

Missionary Training Program
Cuernavaca, Mexico
2009 Dates: April 3 – May 30, 2009

What to Bring with You

For those coming to Cuernavaca, Mexico for the missionary training program, the following is a list of items to bring. Remember this is an internship program, a time of training and hands-on mission experience. This is not a time to set up housekeeping. Please pack within the limits allowed by the airline carrier you are flying.

- Clothes:** Work, casual and dress up. For most of the training program and around the ministry base neat, casual dress is acceptable.
- Longer style shorts and Capri pants are fine; however, please no short-shorts, muscle shirts or low cut shirts/tops or revealing dress wear.
- Swimsuit (no bikinis or Speedos, please!)
- Long pants and one dress shirt with tie for men, and appropriate dress wear for ladies is needed for church services.
- Since it does at times get chilly at night and during raining season, lightweight layer able clothing, a lightweight sweater or jacket is often needed. A vinyl rain poncho or umbrella is helpful.
- Shoes:** Casual, work (sneakers, boots) and dress. Comfortable walking shoes are a must, as is a hat, if you tend to burn.
- Linens:** Wash cloths.
(Towels, bed sheets, a lightweight bedspread and pillow(s) are provided for you.)
- Toiletries:** Shampoo, deodorant, cologne, perfume, razors and sunscreen/block.
These items can also be purchased in Mexico.
- Medical:** Bring any prescription medications with you.
- Household:** All household cleaning items can be purchased in Mexico.
- Misc.:** Laptop computer, i-Pod/MP3, electrical surge protectors, alarm clock, flash light, camera, hair dryer, extension cord, selected books, and a good multi-purpose backpack.
English/Spanish dictionary
Wire bound notebook for taking notes
Bible (a bilingual Bible is helpful but not required)

Recommended Preparation Before Attending the Missionary Training Program

- Begin to pray for your journey into missionary training.
- Write about your thoughts, feelings and experiences in an ongoing journal.
- Begin study of the Spanish language through the use of CD's, computer software, books, etc. in order to help with your adjustment in Mexico.
- Study numbers, the alphabet, colors, greetings (hola, adios, buenos dias, buenos tardes, buenos noche) and simple statements in Spanish such as ¿Donde estan los baños? (Where are the bathrooms?), ¿Como esta? (How are you?).
- Read, research and study about the country, history, culture, and people of Mexico.
- Pray for the people of Mexico.

Recommended Books

- *Cross-Cultural Connections* by Duane Elmer
- *From Jerusalem to Irain Jaya* by Ruth Tucker (this is a comprehensive history of missions)
- *English/Spanish Dictionary*

What Can I Expect in Mexico?

You will be living in group housing at the Ministry and Training Base in Cuernavaca, Mexico, located in the State of Morelos, approximately two hours south of Mexico City. Your status during the program will be as a missionary intern (MI) living at the base, therefore, you will not be considered a guest staying at the ministry base.

The Ministry and Training Base is an old Spanish –style family hacienda in a secured one acre property. The base includes seven bedrooms and eight baths, a commercial kitchen, dining areas, living area, laundry, patios, and swimming pool.

Married couples will share a single room with private bathroom while single missionary interns of the same gender will share a room with private bathroom. The number of single interns and gender at a given session will determine the roommate assignment.

As a missionary intern you will share in community meals and household duties at the ministry base. Missionary interns will be divided into cook teams. Each cook team will be responsible for planning, shopping, preparation and cleanup during their designated week.

All missionary interns will attend Spanish language school for two-weeks which will include living with a Mexican family during the two weeks.

You will be expected to utilize public transportation which includes taxis and buses as your method of moving about the city and area.

As a missionary intern you will be expected to attend a local Spanish speaking church and should be prepared to contribute financially in offerings.

What Will a Typical Training Day Look Like in Mexico?

A typical training day will begin with daily devotion from 9:00am – 9:30am. Class/Workshop from 9:30am - 12:00noon with a break in between. Lunch is from 12:00 – 1:00pm. Afternoon classes resume at 1:00pm - 4:00pm with a break in between.

Ministry outreach days will typically be a full day/days spent outside of the facility in a local village or church setting.

Most all training is in the format of adult learning styles with practical hands-on application and workshops, and is very interactive.

Immunizations

Currently only a tetanus shot is recommended, however some people do feel comfortable receiving the hepatitis A vaccination. Please check with your family doctor or health care provider to determine what is best for you. Malaria medication can be purchased over the counter and at a reduced cost in Mexico, if needed.

Purchasing Airline Tickets

Airline tickets may not be purchased without first receiving field departure approval from the director of the missionary training program. As you begin to prepare and itinerate for your time in Mexico, it is wise to plan on raising the needed funds for the cost of airline tickets along with your internship training program fee. Proper planning in this area will eliminate undue stress to shop, raise funds, and purchase airline tickets, which can be extremely costly if left to the last minute.

When to Arrive in Mexico

All interns are to arrive in Mexico City on the Friday prior to the start of the internship training program that begins on Monday. Any other arrangements must be pre-approved. The intern will be responsible for accommodations if pre-arrival is approved.

Mexico Customs and Immigration Forms

You will be given customs and immigration forms on the airplane while enroute to Mexico City. Fill out each form completely before arrival with your name, passport number, airline flight number, and all other requested information.

On the Immigration forms mark your “Motivo de Viaje” or travel purpose as: “turismo” and write in your “Dirección Prevista” or foreseen address as: Cuernavaca, Temixco.

Very Important: **DO NOT DISCARD THE BOTTOM PORTION** of the immigration form (the top portion is the entrance form and the bottom is the **exit form**). Keep the bottom portion inside your passport. The bottom portion will be collected at the airport for your return trip home to the US.

Visas

To enter Mexico you will need a current passport with at least six months of valid time before expiration. You will be issued a visa when you enter the country at the airport. At immigration, if asked, say that you plan on studying Spanish and culture in Cuernavaca and need a 180 day visa, or 6 months. This will cover your stay in Mexico.

Arrival at the Airport – Mexico City and Cuernavaca

All missionary interns are to arrive the Friday before the start of the training program on Monday. Upon arrival at the airport in Mexico City, terminal 2, you will pass through immigration first, then collect your luggage and pass through customs. You may be asked to go through an inspection line where your luggage could possibly be opened and inspected. Most all of the items you bring into the country will be exempt from any import taxes.

After passing this section of the airport, you will go directly through the exit doors to the outside corridor waiting area. *(Directly across the corridor are currency exchange windows if you would like to go ahead and exchange money – see Banking and Money Exchange below). Turn right and walk toward the Pullman Bus Station at the end of the corridor. You will pass several small restaurants and a Starbucks along the way. At the very end of the terminal is the bus station – a five minute walk.

There is a bus line called **Pullman de Morelos** that offers a luxury commuter bus that leaves frequently, normally every forty-five minutes to hourly, for Cuernavaca from international terminals 1 and 2. This non-stop bus offers round trip transportation to and from Cuernavaca's Casino del Selva Bus Station. The bus trip from the airport to the Casino del Selva bus Station in Cuernavaca takes approximately 1 ½ hours. The bus ticket fee is approximately USD\$13.00 per person.

You will be met at the bus station in Cuernavaca by a training staff member and transported to the ministry base

Banking and Money Exchange

The currency in Mexico is the **peso**. Paper currency comes in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 pesos. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, and 20 pesos, and 20 and 50 **centavos** (100 centavos = 1 peso).

The current exchange rate for the U.S. dollar is around 10 pesos; at that rate, an item that costs 10 pesos would be equivalent to USD\$1.

You can exchange money at the airport in Mexico City after arrival and exiting into the corridor/waiting area. Look directly across the corridor – there you will see two or three banks/exchange windows – *(see Arrival at Airport above).

In Mexico City and in Cuernavaca bank debit cards and major credit cards are widely accepted.

Ministry Giving

There will be many opportunities to give during your time in training. Each week you will attend a local church and should be prepared to give offerings. You will also be involved in various ministry outreaches that may require additional ministry giving.

Program Director Mike Turner has a saying, *“the salvation message is free but the road it travels on costs money ... and lots of it! Therefore, the more you **love** to give **and** the more you **have** to give ... the further down the ministry road you will go!”*

Personal Vehicle & Transportation

Missionary interns are not allowed to bring personal vehicles into the country. You will be expected to utilize public transportation which includes taxis and buses as your method of moving about the city and area.

Public transportation in Mexico by way of public buses and taxis is readily available, and is the primary means of transportation for the majority of Mexican nationals. By getting to know the local transit system it will give you a chance to relate to this common daily life activity.

Buses can be taken and go virtually everywhere. These stop at almost every corner or main avenue approximately every 5 minutes or so and cost about \$4.50 pesos per trip. Taxis in Cuernavaca do not have meters and prices need to be arranged before getting in the taxi. Most destinations during the day will cost you approximately \$50 pesos.

Drivers License

You may need your U.S. driver's license for identification or other purposes, so do bring it with you to Mexico.

Mail Service

There will not be any mail service available during the internship program. You can use the Mexican National Postal Service, but the reliability of the national mail service is not guaranteed.

Phone Service/E-Mail

There is good international phone service in Mexico. Some cell phone services from the U.S. do have service to Mexico. It is recommended that you check with your mobile phone service before leaving the U.S. to see what is available to you during your stay in Mexico. However, beware; generally the cost is very expensive.

There is a phone at the ministry base that can be used for limited personal calls. Calls will be charged to each intern by usage - the cost is approximately USD\$1.50 per minute.

The telephone number for the ministry base is 011-52-777-325-6692. This number can be given to family members for contacting you in Mexico.

There is WiFi service at the base, so you will be able to access your e-mail and internet via your laptop computer. This will be the most economical means for communicating to the States.

Previous missionary interns have used Skype to call computer to computer with video for free, or you can call actual phones in the States for a low rate. For Skype it is recommended to use a headset w/microphone and webcam.

Personal Electronic Equipment and Computers

At this time there are no computers available at the ministry base for use by the interns. We suggest you bring a laptop computer for your personal use.

You may also want to consider bringing an iPod/MP3 player for listening to your favorite music, books, etc. Appliances and electronics designed to operate in the U.S. operate in Mexico on regular 110 Volts. Power shortages, surges and complete power outages are normal and happen regularly in Mexico, so it is advisable to bring a small electrical surge protector.

A television and DVD player are used at the ministry base for training purposes and on occasion can be used for a group “movie night”.

Personal Visits

Personal visits by family and friends from the U.S. or other countries are not allowed during the internship program. Your time in the missionary training program must be looked upon as a special point in time for training, learning and allowing God to work in and through you. Although you will experience lots of fun and excitement during the 8-week internship program, this is not a vacation - *this is a time of preparation*.

Visits Out of the Country of Mexico

Visits outside of the country of Mexico are not permitted during the 8-week training session unless accompanied by training staff personnel.

Language Studies/Immersion

During the language study program, you will study Spanish for two weeks. This will be in total immersion whereas you will live with a Mexican family and study language for five hours daily.

After the two week total immersion there will be additional language and cultural studies during the 8-week internship. It is during this time you will learn and use the L.A.M.P (Language Acquisition Made Practical) method for language learning. This is an excellent supplement to language learning and can be used in any country.

We base this process on Thomas Brewster’s concept of bonding. In his book *Bonding and the Missionary Task*, Brewster says...

“The problem of missionary casualties suggests that there is a heavy price to be paid by those who fail to become believers - probably half do not return for a second term, and some who do stay despite ineffectiveness, may be greater casualties than those who go back home.”

If this is true, and we believe it is, then we need to make a concentrated effort to allow you to experience the bonding process. Although more than one week is needed for the total bonding process to take place, we feel that in that time each intern will be able to experience life through the eyes of a different culture.

According to Brewster...

“...language acquisition and the bonding process are so closely related that the best ways to accommodate them are together. Normal language acquisition is essentially a social experience, not an academic activity. As a result, gaining proficiency in the language is normal for the person who is deeply contexted and has his sense of belonging in the new society.”

The immersion process is a means whereby this can be accomplished.

For those going into another culture and language group after completion of the 8-week missionary training program, success with this process will give you the skills and confidence to pursue excellence in learning the language of the targeted ministry country.

Living Arrangements

During your time in Mexico you will be living at the Ministry and Training Base in Las Brisas, Temixco, just outside of the city of Cuernavaca. The base is a 7-bedroom, 8-bath home located approximately 1 ½ hours south of Mexico City. This facility not only serves as the location for the missionary training program twice a year, but is also used to host short-term trips, and national leadership training.

Each single intern will share a room and private bathroom with other same gender interns. Each family (up to four) will share a single room with private bath.

Although you will be sharing space with other interns, there are various places located within the confines of the base grounds where you can have quiet time or just get away for a moment of reflection. We feel this arrangement is best for learning the principles of team ministry. It is here you will learn how to work together as a team through sharing community meals and team responsibilities.

Meals at the base are community/family style with cook teams for each week. The number of people on a cook team is determined by the number of missionary interns during a given training program. Each week the cook team is responsible for menu planning, shopping and cooking. Pure water is available for purchase and is used exclusively at the training base.

The ministry base has a beautiful family size swimming pool that is available for use by the missionary interns and family members.

Assigned Keys

You will be issued two keys during your stay in the training program. One key is for the front gate into the training base, and one key is for the back gate. You are responsible to guard these keys and keep them in a safe place. In the event you lose your keys you will be responsible for the replacement cost of another set. Cost for replacement keys is USD\$10.00 per key.

Bedrooms & Bathrooms

Each intern is responsible for keeping their bedroom and bathroom clean. Supplies to use are purchased out of the food allowance and are available for your use. Since you are sharing living quarters with other interns, care and consideration should be used in keeping the facilities clean. Each intern is responsible for personal effects such as soap, shampoo, toiletry items and other related personal items.

Laundry Facilities

A laundry area is available for use at the base. The laundry area consists of a large concrete sink for hand washing. A clothesline, iron and ironing board is available for your use. All soap, laundry detergents, and any other items needed for individual laundry is the responsibility of each intern.

Full drop off laundry service, including wash, dry and fold, is available at a nearby lavanderia for a fee of approximately USD\$1.50 per kilo. (For example: 10 kilo (or 22 lbs) of laundry, washed, dried and folded, would cost approximately USD\$12.00).

Kitchen Procedure and Meal Plan

During your stay in the internship training program, you will be having community meals. Each week the cook team will receive a budget for purchasing food. The budget is set at \$25.00 per adult and \$10.00 per child, under 12 years of age. In the case of an infant or child in need of special infant food, formula, or personal items, this cost would be the responsibility of the parent.

Each person will be assigned to a team that will be responsible for the various tasks in the kitchen. Each team will be divided into equal teams and will assist as follows:

- Each person is responsible to prepare his/her own breakfast and clean up.
- Help prepare and serve lunch; kitchen and eating area clean up.
- Prepare and serve dinner. The kitchen team will be responsible for washing dishes and kitchen clean up after lunch and dinner.
- Each Friday prior to your designated cook week, the cook team will plan the weekly menu. Friday afternoons will be a time of shopping to purchase all grocery and food items for the following week.

Cleaning and Maintenance

In order to prove good stewardship of the ministry training base facility the interns are responsible for cleaning and light maintenance of the facility. This is accomplished through teamwork and goal setting.

Base Facility Information

The Ministry Base is a beautiful and safe complex. We have taken measures to assure that the base operates in a smooth and efficient manner; however, the base is located in Mexico and not in the USA. Therefore, things don't always operate, work or happen the way you may be accustomed to in the States.

As in most third world countries, there will be times that the electrical power is out and you will need to use a flashlight or candle. Also, there may be times there will not be water, but for this there is a cistern. These small complexities, which are considered "no big deal" in Mexico, are experienced by 80% of the world on a daily basis.

And, as in most countries there are insects: spiders, snakes, scorpions, tarantulas, ants, etc. This is life in Mexico and around the world!

The swimming pool at the ministry base is not fenced, gated or portioned off and is open to the surrounding areas.

Dress Code

Dress code for the training base should be viewed as with any Christian environment. Casual and modest pants, jeans and shorts are acceptable for all activities in and out of the house. The exception is outreaches in rural areas where you are expected to dress accordingly. You will be notified of specific dress codes for ministry prior to any outreaches; however, the normal dress code for outreach ministry is dresses/skirts for women and long pants for men. Dresses for women should be modest in fit and length. Loosely fitted shorts are acceptable for men and women as well as capri type pants for women, when appropriate; however, modesty is the key.

You will notice that in Mexico most men wear long pants and most women wear dresses or skirts. Shirts and blouses should also be with modesty. Tank tops or loose-armed shirts are not considered acceptable attire. Men should bring one dress shirt and tie for ministry purposes.

When outside of your room you are required to be in street apparel, including shoes or sandals. No housecoats or bed attire is allowed outside of your room. Again, we are not trying to be legalistic in our determining the dress code for the program. However, because of the diversity of people and personalities involved, it is best to establish policies up front thereby avoiding any later misunderstandings.

Curfews

There are certain curfews that apply to the program. During the week there is a 10:00 pm curfew. You are allowed to stay out over the weekend as long as you complete and turn in an overnight request form no later than 12:00 pm on Friday.

We recommend that you travel in pairs when at all possible. Going out late at night or traveling on buses late at night is not recommended as it can pose potential danger. Common sense and caution should be exercised when deciding to travel or stay

out over the weekend. Again, this policy is not intended to restrict your freedom, only to protect and safeguard you from unforeseen danger.

Dating Policy

During your stay in the missionary training program, dating is not allowed with other interns, other North Americans in the country or Mexican nationals. You should view your time in the internship program as a time of learning, spiritual growth and preparation.

Planned Activities

Because this is an intensive program, students are expected to participate in all required group activities and to accompany the group on all ministry outreaches. Missionary interns will be in class from approximately 9 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. every day. Late afternoons and evenings are "free time", but interns should keep in mind that they will often times have homework assignments to complete.

It is important that interns understand the nature of the training program; this is not a "vacation" or a sightseeing trip to Mexico. It is a missionary training course and the purpose of the program is academic and skill training.

In light of this, we will offer several optional sightseeing trips as a group. These will include local areas of interest and historical relevance. Most of these trips will be one day in nature, unless otherwise noted. The cost of these trips is extra and not included in the training program costs, so please plan accordingly.

Free Time

Any time that is not taken for instruction or assignments is considered free time. However, changes in activities may result in a change of schedule. Every effort will be made to make you aware of these changes. You are free to leave the grounds during this time although we again caution you to use wisdom in your travels.

We recommend that the first two weeks you only travel when the group travels. You will be learning how to travel around the area and what buses are best to get you to your intended destination. After you feel comfortable with the use of buses, it will be easier and more enjoyable for you to travel and get around in Mexico. There are great buses that go to different areas of Mexico and with proper safety precautions, can be a wonderful learning experience. We encourage you to take advantage of your free time to see the country of Mexico.

Ministry Trips

When traveling on ministry trips interns should be aware of their behavior. Be respectful of those around you.

Workshops/Guest Speakers

All interns are expected to arrive on time for workshop sessions/guest speakers. It shows a lack of respect not to plan ahead and be present at the beginning of the session.

Interns are expected to bring notebooks and any other related material with them for classes. When a guest speaker is present, please pay attention, listen and take notes, if applicable. This is one of the highest form of respect and gratitude one can show.

Proper dress code for all workshops is casual. However, please be modest in your dress. Wear shoes or sandals during all sessions... no flip-flops, please. No sunglasses are allowed during the workshop sessions unless held outdoors.

During class sit comfortably with good posture. No rocking of chairs back and forth or sitting with legs propped over the arms of chairs. Proper posture not only shows interest in what is being said, but is also conducive to proper learning.

Be attentive, show respect at all times. Remember that it could be you one day as a guest speaker and you would appreciate the same treatment.

Training Program Components

The training program is made up of eight components: Field Orientation, Cultural Adaptation, Language Learning, Concepts of Team Ministry, Interpersonal Skills, Partner Relations, Basic Mission Training and Debriefing.

Not all topics are taught lecture style. Selected training topics are taught in classroom/workshop format while other topics are integrated through practical application, actual hands-on practice, and ministry experience.

One goal of the training program is to give each intern the most up-to-date and relevant information, necessary skill sets and valuable field experience to help in their pursuit of a successful missionary career.

Evaluation

The evaluation process is on going. During the 8-week internship program each intern or intern couple will have three formal debriefings with the training directors and various informal debriefing with staff members and other interns as a group.

The purpose of these evaluations is to provide constructive feedback in areas either identified by the intern or the internship training staff. The main goal in this process is to foster an atmosphere of learning and nurturing in the skills and attitudes necessary for successful missionary work.