

# México

THE PLACE YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW



## Perception Versus Reality

As headlines tarnish Mexico's reputation with drug-related violence, travel agents may feel a struggle to sell a country that has fallen victim to sensationalized news. The newly created perception of Mexico continues to battle the reality of its current state, while officials increase security to ensure travelers' safety and continue to promote this destination by *presenting the facts*.

**FACT:** With more than 21.5 million international tourists visiting Mexico in 2009, the country expects to receive 22.6 million visitors this year, already receiving a total of 15.2 million tourists from abroad from January to August this year. **This represents a growth of 6.8 percent from last year.**

While this turmoil would lead you to believe otherwise, **Mexico actually continues to reign as the top destination for international travelers**, as well as the **most visited international tourism destination by North Americans**. Virtuoso Luxe Report recently placed Mexico second to only Italy on their list of top five international destinations.

These international travelers aren't just passing through, they're continuing to give **Rave Reviews**.

**RATED 9.1** on a scale from one to 10 according to the Mexico government's annual tourism satisfaction survey.

*three out of 10 travelers mention Mexico as their 1st choice of vacation destinations.*



*reality*

**Plus,** these travelers don't see Mexico as a one-time visit. Instead, they're continually coming back for more, with three out of 10 Americans reporting a return visit just 12 months from their last trip.

No other destination can boast this rate of return.

This expected increase in and approval from international visitors proves that travelers view Mexico's unique destinations and attractions as safe and violence in isolated areas of Mexico as unrelated to Mexico's principal tourist locations.



## Steps Mexico is Taking to Ensure Safety

From January to August 2010 Mexico has received 7.1 million tourists through air, representing a growth of 19.5% against 2009, which is why many airlines have increased the number of seats available to Mexico. Meanwhile, incidents of North American tourists being targeted or affected by drug-related violence in Mexico's principal tourist destinations remain extremely rare. U.S. consulates have joined the efforts with local authorities, distributing flyers, stickers and posters promoting tourist safety.

The president of McCabe World Travel, Anne Morgan Scully, tells us she too feels no threat from the country. "I am very comfortable traveling to Mexico," she said. "The people are some of the friendliest in the world, and Mexico is a large country."

Proof of Mexico's safety also lies with the most trusted hotel chains and airlines, which are significantly increasing their presence in Mexico.

## Easy & Safe Travels

The best airlines of North America fly to Mexico with approximately 294 flights, 44,100 seats, every day arriving from different airports all over the United States. With the bankruptcy of Mexico's largest airline, U.S. airlines are taking full advantage of the market by increasing and adding routes to Mexico.

### increased flight frequency and new routes to Mexico:

- US Airways increased flights by 7% and 23% its of available seats correspondingly.
- American Airlines increased the number of flights to Mexican destinations.
- Virgin America will start a Los Angeles to Cancun flight as well as flights from San Francisco to Los Cabos and San Francisco to Cancun by the end of the year.
- Frontier Airlines is flying from Minneapolis to Los Cabos and from Indianapolis to Cancun starting in December 2010.
- Air Canada is flying to several Mexican destinations from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.
- British Airways will fly the London to Cancun route starting in December 2010.

### increased number of seats on Mexico flights:

- In Canada, Sunwing has increased the number of seats available to Mexico by 16%.
- West Jet increased its available seats to Mexico by 49% in comparison to 2009.
- Alaska Airlines has increased its available seats by 24% in comparison to 2009.
- In Spain, Iberia increased the number of seats available in 2010 to reach almost 400 thousand seats, which represents an increase of 75% in comparison to 2008.

## Selling Points for Agents

A common misconception about Mexico is that because violence is happening in one location, then it's happening all across the country. **With a country nearly three times the size of Texas, this is clearly false.** The trouble is some visitors don't realize the incredible size of Mexico and the sheer distances between its tourist destinations and other cities.

**area of incident: Ciudad Juarez  
tourist destination: Los Cabos** 650 nearly miles apart  
*it's like going to Miami from Atlanta*

**area of incident: Tijuana  
tourist destination: Puerto Vallarta** 1000 nearly miles apart  
*it's like going to New York from Orlando*

**area of incident: Tijuana  
tourist destination: Cancun** 1750 nearly miles apart  
*it's like going to Los Angeles from Chicago*

The diversity of its areas goes without saying, and supposed widespread violence is really nothing more than a catch phrase.

"I think of Mexico as a place to visit over and over again to truly understand its diversity."

— Anne Morgan Scully  
President, McCabe World Travel

*Mexico's unique and varied destinations and attractions are really what make this country stand apart from other well-traveled areas.*

With more spas than any country in the world, after the U.S., over 144 golf courses, 30,000 archeological sites and 31 UNESCO World Heritage sites, Mexico has something to offer any and all types of travelers.



\* This survey, carried out since 2001 by Mexico's Center of Advanced Tourism Studies (CESTUR), comprised of 26,000 interviews carried out in 22 beach destinations and several other major tourism destinations, including Mexico City.