

Travel Warning U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE May 5, 2015

[U.S. Department of State: Alerts and Warnings](#)

The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens about the risk of traveling to certain places in Mexico due to threats to safety and security posed by organized criminal groups in the country. U.S. citizens have been the target of violent crimes, such as kidnapping, carjacking, and robbery by organized criminal groups in various Mexican states. For information on security conditions in specific regions of Mexico, which can vary, travelers should reference the state-by-state assessments.

General Conditions: Millions of U.S. citizens safely visit Mexico each year for study, tourism, and business, including more than 150,000 who cross the border every day. The Mexican government dedicates substantial resources to protect visitors to major tourist destinations, and there is no evidence that organized criminal groups have targeted U.S. visitors or residents based on their nationality...

Nevertheless, U.S. travelers should be aware that the Mexican government has been engaged in an extensive effort to counter organized criminal groups that engage in narcotics trafficking and other unlawful activities throughout Mexico. The groups themselves are engaged in a violent struggle to control drug trafficking routes and other criminal activity. Crime and violence are serious problems and can occur anywhere. U.S. citizens have fallen victim to criminal activity, including homicide, gun battles, kidnapping, carjacking, and highway robbery. While many of those killed in organized crime-related violence have themselves been involved in criminal activity, innocent persons have also been killed. The number of U.S. citizens reported to the Department of State as murdered in Mexico was 81 in 2013 and 100 in 2014.

Gun battles between rival criminal organizations or with Mexican authorities have taken place in towns and cities in many parts of Mexico. Gun battles have occurred in broad daylight on streets and in other public venues, such as restaurants and clubs. During some of these incidents, U.S. citizens have been trapped and temporarily prevented from leaving the area. Criminal organizations have used stolen cars, buses, and trucks to create roadblocks on major thoroughfares, preventing the military and police from responding to criminal activity. The location and timing of future armed engagements is unpredictable. We recommend that you defer travel to the areas specifically identified in this Travel Warning and exercise extreme caution when traveling throughout the other areas for which advisories are in effect.

The number of kidnappings throughout Mexico is of particular concern and appears to be on the rise. According to statistics published by the Mexican Secretaria de Gobernacion (SEGOB), in 2013 kidnappings nationwide increased 20 percent over the previous year. While kidnappings can occur anywhere, according to SEGOB, during this timeframe, the states with the highest numbers of kidnappings were Tamaulipas, Guerrero, Michoacán, Estado de Mexico, and Morelos. Additionally, according to a widely publicized study by the agency responsible for national statistics (INEGI, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography), Mexico suffered an estimated 105,682 kidnappings

in 2012; only 1,317 were reported to the police. Police have been implicated in some of these incidents. Both local and expatriate communities have been victimized. More than 130 70 kidnappings of U.S. citizens were reported to the U.S. Embassy and consulates in Mexico between January and November of 2014.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to lower their personal profiles and to avoid displaying indicators of wealth such as expensive or expensive-looking jewelry, watches, or cameras. U.S. citizens are encouraged to maintain awareness of their surroundings and avoid situations in which they may be isolated or stand out as potential victims.

Kidnappings in Mexico have included traditional, "express," and "virtual" kidnappings. Victims of traditional kidnappings are physically abducted and held captive until a ransom is paid for release. "Express" kidnappings are those in which a victim is abducted for a short time and forced to withdraw money, usually from an ATM, then released. A "virtual" kidnapping is an extortion-by-deception scheme wherein a victim is contacted by phone and convinced to isolate themselves from family and friends until a ransom is paid. The victim is coerced (by threat of violence) to remain isolated and to provide phone numbers for the victim's family or loved ones. The victim's family is then contacted and a ransom for the "kidnapped" extracted...

Of particular safety concern are casinos, sportsbooks, or other gambling establishments and adult entertainment establishments. U.S. government personnel are specifically prohibited from patronizing these establishments...

Carjacking and highway robbery are serious problems in many parts of the border region, and U.S. citizens have been murdered in such incidents. Most victims who complied with carjackers' demands have reported that they were not physically harmed. Carjackers have shot at vehicles that have attempted to flee. Incidents have occurred during the day and at night, and carjackers have used a variety of techniques, including roadblocks, bumping/moving vehicles to force them to stop, and running vehicles off the road at high speeds. There are indications that criminals target newer and larger vehicles, especially dark-colored SUVs. However, even drivers of old sedans and buses coming from the United States have been targeted. While violent incidents can occur anywhere and at any time, they most frequently occur at night and on isolated roads. To reduce risk when traveling by road, we strongly urge you to travel between cities throughout Mexico only during daylight hours, to avoid isolated roads, and to use toll roads ("cuotas") whenever possible.

The Mexican government has deployed federal police and military personnel throughout the country as part of its efforts to combat organized criminal groups. U.S. citizens traveling on Mexican roads and highways by car or bus may encounter government checkpoints, staffed by military or law enforcement personnel. In some places, criminal organizations have erected their own unauthorized checkpoints, at times wearing police and military uniforms, and have killed or abducted motorists who

have failed to stop at them. You should cooperate at all checkpoints.

Baja California: Tijuana, Rosarito, Ensenada and Mexicali are major cities/travel destinations in the state of Baja California:

Exercise caution in the northern state of Baja California, particularly at night. Criminal activity along highways and at beaches is a continuing security concern. According to the Baja State Secretariat for Public Security, from January to October 2014 Tijuana and Rosarito experienced increasing homicide rates compared to the same period in the previous year. While most of these homicides appeared to be targeted criminal organization assassinations, turf battles between criminal groups have resulted in violent crime in areas frequented by U.S. citizens. Shooting incidents, in which innocent bystanders have been injured, have occurred during daylight hours.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the [State Department's internet web site](#), where the current [Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts](#) can be found. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and the

Bureau of [Consular Affairs page on Facebook](#) as well. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States and Canada or, for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 001-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). U.S. citizens traveling or residing overseas are encouraged to enroll with the State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#). For any emergencies involving U.S. citizens in Mexico, please contact the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate with responsibility for that person's location in Mexico. The numbers provided below for the Embassy and Consulates are available around the clock. The U.S. Embassy is located in Mexico City... telephone from the United States: 011-52-55-5080-2000; telephone within Mexico City: 5080-2000; telephone long distance within Mexico 01-55-5080-2000. Tijuana Consulate: Paseo de Las Culturas s/n Mesa de Otay, telephone (011) (52) (664) 977-2000. Email: ACSMexicoCity@state.gov.

WAIVER OF LIABILITY / ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I have read and understood the current Travel Alert for Mexico, posted by the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Bureau of Consular Affairs. I have voluntarily joined a Maquiladora Tour to Tijuana, Mexico. I understand that there are great differences between this country and my own. These differences include climate, living conditions, diet, water quality, transportation, medical care, and physical safety. I also understand that health care facilities in Mexico are minimal and that access to all types of health care, including for emergencies, may be difficult. I understand that I will not be able to expect the same type of health care as I would receive in my own country. I understand that the San Diego Maquiladora Workers' Solidarity Network (SDMWSN) and other individuals and organizations that sponsor, organize and promote this maquiladora tour are not responsible for my health care or coverage, either during the tour or afterwards. Furthermore, I realize that there are no guarantees against personal injury, robbery, or death while part of this Maquiladora Tour.

I understand that there are specific legal requirements for travel to Mexico, and illegal activity could result in grave legal consequences for myself, the SDMWSN, and individuals and organizations that sponsor, organize and promote this maquiladora tour. For this reason, I agree to abide by Mexican law while I am in Mexico. I understand that the Maquiladora Tour ends with the final planned activity of the tour followed by the immediate return across the border, and after this time SDMWSN and individuals and organizations that sponsor, organize and promote this maquiladora tour are discharged and held harmless in any participant's decision which deviates from this process after the tour is completed in Mexico.

With this understanding, and in consideration for my participation in the Maquiladora Tour, I completely accept and assume all responsibility for any and all risks of damage, sickness, or personal injury which may occur during, or resulting from my participation in the tour, including, but not limited to, those risks described above. In signing this document I expressly release, discharge, and hold harmless the SDMWSN and individuals and organizations that sponsor, organize and promote this maquiladora tour to the maximum extent permitted by law in any state, territory, district, or country.

I have read and understand the foregoing and sign it voluntarily. I am of sound mind and act of my own free will and without any coercion or duress in signing this *WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK*.

Name:
Signature:
Email:
Date: