

SOL AZTECA

PROJECTS ABROAD MEXICO NEWSLETTER

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

***Samantha Orenstein - 2 weeks
specials***

WHAT TO DO...

212 Music fest

MEXICAN CUISINE

Chilaquiles

Editor's Notes:

The summer is gone and we would like to thank all the volunteers who took part in our projects during this time.

You guys did a great job working with animals, helping at the orphanages and the NGO's doing Journalism and Business, be sure that you will be gratefully remembered by the local staff there and for us as well.

The time is going so fast and the second part of the year has already reached its second month, which means that besides the projects available for the summer, the schools are open again and with this, the chance to join our Teaching programmes at the secondary school and the University.

Also, we are a bit sad because our colleague Jonatan Arriaga, who collaborates all the summer with us, has to say goodbye to re-join school again, so we want to thank him for all his help during the summer. Thanks Mate!!

Well, that is all for now, please enjoy this issue and don't hesitate to write us if you want to collaborate

Cheers!



Jorge Aguayo
Social Manager
Projects Abroad Mexico

Volunteer Story

Samantha Orenstein – 2 Weeks Specials

When i first told my friends i would be attending the Two Week , Spanish and Conservation project in Mexico I received a variety of responses. The most common however being how brave it was of me to want to go and do it independently, without knowing anyone beforehand. I was, as expected, nervous before I came but it was clear from the moment I stepped of my flight in Guadalajara that I was in good hands.



From staying my first night at a welcoming host family to finally arriving at Campamento Tecoman one thing was exceedingly explicit. This being that the Mexico I had seen so far was almost the polar opposite to what I had expected.

Everything seemed to be incredibly green. It may just be the case that I arrived during the wet season but the way in which the nature here exposed its rich colours was so different to anything I had ever seen in London.

The camp was exactly how i had expected: sandy, humid and strangely beautiful. As basic as it all was, I had always believed that things are at their most beautiful in their natural form and the camp was no exception.

Getting to know the other people at the camp was also far easier than I had expected, as we all had at least one thing in common, we wanted to help save turtles. It was clear that the majority of people at the camp were extremely likeminded and compatible because we had all chosen to join this project and therefore had similar goals.

The work we did while at the camp varied everyday but some of the most common tasks we would carry out were: sifting sand in the hatchery to remove the roots in order for the baby turtles to have no obstruction while climbing to the surface; painting the fences and posts to keep the camp looking generally aesthetic and travelling down the road to the nearby lagoon where we would carry out bird watches to collect data for an ongoing project.



As well as doing work at the camp we would also frequently take trips to nearby places to volunteer away from the camp. One place we visited several times was a crocodile farm where we would do a number of jobs, such as cleaning out the cages; doing cloacal sexing of the crocodiles or painting the fences and gates. Another place we helped was at a turtle research centre in which we helped clean the turtles and their pools and conducted a beach clean to try and decrease the amount of plastic and other synthetic materials turtles and birds consume.

In the nights we would go on patrol of the beaches seeking out turtle nests in order to collect the eggs and ensure their safety until they hatched.

During the hours of the day when we were not working we would all just relax on the hammocks watching out over the deep and majestic Pacific Ocean and listening to its harsh waves hit the black sand just metres away from us.

Overall it is clear to me that deciding to participate in this project was one of the best decisions I ever made. Not only did I leave the project knowing I had helped towards a cause I felt strongly for but also with lifelong memories and the thought that I had amazing friends all over the world.

-Samantha Orenstein



Placement Update

Teaching

No more empty classrooms! Teaching placements are back!

After a long and well-deserved vacation, for both teachers and students, on August the 19th the New Year began here in the state of Jalisco (where Guadalajara and Ciudad Guzman are based)

According to the official numbers, more than 1700 000 students will begin a new year or stage in their academic life, some of them still at kindergarten, primary and secondary school or some of them from primary to secondary. As well the universities



Which means that teachers will need an extra pair of hands with English classes, a field where our volunteers have been very helpful; assisting them with the grammar and pronunciation exercises, giving the students a real insight about how English sounds and works and how important a second language is in these times.

English at the secondary school as well as German, French, Italian at the University is the help that volunteers can provide now that the new school year is on.

So if you want to take part in it, please do not hesitate and join us. Your help will be quite appreciated.

Hope to see you soon in Mexico!!



Where to go ...

Chapala

Lake Chapala is one of Jalisco's best day trips, a must see for everyone. The kind of place where you would spend the whole day just relaxing and walking around the lake or the square, eating ice cream (very famous by the way) or enjoying some delicious sea food.

It's Mexico's largest freshwater lake, just 1 hour away from Guadalajara going Southwest, and stands on the border between the states of Jalisco and Michoacán. Its approximate dimensions are 80 km from East to West and 18 km from North to South, and it covers a total of some 1,100 km.



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Around the lake you can find the town of Chapala, with a very nice main street full of restaurants and small cafes where people have lunch or a talk while they admire the beautiful view of the lake. The town also has a big park where people can jog and ride bicycles and is used frequently for picnics.

The lake is also a critical habitat for several species of migratory birds, such as the White Pelican, and home to thousands of indigenous plants and animals. Natural habitats of the lake maintain a healthy ecotourism. In recent years, because of the benign prevailing climate and attractive scenery, a substantial colony of retirees, including many from the United States and Canada, has established itself on the lake's shore. Particularly in the town of Ajijic, Jalisco, located just west of the city of Chapala.



Picture by SanGatiche: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sangatiche/>. Creative Commons license.

It is the perfect place to visit on a Sunday trip, a place to just relax and forget about the chaos or stress that sometimes the big city can bring to our daily lives.

What to do...

212 Fest in Guadalajara

Guadalajara is the second biggest and important city in the country and has a lot to offer to everyone who visits it all over the year.

From extraordinary landscapes, amazing museums, historical buildings and a diverse nightlife, this city has everything for everyone. But today we will talk about the contemporary scene and some of the events organized specially for the young people.



All year round there are lots of great concerts from either national or international artists. However there is an event that stands over the others and it takes place in the city of Guadalajara in September.

Organized by a local radio station called RMX, the 212 Fest brings together all the young people (and not so young as well) to this massive festival on Chapultepec Avenue (one of the most important avenues in the city) with more than 40 bands, 9 hours of music and 100,000 people together, this free festival is a 'must see' if you are (or will be) in Guadalajara in September

So now you know, if you want to hear bunch of good Latin American bands, explore the city and have a good time.... September the 7th is the day.

Mexican Kitchen

Chilaquiles

Chilaquiles is one of the most typical dishes in Mexico, the kind of classic breakfast you find in every tiny eatery around the corner, and it is a great Mexican energy booster to help you with your daily tasks.

Mexican chilaquiles are excellent for holiday breakfasts or party munchies.

Ingredients

5 to 10 guajillo peppers, stemmed and seeded

2 cloves garlic

1 (8-oz.) can tomato sauce

1 cup water

1 chicken stock cube

3 tbsp. oil

12 corn tortillas, cut into 1-inch strips

1/2 white onion, chopped (optional)

4 oz. shredded Jack cheese

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 15 to 20 minutes

Place the peppers, garlic, tomato sauce, water and stock cube in a blender or food processor; blend until smooth. Heat the oil in a large non-stick skillet over a medium-high heat. Fry the tortillas until lightly browned and crispy. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, until tender.

Top with the sauce and the cheese. Lower the heat and cook, covered, for 10 to 15 minutes or until cheese is melted and the tortillas have soaked up the sauce.

You can also add beans, 1 or 2 fried eggs on top of the chilaquiles and some Mexican green or red salsa to make it a real Mexican power breakfast!



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