

## *Local Information for **Yoga in Mexico** 2015...*

The following is an informal collection of information and ideas gathered by Jock & I and yoga friends throughout the years of visiting the Puerto Morelos area. It is not complete by any means, and to fill in you might like to check out the website of the local used book store, Alma Libre, as it is full of current information. <http://www.almalibrebooks.com>

You can also check out <http://www.puertomorelos.com.mx/>

And, as in the good ole' days, there are always the local guide books. When I first went to Puerto Morelos in 1997, I really didn't know a thing. Truly. Nothing. It was the first time I'd been to Mexico, and I just went knowing that somehow I would get to Puerto Morelos and go from there. Have to say, it was quite a fun adventure.

· **Puerto Morelos** is a small fishing village on the Mayan Riviera coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. 22 miles (36 KM) south of Cancun, in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo.

**Villas Shanti**, where we will be staying, is a retreat center with 8 rooms surrounding a central courtyard. There is also a house with 2 bedrooms and 3 baths on the premises. Amenities include modern air-conditioned rooms with baths, kitchenettes, balconies, daily maid service, and bottled water. Also within the compound is a large Yoga palapa and the private home of Jack and Jean Loew, our hosts.

<http://villasshanti.com>

· **You must have a passport to travel to Mexico.** A driver's license as another proof of ID may be useful as well.

· **Language** - If you don't speak Spanish, a pocket **phrase book** is useful. Many local business owners speak English and although you can get by with English, many locals have a good sense of humor and seem to appreciate when visitors experimenting with the language .

· **Health & Medical Info** - no **shots** are absolutely necessary for this area of Mexico. I have not known anyone to get shots before coming to this area, but if you are concerned, you can check with your local Travel Clinic.

Also, if you feel concern, you may want to call your **health insurance** provider to find out proper procedure for medical emergencies in foreign countries. Traveler's insurance is also an option in case a medical evacuation or hospital assistance is needed. **On the few rare occasions in the past, we have received excellent medical and dental care.**

· **Phones** - There are no public phones at Villas Shanti though there are some on the road near-by as well as in town. **You may want to check the International Plans of your cell phone provider. You can also go on-line and look up International Calling Options. Skype of course is good.**

It is also possible, cost effective, and generally works well to purchase a phone card in town.

There are two or three internet cafes in town as well. In case of emergency, you may call Jack and Jean at their private number, 011-52-998-871-0040.

· **Cash** and **credit cards** seem to be the legal tender of choice. But cash mostly as smaller places will not accept credit cards. You don't need Mexican currency (called NP, New Peso) until you are in Puerto Morelos. There are at least three **money-changing** venues on the square in PM, open until 9 or 10pm, no fees. There are two maybe now three ATM machines there, they deliver pesos. **It's best though, not to rely solely on your ATM card**, as things break down and change in Mexico all the time. Your bank may charge higher fees for international withdrawals and some limit how much can be withdrawn each time you use your card. Bring cash for transportation to Puerto Morelos and some US singles if you would like to tip the cab driver.

· **We have never had a problem with theft**, but in case of loss or theft, you may want to make two photocopies of your travel identification, along with copies of credit or cash cards. Leave one copy in the States with someone you can call and keep the other in your carry-on bag. Bringing two different credit cards and keep them in separate places. One set as a "spare", can also be useful. **There is be a safe in your room and a pantry in the kitchen in which you can lock your valuables.**

**Villas Shanti has wi-fi** so if you like, you may bring your laptops/iPads etc and use them either in your rooms or in the courtyard. or not:)

**In March, Puerto Morelos is generally warm, in the 80's, with moist air. There is usually a breeze. Evenings tend to be cooler. Occasionally the weather can be cooler and windy.**

**The following is a list of suggested items to bring:**

basically summer clothes... shorts, light weight shirts & long pants, tank tops, a swimming suit (maybe 2), swimming suit cover, a sarong or two, or three

- yoga wear
- windbreaker, light jacket, warmer cover and/or wrap for evenings
- light weight rain poncho or jacket
- pair or two of socks
- sandals and/or flip flops, walking shoes and/or sneakers
- flashlight
- beach towel(s)
- sunglasses and hat
- sunscreen (is available but tends to be expensive) - waterproof & sweat resistant if you want to snorkel as it is better for the marine life
- swimming goggles – mask, fins, & snorkel if you like - these will be supplied for a snorkeling or cenote trip, and are also available in town for rent
- waterproof case for money and swimming
- packaged foods that you enjoy ie. chocolate!, nuts, tea, etc. (unpackaged may or may not make it through customs)
- Lots of moisturizer :-)
- bug juice (again tends to be more expensive), natural products available there
- perhaps a packable form of pro-biotics, such as Culturelle
- perhaps extras of critical items such as prescription glasses
- a journal, color pencils? Watercolors? other art supply you might enjoy?
- **Some other possibly useful items:** ear plugs if you sleep lightly, water bottle, small airtight

containers for things that stick together like gel caps, plastic bags for wet suits

- **YOUR PASSPORT!**

**\*\* In case your bags don't arrive with you,** pack anything valuable or that you can't live without in your carry-on, such as jewelry, medication and anything you'll need in the first 24 hours of your visit.

**\*\* note about sunscreen and snorkeling:** there is a protected reef off the shore of Puerto Morelos. It is suggested for snorkeling, even swimming, that waterproof and sweat resistant products be used so that it doesn't come off in the water. It has been shown that sunscreen is not good for the reef, fish, and plants. Such products can be purchased there.

Molly Drake – *Yoga in Mexico* - <http://www.bluesaturation.com>

