

A GEOGRAPHIC STUDY OF
THE TOURIST INDUSTRY OF MEXICO

By

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PREFACE

American citizens do not visualize tourism as a complete industry. They think of the hotel, restaurant, souvenir, transportation, garage and filling stations, and sporting goods businesses as individual enterprises rather than one large combined industry. Our democracy, high economic standards, and liberal way of life allow the American citizen much time to spend in travel. An over-all look at tourism in one country, Mexico, has shown me that a large number of enterprisers are interested in this industry, and that country's government goes to great lengths to promote and build up a good tourist trade.

While in the United States Navy, I first noticed the great impact of tourism in foreign lands, especially Hawaii. I became interested in Mexico while working in San Antonio, Texas. While there, several trips were made to border towns, and the large tourist trade between the United States and Mexico was realized. A background in geography has given me a deeper knowledge of Mexico, and a reconnaissance trip to that country provided the incentive to make this study.

I owe a great deal of thanks and gratitude to my thesis adviser, Dr. Ralph Birchard, who has guided and aided me during this study. Dr. David C. Winslow, Dr. Robert C. Fite, and Dr. Edward E. Kesc are due my thanks for their helpful suggestions and criticisms. I would also like to thank the Direccion General de Turismo and the Direccion Nacional de Caminos in Mexico City for their cooperation in obtaining useful

information. Without the interest and cooperation of my wife, Joye, this study would not have been possible.

William M. Bryan

Stillwater, Oklahoma
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The considerable influence of the tourist industry is felt in many countries throughout the world. The income from tourism is highly important to the economy of some. A prime example of this fact is illustrated by Mexico. The tourist industry there has reduced the national debt at an average rate of forty-two million dollars per year for the past nineteen years.¹

Previous Studies

A growing number of research projects in recent years have centered about various phases of this increasingly important industry. Advancement in speedier transportation and betterment of roads and accommodations have enabled the tourist to broaden his scope of travel, so that tourism is not limited merely to isolated resort centers such as domestic sea coast and mountain areas. It has been estimated by leaders in the industry that a total of more than twenty-two billion dollars was spent in all forms of domestic and foreign travel by Americans in 1952, according to a report published by the University of Maryland. This information and much of that following in this section comes from a recent article by Crampon.²

¹Report of Combined Mexican Working Party, The Economic Development of Mexico (Baltimore, 1953), p. 95.

²L. J. Crampon, "Tourist Research---A Recent Development at the Universities," Journal of Marketing (July, 1955).

With the growth in importance of the tourist industry, the increased interest on the part of the researcher actually needs no explanation. Numerous surveys have been made, many at colleges and universities throughout the country. Frequently these studies have originated at, or have been undertaken by, a private or government bureau of business or economic research. No prewar tourist studies such as these have come to the attention of the writer. However, since 1947 there have been at least fifty-four studies and reports made by bureaus and departments at twenty colleges and universities.

The typical tourist survey conducted by a higher institution has covered such subjects as the place of origin or residence of the visitor, the size of the traveling party, the type of accommodations desired, the average expenditures of the tourists in the area, the activities in which the tourist desired to participate, and the tourist's opinions concerning the areas visited. Other surveys have attempted to estimate the number of visitors and total tourist expenditures in a given area, or to define the means of transportation employed in reaching the vacation or resort area. Some have investigated other subjects related to the tourist industry.

Normally the studies have been devoted to an analysis of one specific area. Frequently such surveys have been statewide, as in the case of those undertaken in Washington, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arkansas, and Colorado. Others, nonetheless, were devoted to a single resort or tourist area, such as Miami Beach in Florida, the Black Hills in South Dakota, Glacier National Park in Montana, Zion National Park in Utah, or the Rocky Mountains National Park and Pikes Peak Region in Colorado. Only

two have gone beyond the limits of the continental United States, one covering Alaska, another the Caribbean.

The studies mentioned above were all made at a college or university; however, some were undertaken in cooperation with, or through the support of, various agencies and organizations such as the United States National Park Service, the United States National Forest Service, and state highway departments. Hotels, motor courts, and other similar interested businesses have encouraged research projects in the tourist industry.

This paper deals with tourism as an economic asset to Mexico, and the reasons for the great influx of American visitors, as well as their means of transportation, accommodations, and interest in the most frequented natural and cultural attractions. The structure of the Mexican tourist industry is more readily understood through a study of its history and development.

History and Development

The substantial growth of tourism in Mexico dates back only to the beginning of World War II. Before that there were few good hotels throughout the country, and highways were often impassable. Since that time, the government recognized the importance of the tourist industry to Mexico with the building of better roads and encouragement of construction or remodeling of hotels. The Federal Tourist Bureau (Direccion General de Turismo), in the Ministry of Interior, began advertising the attractions of Mexico in the United States and abroad. A vigorous campaign to encourage travel to Mexico was started during the administration of President Avila Camacho (1940-1946). His Minister of the Interior, Miguel Aleman, appointed Alejandro Buelna to reorganize the tourist department. The press, radio chains, and movie industry of the United States were

invited to send managers, publishers, and directors to Mexico as guests of the national government. Advertising in the United States consisted of presenting special exhibits, showing of 16mm colored travelogues narrated in English, advertising widely in magazines and papers and the distributing of descriptive folders. This campaign in addition to other promotional efforts resulted in a most favorable reaction in the United States. Since 1948, about 95 per cent of the tourists entering Mexico have been residents of the United States.³

The Inter-American Travel Congress has aided a great deal in the promotion and development of tourism in Latin American countries. The Sixth Inter-American Travel Congress which met in San Jose, Costa Rica, last April, specifically recommended:

1. establishment of national tourist offices in countries that do not have them,
2. construction of more hotels,
3. simplification of documentary requirements,
4. elimination of quotas and special taxes that impede tourism,
5. simplification of customs procedure,
6. construction of access roads to points of interest, parking lots, motels, service stations and other facilities along the Pan American Highway,
7. concerted publicity efforts.⁴

These recommendations and others made in previous meetings have helped Latin American countries to establish and maintain a well-balanced tourist industry.

³Personal interview: Mexico, D. F., with Alejandro Buelna, Assistant Director of Direccion General de Turismo (August, 1955).

⁴"Dear Reader," Americas (Washington, D. C., January, 1957), Vol. 9, p. 1.

By 1944 the total number of tourists in Mexico had edged up to 126,000 yearly. The great invasion began in 1946 when the tourist traffic suddenly doubled.⁵ By that time, fortunately, the Mexicans were more or less prepared to handle such vacation trade. Despite these developments the Pan American Highway from Laredo, Texas, was the only hard-surfaced road from the United States into Mexico. Today there are two other main highways stretching southward from Nogales in Arizona and El Paso in Texas. A new four-lane speedway has been constructed in the heavily travelled tourist zone from the Capital to Cuernavaca and on to Iguala where it connects with a four-lane road to Acapulco, and still other speedways are being built. Besides, the motel system has been imported from the United States.

The Mexican government itself spent more than one million dollars to attract visitors, to protect them from "gyp" artists, to train bilingual guides, waiters, and bellboys to care for them, and to help those who get into difficulties. The Tourist Bureau licenses and regulates the nation's 126 travel agencies and 1,200 guides. Charges for tours also are standardized by the Bureau. If a tourist's automobile breaks down, the Bureau will send him a responsible mechanic, and a Bureau inspector will visit the garage to make certain that the repairs have been made properly and the bill is reasonable. All guides are required to carry an official license which they receive only after taking a special course called "Tourism," and have passed written examinations in archaeology, civics, colonial art and folklore. They are required to speak at least two languages, and new candidates must have a year of college education.

⁵See Table I.

TABLE I
 NUMBER OF TOURISTS AND TOURIST RECEIPTS, 1939-1950⁶

Year	(1) Number of Tourists ^a	Millions of Dollars						
		(2) Index 1939 = 100	(3) Net Expendi- tures of Border Visitors	(4) Tourist Expenditures	(5) Total Tourist Receipts	(6) Mexican Travel Expenditures Abroad	(7) Net Tourist Receipts ^b	(8) Receipts per Tourist (Dis) ^c
1939	139,010	100.	12.0	18.7	30.7	9.0	21.7	221
1940	133,209	95.8	13.0	17.3	30.3	8.0	22.3	228
1941	173,104	124.5	11.0	26.5	37.5	6.0	31.5	217
1942	97,785	70.3	13.0	16.4	29.4	6.0	23.4	301
1943	133,572	96.1	13.8	27.5	41.3	6.0	35.3	309
1944	126,208	90.8	16.3	32.2	48.5	6.0	42.5	384
1945	164,782	118.5	15.0	45.9	60.9	10.0	50.9	370
1946	265,234	190.8	15.6	85.6	101.2	13.9	87.3	382
1947	249,591	179.6	15.6	81.3	96.9	14.1	82.8	388
1948	264,904	190.6	28.5	87.7	116.2	12.1	104.1	439
1949	322,504	232.0	37.2	100.4	137.6	5.3	132.3	427
1950	390,097	280.6	45.4	117.0	162.4	6.3	156.1	416

Sources: Bank of Mexico, Departamento de Estudios Economicos.

^aDoes not include border visitors.

^bIncludes net receipts from border visitors and gross receipts from tourists coming into the interior.

^cObtained by dividing total tourist receipts (Column 5) by number of tourists (Column 1).

⁶Report of Combined Mexican Working Party, p. 377.

Training courses for hotel and restaurant workers are also conducted. Perfection has not been achieved, but in general the path of the tourist has been made smooth even in the more remote areas of Mexico.

The total number of tourists entering the interior of Mexico in 1956 was reported at 520,000 by the Ministry of Economy, as compared with 549,000 in 1955. Net income from tourists and border traffic was \$283.5 million as against \$263.1 million in 1955, or an increase in 1956 of over \$20 million.⁷ Tourism has become a big business in Mexico, topped only by the oil and mining industries. The American tourists comprise the third largest industry of Mexico.⁸

In the past decade and a half, more and more tourists took advantage of an economical and enjoyable vacation in Mexico. The number of tourists coming to Mexico increased almost three times from 1939 to 1950, and gross receipts rose more than five times. Since 1946, the tourist receipts have been rising at an average rate of increase of only twelve per cent of the period from 1939 to 1950. The amount of money each tourist spends during his stay in Mexico also has been skyrocketing over the years. In 1939 per capita expenditures by tourists amounted to \$221; by 1948 they increased to \$439, then declined to \$416 in 1950 as a result of the depreciation of the peso. By 1950 there were almost 400,000 tourists (Table I). The total mounted to 464,000 in 1954, and has reached to the half million mark since.⁹

⁷"Mexican Economy Makes Impressive Gain," Foreign Commerce Weekly, Washington, D. C., April 15, 1957, pp. 3 and 26.

⁸J. A. Morris, "Down in Old Mexico," Saturday Evening Post, December 3, 1955, pp. 28-29 and 138.

⁹Report of Combined Mexican Working Party, pp. 133-135.

As a result, tourism has done a great deal to improve relations between the United States and Mexico. Mexico is third in popularity to the Europe-Mediterranean area and Canada as an objective for the American traveller. (Figure 1.) The importance of tourism is obvious in the rising economy of Mexico today.¹⁰ Many small industries were established on the basis of catering to the visitors. Guide and tour services, recreational facilities for fishing and hunting, and services performed for the hotels are examples of these industries. Not to be omitted is the importance of the tourist purchases in the handcrafts and so-called souvenir industries.

The simplicity of entering and leaving, and the contiguity of, Mexico make it convenient for the American tourist to enjoy the Old World atmosphere and customs of another country at reasonable expense and effort. Formalities for entrance into and departure from Mexico are simple. No passport is required of United States citizens who may readily obtain a tourist card valid for six months. One may enter border towns for visits not exceeding 72 hours without even this formality. Before reentering the United States, after a lengthy sojourn, one must present evidence of having had a recent smallpox vaccination.¹¹ The present (1957) rate of money exchange is twelve and a half pesos to one American dollar, which is an inducement.

The "bargain rates" are not, however, the only explanation for the top place held by tourism. There is an abundance of beautiful and spectacular natural scenery. The former civilizations of the country

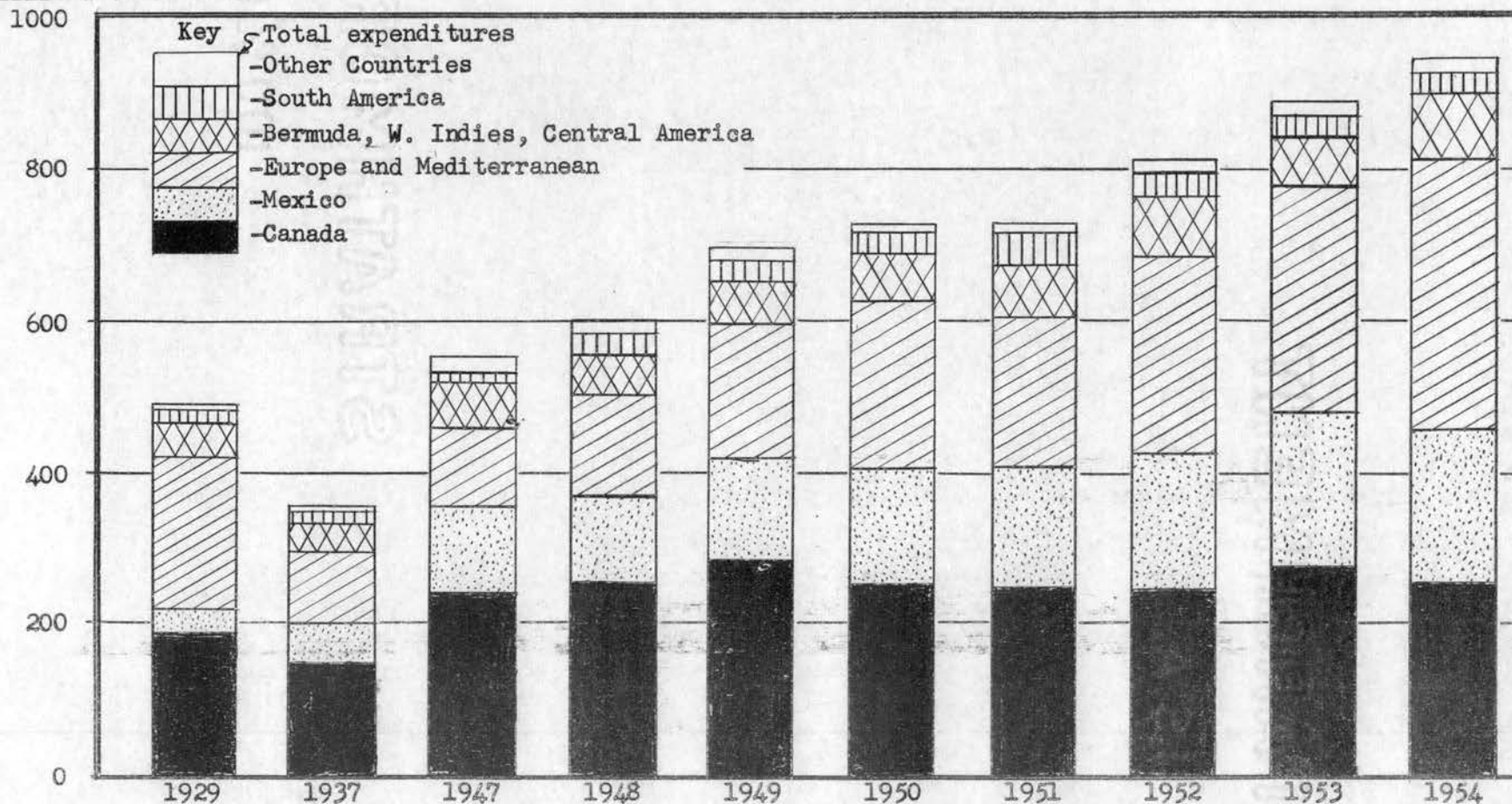
¹⁰John E. Lang, Mexico (American Geographic Society, New York, 1955).

¹¹Mexico By Motor (American Automobile Association, Washington, D. C., 1955), pp. 13-15.

Figure 1

Expenditures for Foreign Travel by United States Residents,
Less Oversea Transportation¹²

Millions of Dollars



¹²Survey of International Travel, U. S. Department of Commerce (Washington, D. C., 1956), p. 6.

have left remnants of their varied cultures. There are palaces, cathedrals, pyramids, ancient aqueducts, shrines and gardens of the Maya, Toltec, Aztec and Spanish cultures. Other attractions are native products of silver, leather, pottery, and textiles. Bullfights, cockfights, and an active popular sports program draws many. These along with the modern business buildings, apartments, hotels, universities, and private residences of Mexico City and other large cities give the tourist a wide variety and ceaseless supply of interesting sights to see and places to visit, and institutions for study.

Mexico's year-round mild climate is an asset to its tourist industry. There are no seasons in which one cannot enjoy every day. The climate in Mexico is determined vertically rather than horizontally, and the combination of altitudinal and tropical differentiation makes it possible to guide the individual to a temperature condition suiting his tastes. Throughout the greater part of the country the rainy season occurs between the months of May and October. Despite this, Mexico has a recorded total hours of sunshine per year equalled by few other countries of the world.

Mexico's proximity to the United States, its ever widening network of good roads and improved accommodations, its many natural and cultural attractions, and other favorable advantages should attract an ever increasing number of visitors. The Government Tourist Bureau is encouraging large scale construction of hotels and motor courts, restaurants, and other tourist facilities, some of these with the aid of government loans; also it provides tourist agencies, guides, and advertising in foreign nations. With completion of all three highways, and improvement of railroad and airway facilities the most important single factor that has limited the

expansion of tourist trade has been the lack of facilities to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of tourists.¹³

¹³personal interview: Mexico, D. F., with Alejandro Buelna.

CHAPTER II

TRANSPORTATION AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL IN MEXICO

The promotional efforts of the National Tourist Bureau, other tourist agencies, and the Inter-American Travel Congress would have been to no avail had the country not improved its transportation facilities in accordance with this vigorous tourist promotional program. The transportation facilities were not developed entirely with tourism in mind, as the country greatly needed these trade route improvements in the regular movement of its agricultural and mineral products to the market and manufacturing centers, as well as to import and export ports. As the air and highway tourist trade increases, that by sea and rail transportation decreases. However, these latter facilities are still very important to the importation and exportation of raw materials and commodities. Highways hold the first place in tourist transportation importance, followed by air travel.

During the war year 1944, when 126,000 tourists came to Mexico, only 30 per cent travelled by automobile under gas rationing, and 19 per cent by air lines; in 1950 the number of tourists was augmented to 390,000, of which 59 per cent came by automobile on the new and improved highways, and 23 per cent by air lines (Table III).¹ In 1955 the total number of American tourists alone was around 550,000. Automobile travel

¹For total numbers see Table I and for percentages see Table III.

brought 150,000 into Mexico, and 400,000 travelled by air and other modes of transportation.² Air travel, particularly, is fast becoming an important factor in the tourist industry of Mexico.

Main Highways

The three main highways leading from the United States into Mexico are now all-weather roads, and are rapidly becoming commercialized with tourist accommodations, gasoline stations, garages, and restaurants found at reasonable intervals. The easternmost, the Pan American Highway, having been in use longest is now the most commercialized of the three. Also it is the shortest route from the United States to Mexico City and the most available one coming from the center of American population concentrations.

An overland facility to connect the American nations was originally suggested as early as 1889 at the First Conference of American States. It was proposed that a single railroad route connect all countries of the Americas. Although the idea was approved, commissioners were appointed, and surveys made, the project never reached the construction stage.

The Pan American Highway was first suggested officially in 1923 at the Fifth International Conference of American States held in Santiago, Chile. In 1925 the Comision Nacional de Caminos was formed in Mexico. With the aid and administrative efforts of the Department of Communications and Public Works of Mexico, these units began planning highway

²Stan Delaplaine, "Modern Mexican Guide Irks Stan," The Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), February 1, 1956.

construction in cooperation with various state governments.³ The yearly average of construction from 1925 to 1940 was about 664 kilometers. By the end of 1940 the total was 9,968 kilometers. Between 1941 and 1949 the yearly average rose to 1,333 kilometers, and approximately 22,000 kilometers were constructed up to 1949. Of this construction program 57 per cent were paved roads, 33 per cent were improved roads, and 10 per cent were dirt roads. The expenditure during the twenty-five years came to 2,135 million pesos, of which nine-tenths came from the Federal government.⁴ The annual cost of maintenance per kilometer of Mexico's highways is from 5,000 to 7,000 pesos.⁵

The Inter-American Highway, as such, was officially opened on May 5, 1950. It spanned a distance of 1,618 miles from the United States border at Laredo, Texas, to El Ocotal, Ciudad Cuauhtemoc, on the Guatemalan frontier. However, it was in use before that time as far as Mexico City. Also in 1950 the Christopher Columbus Highway from Ciudad Juarez, across from El Paso, Texas, to Mexico City, where it connects with the Inter-American Highway, was opened by the Mexican government.⁶ It is commonly called the Central Highway. The other main highway from Mexico City to the United States border at Nogales, Arizona, was constructed at various intervals. In 1925 it was constructed from Mexico City to Toluca, and in 1930 continued from Toluca to Guadalajara. In

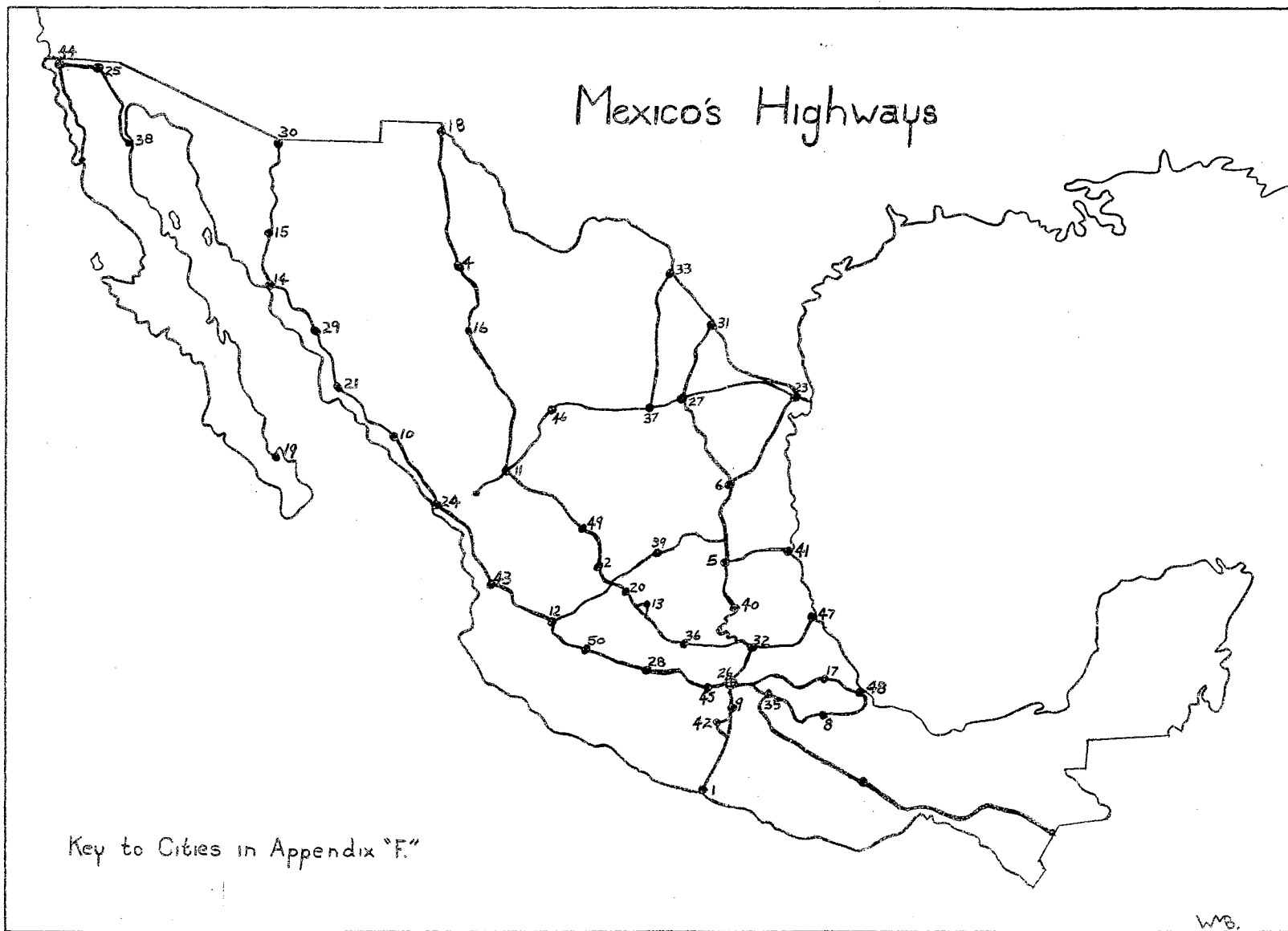
³Merwin Shurberg, Pan American Highway (Washington, D. C., 1951), pp. 26-30.

⁴Encyclopedia Americana (New York, 1955), XVIII, p. 772.

⁵Direccion Nacional De Caminos, Oficina De Informacion y Estadistica, Mexico, D. F.; Personal correspondence, February 22, 1957.

⁶Shurberg, p. 28.

Figure 2
Mexico's Highways



1946 construction began from Guadalajara to Nogales, and was completed in 1954.⁷

These three main arteries from the United States to Mexico City are crossed by two transverse highways. The first is a northern route entering Mexico at Matamoros travelling west through Monterrey, Saltillo and Torreon, where it angles southwest to Durango on the Central Highway. The second transverse highway begins at Tampico, extends west and crosses the Pan American south of Ciudad Mante, then moves west to San Luis Potosi, and crosses the Central Highway at Lagos de Moreno, and then southwest to Guadalajara on the West Coast Highway. Other important tourist routes are the Mexico City-Veracruz Highway and the Mexico City-Acapulco Highway. Various other short highways lead to points of interest in Mexico City's recreational hinterland.

Accommodations

With the construction and improvement of these highways from the United States border to Mexico City, the accommodations have developed in accordance with demands, some even to the plush resort type with playgrounds, swimming pools, restaurants, and bars. The Pan American Highway being the oldest in operation, the shortest route, and the most accessible is the most commercialized. The new West Coast Highway accommodations are fast developing to handle the tourist trade from the west coast region of the United States. The accommodations on the Central Highway, although adequate, are not as highly developed as on the others, probably due to the lack of natural scenery and fewer points

⁷Direccion Nacional De Caminos, February 22, 1957.

of interest, until it reaches the more populated central portion of Mexico. However, the larger cities along this route such as Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Durango, and Aguascalientes have excellent accommodations. On the West Coast route such cities as Guaymas, Mazatlan, and Guadalajara are becoming well supplied with facilities. Monterrey and Ciudad Valles are important stopovers on the Pan American Highway, as noted in Table II. However, many good accommodations are located between the larger cities on this route.

Bus Transportation

With the improved highways of Mexico, bus travel has improved, and the more advanced states have bus lines which are utilized by the natives. The tourists who travel by bus usually use a package tour arranged by individual bus companies. These tours are organized with guides, interpreters, and accommodations so the tourist may make better use of his time with the least effort. The improved buses now include many air-conditioned ones with observation domes, lavatories, and refreshment services.

Bus tours leave the United States at San Antonio or El Paso, Texas, and Phoenix, Arizona, at specified intervals. At the border the American bus line meets with its Mexican affiliate such as Transportes Chihuahuenses or Transportes Norte de Sonora.⁸ Other prominent bus lines operating in Mexico are Autobuses de Oriente, Estrella de Oro and Transportes del Norte. Bus transportation cost as compared with air and rail transportation cost is relatively inexpensive. Bus fare from Dallas, Texas, to Mexico, D. F.,

⁸"All the Way to Mexico City by Bus," Sunset, The Pacific Monthly (Menlo Park, California, September, 1956), p. 18.

TABLE II
ACCOMMODATIONS BY HIGHWAYS⁹

Name of City	Pan American Union Hotel Directory	Hotel Red Book Directory	Mexico Tourist Association Hotel Directory	A. A. A. Accommo- dation Directory	1955-57 Conoco Tour Aid Directory	Duncan Hines Hotel and Motel Direc- tory
	<u>Pan American Highway</u>					
Nuevo Laredo	1	1	2		1	
Sabina Hidalgo				1		1
Monterrey	9	15	11	5	5	5
Linares	1		2	1	1	1
Ciudad Victoria	1	1	3	3	4	
Ciudad Mante	1	1	3	2	2	1
Ciudad Valles	5	5	7	3	6	3
Tamazunchale			3	2	4	2
Zimapan	1	1	2	1	1	1
	<u>Central Highway</u>					
Ciudad Juarez	3		3		1	
Chihuahua	5	1	6	3	3	3

⁹Data compiled from the following sources: Directory of Hotels, Mexico, Pan American Union (Washington, D. C., Department of Economic and Social Affairs, June, 1955); Hotel Red Book, American Hotel Association Directory Corporation (New York, April, 1957), pp. 1018-1036; Mexican Hotel Directory, Mexican Tourist Association (Mexico, D. F., Mexico, 1957); Accommodation Directory, American Automobile Association (Washington, D. C., 1955), pp. 442-449; and Lodging for a Night - A Directory of Hotel, Motel, Motor Courts and Inns, Duncan Hines Institute, Inc. (Ithaca, New York, 1956).

TABLE II, Continued

Name of City	Pan American Union Hotel Directory	Hotel Red Book Directory	Mexico Tourist Association Hotel Directory	A. A. A. Accommo- dation Directory	1955-57 Conoco Tour Aid Directory	Duncan Hines Hotel and Motel Direc- tory
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Central Highway, Continued

Ciudad Camargo			3	3	3	
Hidalgo del Parral			1	1	1	
Durango	7	12	6	3	3	2
Zasatecas	2		2	2	1	
Aguascalientes	5	4	5	2	3	
Leon	5	4	2	2	4	
Guajuato	7	6	5	3	2	1
Irapuato	4	2	2			
Celaya	2	2	1			
Queretaro	3	5	2	1	2	

West Coast Highway

Nogales	3	5	2		2	1
Hermosillo	8	8	6	3	4	1
Guaymas	4	4	3	2	3	1
Ciudad Obregon	3	4	2		2	
Navojoa	2	3	1	1	1	1
Culiacan	2	3	3	1		
Mazatlan	6	13	4	4	5	2
Tepic	3	4		2	1	

TABLE II, Concluded

Name of City	Pan American Union Hotel Directory	Hotel Red Book Directory	Mexico Tourist Association Hotel Directory	A. A. A. Accommo- dation Directory	1955-57 Conoco Tour Aid Directory	Duncan Hines Hotel and Motel Direc- tory
<u>West Coast Highway, Continued</u>						
Guadalajara	13	11	10	4	9	2
Chapala	2	2	1	2	1	
Zamora	3	2	1	1	1	
Morelia	2	2	2	1	5	1
Zitacuaro	1		1		1	1
Mexico City	64	59	56	23	24	10
<u>Other Resort Centers</u>						
Acapulco	60	61	46	14	12	2
Cuernavaca	8	6	11	4	7	
Puebla	7	3	4	3	3	2
San Luis Potosi	3	4	5	3	3	
Tampico	1	1	3	2	2	
Taxco	11	11	8	5	5	2
Veracruz	8	6	5		4	

for a twelve day tour is \$149.15. This tour includes accommodations, most meals, and extra sightseeing arrangements.¹⁰ By way of contrast, the round-trip first-class air travel costs \$111.60, and round-trip first-class rail travel costs \$75.30.¹¹

Nevertheless, bus travel as a means of transportation for tourists travelling in Mexico has been decreasing in importance. In 1944 fifteen per cent of the total number of tourists travelled by bus, and in 1954 it dropped to thirteen per cent, and since that time has hovered around six per cent (Table III). Even though bus travel has become more attractive in appearance and comfort, private automobile and air travel are the most important means of transportation used by the tourist because the typical American prefers the privacy and convenience of his own car.

Air Transportation

Air travel in Mexico has been steadily growing through the years, partly due to the economic advancement of this country, and partly due to the tourist traffic from the United States and other countries. The total number of passengers carried in 1939 by both domestic and foreign companies was 85,000. In 1942 the number increased to 183,700, and in 1944 it went up to 298,000 of which 21,900 were tourists from abroad. In 1946 planes carried 706,500 passengers, including 41,400 foreign tourists. In 1948 of the total 815,100 air passengers 49,100 were

¹⁰Russell's Official National Motor Coach Guide, Official Bus Guide, U. S., Canada, and Mexico (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, March 31, 1957), p. 73.

¹¹The Official Guide of the Railways and Steam Navigation Lines (Air Line Schedules) of the U. S., Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico and Cuba (New York, April, 1957).

tourists from abroad. The year of 1950 showed an increase to 1,033,200 passengers with an estimated 55,000 foreign tourists (Table I), roughly a ten per cent increase over 1949.¹² In 1951 approximately 1,100,000 passengers travelled by air.¹³ Air travel has increased more than ten-fold in Mexico during the past decade. The number of tourists travelling by air is rising simultaneously with the total number of air passengers.

The expansion and development of Mexico's airports has greatly aided in its commercial air travel. The construction of air ports was originally begun by private airlines. In 1947 the government began a program of air port construction and improvement to insure more balanced development of air traffic throughout the entire country.¹⁴ In December of 1953 a new two million dollar airport was opened in Acapulco. Mexico City's new central airport, which went into service in the early part of 1953, cost four and a half million dollars, and is one of the largest in the world. This new air terminal can handle up to twenty-four DC 6s at a time and is capable of handling 17,000 passengers per day. Between these two modern air terminals is the busiest single air route in Mexico.¹⁵ This is due to the heavy tourist traffic between these two points and to the fact that until the new highway was opened the road connecting the capital with the resort was undesirable to the motoring tourist.

Air travel is fast becoming the most important means of passenger transportation in the world over. Most countries of the world are striving

¹²The Combined Mexican Working Party, The Economic Development of Mexico (Baltimore, 1953), p. 318.

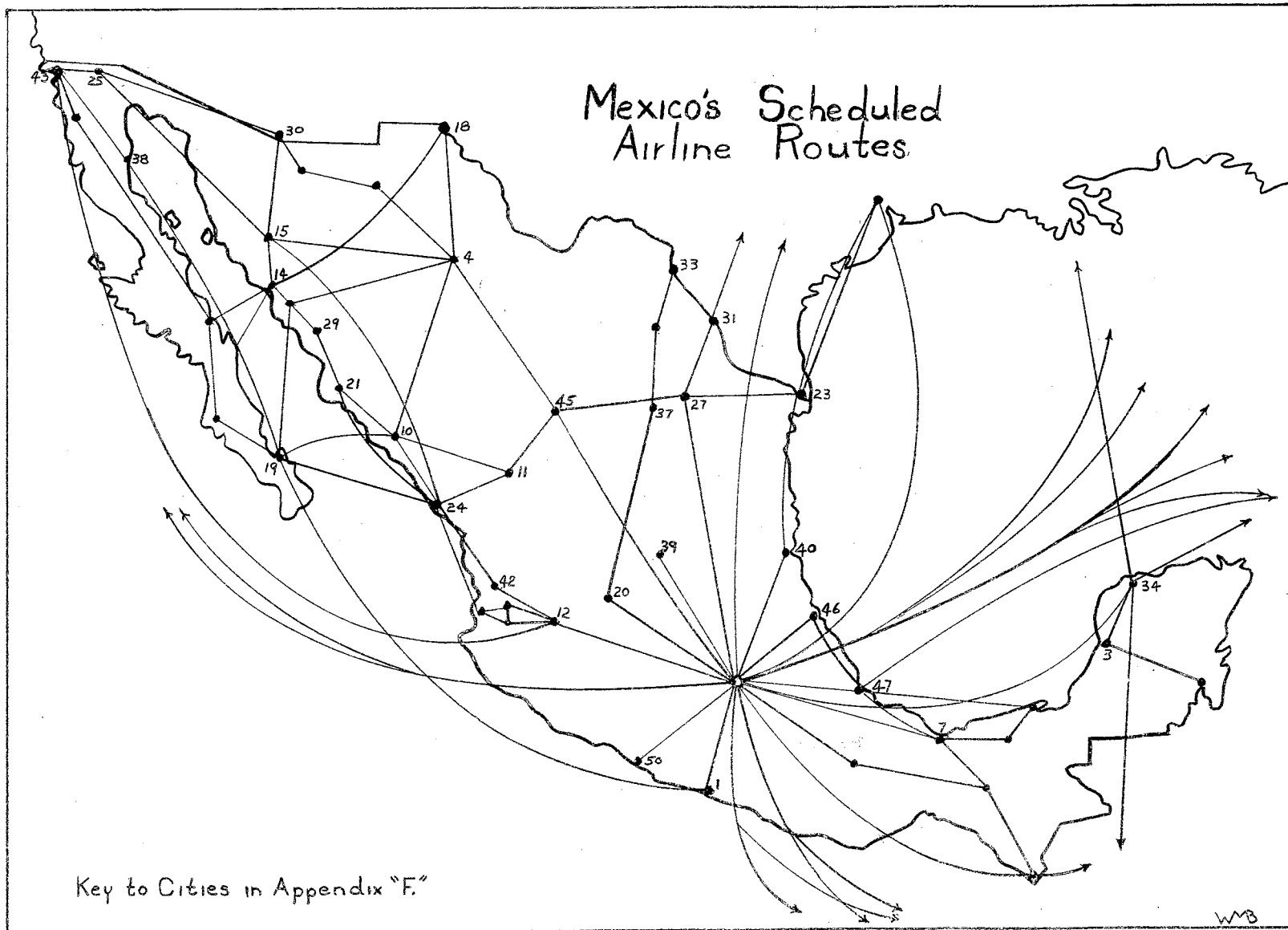
¹³"Mexico," Aviation Week, New York, February 25, 1952, pp. 244-245.

¹⁴The Combined Mexican Working Party, p. 96.

¹⁵"Mexico Improves Terminal Facilities," Aviation Week, New York, April 18, 1955, p. 27.

Figure 3

Mexico's Scheduled Airline Routes¹⁶



¹⁶Official Airline Guide (Chicago, Illinois, May, 1957), p. D-26.

to develop greater air strength both for economic and military reasons. Mexico's developments have tended to be commercial rather than military. It depends upon the United States for air power. However, the tourist industry has developed a need for improved commercial air travel. In 1952 the country had forty-nine commercial air lines, including foreign carriers operating in Mexico.¹⁷ The two principal Mexican air lines are Compania Mexicana de Aviacion (CMA) and Aeronaves de Mexico (affiliate of Pan American Airways).¹⁸ Recent developments in Mexico's commercial airways are CMA's nonstop flight from Miami, Florida, to Mexico City.¹⁹

While doing field research in Mexico on tourism the writer spoke to several tourists who had been travelling in Mexico for many years. The more experienced tourist tends to travel to Mexico City by air and take bus and car tours to the surrounding points of interest. However, the tourist forfeits a great deal of cultural and natural scenery on the way by travelling by air.

Railway Transportation

Today, transportation by rail is not too important in Mexico's tourist industry. However, with the development and promotional program in progress it has great potential as a means of augmenting transportation for the United States tourist. The Mexican railways touch the United States-Mexico border at ten points and these lines are all connected with the main rail network, whereas there are only six first-class paved highway points of entry that connect to one of the three main highways.

¹⁷"Mexico," Aviation Week, pp. 244-245.

¹⁸World Airline Record (5th ed., Chicago, 1955), pp. 251-265. This source lists twenty airlines now operating in Mexico.

¹⁹"Mexico Improves Terminal Facilities," Aviation Week, p. 27.

With this in mind and the strong rehabilitation program on the Mexican railroads, travel by rail again could become an important factor in tourist transportation. However, today's trends are away from the railway in tourist travel.

The present form and size of the Mexican railway system was acquired several decades ago. Building of new lines has been balanced by the abandonment of older ones, so the total amount of trackage is about the same. The main railroad network of Mexico is in the central area of the country and connects the northern border by two main trunk lines from Mexico, D. F. - Juarez and Mexico, D. F. - Laredo, the latter trunk line branching out at Monterrey to Piedras Negras and Matamoros. A single line runs to the border of Guatemala. Transverse lines connect these trunk lines to ports on the Gulf of Mexico such as Tampico, Tuxpan, and Veracruz. The west coast of Mexico is served by the Pacific Railroad which extends from the northern border to Guadalajara where it meets the central network. The Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific coast are connected by only three transverse routes; namely, the Matamoros-Mazatlan, Manzanillo-Central network and a crossing at the narrow Isthmus of Tehuantepec. However, two other lines have been proposed to connect the central network with the Pacific at Zihuatanejo and Acapulco (Figure 4).

The negligence of the Mexican government and private interests in the rail system of Mexico shows up in the statistical figures. In 1939 the total number of passengers carried by all railroads in Mexico was 29,800,000; in 1942 the total number was 31,900,000; and it reached an all time high of 38,000,000 in 1944. After that there was a slump for about three years, then gradually the number rose again to 31,100,000

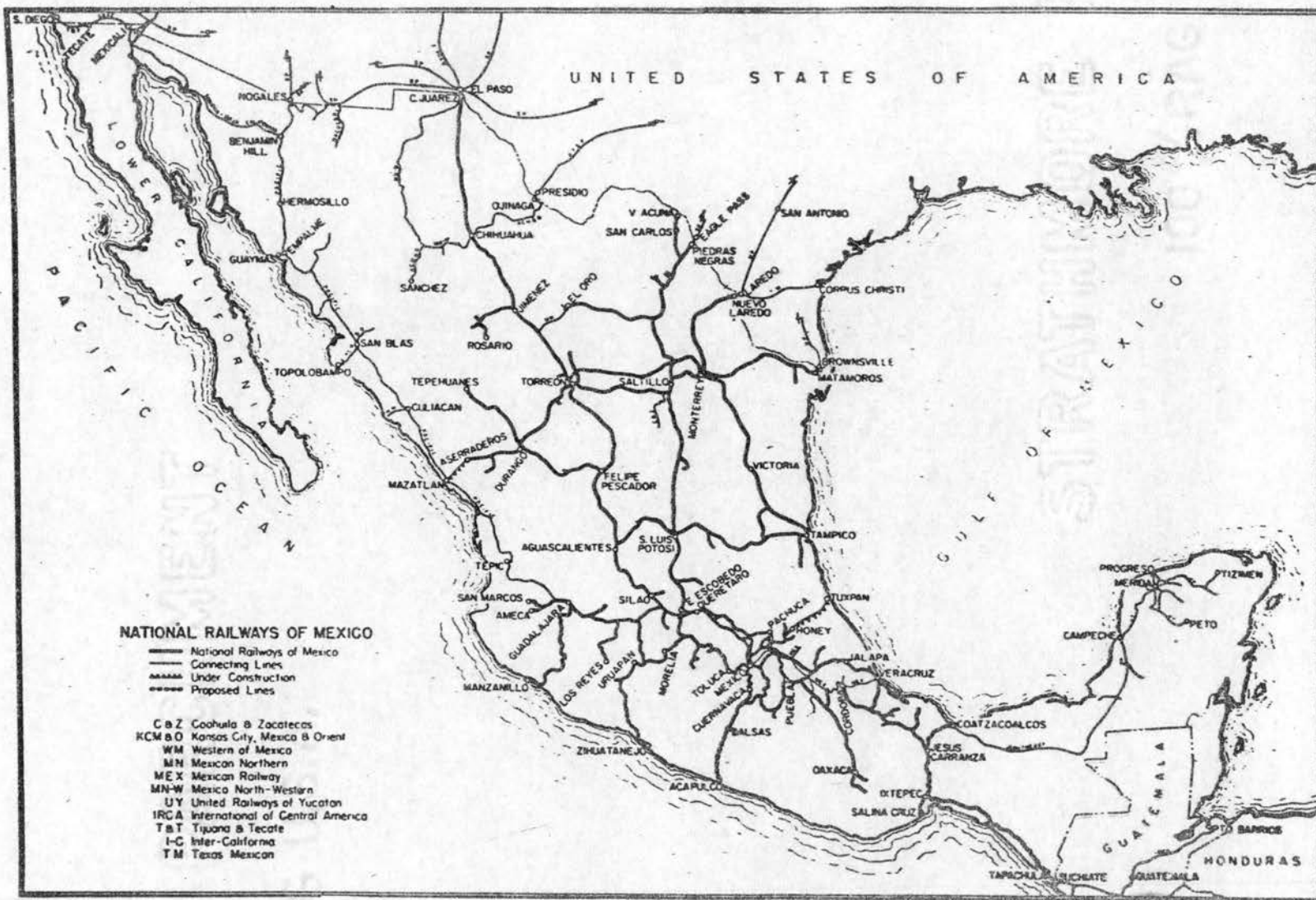


Fig. 4. National Railways of Mexico

20 "Old Mexico's Railroad Go Modern", Railway Age, p. 80

in 1951.²¹ Of the tourists from abroad, 21,000 travelled by rail in 1944. Since that time rail travel has been on the downgrade and reached a low of 11,900 in 1950, which is only five per cent of the total means of transportation used by tourists from abroad (Table III).

In recent years a rehabilitation program has been undertaken by the National Railways of Mexico, to improve its deteriorated railway system. The total estimated cost of the rehabilitation program is 562 million pesos, which includes road equipment and related facilities. This program includes the laying of all standard gauge track replacing the old narrow gauge, 100 per cent dieselization, and the addition of new freight and passenger cars. The major items of rehabilitation are to be completed in 1958.²² If "Plan Aleman" is completed, Mexico can look forward to a completely revitalized railroad system, equal to the nation's growing demands for transportation and comparable in capacity and efficiency to the best railways elsewhere in the world.²³

In the past, freight and passenger service has not been good, and buses and airlines have grabbed off virtually all of the tourist traffic. To attract the American tourists to travel by rail and to compete with airline and bus travel, three high speed luxury trains made in Switzerland and thirty-nine new coaches built in Germany were placed in service in 1953 on the rehabilitated Laredo-Mexico City line. With improved schedules

²¹The Combined Mexican Working Party, Table 102, pp. 314-315.

²²"Mexican Lines Business Slumps," Railway Age, Orange, Connecticut, January 11, 1954, pp. 200-202.

²³"Old Mexico's Railroads Go Modern," Railway Age, Orange, Connecticut, September 1, 1952, pp. 77-82.

TABLE III²⁴MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION USED BY TOURISTS FROM ABROAD, 1944-1950^a

Means of Transportation Used	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950 ^b
	(Thousands of Tourists)						
Automobile	33.6	57.2	117.4	111.0	128.2	161.5	141.0
Bus	16.7	18.3	15.8	12.5	17.2	18.6	14.3
Railroad	21.0	19.2	20.1	14.3	12.5	15.5	11.9
Airplane	21.9	28.9	41.4	44.6	49.1	61.7	55.0
Ship	.2	.3	.3	.2	.3	.3	.2
Unclassified	20.3	20.2	43.5	42.4	30.4	31.1	16.5
	(Percentage of Total)						
Automobile	30	40	49	49	54	56	59
Bus	15	13	7	6	7	7	6
Railroad	18	13	9	6	5	5	5
Airplane	19	20	17	20	21	21	23
Ship	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unclassified	18	14	18	19	13	11	7

^aStatistics gathered at points where tourists leave Mexican territory.

^bEstimates.

²⁴The Combined Mexican Working Party.

the trains make the run in sixteen hours, whereas buses take twenty-four hours and airlines five hours.²⁵

These new streamlined trains consist of nine lightweight cars as follows: one mail baggage, one chair car (for domestic travel), two chair cars (reserved seats), one full dining car, two eight-section three bedroom sleepers, one two-drawingroom seven double-bedroom sleepers, and one bar and observation car. All cars are air conditioned, with the exception of the first two. Only first class passengers will be admitted on these trains.

In correlation with the rehabilitation plan ultra-modern terminals are being constructed. Stations completed in 1952 include the Mexico City terminal, which is equalled by few others in the world, and others at Nuevo Laredo, Monterrey, Guadalajara, Chihuahua, San Luis Potosi, Jalapa, Puebla, and Escobedo.²⁶ Construction and remodeling is being accomplished on several other terminals as well throughout Mexico. Even though the railway may not become as important to the tourist as bus, air, and automobile travel, such a rehabilitation program gives hope of improving conditions so as to provide another popular means of tourist transportation into the interior of Mexico.

Waterway Transportation

Transportation by passenger ship is insignificant as a means of travel for the tourist to and from Mexico. Very few tourists from the United States use this mode of transportation. From 1944 to 1950 the number of tourists travelling by ship varied from two to three hundred

²⁵"New Routes, New Diesels for Mexican Railway," Business Week, New York, January 12, 1952, pp. 152-154.

²⁶"Old Mexico's Railroads Go Modern," Railway Age, pp. 77-82.

(Table III). Of this number the largest percentage are tourists from Europe. For convenience, sightseeing, and cheapness the United States tourist travels other ways.

However, the less expensive freighter travel, a recent fad among international tourists, now offers two fairly well-known and inexpensive tours to Mexico's ports. The one available by Grace Lines from Los Angeles to Acapulco is a five-day voyage costing \$210 one way and \$378 round trip. These freighters carry twelve passengers per trip and allow the tourist two weeks in Mexico before the round trip ticket becomes void. The second is a Ward Lines tour, which leaves the ports of New York or Baltimore weekly on Norwegian or German freighters. Ward Lines carries seven to twelve passengers per trip depending on the ship's capacity. On the fifth day the tourist is allowed one day in Havana, Cuba, and on the morning of the ninth day arrives in Veracruz. Embarkment for the return voyage takes place in Tampico which allows the tourist seven days to sightsee in Mexico. The round trip takes twenty-two to twenty-five days and fares are \$165 one way and \$297 round trip.²⁷

In recent years the government has spent considerable effort to improve the conditions and increase the capacity of Mexican ports. Even with this effort the important ports of Tampico, Veracruz and Manzanillo are still considered unsatisfactory. Expansion work is being done on many other ports such as Acapulco, Mazatlan, Coatzacoahuas, Progreso, Salina Cruz, and others. Inaccessible locations and lack of adequate

²⁷Kenneth Ford, Ford's Official Freighter Travel Guidebook (5th ed., Los Angeles, California, Summer, 1955), Tours 10 and 47, pp. 29 and 90.

connections with their hinterlands has limited the amount of sea traffic to many of these seaports.²⁸

Water transportation on a smaller scale shows some importance as a means of crossing the Gulf of California from Mexico proper to Baja California, and also as a tourist attraction in deep sea fishing and yachting.

Summary

In comparing the means of transportation used by tourists in Mexico, automobile travel is the most important, largely due to Mexico's proximity to the United States and the fact that most tourists like to enjoy the sights along the way in the privacy of their own automobiles. Although air travel is in second place, Mexico is developing its commercial air lines to such an extent that it is slowly encroaching on the number one place held by automotive travel. Together automobile and air travel made up 82 per cent of the types of transportation used by tourists in Mexico in 1950. Bus and railroad transportation have been operating on the downgrade in tourist numbers since the early 1940's and by 1950 comprised only eleven per cent of the entire means of tourist transportation. Travel by ships and unclassified travel make up the remaining seven per cent (Table III). The promotional efforts of the government and other organizations interested in the development of tourism have unleashed a vigorous campaign in which transportation, accommodations, and other tourist facilities have benefited. These improvements have made travelling in Mexico more comfortable for the tourist. Continuing

²⁸The Combined Mexican Working Party, pp. 95-96.

improvements are aiding in the increasing popularity of Mexico's tourist trade.

CHAPTER III

NATURAL AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

The chief features which attract tourists to Mexico, besides cheapness of the sojourn in a foreign atmosphere, may be divided into two major categories, natural and cultural attractions. The natural attractions embrace such things as landforms, climate, flora, fauna, streams and bodies of water, and other outdoor features. The cultural attractions include the different civilizations of peoples, their contributions and remnants, and the modern cultural differentiations of Mexico, along with the arts in the cities. The larger and more popular resort centers tend to develop in areas which are easily accessible and where both natural and cultural attractions are present.

Natural Attractions

Mexico's land surface is one of great diversity. A large portion of Mexico is mountainous; some of the mountains have been produced by erosion of streams in areas of contorted rock structures, and some were produced by explosive outburst of volcanic ash and lava. Well over one-half of Mexico is more than 3,000 feet above sea level, and only about one-third can be classed as level. Over all the surface features one finds contrasting types of climate, partly controlled by differences of altitude and partly by relation to sources of moisture.¹ The different

¹Preston E. James, Latin America (New York, 1950), p. 553.

climates produce different types of vegetation which make up the different habitats of the fauna of Mexico.

To the tourist visiting Mexico, natural attractions are usually thought of as different combinations of landforms, climate, water bodies, fauna and flora. However, if one is singled out as the most important natural attraction, climate would possibly be the prominent one. The typical tourist tends to seek out a type of climate for his vacation that contrasts to the type to which he is accustomed. On the other hand, tourists interested in exploration or study of minerals or landforms, fauna or flora, or sportsmen interested in fishing or hunting, will tolerate an undesirable climate on their vacations. Reasons for tourists visiting a particular area is a study in itself, depending upon personal interests and desires.

Landforms

The highland area which extends from the border of the United States to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and which occupies most of the width of the country is one of the most important surface configurations of Mexico. The geological structure and the surface form of the highland area is exceedingly complex, but for a general observation it will be sub-divided into two major parts; namely, the Central Plateau and the Dissected Borders. Other surface elements of Mexico are the block mountains and basins of the northwest, the lowlands of the Gulf Coast and Yucatan on the east, and the highlands of Chiapas on the southern border.²

The northern portion of the Central Plateau is lower and drier than the southern section. The northern basins with interior drainage

²Ibid., pp. 553-559.

consist of deep accumulations of sand and gravel washed from the block mountains, which stand above them. In the south the mountains are more continuous and the higher and wetter intermountain basins are separated from one another, whereas the northern basins tend to run together and are of irregular shapes.

Some of Mexico's largest and most important cities are located in these southern intermountain basins: Guadalajara is located in the lowest of these basins at 5,000 feet above sea level; Mexico City stands at 7,500 feet; and Toluca is 8,600 feet above sea level. The volcanic zone is also located along the southern edge of the central plateau. The Mexican highlands are deeply dissected by streams cutting on the east, west, and south. The western dissected border is known as the Sierra Madre Occidental, which is one of the major mountain barriers in the Western Hemisphere. The Sierra Madre Oriental or the eastern dissected border is also quite difficult to cross. On the Pan American Highway between Tamazunchale and Jacala, a distance of sixty miles, the highway climbs some 4,199 feet. The highland region is also dissected on its southern border as noted on the road from Mexico City to Acapulco, which first climbs to an elevation of 10,000 feet on the southern rim of the basin, then drops rapidly to the city of Cuernavaca at an elevation of 4,500 feet which is a straight line distance of only 36 miles.

The block mountains in the northwest are merely a continuation of the surface features of Southern California, which is mountain and bolson country. A continuation of the Gulf Coastal plain of Texas as far south as Tampico is the division of the Gulf Coast and Yucatan lowlands. Here outliers of the Sierra Madre Oriental and isolated volcanic necks pinch out the coastal plain. South of Tampico the coastal plain is a narrow

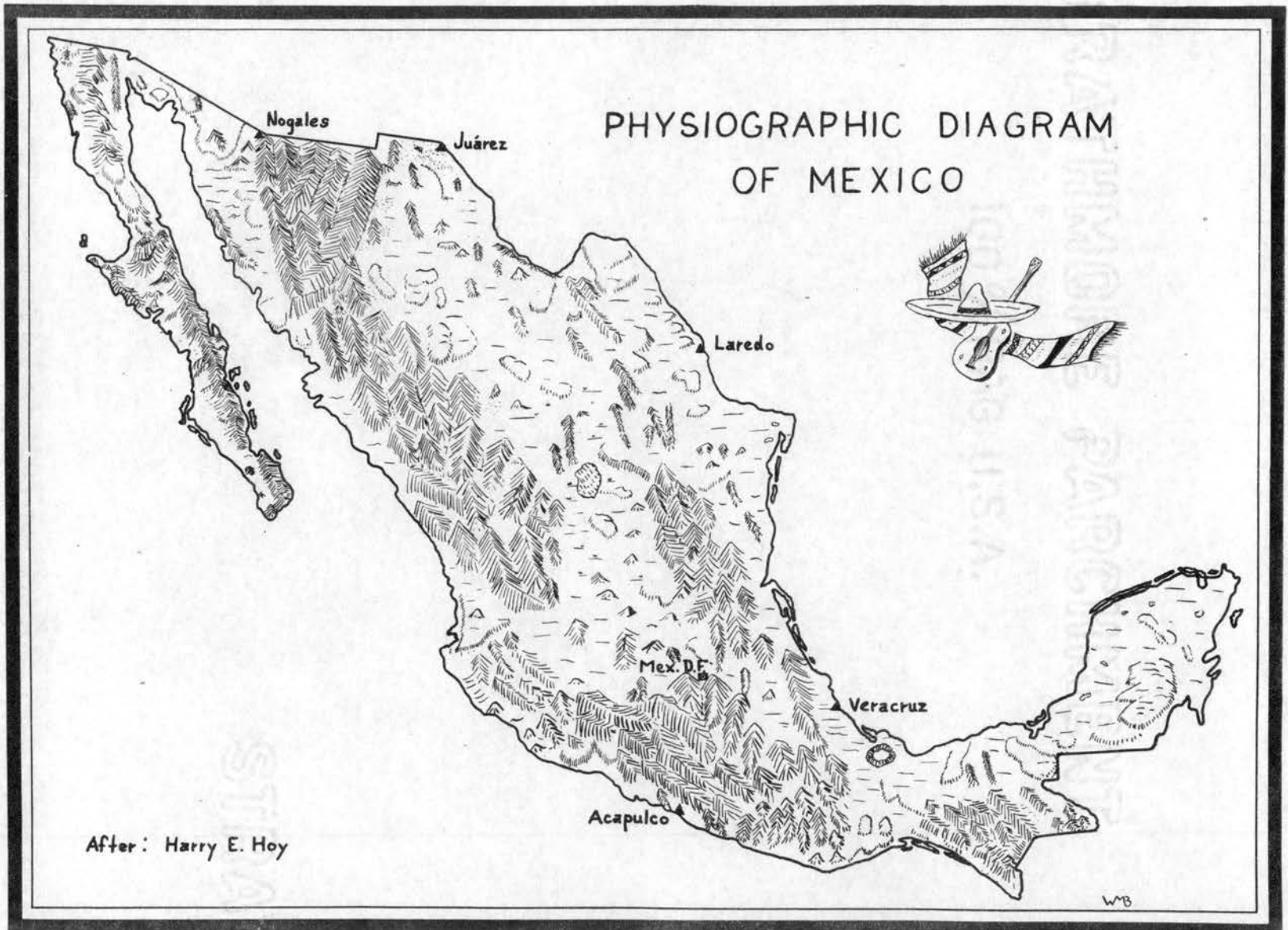


Fig.5

ribbon, and widens out at the northern end of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The Yucatan peninsula is a low lying plain resembling Florida. The last of the major divisions, the highlands of Chiapas, is separated from the southern dissected border by the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.³ Each of these divisions holds an unusual amount of interesting and spectacular natural scenery. Tourists are attracted to the many local configurations and features that make up the larger divisions, such as the snow capped volcanoes of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl southeast of Mexico City, beautiful waterfalls, interesting caves and the other scenic natural features of the country, but seldom visualize the overall landform pattern.

Climate and Vegetation

Mexico's climate is an important asset to the tourist industry, as it generally is included and often is glorified in the many travelogues and promotional materials. The tourist season continues the year round and no concern need be given to which seasons to avoid. However, during the rainy season, from May until October, travel into the lesser developed country is practically curtailed, and to one whose visit in Mexico is limited in time this can sometimes become annoying. Before tourism became so popular in Mexico, an off season occurred between the months of late May and early October. During this period hotel rates were lowered and guide services and souvenir industries had marginal operations. However, the daily showers during this season cause the tourist little concern, and the vegetation is at its maximum beauty, which in itself is

³Ibid.

a drawing card.⁴ In some cases this type of weather is desirable to tourists who are seeking to change the monotony of the hot, dry weather occurring in the United States at the same time. Areas having the most rainfall in Mexico are the slopes facing the Pacific Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. The two recorded rainfall extremes are at Teapa in Tabasco with about 180 inches of rainfall a year and in the Sonora Desert in the extreme northwest.⁵

The climate in Mexico largely is determined vertically rather than horizontally, and the combination of altitude and tropical location makes it possible to guide the individual to a temperature level suiting his taste. Altitude tends to eliminate the extreme high temperatures which otherwise might be found in a land area of this latitude.

On the basis of elevation it is necessary to describe the climate of Mexico in four subdivisions: (a) hot land at low elevation (Tierra Caliente), (b) temperate at 4,000 to 6,000 feet (Tierra Templada), (c) cool with occasional frost at 6,000 to 12,000 feet (Tierra Fria), and (d) frigid land above 12,000 feet (Tierra Helada). The two largest cities, Mexico City and Guadalajara, are located in the cool and temperate zones respectively. In the cooler and more temperate zones man has tended to settle and is more active than in the hotter areas.

The two extreme features of Mexico's climate are the northers of winter and the tropical storms of the summer. Northers are cool north winds coming through Mexico and along the Mexican Gulf coast and prevail

⁴Personal interview with Raymond Garcia, government bonded guide, Mexico City, Mexico, August, 1955.

⁵Ivan R. Tannehill, Weather Around the World (Princeton, New Jersey, 1943), pp. 141-143.

when cold air masses with high pressure occupy the Rocky Mountains and Great Plain regions of the United States. Hurricanes occasionally cross the Gulf and Caribbean coasts of Mexico in the months from June to November. An average of five tropical storms occur each year on the Pacific side and come most frequently in September.⁶

Table IV, the Climatic Table of the Principal Cities and Resorts, illustrates the overall consistency of favorable climate which prevails in Mexico. In the table these cities are listed according to altitude zones.

Generally, vegetation as a tourist attraction is not too important but rather a "taken for granted" feature. However, the sites where beautiful gardenias and orchids grow wild are greatly advertised. These flowers are sold in the markets and by street vendors in these areas. Mexico has a greatly varied vegetation pattern as it has climatic and landform patterns. The rugged surfaces and contrast of altitude within short distances give an extremely spotty and irregular pattern to the natural vegetation cover, as it does to the climatic zones.

Looking at Mexico's vegetative cover, it is noted that the northern part of Mexico is dominated by xerophytic shrubs and desert grasses. Along the semiarid mountain bases the scrub forest is situated, and at a higher altitude on these same mountains is the coniferous forest. Moving southeastward in Mexico the tropical forest begins just north of Tampico, extends in a narrow band about one hundred miles inland from the east coast to Yucatan and broadens to cover the entire peninsula with the exception of the north end. Prairie type vegetation is found in the

⁶Ibid., pp. 141-143.

TABLE IV

CLIMATIC TABLE OF PRINCIPAL CITIES AND RESORTS⁷

Zone	City	Jan.		Feb.		Mar.		April		May		June		July		Aug.		Sep.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.	
		Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation	Temperature	Precipitation
Tierra Caliente 0' to 4,000' elevation	Acapulco	78	.4	78	--	79	--	80	--	83	12.	83	17.	83	8.6	83	9.8	82	14.3	82	6.7	81	1.2	79	.4
	Guaymas	64	.3	66	.2	69	.2	73	.1	78	.1	84	--	87	1.8	87	3.	86	2.1	81	.4	72	.4	65	1.1
	Tampico	65	2.1	68	.9	71	.5	77	.4	80	2.	82	7.9	82	5.8	82	5.9	81	13.3	78	7.	72	2.2	67	1.7
	Mazatlan	67	.5	67	.4	67	.1	70	--	75	--	79	1.1	81	6.6	81	9.6	81	10.7	79	2.4	74	.5	69	1.7
	Veracruz	70	.9	71	.6	73	.3	77	.8	79	2.1	81	10.7	81	13.8	81	12.	81	14.	79	6.	74	3.5	72	1.
	Nuevo Laredo	57	.9	63	.9	69	.8	77	1.	83	2.5	87	1.6	90	1.1	90	.7	80	3.1	79	1.1	70	1.1	61	1.
	Ciudad Victoria	60	1.4	64	1.0	70	.8	76	1.5	79	5.	81	5.	81	4.	82	2.7	79	8.	74	4.3	67	1.7	60	.6
	Monterrey	58	.8	62	.9	68	.6	74	1.1	78	1.7	81	3.3	81	3.	82	2.5	78	8.	72	4.3	63	1.	57	.9

⁷Data compiled from the following sources: Mexico By Motor, American Automobile Association, (Washington, D. C., 1955), p. 183; Ivan Ray Tannehill, Weather Around the World (Princeton, New Jersey, 1943), pp. 141-143, 155 and 163; and Robert DeC. Ward and Charles F. Brooks, The Climates of North America (Berlin, Germany, 1936), pp. 49-75.

TABLE IV, Concluded

Zone	City	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
		Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation	Temperature Precipitation
Tierra Templada 4,000' to 6,000' elevation	Chihuahua	49 .1	52 .2	59 .3	65 .3	74 .4	79 1.	77 3.1	75 3.7	72 3.7	65 1.4	56 .3	49 .8
	Cuernavaca	65 .1	67 .2	70 .3	72 .3	74 2.	70 7.8	68 8.6	68 9.	68 10.	68 3.	67 .3	66 .1
	Oaxaca	63 .1	66 .1	70 .4	72 1.	73 2.5	71 5.	70 4.	69 4.	69 7.	67 2.	65 .3	64 .4
	Guadalajara	58 .7	61 .2	65 .1	70 --	72 .7	71 7.6	69 10.	68 8.	67 7.	65 2.1	61 .8	59 .8
	Taxco	66 --	69 .2	72 .4	75 .9	76 3.	72 10.	70 12.	70 14.	69 13.	69 3.5	68 .2	67 .1
Tierra Fria 6,000' to 12,000' elevation	San Luis Potosi	55 .5	59 .2	63 .4	69 .2	70 1.2	70 3.	67 2.3	67 2.	65 3.4	63 .7	59 .4	57 .6
	Aguascalientes	55 .5	58 .2	63 .1	68 .1	72 .7	70 5.	69 6.	67 4.1	67 4.	66 1.3	64 .7	56 .6
	Guanaajuato	57 .5	60 .3	64 .2	68 .2	71 1.1	68 5.4	66 7.	66 6.	65 6.	63 2.	60 .7	59 .6
	Mexico City	54 .2	57 .2	60 .6	64 .6	65 2.	64 4.	62 4.1	62 5.	61 4.	59 2.	56 .5	53 .2
	Toluca	49 .4	52 .4	55 .4	57 1.1	59 2.	58 5.3	56 4.	56 6.	56 6.	54 2.	52 .8	50 .3

intermountain basins of central Mexico, from Mexico City in a northwest direction, and the true savanna type vegetation is found only in a small area in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.⁸

Hunting

The natural habitat of the fauna is partially determined by the vegetation in which the particular animal dwells. Mexico's fauna is rich and varied and is important to the tourist industry in the fact that it lures many sportsmen to this country. For the hunter interested in big game, several species of deer, black or silver tipped bear, puma, wild boar, lynx, badger, and coyote await him. The bird hunter will be interested in the wild turkey, quail, ducks, snipe, geese, pheasant, and dove. Guides are available in the towns and villages in vicinities where the game is known to be abundant.⁹

Water Bodies and Streams

The east and west coast fishing grounds and the inland streams and lakes are excellent examples of Mexico's natural tourist attractions. They offer opportunities for salt water and fresh water fishing, swimming and boating. Annual fishing tournaments now are held during the spring and summer months at the resort port cities of Acapulco, Mazatlan, Guaymas, Tampico, and Veracruz. These tournaments attract fishermen from all over the world, and trophies are donated by State and Federal authorities as well as by local fishing clubs. Some other deep sea fishing resorts are Zihuatanejo and Manzanillo on the west coast, and

⁸James, pp. 555 and 585. This description is according to the vegetation zones shown in Maps Nos. 115 and 119.

⁹Personal interview with Raymond Garcia.

San Felipe and La Paz in Baja California. East coast resorts, other than the important Veracruz and Tampico, are Tuxpan, Tecolutla, Nautla and Puerto Mexico. These ports are reached by water, road, railroad, or by air, and have accommodations for sportsmen.

The deep sea fisherman may choose from a great variety of game fish. Among these are sail fish, marlin, ray fish, tuna, albacore, tarpon, barracuda and others. Salt water fish of the smaller variety are abundant, with such species as halibut, bonito, Spanish mackerel, redsnapper, and sea bass. For the fresh water fisherman Mexico's many lakes, rivers, and streams are well stocked with rainbow and brook trout, bass, carp, white fish, mullets, and catfish. The port cities boast adequately equipped fishing craft, and guides are available to take the fresh water fisherman to remote streams and lakes.

Mexican lakes and streams are stocked by Federal and local authorities. Some lake and stream fishing grounds located near the Mexican-United States border are in Chihuahua at Lake Toronto, in Coahuila at the famous Don Martin Dam, and in Tamaulipas with the Tamesi River, the Marie R. Gomez and El Azucar Dams. Other important states with lakes or streams are San Luis Potosi, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Michoacan, Queretaro, Hidalgo, Morelos, Puebla, and Jalisco, the latter having the largest lake in the country, Lake Chapala, which is seventy miles long and twenty miles wide. Comfortable lodgings for the fisherman may be found at the resort towns of Chapala and Ajijic. The fisherman staying in Mexico City also has accessibility to many streams and small rivers located in the State of Mexico and the Federal District.¹⁰

¹⁰Pemex Travel Club, Fishing in Mexico (Mexico, D. F., Mexico, date not given).

Not to be omitted in this category of Mexico's tourist attractions is its many natural mineral springs. The most important of these are equipped to accommodate the tourists with baths and mineral drinking water, and many of Mexico's outstanding resorts have been established around these natural occurring phenomena. In the vicinity of Mexico City the radioactive water of Penon De Los Banos, the thermal water of Tehuixtla are popular spas. Some of the well-known spas throughout Mexico, frequented by tourists, are: El Riego in the town of Tehuacan, Ojo Caliente, El Banito in Valles, El Salto south of Ciudad Mante, Topo Chico north of Monterrey. On the Central route the baths of Comanjilla between Silao and Leon have been famous for centuries, the state of Aguascalientes also has many popular spas. Near Los Mochis on the coast Highway are the hot springs of Agua Caliente De Baca; others along this route are Carrizalejo Arroyo Hot Springs east of Culiacan, Chorros Springs on the outskirts of Guadalajara, and the thermal waters of Atzimba.¹¹ Swimming is quite popular at most of these spas; however, the seaside resorts tend to be most popular for swimming, and many of the larger hotels and motels are equipped with swimming pools.

Cultural Features

Mexico's culture, its history, and its people make it a fascinating and interesting tourist mecca. Of all the countries of the world, Mexico has one of the most interesting and diversified backgrounds. Each previous civilization has left remnants of its culture. Every city and village has its own unique cultural background of history and legend, as well as its

¹¹Pemex Travel Club, Mexico's Spas (Mexico, D. F., Mexico, date not given).

modern cultural points of interest. Although one cannot travel in any part of Mexico without seeing interesting historical and modern landmarks, this treatment will cover only the most frequently visited and easily accessible ones.

The different cultures of Mexico cannot be readily understood without a brief historical background. The first people to inhabit this country were the Indians, of which the Mayas, Toltecs, and Aztecs were the most dominant. By the end of the seventh century the Mayas had built up a great empire in Yucatan. About the eighth century the Toltecs moved southward and colonized the Valley of Mexico. They were in power until about the middle of the tenth century when they were driven southward and lost to history. The Aztecs, a migratory tribe, came from the northwest in the thirteenth century and founded Mexico City. From that time on their power increased, their civilization advanced, and their wealth accumulated to the time of the Spanish invasion in 1519. The Spanish rule and influence was dominant until Mexico won independence in 1821. Today the Mexican nation is divided roughly into three racial groups: ten per cent white, mostly pure European decent; thirty per cent pure Indian of fifty odd tribes and dialects; and sixty per cent mixed or mestizo, a blend of white and Indian. The Indian heritage is of great importance because of its influence in foods, clothing, and the general Mexican philosophy of life. Over ninety per cent of the Mexican people are of Roman Catholic faith, as introduced by the Spanish. Spanish is the official language. However, a large percentage of the Indians speak their various tribal tongues.¹²

¹²James J. Dossick, "Mexico," The New World Guides to the Latin American Republics, I (New York, 1945).

The cultural features of Mexico are one of the main tourist attractions, if not the most important. Many of these are in out of the way places with bad roads or no roads connecting them with the travelled routes. For some accommodations are not near enough to make visiting convenient. However, the most highly publicized and most frequented of these are easily accessible by the main highways in the country. Such attractions as cathedrals, shrines, palaces, unusual markets and plazas will be introduced by the three main highways leading to Mexico City from the United States border, and the two transverse routes crossing these highways. Mexico City and the surrounding area, including Veracruz and Acapulco, are covered in the following chapter.

Pan American Highway

Travelling the Pan American route, on Mexico Federal Highway 85, Nuevo Laredo is the point of entry which offers an interesting Mexican-American atmosphere (Figure 2). However, the true Mexican influence is not felt until reaching Monterrey, the first city of any size or importance. It is a modern industrial city which is a popular tourist spot because of its nearness to the United States and its outstanding beauty. After leaving Monterrey the villages and cities take on a certain air of quaintness typical throughout the interior of Mexico. The architecture and other cultural attractions change as does the landscape southward through a fruit growing region to the broad fertile valley of the Rio Linares, across an area of high mesas crossed by the Tropic of Cancer, then gradually descending into the tropical area near Tamazunchale at the base of the Sierra Madre Orientals. Crossing these mountains offers some of the most interesting cultural sites as well as spectacular natural

scenery found in Mexico. From Jacala to Mexico City the road passes through primitive villages and mining centers. These typical villages are much alike in appearance and many tourists do not examine them closely after visiting others with the same outward appearance. However, it must be kept in mind that villages differ with the various landscapes, people, and products of each particular area.

The Pan American Highway spans 776 miles from Laredo, Texas, to Mexico City and rises from an elevation of 295 feet at Valles to 8,209 feet near Pachuca on the good hard-surfaced all-weather road. Since this highway is most heavily travelled by tourists from the United States most all towns have adapted themselves to display the most interesting and unusual sights each town affords. All along this route are picturesque churches, shrines, unusual markets, and other points of interest for the tourist. These cultural attractions are grouped into related categories and are listed by name in Appendix "A" with the cities in which they are located. Many interesting attractions that are common to most of the villages and cities such as plazas, markets, bull rings, and the jai alai game are omitted unless recognized by the author as being of unusual interest or importance.¹³

Central Highway

The point of entry for the Central Highway is Ciudad Juarez across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas, (Figure 2). Juarez is a typical Mexican-United States border town thriving on the border tourists. After leaving the border on Mexico Federal Highway 45, the tourist

¹³From notes taken while travelling on this highway in August, 1955.

travels through a vast desert area dotted by small agricultural villages which have grown around the irrigated areas of the few rivers. No matter how small, practically every village or town has at least one cathedral and often several shrines. Many of these have interesting and unusual histories or legends behind them that make them of interest to the tourist. Chihuahua and Durango, both rather large towns located along this route, are sites of attractive churches, plazas, and places of historic value. As one travels farther south along this route the towns are much closer and more heavily populated. The interesting structures of cultural value are numerous. Zacatecas and Aguascalientes are two other larger cities which hold many interesting places to visit. One of the most interesting of these towns is Guanajuato, which has maintained its quaint, primitive atmosphere of the sixteenth century. This heavily populated area affords a variety of cultural points that are of interest to the traveller on this route.¹⁴ The most publicized of these, as noted by the writer, are listed in Appendix "B."

West Coast Highway

The newest of the three main highways leading to Mexico City from the United States border is Mexico Highway 15, or the West Coast Highway (Figure 2). The cultural attractions along this route differ slightly from those along the other two because of the influence of the sea on man and his mode of life. Nogales is the point of entry for the route and is much the same as the other border towns with its Mexican-American atmosphere, consisting of bull rings, markets, and cabarets to satisfy

¹⁴Ibid.

the interests of the border tourists. The first large city after leaving Nogales is Hermosillo, which is much like Monterrey on the Pan American Highway in that it serves as a resort for the tourists not wishing to journey deep into the interior of Mexico. Guaymas, Los Mochis, and Mazatlan are interesting ports which hold many cultural attractions as well as being noted as excellent fishing resorts. The highway parallels the coast to Tepic, one of the larger cities on this route. Here it turns to the southeast to Guadalajara, which has a great potentiality of becoming a tourist mecca in itself because of the quality and abundance of the natural and cultural attractions therein. This city is represented in every category in the list of cultural attractions, plus many other points of interest that may demand the attention of the visitor.

Enroute to Mexico City from Guadalajara many small towns are passed in this densely populated area. Two of the most interesting of these are Morelia and Toluca, in which is found remnants of ancient tribes and the influence of the Old World blended with present day cultures.¹⁵ In the opinion of the author, the cultural attractions of interest to the tourist travelling this highway are listed in Appendix "C." The cultural attractions of Mexico City are covered in the table included in the chapter on that city.

Summary

Mexico is an excellent vacationland since it contains an inexhaustible supply of things to do and see and is relatively inexpensive compared to most other resort areas. There are some inconveniences but the advantages

¹⁵Frances Toor, New Guide to Mexico (New York, 1954), pp. 58-88.

seem to outweigh the disadvantages in this country of innumerable cultural and natural attractions. It depends on the individual as to what makes up an interesting vacation in Mexico. Some tourists travel in Mexico expressly for the purpose of shopping, as Mexico City is becoming quite a fashion center and prices are reasonable; others enjoy the ancient and colonial architecture, the beautiful natural scenery, the pleasant climate, and the active sports programs. Some of these natural and cultural features are located in remote areas which are inconvenient for the traveller to reach, such as the Paricutin Volcano, Chichen Itza, and other archaeological sites. However, it would take the tourist many months to visit all the easily accessible attractions without having to seek out the remote areas. Better transportation has enabled the tourist to enjoy these features and has aided in the rapid growth of the country's tourist industry.

CHAPTER IV

MEXICO CITY AND VICINITY

Mexico City is located in one of several intermountain basins on the Central Plateau, 281 miles south of the Tropic of Cancer. The elevation of the Valley of Mexico ranges from 5,000 to 8,000 feet and is about sixty miles long and thirty miles wide. Mexico City is at an elevation of 7,500 feet.¹ It is located in the Federal District and is the governmental, economical, educational, industrial, and cultural center of the country. This city offers the tourist a wide and ceaseless variety of interesting sights and places to visit. It is one of the foremost tourist meccas in the Americas. Aiding Mexico City in attaining its popularity are the surrounding cities. Covered in this chapter, besides Mexico City, are nearby cities and the Mexico City-Veracruz and Mexico City-Acapulco routes.

History

Mexico City was first built on several islands of Lake Texcoco by the Aztecs and was called Tenochtitlan. The Aztecs had been the dominant people in Mexico for about sixty years when the Spanish conquest began in 1519 led by Hernan Cortez. At this time the estimated population of Tenochtitlan was 300,000. Montezuma II was the leader and he welcomed

¹Mexico By Motor, American Automobile Association (Washington, D. C., 1955), p. 64.

Cortez with no resistance. The Spaniards remained in the city for a year and a half, but a general uprising occurred in which Montezuma II was killed while the Spaniards were being driven out. After a long siege the city fell and the Aztec empire came to an end. It remained in the hands of the Spaniards for three centuries until finally taken by an army of patriots in 1821. The country has remained independent with Mexico City as its capital since that time, except for a brief period of three years when the French installed Maximilian as Emperor.² The Indian, Spanish, and French civilizations have left their marks on the presently thriving metropolis.

Mexico City, the capitol city, is noted for its many tourist attractions; some of these are so interesting and unique they greatly impress the tourist, while others with equal billing are less noteworthy. A combination of the many parks, gardens and plazas, the modern buildings, and the residential sections impress the tourist in Mexico City as much as the more publicized attractions. Among the numerous points of interest in this city, those considered noteworthy are listed in Table V.

Climate

Mexico City is often called the City of Perpetual Spring because of its enjoyable year-round climate. The yearly average range of temperature in Mexico City is only 11° F., and the annual average temperature is around 60° F. The coldest month is December with an average of 53.4° F., and the warmest month is May with an average of 64.9° F. Mexico City has a definite rainy season which begins in May and ends in October. This

²Preston E. James, Latin America (New York, 1950), pp. 594-595.

TABLE V
POINTS OF INTEREST IN MEXICO CITY³

Places	Attractions
AZTEC RUINS	Remnant of Aztec Empire in Mexico City.
CATHEDRAL	The largest church in Mexico, with fourteen chapels, the exterior composed of Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian architecture.
CENTRAL ART GALLERY	Houses most of Mexico's moderns.
CHAPULTEPEC PARK & CASTLE	Dates from Aztec to present time; was once the home of Maximilian and Carlotta, and was used as the home of Mexico's presidents until recently, and is the site of many historical events. The park is one of the oldest natural parks in America containing the statue called Los Ninos Heroes and the Don Quijote Fountain, Botanical gardens and beautiful old trees.
FRONTON MEXICO	The jai alai game is played here nightly.
HOUSE OF THE COUNT OF SANTIAGO	An aristocratic mansion erected shortly after the conquest.
HOUSE OF TILES	Once was one of the finest colonial mansions in the city and now houses the well-known Sanborns Tearoom and Gift Shop.
LA ALEMEDA	The City's central park and has an interesting history.

³Data were mainly compiled from the following sources: Pemex Travel Club, Tours Out of Mexico City (Mexico, D. F., Mexico, date not given); G. M. Bashford, Tourist Guide to Mexico (New York, 1954), pp. 132-139; Frances Toor, New Guide to Mexico (New York, 1954), pp. 95-142; Mexico By Motor, American Automobile Association (Washington, D. C., 1955), pp. 77-89; New Horizons, Pan American World Airways (New York, 1955), pp. 339-349; Mexico, Automobile Club of Southern California (Los Angeles, California, 1955), pp. 53-74; and Travel folders from agencies located in Mexico City's hotels Reforma, Del Prado, Virreyes, and Regis.

TABLE V, Continued

Places	Attractions
LAVA GARDEN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT	Near University City, beautiful modern homes built among the porous lava flow, private gardens.
MERCADO MERCED	The largest market in Mexico.
MERCADO RODRIGUEZ	Mexico City's newest and cleanest market.
MONUMENT DE LA INDEPENDENCE	This monument is 150 feet high with a winged statue of Victory on top.
MUSEUM OF FLORA AND FAUNA	Nation's best collection of species.
NATIONAL LIBRARY	Contains many historical books and ancient documents.
NATIONAL MUSEUM	This is one of the world's finest archaeological museums.
NATIONAL PALACE	Located on the east side of Zocala with its early colonial architecture and murals depicting Mexico's history.
NATIONAL PREPARATORY SCHOOL	Bolivar Amphitheatre of baroque style architecture, with frescoes, murals and paintings.
NATIONAL SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS	Contains work of the old masters.
PALACE OF FINE ARTS	It is a blend of Mayan and Mextec classic architecture, and contains the National Theatre and Art Galleries.
PLAZA DE LA CONSTITUTION or ZOCALA	The plaza was the heart of the Aztec capitol where the Aztec calendar stone was found.
PLAZA DE LA REPUBLIC	Contains the Monument to the Revolution which rises to a height of 250 feet and can be seen from almost every part of the city.
PLAZA MONUMENTAL MEXICO	World's largest bull ring.

TABLE V, Concluded

Places	Attractions
PLAZA DE SANTO DOMINGO and CHURCH OF SANTO DOMINGO	The first church established by the Dominicans in Mexico.
STATUE OF CUAUHEMOC	This is a statue to the greatest hero of the Aztecs.
UNIVERSITY CITY	One of the most beautiful uni- versities of the world, and is the pride of modern Mexico.

season reaches its peak in August which has a monthly average of 4.7 inches of precipitation (Figure 6). This and other climatic data which are of importance to tourism in Mexico City may be found in Table VI.⁴

In the past cloudiness and fog were hinderances to airline transportation coming into Mexico City, but with the installation of instruments along this line, it is now a minor obstruction. However, occasionally dense fog sets in around the airfield and schedules are delayed. During the rainy season some of the arroyo causeways become dangerous to the motorist and two or three hour delays are necessary before crossing. Also the daily rainfall is often a nuisance to the tourist interested in photography.⁵ These unfavorable factors of Mexico City's climate as compared with other resort cities of the world are of little importance in limiting its tourist industry.

Tours Out of Mexico City

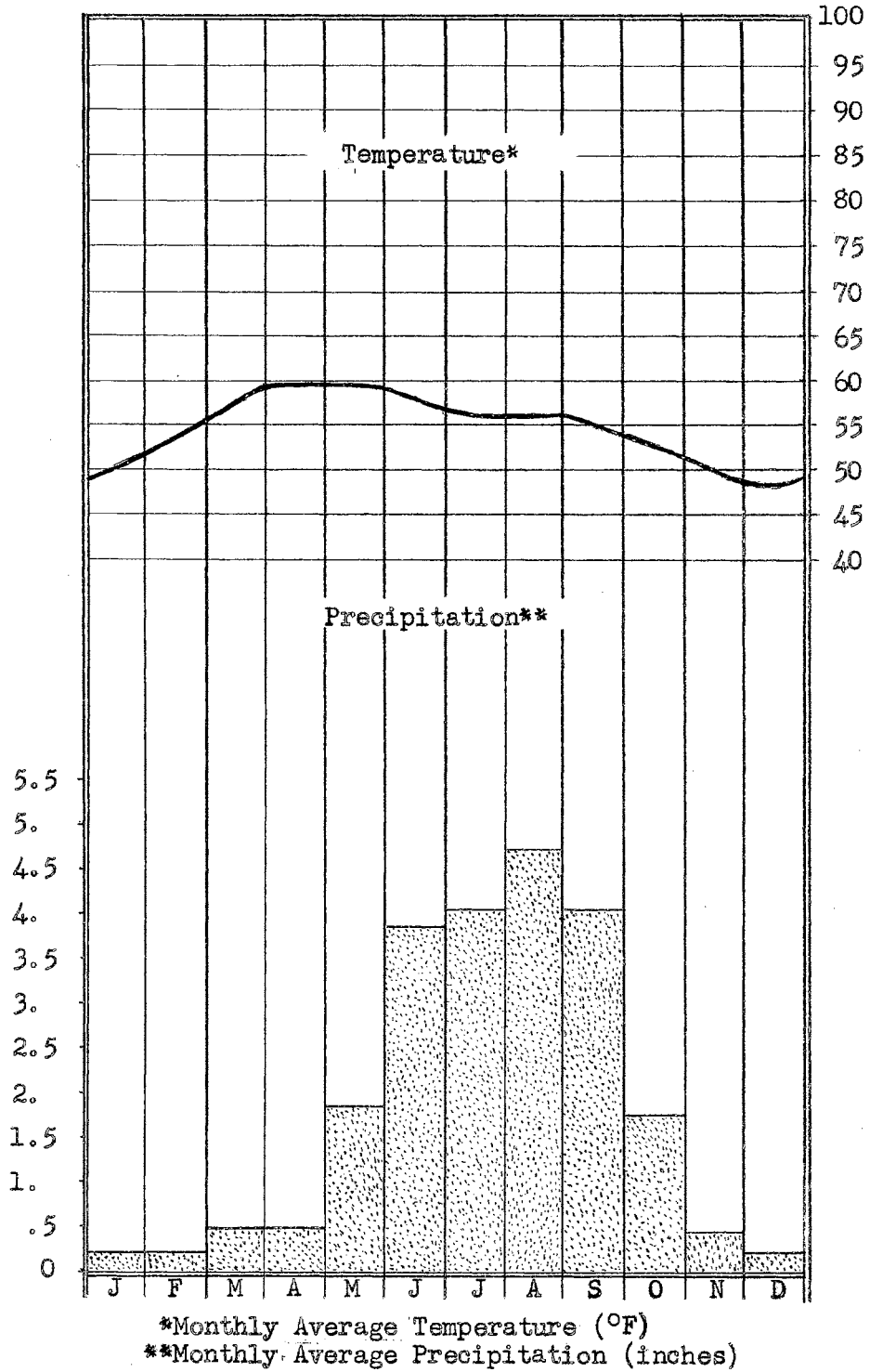
Many of the interesting tourist attractions are located near Mexico City and are offered as one day tours from the city by private, or hotel, tour agencies. The tourist may drive to these places himself rather than use the agency tour limousine service, or he may hire a government guide. These one day trips from the capital city are combined in convenient groups according to locale. The number of points of interest covered in each tour depends on the time to be spent at each stop.

⁴Robert DeC. Ward and Charles F. Brooks, The Climates of North America (Berlin, Germany, 1936), pp. 49-75.

⁵Personal observation.

Figure 6

Mexico City -
Temperature and Precipitation Chart⁶



⁶Ward and Brooks.

TABLE VI
CLIMATIC DATA ON MEXICO CITY⁷

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year
<u>Number of Clear Days</u>												
18.6	19.1	16.9	11.1	6.8	3.8	.6	1.0	1.7	7.3	12.6	15.2	114.7
<u>Number of Cloudy Days</u>												
3.5	2.4	2.7	4.4	7.3	15.4	17.1	17.3	18.4	10.6	5.6	4.6	109.3
<u>Number of Days With Fog</u>												
3.5	2.2	.6	.8	1.5	1.7	2.5	2.4	2.8	2.7	5.7	3.7	30.1
<u>Per Cent of the Possible Sunshine Hours</u>												
64	67	59	53	54	43	46	53	45	52	60	59	54.6
<u>Relative Humidity (%)</u>												
53	48	45	45	51	62	67	68	70	65	61	58	

⁷Ward and Brooks.

Typical tours of this type are as follows:⁸

- Tour 1. Churubusco, Xochilmilco, Coyasan
2. Basilica de Guadalupe, Acolman, San Juan Teotihuacan
3. Chalco, Tlalmanalco, Amecameca, Cuautla
4. Villa Obregon (San Angel), Desierto de los Leones, Toluca
5. Pedregal, University City, Cuicuilco Pyramid, Tlalpan
6. Tenayuca, Santa Cecilia, Tepotzotlan
7. Chapingo, Huexotla, Coatlinchan, Texcotzingo, Molino de Flores
8. Cuernavaca, Xochilmilco, Tequesquitengo, Tepoztlan, Cacahuamilpa

Tours similar to these are made up according to the agency. It is important that the tourist check to see if the agency is a dependable and licensed one before its employment. Additional points of interest in the vicinity of Mexico City follow in Table VII.

Souvenir Industry

Mexico City is a market for most of the native products of the country. Many of the small villages are known for certain distinctive products which are sent to Mexico City where they may be bought, as well as in the village markets themselves. However, these wares are often less expensive in the smaller village markets where they may be bargained for. The shops of the larger cities have set prices, and it is considered unethical to bargain. Mexico City has a wide variety of items from which to choose: hand-hammered jewelry, painted onyx and obsidian, woodcarving and wood inlay work, pottery, hand tooled lacquer wares, native textiles,

⁸Data were obtained from sources listed in footnote 2 of this chapter.

TABLE VII
POINTS OF INTEREST NEAR MEXICO CITY⁹

Places	Attractions
ACOLMAN	Monastery of St. Augustin Acolman, the San Juan Tectihuacan archaeological zone.
CACAHUAMILPA CAVES	Interesting sights in these mammoth caves.
CHAPINGO	National Agricultural College, Huexotla Ruins, Idol of Tlaloc.
CHURUBUSCO	Motion picture studios, Convent of St. Matthew.
COYOACAN	Palace of Cortez, First seat of Spanish government, Church of San Juan Bautista, Dominican Monastery.
CUICUILCO	Pyramid Cuicuilco, oldest on the American Continent.
EL DESIERTO DE LOS LEONES	National Park, ruins of Santo Desierto.
IXTAPALAPA	Cerro de la Estrella (Star Hill), an interesting village which is noted for its Easter pageant.
LAKE TEQUESQUITENGO	Artificial lake covering a small town, 16th century hacienda.
LOS REMEDIOS	Los Remedios Sanctuary, colonial aqueduct.
SAN CRISTOBAL (Escatepec)	Casa de los Virreyes (museum).
SAN JUAN TECTIHUACAN	Archaeological zone, Pyramid of the Moon, Road of the Dead, Sun Pyramid, Temple of Quetzalcoatl, Temple of Agriculture.
TEPOZTLAN	Convent of Tepoztlan, Pyramid of Tepozteco.

⁹Data were obtained from sources listed in footnote 2 of this chapter.

TABLE VII, Concluded

Places	Attractions
TLALNEPANTLA	Tenayuca Pyramid, Pyramid of Santa Cecilia.
VILLA MADERO	Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
XOCHICALCO	House of Flowers, small pyramid.
XOCHILMILCO	Floating gardens, Convent and Church of San Bernadino.

embroideries, and the basket and palm products which are displayed interestingly in the many shops and markets.

Along with the Mexican hand work and art there are several growing industries in Mexico City which benefit the tourist industry. Among these are tanneries where fine grades of leather are prepared and then sent to workshops to be made into leather products distinguished by their beautiful workmanship and fine quality. Modern textile plants produce cotton, linen, and woolen materials; and glass blowing plants produce handmade colored glass. Another highly developed industry is silver working. These industries are sustained mainly by the tourist trade and are increasing in size and volume as the tourist trade increases.¹⁰

The souvenir and handicraft industries of Mexico are not highly mechanized as are such small industries in the United States, but are often household workshops with only members of the family as employees. These household industries are numerous throughout Mexico and the volume produced is considerable.

Transportation in Mexico City

On the outskirts of Mexico City the government has set up check stations at which guides are located to drive the tourist to his hotel with no charge or obligation. However, the guide may be hired later to conduct a private tour of the city or even tours out of town if so desired. There are also several sightseeing agencies who offer tours in passenger cars with English speaking guides. These tours can be obtained through most of the hotels and motels.

¹⁰Mexico By Motor, p. 67.

The traffic rules and regulations, heavy traffic, and driving habits of the natives of Mexico City are quite different from those to which most American tourists are accustomed and make it difficult to drive one's automobile in Mexico City. However, many do like to drive their private cars. Automobiles are available for hire by the hour or day to those who reach Mexico City by some means other than private automobile. There is a regular bus system in Mexico City, but it may be difficult for the tourist with little knowledge of the city or the language to use this means of transportation. The libres (taxis) are the most desirable means of transportation to the tourist, as they are convenient, fast, and inexpensive.¹¹

Accommodations

Mexico City has an abundance of good hotels and restaurants. At the present time the city has adequate accommodations for the tourist trade; however, if the tourist rate continues to increase as it has in the past, the accommodations may be insufficient. In the past, before the tourist boom, there was an off season during the rainy months in which the hotel rates were lowered. Since the tourist trade has become a year round industry, this is no longer true. Some of the largest and most popular of these hotels are the ultra-modern Continental Hilton, the Del Prado, and the Reforma. There are also many other fine hotels in the city, most of which are equipped with all the modern conveniences. The rates are moderate in comparison with those of similar hotels in New York or Chicago.¹² The number of hotels, motels, and tourist courts

¹¹Personal observation.

¹²Byron Steel, Let's Visit Mexico (New York, 1946), p. 159.

which are recommended by various agencies interested in tourism are listed in Chapter II, Table II. All the larger hotels have high quality restaurants and night clubs. There are also many good individual restaurants such as Sanborns and the Ambassadeurs, and many others offering an international cuisine.

Mexico City-Veracruz and Mexico City-Acapulco Highways

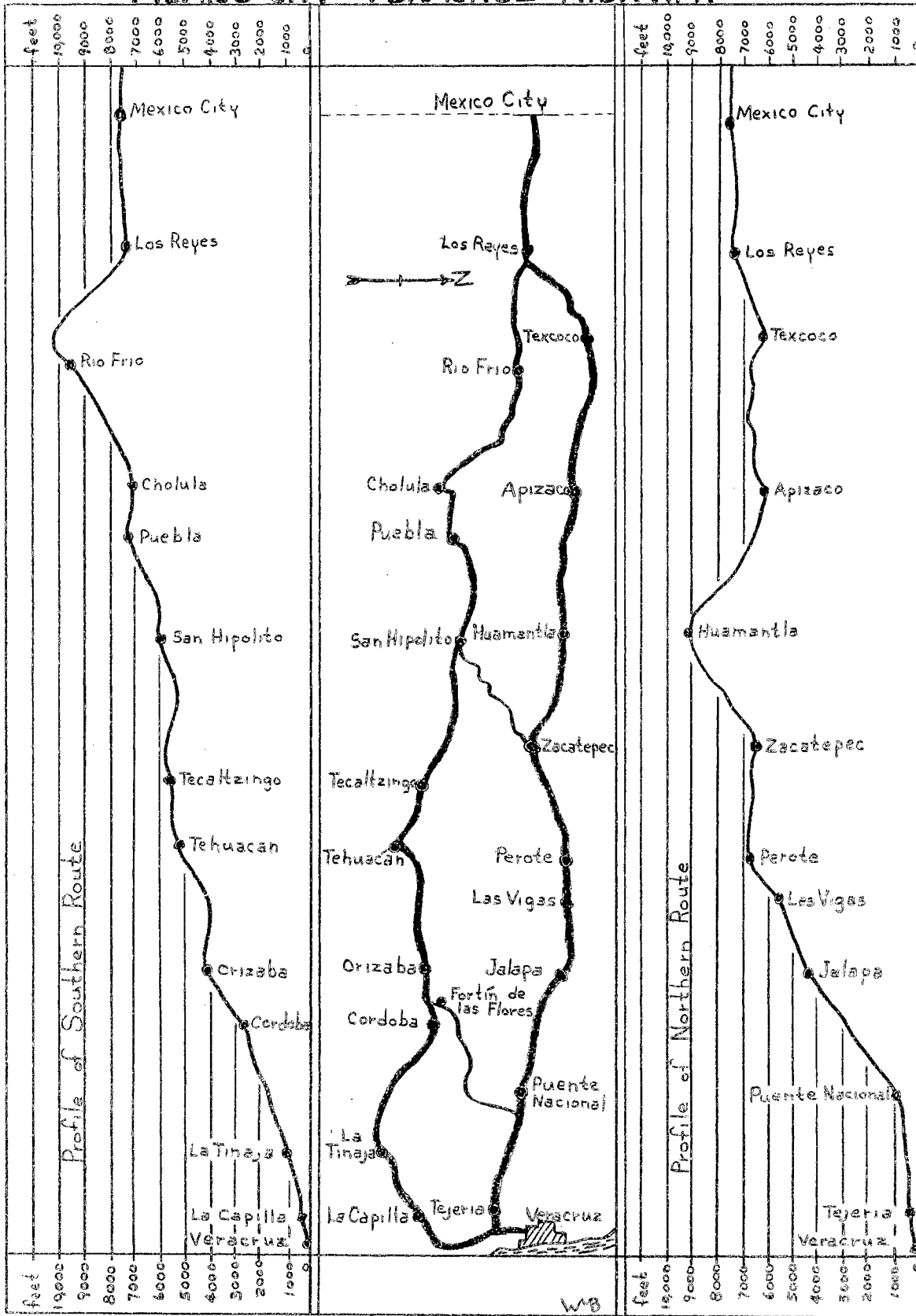
The Veracruz and Acapulco routes have long been important routes to the Mexico City area. Before the Spanish conquest the Aztecs had runners to both coasts providing them with fresh fish and other commodities from the seacoast regions. Both Acapulco and Veracruz have entered into the history of Mexico as important ports. Acapulco was a port where the galleons from the Orient unloaded their wares to be carried by mule to Mexico City. Veracruz was founded by Cortez and was the point from which he launched his campaign.¹³

The Mexico City-Veracruz route has two parallel highways--via Jalapa and via Puebla. The new Texcoco-Jalapa route is 279 miles long, and the Puebla route is 295 miles long.¹⁴ The Jalapa route is shorter and saves driving time by avoiding the mountains, although the Puebla, or southern route is more scenic. Both, however, offer the tourist many interesting sights. The latter is more heavily travelled and fine resorts are located along it. These highways are connected by three different transverse highways: one joining Puebla to Tlaxcala then on to Apizaco on the Jalapa highway; the second connecting Tepeaca on the southern route with

¹³Personal interview with Raymond Garcia.

¹⁴Direccion Nacional de Caminos, Office De Informacion y Estadistica, Mexico, D. F., Mexico, personal correspondence, February 22, 1957.

MEXICO CITY-VERACRUZ HIGHWAY¹⁵



¹⁵Ibid., based on maps received in Personal Correspondence.

Zacatepec on the northern route; and the third connecting Fortin de las Flores on the southern highway with Paso Ovejas on the northern highway (Figure 7).

The Mexico City-Acapulco route has been improved tremendously in the last few years with a new super toll highway. This 22 meter wide boulevard to Cuernavaca was inaugurated in 1952, and later the entire highway was completed to Acapulco at a cost of 365 million pesos.¹⁶ An alternate route, called the Circle Tour, may be taken back to Mexico City by way of Cuautla, Amecameca, Chalco, and Los Reyes. There is a transverse highway connecting these two routes between Chalco and Huipulco, on the new highway, which passes through Xochilmilco, another well-known tourist attraction. Interesting towns such as Cuernavaca, Taxco, Iguala, and Chilpancingo are located along this route (Figure 8); these cities and other points of interest along this route as well as the Veracruz route are listed in Appendixes "D" and "E," respectively.

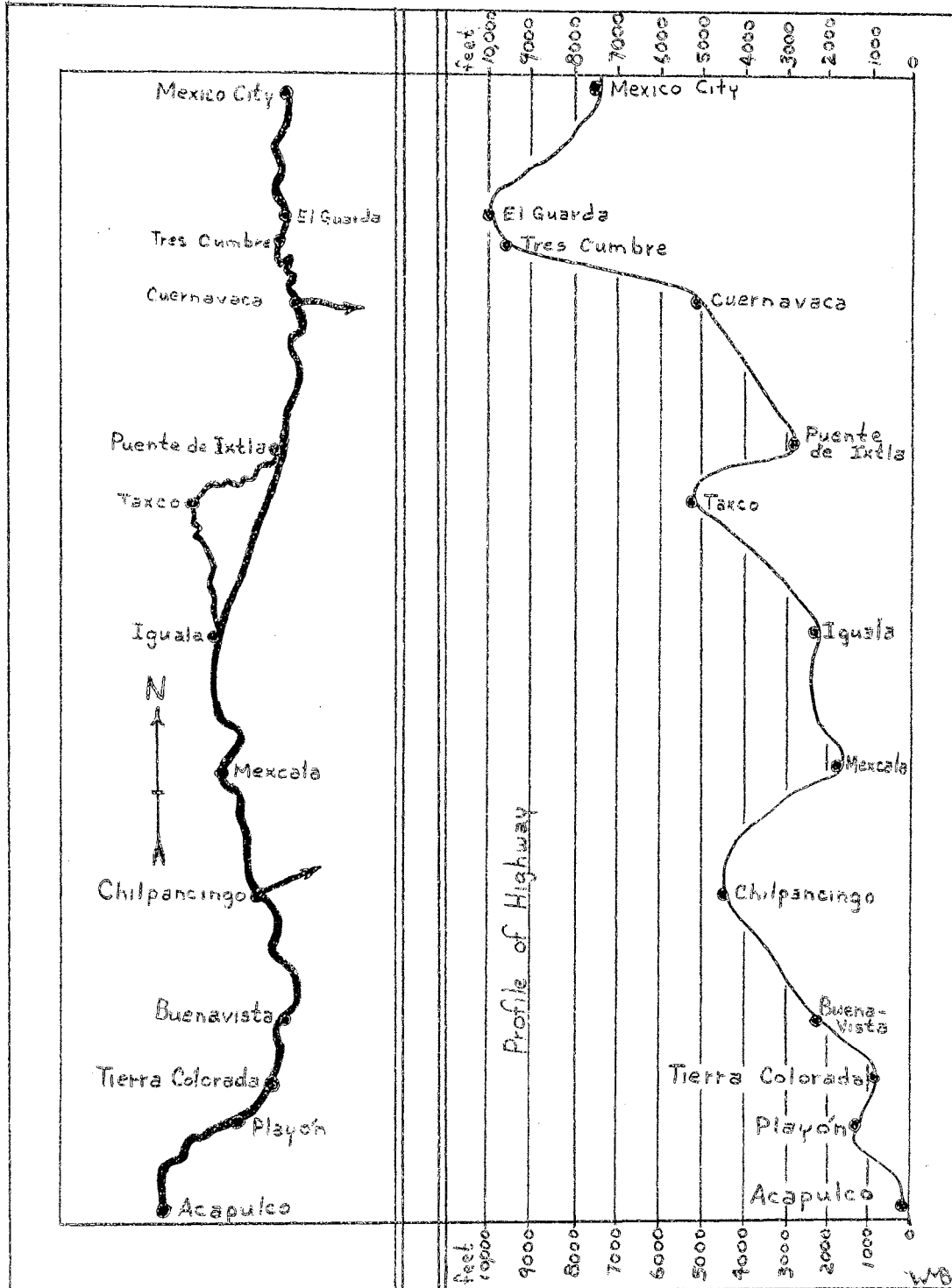
Summary

Mexico City is the largest and most important city in Mexico and is one of the main drawing cards of tourists to this country because of its many attractions. This modern metropolis with its ultra-modern business buildings, hotels, universities, and boulevards in contrast with its ancient Cathedral, Chapultepec Castle, and archaeological ruins left by the various Indian races of the area, provide the tourist with an interesting as well as economical vacation. Transportation facilities in Mexico City and for tours radiating from the city are well established for the convenience of the sightseers.

¹⁶Ibid.

Figure 8

MEXICO CITY-ACAPULCO HIGHWAY¹⁷



¹⁷ Ibid., based on maps received in Personal Correspondence.

The good highway systems radiating from Mexico City and the capable tour agencies make it convenient for the tourist to reach the many interesting sights around Mexico City such as the floating gardens at Xochimilco, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the archaeological sites at San Juan Teotihuacan. There are many worth-while sights along the routes to various cities of overnight tours out of the capitol city, such as Veracruz, Acapulco, Guadalajara, Guanajuato.

Mexico City, being the center of activity, offers the tourist an active sports program, interesting shops and markets, as well as noteworthy natural attractions. These combine to make Mexico City the popular tourist center it is today.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The importance of travel in foreign countries was stressed by the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, in his message to Congress on foreign policy, March 30, 1954. He stated, "International travel has cultural and social importance in the free world. It also has economic significance. Foreign travel by Americans is a substantial source of dollars for many countries, enabling them to pay for what we sell them."¹ This is well illustrated in the case of Mexico as it has reduced its national debt at an average rate of forty-two million dollars per year for the past nineteen years. Not only has the tourist industry aided in reducing Mexico's national debt, but has also improved relations between that country and the United States.

A visit to Mexico, especially to the larger modern cities, often proves very enlightening to the typical tourist who thinks of that country as a primitive, backward nation. Although Mexico has maintained much of its quaintness with its colorful fiestas and many unique customs, the tourists usually find all the conveniences of their own country.

At the present time tourism in Mexico is a large and growing industry. Twenty-five years ago this industry was insignificant to the economy of the country. Since the end of World War II tourism has grown into the

¹Survey of International Travel, U. S. Department of Commerce (Washington, D. C., 1956), cover page.

third largest industry of Mexico, topped only by oil production and by other mining. Governmental leaders recognized the potential of this industry and began a development program to encourage travel into this country of rich and abundant cultural and natural features. Although improvements in accommodations and transportation facilities were much needed at the time, little was done to develop these utilities until the interest in tourism became prominent. Presently Mexico is adequately equipped to handle its tourist trade, but a substantial gain in the number of tourists would overcrowd its facilities, especially the hotels, motels, and tourist homes.

Encouragement in private investments in the tourist industry has helped the country socially in that many of the people in the larger cities have found employment in large stores, hotels, restaurants and other agencies interested in tourism, whereas before the tourist boom these people found it difficult to make a substantial living. Some even own shops, taxis, or other enterprises of their own. These people make up the middle class of Mexico, which has developed only since tourism has opened these new fields to them.

Approximately 500,000 tourists are visiting the interior of Mexico each year, and many more make border crossings. Income from tourism and border trade has soared to \$489.3 million per year. Border transactions account for approximately seventy per cent of the gross income from tourism.

In the past several years the tourist facilities of Mexico have improved to a great extent. However, much can still be done that would be a great asset in furthering the development of the tourist industry. For instance, the national parks of that country are generally in out-of-the-way places without good roads leading to them or facilities to

accommodate visitors. Development of these "beauty spots" patterned after the park system of the United States would be beneficial to the tourist industry not only for foreign tourists but also as recreational facilities for the natives of the country.

The improvement of the government produced gasoline is greatly needed since the newer high compression automotive engines do not function at maximum ability with the crude Mexican gasoline. The government controls the petroleum industry and therefore should be interested in producing a sufficient gasoline.

Sanitary drinking water is quite a problem in Mexico. Most tap water is impure and tourists are warned against drinking it. However, all the large hotels and restaurants have bottled water for drinking purposes, but even after taking precautions many visitors to the country are affected by the impure water. It is also unwise to eat any fresh, uncooked fruits or vegetables that cannot be peeled because of the unsanitary methods of fertilization and the impure water in which the fruit is washed.

With these and other improvements the future of the tourist industry of Mexico looks bright. Development of the potential of tourism depends on the intensity of the promotional efforts by the government and various other interested agencies. If the past records are any indication of future development, Mexico could become a top contender for the title of America's favorite vacationland.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX "A"

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE PAN AMERICAN HIGHWAY¹

Parks, Plazas, and Monuments

Nuevo Laredo	Interesting plazas
Monterrey	Plaza de Zaragoza
Ciudad Victoria	Interesting plazas; Juarez Garden; Plaza de Armas
Ciudad Valles	Typical plazas
Zimapan	Quaint small plaza
Pachuca	Plazas; Monument to Independence
*Reynosa	Parks and Plazas
*Saltillo	Alameda Park; Statue of General Zaragoza; Calzada de los Heroes

Cathedrals, Churches, and Shrines

Nuevo Laredo	Typical Mexican churches
Monterrey	Cathedral
Ciudad Victoria	Cathedral

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

¹Data mainly compiled from the following sources: G. M. Bashford, Tourist Guide to Mexico (New York), pp. 132-140; James Dossick, New World Guide to the Latin American Republics (New York, 1943), pp. 54-162; Frances Toor, New Guide to Mexico (New York, 1954), pp. 21-28; Mexico By Motor, American Automobile Association (Washington, D. C., 1955), pp. 29-130; Mexico, Automobile Club of Southern California (Los Angeles, 1955), pp. 53-74; New Horizons, The Guide to World Travels, Pan American World Airways (New York, 1955), pp. 339-349; Conoco Touraide, Sheets of assembled data obtained from personal interview, April 16, 1957; Pemex Travel Club, Travel folders, The Central Route, The Coast to Coast Route, The Gulf Route, and The Western Route (Mexico, D. F., Mexico, No date given); and from Personal Observations, Summer, 1955.

Ciudad Valles	Interesting cathedrals
Tamazunchale	16th Century church
Zimapan	Parish church - 16th Century
Ixmiquilpan	Old Church and former monastery of the Order of St. Augustine founded in 1550
Actopan	Convent of St. Augustine
Pachuca	Church of San Francisco - 15th Century
*Matamoros	17th Century cathedral
*Saltillo	Cathedral of Santiago; Church of San Esteban

Bull Rings and Sports Arenas

Nuevo Laredo	Bull ring
Monterrey	Circulo Mercantil Mutualista; Bull fights
*Saltillo	Bull fights

State and Federal Buildings and Universities

Monterrey	State Capitol; Universidad de Nuevo Leon; Federal Palace; Military Post
Ciudad Victoria	State Agricultural College; State Capitol
Pachuca	Casa Colorados (Red House) Government offices; Instituto Cientifico y Literario
*Saltillo	State Capitol

Museums and Historical Sites

Monterrey	Bishops Palace (El Obispado)
*Saltillo	Buena Vista Battlefield
*Matamoros	Fort

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

Markets and Folk Art

Nuevo Laredo	Markets
Monterrey	Celon Market
Ciudad Victoria	Market
Ciudad Valles	Markets and street vendors
Tamazunchale	Unusual market with native goods from the mountains
Zimapan	Colorful market
*Matamoros	Large market place
*Saltillo	Markets (Indian wares)

Architecture and Archaeological Sites

Actopan	Tula (ancient capital of the Toltecs), west of town
*Matamoros	17th Century theatre

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

APPENDIX "B"

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE CENTRAL HIGHWAY²

Parks, Plazas, and Monuments

Chihuahua	Parque Lerdo de Tejada
Durango	Plaza Principal
Aguascalientes	Many pretty parks
Moreno	Typical plazas
Leon	Flowering plazas
Guanajuato	Statue of Pipila; Jardin de la Union (one of seven parks); Statue of Jose Barajas
Queretaro	Plaza Obregon; Plaza de la Independencia
*Torreon	Interesting parks and plazas
*San Juan de los Lagos	Interesting plaza
*San Luis Potosi	Plaza de Armas Plaza de Morelos

Cathedrals, Churches, and Shrines

Ciudad Juarez	Mission de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe
Chihuahua	Cathedral
Hidalgo de Parral	Virgin of the Thunderbolt (Virgen Del Rayo); Parochial church
Durango	First cathedral; Temple of Sagrario
Zacatecas	Chapel of Los Remedios on the Cerro de la Bufa; Church of Santo Domingo

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

²Ibid.

Guadalupe	Convento de Guadalupe
Aguascalientes	Church of San Marcos; Church of San Antonio
Moreno	Churches
Leon	Church of the Immaculate; Guadalupe Shrine; Shrine of the Sacred Heart (all three of which are relatively modern)
Guanajuato	La Parroquia; Church of La Valenciana; San Francisco Church; La Compania de Jesus; San Diego Church
Queretaro	Church of San Francisco; Church of Santa Clara; Church of Santa Rosa de Virterbo
*San Luis Potosi	The Cathedral; Church of Our Lady of Carmen; Church of San Francisco

Bull Rings and Sports Arenas

Juarez	Bull ring
Aguascalientes	Breeding of Fighting Bulls

State and Federal Buildings and Universities

Chihuahua	Federal Palace and Municipal Palace; State Capitol; Instituto Cientifico y Literario
Hidalgo del Parral	Palacio Municipal
Durango	Juarez Institute
Zacatecas	Municipal Palace; Instituto de Ciencias
Aguascalientes	Government Palace; Municipal Palace
Leon	Palacio Municipal

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

Guanajuato	Government Palace; State College
Queretaro	State Capitol
*San Luis Potosi	State Palace; Universidad de San Luis Potosi

Museums and Historical Sites

Chihuahua	Home of Pancho Villa
Hidalgo del Parral	El Cerro de la Cruz (Ruins of an old fort)
Durango	Ex-home of the Count of Suchil
Queretaro	Museum Pio Marino; Cerro de las Campanas (Hill of Bells)

Markets and Folk Art

Juarez	Border markets
Zacatecas	Enclosed market
Aguascalientes	Market (drawn linen work)
Leon	Colorful market (leather goods, shawls)
*San Luis Potosi	Hidalgo Market
*San Juan de los Lagos	Market; Interesting November Fair

Architecture and Archaeological Sites

Chihuahua	Colonial aqueducts
Camargo	Boquilla Dam
Zacatecas	Calderon Theatre
Leon	Mostly modern buildings

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

Guanajuato	Quaint colonial architecture, narrow cobblestone streets; Teatro Juarez; Alhondiga de Granaditas (Now State Prison); The Pantheon (Cemetery with mummies)
Queretaro	Spanish aqueduct
*Torreon	Modern architecture

*Cities on the transverse routes are listed under the nearest main highway.

APPENDIX "C"

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE WEST COAST HIGHWAY³

Parks, Plazas, and Monuments

Hermosillo	Plaza de la Constitucion; Parque Madero
Culiacan	Jardin Rosales
Tepic	Numerous Plazas - Plaza Principal
Guadalajara	Many flower filled parks and plazas
Jiquilpan	Colon Plaza
Morelia	Jardin de las Rosas
Zitacuaro	Plazas
Toluca	Monument to the Mexican Flag

Cathedrals, Churches, and Shrines

Hermosillo	The Cathedral
Guaymas	Church of San Fernando
Los Mochis	Church
Culiacan	Cathedral
Tepic	Cathedral; Church of the Holy Cross
Guadalajara	Cathedral; Church of Santa Monica; San Francisco Church; Church of Our Lady of Aranzazu
Zamora	A neo-classic Cathedral
Morelia	The Cathedral; Church of San Francisco
Toluca	Church of El Carmen; Shrine of El Calvario

³Ibid.

Bull Rings and Sports Arenas

Nogales	Bull fights
Guaymas	Fiesta de la Pesca (fishing festival)
Mazatlan	Olas Altas (High Waves) Beach; North Beach
Guadalajara	Bull fights and fiestas

State and Federal Buildings and Universities

Hermosillo	Federal Palace; State Capitol; University of Sonora
Guaymas	Municipal Palace
Culiacan	State Capitol; University Socilista del Noroeste
Tepic	State Capitol; Instituto del Estado
Guadalajara	State Capitol; University of Guadalajara; Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara
Morelia	College of St. Nicholas; State Capitol
Toluca	State Capitol; Instituto Cientifico y Literario

Museums and Historical Sites

Guadalajara	Museo del Estado (State Museum)
Morelia	Museo del Estado (State Museum); Casa de Morelos
Toluca	State Museum

Markets and Folk Art

Nogales	Markets and street vendors
Guaymas	Markets
Mazatlan	Markets

Tepic	Market (handicrafts by surrounding Indians)
Guadalajara	Market of San Juan de Dios
Morelia	Market (lacquer ware, pottery, wood-carvings, and jewelry)
Zitacuaro	Markets (woodcarving)
Toluca	Markets (handwoven blankets, serapes, pottery)

Architecture and Archaeological Sites

Ciudad Obregon	Obregon Dam; Modern buildings
Mazatlan	Second highest lighthouse in the world
Guadalajara	Teatro Degollado; Modern buildings
Morelia	Old Aqueduct
Toluca	Calixtlahuaca Archaeological Zone

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE MEXICO CITY-ACAPULCO HIGHWAY⁴

Cathedrals, Churches, and Shrines

Tlalpan	Church of St. Augustin de las Cuevas, 1532
Buenavista (Tepoztlan)	Convent of Tepoztlan - 16th Century.
Guernavaca	The Cathedral; Capilla del Tercer Orden; Church of Guadalupe
Taxco	Church of San Sebastian y Santa Prisca; Convent of San Bernadino de Sena
Iguala	Parish Church
Zumpango	Cathedral
*Oaxtepec	16th Century church
*Amecameca	16th Century Parish church; Shrine of the Sacred Mountain
*Tlalmanalco	Old Franciscan Convent
*Chalco	16th Century Franciscan Church

Plazas, Parks, and Monuments

Buenavista (Tepoztlan)	Plaza
Guernavaca	Jardin Borda
Taxco	City itself is National Monument; Plaza Ex Convento; Plaza Borda
Iguala	Plazas with Tamarinda trees
Zumpango	Plazas and parks (Main plaza interesting)
Chilpancingo	Old Cemetery
Tierra Colorada	Picturesque village with parks and plazas.

*Cities on the Circle Tour

⁴Ibid.

Acapulco	Picturesque parks and plazas with tropical vegetation
*Amecameca	National Park nearby

Markets and Folk Art

Guernavaca	Markets (silver, leather, furniture, pottery, textiles); Street vendors
Taxco	Market (Indian handicrafts, tinware, serapes, hammered silver, handcarved furniture)
Iguala	Market
Acapulco	Unusual native market
*Amecameca	Market
*Chalco	Market

Museums and Historical Sites

Taxco	Casa Figueroa (House of Tears)
Chilpancingo	House of the First Revolutionary Congress
Acapulco	17th Century Castillo San Diego

State and Federal Buildings and Universities

Guernavaca	State Capitol (formerly Cortez' Palace)
Chilpancingo	State Capitol

Architecture and Archaeological Sites

Tlalpan	Pyramid of Cuicuilco
Buena Vista (Tepoztlan)	Pyramid of Tepozteco
Guernavaca	Pyramid of Teopanzolca; Xochicalco Pyramid

*Cities on the Circle Tour.

Taxco	Colonial and quaint architecture
Chilpancingo	16th Century bridge
Acapulco	Tecpan (unexcavated pyramid, northwest)
*Yautepec	Pre-Columbian ruins
*Oaxtepec	Ruins of Aztec Botanical Gardens

Bull Rings and Sports Arenas

Cuernavaca	Chapultepec (swimming pool and Pavilion)
Iguala	Horse Fair in December
Acapulco	International Sailfish Rodeo; Water skiing; Playa Caleta (beach); Playa Hornos; Jai Alai games
*Cuautla	Swimming pool and pavilion

*Cities on the Circle Tour.

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE MEXICO CITY-VERACRUZ HIGHWAY⁵

Cathedrals, Churches, and Shrines

*Huamantla	Church
*Las Vigas	Cathedral
Veracruz	Many interesting churches
Los Reyes	16th Century church
**Texmelucan	Cathedral
**Tlaxcala	Church of San Francisco; Sanctuary of Our Lady of Ocotlan
**Cholula	Incredible number of churches; Capilla Real; Church of San Gabriel; Church of San Francisco Acatepec
**Puebla	Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception; Church of Santo Domingo; El Carmen Church and Convent; Secret Convent of Santa Monica; Convent of Santa Rosa; La Compania Church; Church of San Francisco
**Acatzingo	Parish church with interesting paintings
**Tecamachalco	16th Century Franciscan church
**Orizaba	Parochial church
**Cordoba	Churches

Architecture and Archaeological Sites

*Texcoco	Texcotzingo ruins
*Jalapa	Colonial and modern architecture

*Cities on northern route.

**Cities on southern route.

⁵Ibid.

*Puente Nacional	Pyramids of Cempoala (north of town)
Veracruz	Colonial and modern architecture
**Tlaxcala	San Estaban Tizatlan ruins
**Cholula	Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl; Santuario los Remedios (Holy City of Anahuac)
**Puebla	Palafox Library; Colonial architecture
**Fortin de las Flores	Colonial architecture

State and Federal Buildings and Universities

*Jalapa	State Capitol; Universidad Veracruzana Instituto Cientifico y Literario del Estado
**Puebla	Municipal Palace; Puebla State University
**Orizaba	City Hall (Architectural interest) Federal School

Markets and Folk Art

*Texcoco	Textile market
*Apizaco	Market - famed handcarved canes
**Puebla	Market - tiles and pottery
**Ciudad Mendosa	Textile Market
**Rio Blanco	Textile Market
**Orizaba	Textile Market

Plazas, Parks, and Monument

*Apizaco	Interesting plaza
*Huamantla	Plaza

*Cities on northern route.

**Cities on southern route.

*Jalapa	Flowered gardens and parks; Jardin Lecuona; Juarez Park; De los Berros Park
Veracruz	Plaza de la Constitucion; Parks, plazas, and tree-lined boulevards
Los Reyes	Interesting plaza
**Puebla	Many plazas
**Tehuacan	Parks and plazas
**Fortin de las Flores	Flowered gardens and parks
**Cordoba	Flowered patios and plazas

Bull Rings and Sports Arenas

*Jalapa	Modern stadium
Veracruz	Mocambo Beach; Villa del Mar Beach; Fishing Festival

Museums and Historical Sites

*Perote	Massive old Fort, 1770
Veracruz	Castillo de San Juan de Ulua (Island Fort); Isla de los Sacrificios (Island)
**Puebla	Casa de Alfenique (museum); Fort Guadalupe; Fort Loreto
**Cordoba	Pact of Cordoba was signed here (Independence)

*Cities on northern route.

**Cities on southern route.

APPENDIX "F"

KEY TO CITY LOCATION MAP

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Acapulco | 27. Monterrey |
| 2. Aguascaliente | 28. Morelia |
| 3. Campeche | 29. Navojoa |
| 4. Chihuahua | 30. Nogales |
| 5. Ciudad Valles | 31. Nuevo Laredo |
| 6. Ciudad Victoria | 32. Pachuca |
| 7. Coatzacoalcos | 33. Piedra Negras |
| 8. Cordoba | 34. Progreso |
| 9. Cuernavaca | 35. Puebla |
| 10. Culiacan | 36. Queretaro |
| 11. Durange | 37. Saltillo |
| 12. Guadalajara | 38. San Felipe |
| 13. Guanajuato | 39. San Luis Potosi |
| 14. Guaymas | 40. Tamazunchale |
| 15. Hermosillo | 41. Tampico |
| 16. Hidalgo del Parral | 42. Taxco |
| 17. Jalapa | 43. Tepic |
| 18. Juarez | 44. Tijuana |
| 19. La Paz | 45. Toluca |
| 20. Leon | 46. Torreon |
| 21. Los Mochis | 47. Tuxpan |
| 22. Manzanillo | 48. Veracruz |
| 23. Matamoros | 49. Zacatecas |
| 24. Mazatlan | 50. Zamora |
| 25. Mexicali | 51. Zihuatanejo |
| 26. Mexico City | |

CITY LOCATION MAP OF MEXICO*



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