

CENTRAL  
**MEXICO**  
THE REWILD WAY



**REWILD**  
SAFARIS™

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# Welcome!

We are excited and grateful you have entrusted us to guide and support you on your journey. Please consider this guidebook essential instructions for your upcoming adventure.

Refer to it for everything from passport and visa instructions to tipping etiquette, as well as important health, safety, and conservation information.

At Rewild Safaris, our “what” is providing sustainable luxury for travelers and continuing our growth as a leader in conservation-centered premium travel. Our “why” is to inspire traveler commitment to wildlife protection, preservation, and the rehabilitation of the wild.

We hope to help “rewild” your soul and spirit through these life-changing escapes from an overdeveloped world, to profoundly connect you to the wild, and inspire support for vital global conservation efforts.

By joining us on this adventure, you are helping to protect Mexico’s incredible wildlife and support sustainable tourism. Together, we can ensure these wild spaces thrive for generations to come. So let the rewilding begin!



**Tom LaRock**  
PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER



**James Ward**  
CHIEF EXPLORATIONS OFFICER

# DESTINATION MEXICO



## WHERE WINGS TURN THE FOREST TO GOLD

Beyond the energy of Mexico City, the land rises into a dramatic highland landscape shaped by volcanoes, forests, and centuries of human history. Central Mexico unfolds in layers, from ancient canals and colonial towns to pine and oyamel clad mountains that stretch west toward Michoacán. Cool, mist filled air and winding mountain roads define the transition from city to countryside, revealing a quieter, deeply rooted side of the region.

This is a place where culture and landscape are inseparable. Indigenous Purépecha heritage, Catholic traditions, and seasonal rhythms are reflected in lively town plazas, hillside churches, artisan workshops, and bustling markets filled with regional produce, textiles, and handcrafted goods. Cornfields, orchards, and agave patchwork the highlands, while local cuisine draws on ancestral techniques that remain central to daily life. Towns and rural communities across Michoacán and the surrounding states continue to live in close connection with the forests that sustain them.

In the surrounding highlands, time seems to slow. Forests grow denser, the air cooler, and the sense of place more immersive. Each year, these mountains quietly become a seasonal refuge for one of the natural world's great migrations, a phenomenon long woven into the cultural memory and identity of the region. Remote yet accessible from Mexico City, central Mexico's highland forests offer travelers a rare blend of history, living tradition, and wild landscapes that remain profoundly connected.

# Central Mexico Wild Facts



## TIME ZONE

Central Mexico follows Central Standard Time (GMT -6). The region observes Daylight Saving Time, shifting one hour forward from March to November.



## LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official and most widely spoken language. In the highland towns near the monarch reserves, English is less common than in Mexico's major beach destinations, though you will often find bilingual guides at visitor centers and sanctuaries. A few simple phrases go a long way—"Hola" (Hello), "Buenos días" (Good morning), and "Gracias" (Thank you).



## GEOGRAPHY

Mexico borders the United States to the north and Guatemala and Belize to the south. Its landscapes range from northern deserts and central plateaus to volcanic highlands, fertile valleys, and tropical lowlands. The country is flanked by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea to the east, with more than 5,700 miles (9,000 km) of coastline.



## CLIMATE

Central Mexico's highland climate is shaped by altitude rather than the sea.

**Winters (November–March)**, when the monarch butterflies arrive, are cool and crisp with daytime highs around 60–70°F (15–21°C) and chilly mornings that can dip near freezing.

**Summers (June–September)** are warmer, often reaching the upper 70s to low 80s°F (25–28°C), with afternoon rains common during the wet season. Spring and fall bring mild, dry weather with clear skies—ideal for exploring mountain trails and villages.



## CURRENCY

The Mexican Peso (MXN) is the official currency. While credit cards and ATMs are widely available in Mexico City, US dollars are not generally accepted. As travelers venture into the highland towns and monarch reserves, pesos become essential for all purchases, including markets, shops, and tipping. Carrying cash is recommended, as credit card use is limited in rural areas. US dollars can be exchanged for pesos at airports, banks, or exchange houses (casas de cambio).



## FINDS

Colorful handwoven textiles, embroidered blouses, rebozos (shawls), silver jewelry, hand-painted Talavera pottery, local ceramics, leather goods, and regional specialties such as cajeta (goat's milk caramel), vanilla, artisanal chocolate, and mezcal.

**NOTE:** Avoid items made from endangered species. Support local artisans by purchasing from recognized cooperatives and fair-trade shops.

Nature can live without us but  
we as human beings, we can't  
live without nature.

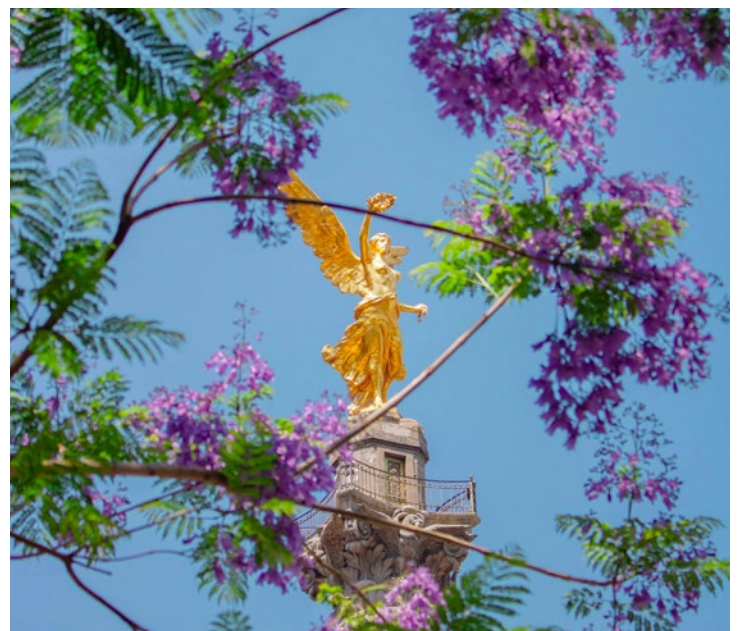
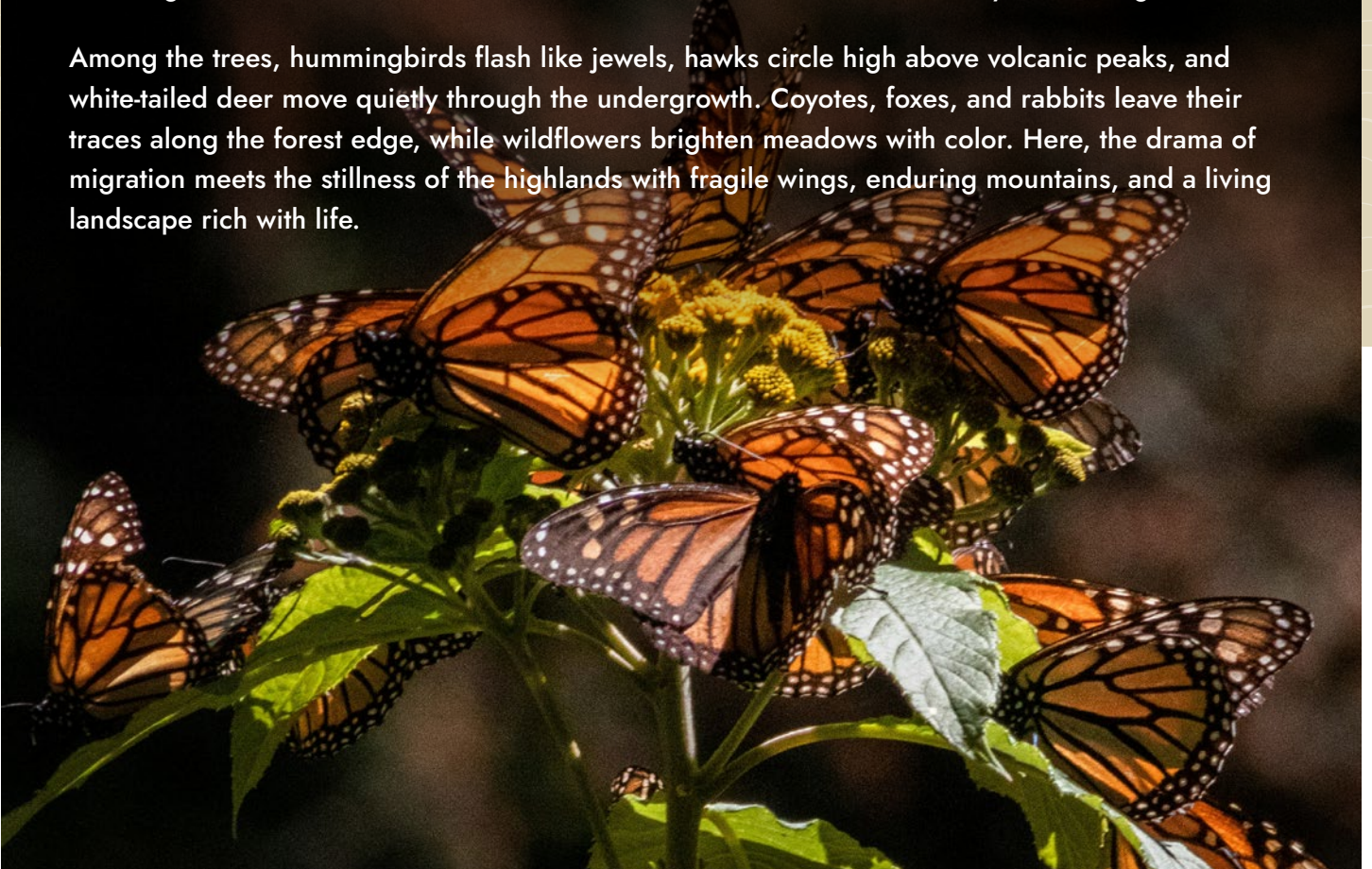
—Homero Aridjis,  
*a Mexican conservationist protecting  
the Monarchs in Michoacán*



# Wildlife & Safari Highlights

In Central Mexico, the wild reveals itself in the cool embrace of mountain forests. Each winter, millions of monarch butterflies arrive from across North America, cloaking oyamel fir trees in shimmering orange and black. As the sun warms the canopy, the forest comes alive with a fluttering that sounds like soft rain, and clouds of butterflies rise into the sky in dazzling waves.

Among the trees, hummingbirds flash like jewels, hawks circle high above volcanic peaks, and white-tailed deer move quietly through the undergrowth. Coyotes, foxes, and rabbits leave their traces along the forest edge, while wildflowers brighten meadows with color. Here, the drama of migration meets the stillness of the highlands with fragile wings, enduring mountains, and a living landscape rich with life.





# Conservation: Literally, A Way of Life

Central Mexico's volcanic highlands and oyamel fir forests are recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for their unique ecological importance. Conservation efforts here focus on protecting the fragile forest habitat that sustains the monarch migration and countless other species, while also working with local communities to develop eco-tourism that supports livelihoods and reduces pressure on the land. Reforestation projects, sustainable forestry initiatives, and strict protections against illegal logging are central to preserving this irreplaceable ecosystem for future generations.



**1** UNESCO World Heritage natural site Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve

**~140,000**  
acres of protected highland forest

**57,000+**  
acres designated core protected zones

**>200**  
tree nurseries established





## Getting the Shots

James Ward, our Chief Explorations Officer, is also a professional wildlife and conservation photographer. Here are a few tips he'd like you to consider.

**Light in the forest:** Mornings are cool and misty, with soft light that flatters both trees and clustered monarchs. As the sun warms the air, butterflies stir into motion, illuminated by shafts of light through the canopy. Midday brings peak activity but harsher light. Late afternoons turn clearings golden, ideal for wide shots in flight.

**Lenses and gear:** A zoom lens (70–200mm or 100–400mm) frames both high clusters and close-ups without disturbing the butterflies. A light macro lens works well for detail shots of wings or wildflowers. Keep setups minimal as trails are steep and protect gear from dust and mist.

**Silence and stillness:** Sanctuaries are hushed places. Speak softly, walk gently, and set cameras to silent shutter mode. Quiet presence preserves the atmosphere and leads to more natural, immersive images.

**Angles and perspective:** Don't just shoot up at clusters, crouch low when butterflies rest on the ground or swirl through meadows. Wide angles capture abundance, while including people beneath wing-filled trees conveys both intimacy and scale.

**Telling the story:** Think beyond close-ups. Frame trails winding through forests, butterflies rising against volcanic peaks, or sunlight scattering through wings like stained glass. Show both detail and place to capture the wonder of migration.

**Respect the wild:** Never touch or pick up monarchs, even if grounded on cold mornings. Stay on marked trails, move slowly, and let patience guide your photography. The best images come from quiet observation and respect.



# Local Flavors

Central Mexico offers a rich culinary journey shaped by its volcanic soils, fertile valleys, and centuries of cultural tradition. From bustling markets in Mexico City to small mountain villages near the monarch reserves, flavors here reflect both land and heritage. Here are some dishes and tastes you may encounter along the way:

**Tamales:** Corn masa filled with meats, chilies, or beans, wrapped in husks and steamed

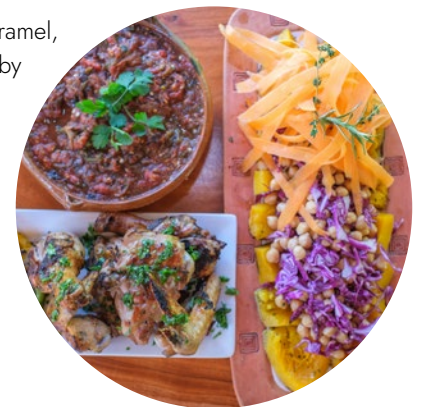
**Mole:** A complex sauce of chilies, spices, nuts, and chocolate, often served over chicken or turkey

**Carnitas:** Slow-cooked pork, crispy on the outside and tender within, often served in tacos



**Cajeta:** Sweet goat's milk caramel, a specialty of Celaya in nearby Guanajuato

**Atole & Hot Chocolate:** Traditional warm drinks made from corn masa or cacao, often flavored with cinnamon and vanilla



## ***When not to be adventurous:***

**Drink only bottled, purified, or filtered water.** Avoid tap water, ice cubes, and unpasteurized juices

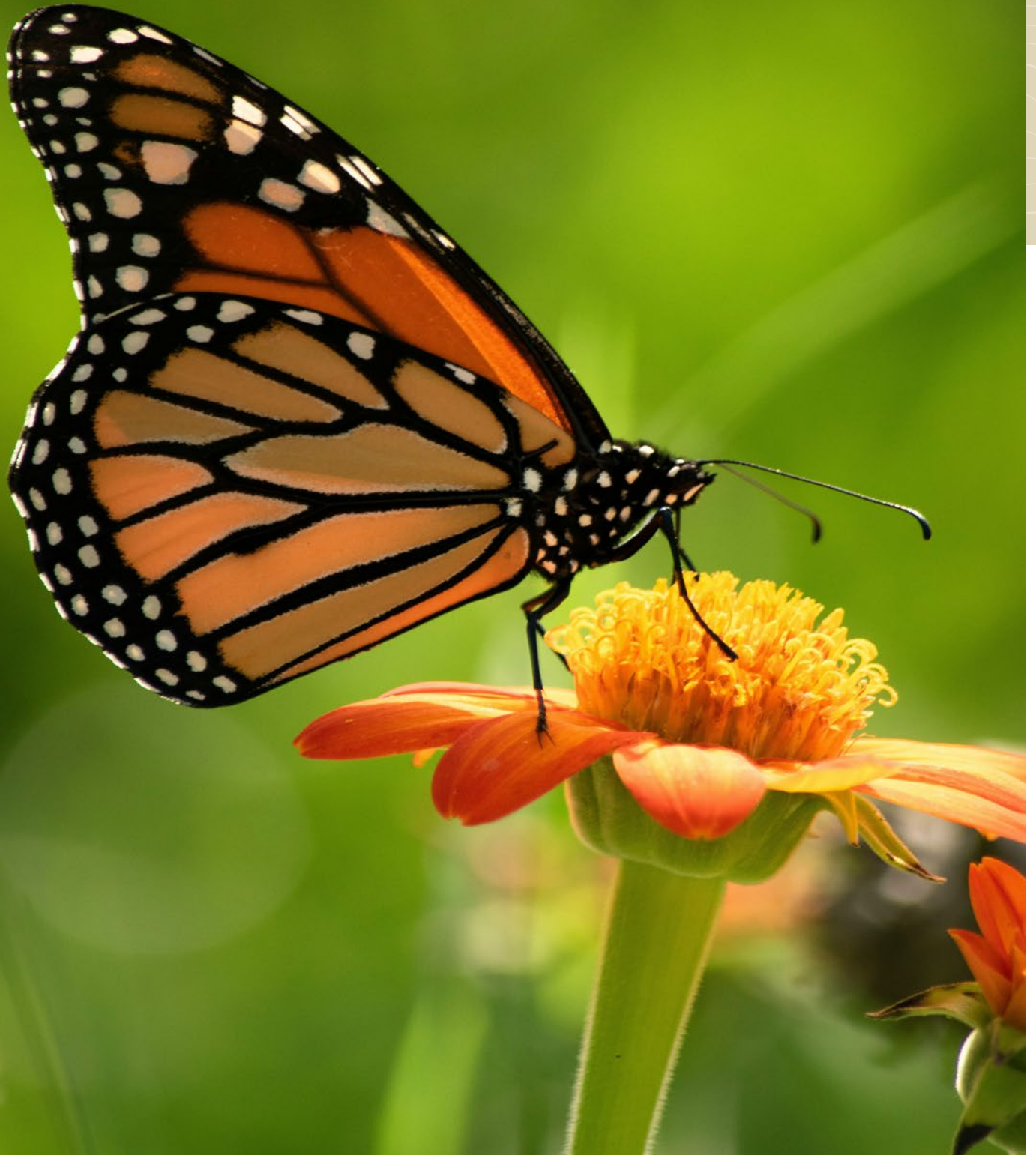
**Fruit & vegetables:** Avoid raw salads & prepared fruit (peeled) outside of your safari accommodations

**Street food:** Avoid unless recommended by your guide

**Meat & dairy:** Choose meats that are well-cooked, dairy products that are pasteurized, avoid anything that has been sitting unrefrigerated

**If you have any dietary restrictions, make sure to include them on your safari registration**

# PRE-FLIGHT CHECKLIST



# Entry Requirements

- Valid, signed passport
- Passport is valid at time of entry
- At least two blank pages in passport
- Passport name matches your booking exactly
- Forma Migratoria Múltiple (FMM), the official tourist entry permit, issued on arrival
- Proof of Tourist Travel: Travelers may be asked to present itinerary and/or to demonstrate sufficient funds for their stay

Share with us: Provide Rewild Safaris with a copy of your valid passport during your safari registration or, send via encrypted link: <https://rewildsafaris.com/passport-upload/>



## PASSPORT TIPS



- ✓ Carry your passport securely and keep it with you at all times.
- ✓ Expedited Services: Use professional passport services if you need a fast renewal.
- ✓ Carry color photocopies of your passport's photo page at all times.
- ✓ Lost Passport? Report it immediately to the nearest embassy or consulate. Your photocopy can speed up replacement.

# Booking Flights

**IMPORTANT:** Once you've booked your flights, forward your confirmation to [support@rewildsafaris.com](mailto:support@rewildsafaris.com) so our Mexico team can coordinate a seamless safari.

# Visas

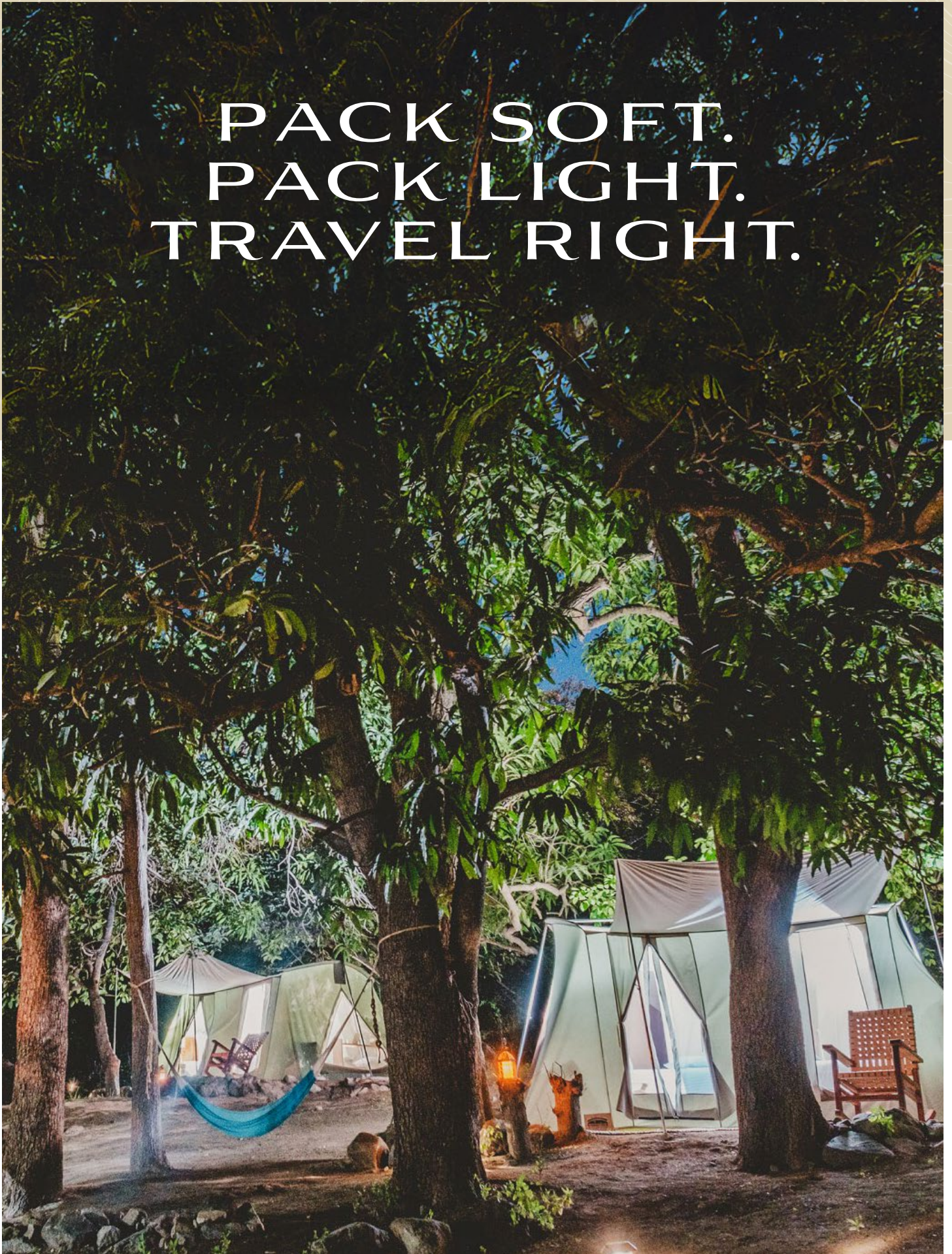
US, Canada, UK and EU passport holders do not require a visa to enter Mexico for stays of up to 180 days as tourists.

## FLIGHT TIPS



- ✓ Book early: Reserve flights ahead of time for the best prices and seat options
- ✓ Allow extra time: We recommend allowing 2 - 3 hours before your international departures and for connections
- ✓ Early arrival: Consider arriving a day early in case of delays and to acclimate to your destination

PACK SOFT.  
PACK LIGHT.  
TRAVEL RIGHT.



# Your Carry On

## THE ESSENTIALS

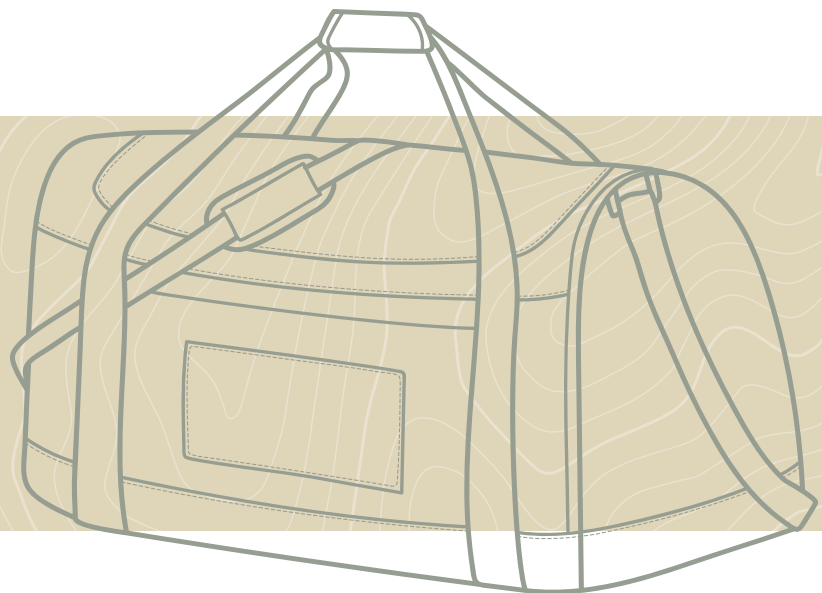
- Passport
- Photocopies of your passport's photo page in a separate compartment
- Medications
- Cameras and Devices (plus memory cards, extra batteries, chargers, lens cleaning supplies)
- Change of clothes (in case of luggage delay)
- Spare eyeglasses or contacts (with a copy of your prescription)
- Credit Cards and Cash

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## Luggage Limits

Safaris in Central Mexico generally do not include domestic flights, so please check your international airline for baggage restrictions. We still strongly recommend packing light in soft-sided bags, as all luggage must fit comfortably in the vehicles used for transfers between locations.

**Recommended luggage for your travels will be gifted to you by Rewild Safaris.**



# DRESS FOR SUCCESS



# What to Pack

## CLOTHING

- Light, breathable, quick dry, moisture wicking layers for comfort in variable weather in neutral colors
- Lightweight long and short sleeved shirts, pants, and shorts—long layers for sun protection and cooler temperatures
- Warm clothing for evenings—fleece, base layers, light warm jacket
- Sandals or flipflops e.g. Tevas, Chacos
- Comfortable hiking shoes or boots
- Comfortable hiking socks
- Casual shoes for hotels & lodges
- Warm hat/beanie
- Light gloves
- Hat for sun protection
- UV protective, polarized sunglasses
- Light rain jacket
- Bandana or Buff for sun protection
- Optional: Swimwear—some hotels & lodges will have swimming pools



## OTHER ESSENTIALS

- Travel adapters: Electrical sockets in Mexico, are typically **Type A and Type B** (the same as in the US and Canada). Voltage is **110V–127V at 60Hz**. Travelers from the US/Canada usually don't need an adapter or converter, while others will need a universal adapter.
- Good binoculars for wildlife viewing
- High-SPF sunscreen and lip balm
- Daypack
- Insect repellent
- Headlamp or small flashlight
- Medications, including a small first-aid kit
- Device chargers
- Power bank / portable charger
- Extra batteries for your camera and devices
- Reusable water bottle
- Optional: trekking poles

### CLOTHING TIPS



Some suggestions for upscale performance (and fashionable) safari gear:

- ✓ Patagonia
- ✓ Orvis
- ✓ Fjallraven
- ✓ Arc'teryx
- ✓ LL Bean
- ✓ Tilley Endurables

# SAFE TRAVELS



# Health & Safety

## VACCINATIONS AND MEDICATIONS

Consult your doctor or travel clinic at least six months before departure. Inform them of everywhere you're visiting, your current medications and conditions. Bring enough of your prescription medicines in their original packaging. It's also a good idea to pack medications for digestive discomfort, itching and rashes just in case.

## ALTITUDE AWARENESS

This safari can go above 3000 meters / 9,800 feet where it is common for travelers to experience some adverse health effects due to the altitude—regardless of your age, gender and fitness. Altitude sickness has the potential to affect all trekkers from 2500m and higher. You will ascend slowly to give our bodies plenty of time to adjust to the smaller quantities of oxygen in the air. However, it is important to be aware of the normal altitude symptoms that you may encounter, but not worry about:

- Periods of sleeplessness
- Occasional loss of appetite
- Vivid, wild dreams at around 2500-3800m altitude
- Unexpected momentary shortness of breath, day and night
- Periodic breathing that wakes you occasionally
- Stuffy nose
- Dry cough develops
- Mild headache

If you feel unwell, even mildly nauseous, dizzy, or just "off", you should inform your group leader right away. Open communication helps us monitor your well-being, respond quickly to any concerns, and ensure the best possible experience for both you and the group.



## ASK ABOUT

- **Altitude:** Certain medical conditions can worsen at high altitude and are difficult to treat on site. It is essential to discuss any pre-existing conditions with your doctor. Preventative medications for altitude sickness may be recommended to help your body acclimatize and reduce symptoms. Always seek medical advice before taking any medication.
- **Vaccinations:** Share your itinerary with your doctor or travel clinic for accurate vaccination requirements or recommendations
- **Medication restrictions:** Some destinations have requirements, restrictions & penalties for traveling with certain medications.

Check the CDC website (US) or your local government travel advisory website for up-to-date information on your destination/s.  
<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

### HEALTH TIPS



- ✓ Stay hydrated—carry a reusable water bottle and consider electrolytes
- ✓ Drink only bottled or treated water—including for brushing your teeth
- ✓ Eat mindfully—ease into local cuisine to avoid digestive upset
- ✓ Prepare for altitude—take it slow, rest as needed, and listen to your body
- ✓ Layer for changing weather



# ON YOUR SAFARI



# Good to Know

## TRAVEL SMART

It's always wise to take basic precautions when traveling internationally: Be aware of your surroundings, especially in areas frequented by tourists. Do not leave your food or drink unattended. Being alert is a good way to help ensure a safe and enjoyable trip.

Check for travel advisory updates on your local government website. For the US: <https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories.html>

## HEALTH CARE IN MEXICO

While Mexico City and larger towns have excellent hospitals and clinics, the reserves are located in rural highland areas where advanced medical care is not immediately accessible. In the event of a serious emergency, transport to Mexico City may be required, and response times can be slowed by mountain roads and remote locations. Guides and local staff can provide basic first aid but should not be relied upon for full medical care. We strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance that includes medical evacuation coverage and always keeping your emergency contacts with you.

## VALUABLES AND PACKING

Keep valuables with you or in safes when available. Travel light for easier mobility and smoother transfers.

## CPAP MACHINES

Some lodges run on solar or generators with limited hours. If you need one, consider purchasing a portable, battery-powered model to take with you. If you can only use a CPAP that requires overnight electricity, contact us at [support@rewildsafaris.com](mailto:support@rewildsafaris.com) to ensure that the lodges and camps on your itinerary can accommodate your needs.

## STAYING CONNECTED

Mobile coverage in Mexico is generally good in cities and towns, including Mexico City, but it can be limited in the rural highlands. WhatsApp is widely used and often the most reliable way to communicate when Wi-Fi is available. Many hotels and lodges provide basic Wi-Fi, usually sufficient for messaging and checking emails, though not always strong enough for large uploads or streaming. Consider it an opportunity to stay lightly connected while embracing the quiet rhythms of the mountains and forests.

## ETIQUETTE

Respect Mexico's extraordinary wildlife, environment and culture by following these guidelines:

- Follow local laws and customs
- Ask before photographing people, especially in villages or markets
- Keep a respectful distance from all wildlife
- Do not touch, chase or feed wildlife
- Do not remove anything from the environment e.g. rocks, plants, wood
- Do not litter
- Rewild Safaris maintains a strict no smoking/no vaping policy
- Always follow your guide's instructions to minimize your impact
- Conserve resources like water and electricity
- Practice the "Leave No Trace" principal

### TIPS ON TIPPING



#### PER PERSON, USD / MXN:

Trip leader: 30-40 USD / 500-700 MXN per day

Driver (half/full day): 10-20 USD / 170–340 MXN per day

Driver (short transfers): 5 USD / 85 MXN per transfer

Local guides: 10-15 USD / 170–255 MXN per activity

Restaurants (meals not included on safari): 10% of total bill

Note: Tipping is preferred in pesos (MXN)

# It's Go Time!

Thank you for choosing Rewild Safaris. This journey not only offers incredible wildlife and landscapes but also supports conservation efforts in Mexico. Your trip makes a difference by helping preserve these ecosystems and uplift local communities.

Get ready for an unforgettable experience—¡Vamos!

