



Cabo San Lucas, Baja, Mexico

Some people believe the IF is a very big one, while others think of it as an insult to the Mexican people. So, let's begin by saying you are much safer in Mexican cities and its countryside than you are in some areas in the U.S.

Of course, there's crime in Mexico, and as with the major reason for crime in the U.S., it is almost always drug business related and the gangs who go with it. Therefore, for seniors traveling south of the border, they can assure themselves of maximum safety by following just a few suggestions.

Always travel with a group, and follow the group leader's instructions. Don't decide to wander off down some charming dark street at midnight. You certainly wouldn't do it in New York, Amsterdam, London, Hong Kong, Philly, or even your own hometown.

For most seniors, especially those with limited mobility, a cruise is the best way to travel to Mexico. It's not expensive, and often the most comfortable and luxurious. You can go ashore on day trips with a group to visit Mexican towns and cities, such as Acapulco (west) or Vera Cruz (east), and you're back onboard in your own cabin every night.

You can choose eat all meals aboard, and don't have to take chances with your sensitive stomach by eating or drinking Mexican products from street carts or local cafes. Or, if you don't feel like going ashore at one town or at any, you can admire the view of the port cities from your cabin window, balcony or while lolling on a deck beach chair.

Instead of a cruise, a package land vacation can be a very good deal. When everything is

included, you don't have to fumble for money everywhere you go. As for carrying money, you should take just enough cash you'll need for the day when you're on an excursion. In most places, you'll be able to pay with your credit card, but keep the limit down to the minimum, usually \$1,000, so that if the number is stolen, the loss won't be large.

Another way to insure safety while traveling in Mexico is to speak the basics of the language. If you studied Spanish in high school, renew your knowledge. There are many internet language study courses you can take for a quick learning or brush-up.

Also, there are inexpensive palm-sized digital translators available that can click in the right words and phrases instantly. The safety element of knowing basic Spanish in Mexico is that there are times you may need it in distress or emergency, such as asking, "I'm lost. Where is the Hotel Valencia?", "Where is the police station?" or "I need a doctor", or simply, "Where's the nearest toilet".