
MEXICO

FLAG



FACTS AND STATISTICS

Location: Middle America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, between Belize and **the USA** and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and the US

Capital: Mexico City

Climate: varies from tropical to desert

Population: 131+ million (2019 est.)

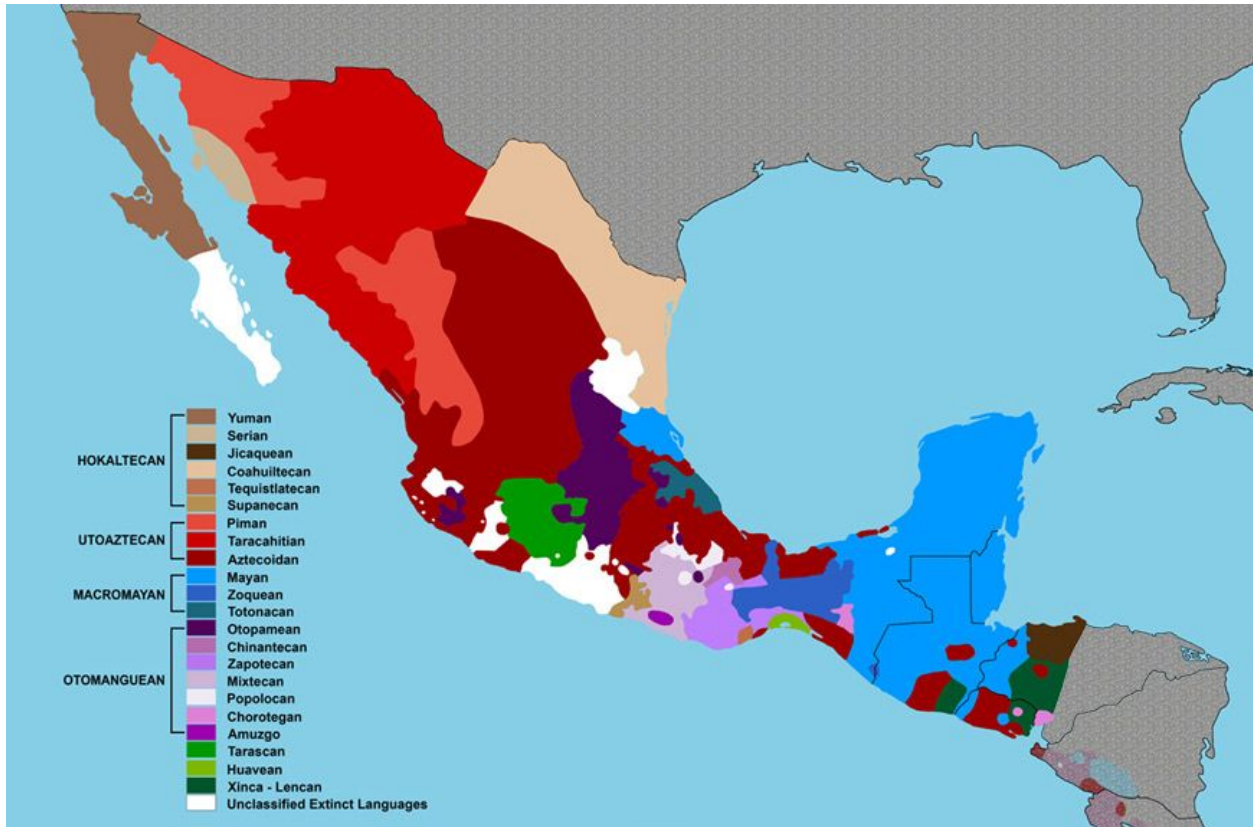
Ethnic Make-up: mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 60%, Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian 30%, white 9%, other 1%

Religions: nominally Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 6%, other 5%

Government: federal republic

STATES OF MEXICO





LANGUAGE IN MEXICO

- Spanish control of Mexico led to the dominance of Spanish, the official language.
- As many as 100 Native American languages are still spoken in Mexico, but no single alternative language prevails. Eighty percent of those Mexicans who speak an indigenous language also speak Spanish.
- The most important of the Native American languages is Nahuatl. It is the primary language of more than a million Mexicans and is spoken by nearly one-fourth of all Native Americans in the country. This is followed by Maya, used by 14 percent of Native Americans, and Mixteco and Zapoteco, each spoken by about seven percent of Native Americans. No other indigenous language is spoken by more than five percent of Mexico's Native Americans.

MEXICAN SOCIETY & CULTURE

Mexican Family Values

- The family is at the centre of the social structure.
- Outside of the major cosmopolitan cities, families are still generally large.
- The extended family is as important as the nuclear family since it provides a sense of stability.
- Mexicans consider it their duty and responsibility to help family members. For example, they will help find employment or finance a house or other large purchase.
- Most Mexican families are extremely traditional, with the father as the head, the authority figure and the decision-maker.
- Mothers are greatly revered, but their role may be seen as secondary to that of their husband.

Hierarchical Society

- Mexican society and business are highly stratified and vertically structured.
- Mexicans emphasize hierarchical relationships.
- People respect authority and look to those above them for guidance and decision-making.
- Rank is important, and those above you in rank must always be treated with respect.
- This makes it important to know which person is in charge, and leads to an authoritarian approach to decision-making and problem-solving.
- Mexicans are very aware of how each individual fits into each hierarchy--be it family, friends or business.
- It would be disrespectful to break the chain of hierarchy.

'Machismo'

- Machismo literally means 'masculinity'.
- There are different outward behaviours to display machismo.
- For example, making remarks to women is a stereotypical sign of machismo and should not be seen as harassment.
- Mexican males generally believe that nothing must be allowed to tarnish their image as a man.

ETIQUETTE & CUSTOMS IN MEXICO

Meeting Etiquette

- When greeting in social situations, women pat each other on the right forearm or shoulder, rather than shake hands
- Men shake hands until they know someone well, at which time they progress to the more traditional hug and back slapping.
- Wait until invited before using a Mexican's first name

Gift Giving Etiquette

- If invited to a Mexican's house, bring a gift such as flowers or sweets.
- Gift wrapping does not follow any particular protocol.
- Do not give marigolds as they symbolize death.
- Do not give red flowers as they have a negative connotation.
- White flowers are a good gift as they are considered uplifting.
- Gifts are opened immediately.
- If you receive a gift, open it and react enthusiastically.

Dining Etiquette

If you are invited to a Mexican's home:

- Arrive 30 minutes late in most places (check with colleagues to see if you should arrive later than that).
- Arriving on time or early is considered inappropriate.
- At a large party you may introduce yourself.
- At a smaller gathering the host usually handles the introductions.

Watch your table manners!

- Always keep your hands visible when eating. Keep your wrists resting on the edge of the table.
- When you have finished eating, place your knife and fork across your plate with the prongs facing down and the handles facing to the right.
- Do not sit down until you are invited to and told where to sit.
- Do not begin eating until the hostess starts.
- Only men give toasts.
- It is polite to leave some food on your plate after a meal.