



## Experience Mex-ECO Living Conditions & Equipment List Teaching and Special Education Projects

Bahía de Navidad is a beautiful bay where the towns of Melaque, Villa Obregon and Barra de Navidad lie; host to hundreds of tourists from November through to March each year. During these months, the beach becomes rather busy with both tourists and vendors of clothes, food and souvenirs. Between April and October, the towns change considerably; there are very few people on the beach or in restaurants and bars, with the exception of local tourists visiting during public holidays.

Living with a family in Mexico can be both a challenging and thoroughly enjoyable experience. All volunteers are made to feel welcome and often begin to feel like part of the family after a couple of weeks, taking part in family outings and events. It can sometimes take a week or so to get used to the different routine, but volunteers usually settle in and are sad when it comes to leaving their new family!

Meal habits are slightly different in Mexico to what you may be used to; usually including a reasonable sized breakfast, followed by a large meal for lunch and lighter meal in the evening. Lunch is often followed by a short siesta before heading back to work. Mexican cuisine is very tasty, often including a lot of meat, tortillas and chilli, but the chilli content can be moderated according to your taste. Vegetarians can be catered for, as can other special dietary requirements.

There are a large number of mosquitoes and sand flies in our area, and you are likely to be bitten at some point during your stay. There have been no reported cases of malaria in the region for over 20 years, but there have been some cases of dengue fever, although never amongst any of our volunteers. The best way to avoid being bitten is by covering up in the early mornings and evenings and regularly applying insect repellent.

Timetables are variable, but most teaching projects take place between 9am and 2pm, then in the afternoon between 4pm and 7pm (lesson times vary from day to day); and the special education school operates between the hours of 2pm and 6pm, but volunteers may be required to participate in other activities, such as fundraising events, outside of school hours.

### Average minimum and maximum temperatures and rainfall

Month	Average Min. Temp (°C)	Average Max. Temp (°C)	Rainfall (data from 2007)
January	16.6	29.2	3.05 mm
February	16.2	29.5	3.30 mm
March	16.0	28.8	0.00 mm
April	17.2	29.2	0.00 mm
May	19.5	30.2	0.00 mm
June	22.6	31.5	0.00 mm
July	22.9	31.7	167.13 mm
August	22.7	32.0	527.42 mm
September	23.0	31.2	322.33 mm
October	22.1	31.4	8.89 mm
November	19.7	30.8	0.00 mm
December	18.0	30.2	0.00 mm

*Data from 'Estación Biológica Chamela'*



## Equipment List

Below is a list of items we feel necessary to have throughout your stay on our Sea Turtle Conservation Project in Campamento Majahuas; it is divided into essential items and optional extras.

### Essential Items:

- **Smart clothes:** although you will be working in a small community, and dress is relatively casual, you must remember that you will be working in a position of respect and must dress accordingly. For women we recommend a knee length skirt or lightweight trousers and a lightweight blouse; for men we also recommend lightweight trousers and shirt or smart t-shirt. Smart flip flops/sandals are appropriate footwear, heels are not recommended due to the cobbled streets.
- **Casual clothes:** outside of project hours dress is much more casual, shorts and t-shirts are appropriate with flip flops or tennis shoes.
- **Insect repellent:** spray-on insect repellent.
- **Sun-cream and sun-hat:** high factor sun-cream
- **First aid kit:** there will be first aid equipment kept by staff on the project, but it is essential that you take a basic supply of your own. This should include band-aids, tweezers, antiseptic wipes and cream, antihistamine tablets and painkillers.
- **Water bottle:** It is important to drink at least three litres of water each day. The easiest way to do this is to have your own water bottle that allows you to monitor your intake.
- **Toiletries:** everything you might need may be bought in large towns, but it is a good idea to bring supplies to last for the first couple of weeks at least.
- **Towel:** a light towel or sarong is sufficient.
- **Copies of documentation:** you should bring a copy of all of the pre-departure information that you have received from Experience Mex-ECO, as well as two photocopies of your passport, tickets and insurance policy (for use in case of loss of the originals/emergencies).

### Optional Extras:

- **Binoculars:** although not essential, the bird life in the area is wonderful, and if you have an interest in wildlife in general then they are a good idea.
- **Camera:** It would be a shame to leave without some photos of what you have been involved in. A cheap camera with a flash will suffice if you do not wish to spend the money on a good camera.
- **Canoe bag:** these waterproof sacks are ideal for protecting camera equipment in the wet season.
- **Smart clothes:** it is a good idea to bring some evening wear. It is still not necessary to bring your best clothing, but there are a couple of local bars and restaurants that you may wish to visit on a weekend.
- **Spanish dictionary:** A small dictionary will always come in handy.
- **Games/stationary for the children:** this is always a hit with the kids and can be used as a teaching aid (appropriate for younger children only).
- **Flashlight:** a good idea for evenings or in case of power failures.