



Transportation & Arrival to Tijuana

For volunteers traveling from outside of California, we recommend flying into San Diego International Airport and crossing into Tijuana on foot. To arrive at the border using public transportation, please check the San Diego online public transportation trip planner: <https://www.sdmts.com/>. You may also take an Uber/Lyft from the airport to the border.

We recommend using Uber for transportation in Tijuana. Please download the application to your phone prior to your arrival. For non-Spanish speakers there is the option to use Uber English and work with drivers who are bilingual.

There are parking lots near the Plaza de Las Americas for volunteers to leave their vehicle. We recommend that you cross into Mexico at the pedestrian crossing at the Pedwest port-of-entry (across from the Las Americas Premium Outlets on Virginia Ave) and arrange for an Uber when you exit the port of entry to the Mexican side of the border. Note: this entrance is not accessible after 10 pm. After 10pm, you must use the pedestrian crossing at San Ysidro East.

Those who do wish to drive in Mexico must ensure that their personal or rented vehicle has Mexican auto insurance.

Passport & Visa Requirements

Volunteers must present a valid US passport upon entering Mexico. Visitors will be asked the length of their stay in Tijuana, and will be provided a tourist permit for the length of their stay. For trips of seven days or more, volunteers must pay a \$25 fee for the tourist permit. This permit is valid for 180 days. Trips less than seven days in duration do not carry a permit fee.

Technology

We strongly recommend that volunteers contact their cell phone carriers to determine what data plan they should purchase in advance of their trip to allow them to avoid international roaming charges, while at the same time allowing volunteers to use data on their phones for other necessary activities, such as ordering transportation or making a phone call.

We strongly recommend that volunteers download the Uber app to their cell phones prior to their arrival. We do not have Lyft in Tijuana, and while there are regular taxis (known as “taxi libres”), Uber is the most cost-effective and safest option for visitors unfamiliar with the city.

We strongly recommend that volunteers download Whatsapp to their cell phones prior to their arrival. In some instances, volunteers may need to conduct follow-up with asylum seekers who are still in Tijuana. Whatsapp is a free and secure way to communicate across international borders. While Signal is also an excellent app for this reason, the majority of refugees with whom volunteers will be interacting use Whatsapp.

Lodging

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Airbnb Recommendations

Mexican human rights attorney, Graciela Zamudio, is the director of Proyecto Alma, a local nonprofit organization, Graciela rents out the second bedroom of her apartment overlooking the Pacific ocean on Airbnb. She is bilingual (English / Spanish) and an excellent source of information on the local community of migrant rights issues and activism. Contact Graciela via email to reserve your stay: gzamca@yahoo.com.

Airbnb by Edgar Bello: Edgar is a local engineer and musician with three properties overlooking the Pacific ocean. He is bilingual (English / Spanish) and an excellent source of information regarding local entertainment and sites. To reserve your stay, contact Edgar via Airbnb: <https://www.airbnb.com/users/31148092/listings>

GaryMarCenter - The GaryMar Center / Centro GaryMar is a home / meeting space operated by Mar Cardenas, and her husband Gary, two San Diegan based Unitarian Universalists and activists. The center functions as both lodging and a meeting space for groups who come to the border to do social justice work. This site is ideal for groups and can accommodate 18+ individuals. It boasts a rooftop terrace with an oceanview. To reserve your stay, contact Mar and Gary at: <https://www.facebook.com/CUPTJ/>

Downtown Hotel Recommendations

Lucerna Hotel: www.hoteleslucerna.com/tijuana/

Palacio Azteca: www.hotelpalacioazteca.com/

City Express Hotel Tijuana Rio:

www.cityexpress.com/en/express/hotels-mexico/baja-california/tijuana/rio

Hotel Real del Rio: www.realdelrio.com/