

LANDMARK EDUCATION VACATION COURSE

TRANSFORMING *Yesterday's* **STRATEGIES**

PUERTO VALLARTA INFORMATION

Welcome to your Transforming Yesterday's Strategies course in Puerto Vallarta! Please read over the information below to assist you in making your stay most enjoyable!

GREETINGS IN MEXICO

Greeting strangers with 'Buenos Dias' - 'Good Morning', 'Buenas Tardes' - 'Good Afternoon!', 'Buenas Noches' - 'Good Evening' is always appropriate and welcome!! Shaking hands with people is expected, even if you've already met before and have seen them three times in the same day. If you have met the female before it is customary to kiss the cheek.! If you haven't seen them for a week, or more, be prepared for 'un abraso' - an embrace. Male or female.

TELEPHONE AND EMAIL

Long distance telephone calls from Mexico to the United States can be very expensive. Don't be surprised by direct calls to cost up to! \$6 per minute. Even calling card calls can cost! \$5 per call to just access a long distance operator not to mention the long distance charges. The most economical option is to purchase a prepaid calling cards for the pay phone in \$20-\$100 Pesos. These calls will cost about \$1 per minute to the United States. To save from having a huge phone bill, we recommend having your friends and family call you each day at a designated time for non-emergency calls.

BUSINESS CENTER

The hotel has a business center that can assist you with Internet access from their computers. You should be able to access any web based email service (such as Hotmail and Yahoo). You can also connect your laptop to either an Ethernet connection or WiFi connection for a fee from your room. You will be charged approximately \$23 for a 24 hour time period. You can also make copies and print pages from your laptop or disk at the business center.

CURRENCY CONVERSION

The current exchange rate for Mexican Pesos to US Dollars is approximately 10 to 1. That means for every dollar you can buy 10 pesos. Most! businesses (except for some public transportation services) will accept US Dollars making it unnecessary to exchange your dollars to pesos. You can often get the best exchange rate by using your credit card for your purchases.

GROUP DINNER MENUS

Group dinners will consist of delicious buffets on the first two nights (welcome dinner and then the cruise to Caletas) and a plated meal service at Café des Artiste and the farewell dinner. On evenings with a plated menu, the main entrée for these dinners will be fish (sea bass and then, salmon.) If you are vegetarian, there is a vegetarian alternative available. Please inform us by phone if you should have the vegetarian alternative. On the last night, our menu will consist of tornadoes of beef and grilled salmon as the main entrée. If you wish to have two salmon filets instead of the combo, please put your name on the "two salmon" list at the Hospitality Desk by Thursday evening.

HOSPITALITY DESK HOURS

The Transforming Yesterday's Strategies Hospitality Desk will be open each day for several hours. Please check your course agenda for hours and location. Here, you can sign up for excursions, additional spa treatments at Terra Noble, or ask questions that might make your vacation more enjoyable.! Important updates will be posted on a flip chart next to the desk.

TERRA NOBLE

During our stay in Puerto Vallarta, Terra Noble will host our spa treatments and massages. Please communicate any surgeries or other health concerns you might have regarding your massage to your therapist at the beginning of your treatment.! Though traditionally massages are done in the nude, you have the option of wearing a bathing suit. You may wish to bring a swimsuit to Terra Noble, if you plan to sun bathe. Restrooms and changing facilities are also available at Terra Noble.

Transportation to Terra Noble will depart from the hotel lobby. Please look at your spa confirmation for the time you should be departing the hotel. Please plan on arriving at least five (5) minutes before this departure time so we can have an on time departure.! Make sure to bring with you the spa confirmation, a towel, and tote for your clothing, food, etc. It's advisable to bring your own food to Terra Noble (no lunch will available on site). Water, tea, juices and the like will be available.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Public bus transportation can take you almost everywhere for about 5 pesos (less than 50 cents).!! To get to town from the Marina, take the public bus that says 'Centro' on it.! These buses will drop you off in the heart of downtown where the shopping, dining and entertainment is abundant.

Taxis are both a practical and speedy!way to get around Puerto Vallarta. The cost for a taxi cab (that can fit three people) from the hotel to the main downtown area is about \$50 Pesos (or approximately 5 dollars). Costs are higher If you are going further south or obscure locations such as Terra! Noble (but generally should be less than \$10 each way).

Recommendations! from taxi drivers on where to eat etc. are not reliable! since many may be getting a kickback. There have been some recent complaints of taxi drivers taking people to different places than requested because of this. If the driver tells you the place is closed or he doesn't know where it is - take another taxi.

LOCAL WATER AND SAFE DRINKING WATER

The tap water from your hotel room at the Westin Regina is safe to drink. The water is purified and sanitized via the hotel's purification system. The food (including fresh fruits and salads) is washed and processed before it is prepared in most major restaurants and eateries.!

If you wish to stock up on bottled water or anything else you miss from the United States, you can visit the Walmart nearby (within 5 minutes taxi cab ride). Though the prices will be in pesos, they are comparable to what you would pay in the United States.

HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CARE

There are many excellent doctors in town, both traditional and homeopathic. Emergency medical and surgical procedures are available at the hospitals here and, there is also an AirVac program. Puerto Vallarta has a new hospital, the St. Javier, that is minutes from the hotel. In the event of an emergency, please dial "0" for the Service Express and state your emergency.!

If you are not feeling well or have a concern about your well being, please talk to the course supervisor, Carrie McLaughlin (at the back of the room) regardless of how minor you may think the situation might be.

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NIGHT LIFE

Puerto Vallarta is a party town. Whether you want Disco, Jazz, Rock & Roll or Latin/Salsa, this city has got it. Keep in mind, the locals do not eat dinner before 9:00 PM so most night spots do not even open until 11:00 PM. On the Malecon (sea front) there are many Dance Bars, offering 2 for 1 drinks all day and night. For the hottest spots for any given night, ask our local experts at the Hospitality Desk.

GRATUITIES AND TIPPING

Bellman and Maid gratuities at the Westin hotel have already been prepaid. The exception would be maid gratuities for nights that you have reserved either before or after the program. Also, gratuities for your breakfasts, dinners and transportation to the various events is also included and prepaid. At Terra Noble, a standard gratuity has been prepaid but you may wish to bring extra cash for additional tips to reward exceptional service. Gratuities for your excursions should be given at the conclusion of each tour.

MAP OF THE AREA

Maps of the Puerto Vallarta area and tour and excursion brochures will be available at the Hospitality Desk.! Enjoy your stay here in Puerto Vallarta!

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