence and responsibility are the same. Talk with your host family about this and make agreement about independence.

School manners

Mexicans schools have particular manners that will be strange for you. The education system is a traditional one and discipline is very important. In most cases you won't be able to choose your assignments.

On your first days you won't feel comfortable, but this feeling will go by in a few days.

When you arrive to your school, you will be the spotlight and everyone will ask you many questions; be patient and gentle

Family gatherings

You have to be prepared for mexican family reunions. A lot of people at the same place that laugh, sing and talk very loud. Parents, siblings, cousins, aunts, nephews, grandparents, close friends, godfathers, neighbors, grandchildren are an example of all the people you will meet. Remember to say hello to everyone and also to say goodbye. You will be the spotlight (again) but all the questions they will ask are a way to let you know that you're welcome into the family.

If you meet a special person in your year abroad, follow these tips and you won't have problems:

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- Introduce your boyfriend or girlfriend to your host family; they will be very interested to know them.
- Don't spend all your time with your special friend. Host family want to learn about you and spend time with you.

Don't be rude...

- Always inform your host family your whereabouts and please respect the curfews.

Independent travel

The keys for a great experience

You are now prepared to live an extraordinary year in México.
Remember:



Communication between you and your host family and local volunteers is the clue, don't take unnecessary risks.



Learn and teach the most you can.



Share your time between your host family and your friends.



Return to your country being a world citizen and a wise person.



Fun and responsibility are not enemies.



Conectando Vidas, Compartiendo Culturas

Intercultura
México, A.C.

L'AMERIQUE
SEPTENTRIONALE.
Suivant les
Nouvelles Observations
de
Messrs de l'Academie Royale
des Sciences, etc.
Augmentées de Nouveau.
A AMSTERDAM
Chez COVENS u MORTIER

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