



SMALL-GROUP

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE TOUR

JANUARY 19 to 26, 2025

FAQS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: Will I be met at the airport?

A: Yes. We recommend booking your trip to the international airport in Queretaro, México. It is the nearest international airport to San Miguel de Allende. For those arriving by 6:00 PM, your tour leader will meet you at the airport and facilitate ground transportation to the Hotel. The transfer time to San Miguel is approximately 90 minutes.

Q2: What hotel will the tour group be staying at?

A: Hotel Villa Mirasol, Pila Seca 35, Zona Centro, 37700 San Miguel de Allende, +52 415 152 6685.

Q3: How much future validity do I need on my passport to travel to Mexico? Do I need a visa? Should I make a copy of my passport?

A: U.S. Passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay in Mexico and have blank pages for immigration stamps. Visitors in Mexico for less than 180 days are not required to have a Mexican visa. It is advisable to make a copy of your passport. It can be a digital copy to store on your smartphone or a photocopy to keep with you. A copy will facilitate obtaining an emergency replacement if it should be lost.

Q4: What immunizations are required or recommended?

A: No immunizations are currently required to visit Mexico. For current information, consult your medical doctor or the Center for Disease Control website.

Q5: How much cash should I bring?

A: You don't need to travel with a great deal of cash in the form of USD while in Mexico. ATMs are readily available at the airport and around the Centro Histórico. \$100-\$200 in USD cash should be sufficient.

Q6: How can I get Mexican Pesos?

A: Using an ATM/Debit card in San Miguel is an easy and convenient way to withdraw money in Pesos (often limited to a few hundred dollars per day). There are ATMs at the airport and banks in the Centro Historico. You can quickly get cash in Pesos before leaving the airport and replenish your funds at ATMs around town. You will likely get a better exchange rate at San Miguel's ATMs than at a U.S. bank.

If you plan to convert USD to Pesos, we recommend you do so at one of the exchange kiosks at the airport. The rates can differ slightly, so you can compare before deciding which offers the better deal. Purchasing Pesos at a U.S. bank may result in a lower exchange rate.

Q7: Are credit cards accepted?

A: Credit cards are widely accepted in most stores, large shopping areas, and museum shops. It is important to see if your bank/credit card company requires foreign travel notification to alleviate the situation of having cards "suspended" until they can verify the legitimacy of the "suspicious" charges. Small vendors often prefer only *efectivo* (cash).

Q8: Should I notify my bank/credit card company of my foreign travel plans?

A: Yes; if you plan to use your bank Debit Card or your Credit Card while in Mexico, it is important to check with the bank and/or your credit card company to see if they require notification before using the cards in outside of the US. This will alleviate having cards "suspended" until they can verify the legitimacy of the "suspicious" charges.

Q9: Should I get travel insurance or minimum medical emergency and evacuation insurance?

A: Travel insurance is highly recommended. U.S. News & World Report or Consumer Report provide lists comparing multiple providers, each offering various coverages. You may also wish to consider **minimum medical emergency & evacuation insurance**.

Q10: What is San Miguel de Allende weather like in January?

A: Midday temperatures usually hover in the 60s and low 70s. It cools off considerably at night; you can expect temps in the mid-30s to mid-40s on most nights. The evening temperatures may be cool, so a lightweight pullover, sweater, shawl,

or jacket may be practical. A hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen are helpful for our outdoor excursions like the Centro Histórico walkabouts, where we can visit archeological site, churches, mercados, etc. January rains average about 0.4 in, distributed over 2 days. It may also be a good idea to carry a lightweight water bottle, which can be refilled at the hotel or locations offering filtered water.

Q11: What to Pack/What to Wear

San Miguel de Allende is much like the U.S. The general rule is to dress comfortably with a light jacket, windbreaker, or shawl for the morning or evening chill. For women, blouses, T-shirts, dresses, skirts, and long pants/jeans are appropriate. T-shirts, collared shirts, and polos paired with long pants are proper for men. Shorts are considered resort wear or for children. Sunglasses and a hat can be helpful. Shoes should be c-o-m-f-o-r-t-a-b-l-e and designed for walking.

Q12: What is the altitude in San Miguel de Allende?

A: You will be at an altitude is 6,134–6,234 feet, more than double Tucson's 2600 feet. So, the first couple of days may require some adjustment. It is important to stay hydrated to avoid feeling dizzy.

Q13: Are medical offices, pharmacies, and medical offices available near our Hotel?

A: Yes, there are clinics, pharmacies, and hospitals near our Hotel. If necessary, we have English-speaking doctors who are experienced in treating common tourist illnesses. They can visit the hotel if needed. The cost for a consultation is approximately \$50 USD, plus the cost of any required medications.

It is also important for travelers to bring any medication they typically use for stomach discomfort, as changes in spices, fats, or food in general can sometimes cause issues. Additionally, we recommend bringing sunscreen, preferably one they are accustomed to, as the sun can be dry and intense during the day.

Q14: What is Mexico's national emergency number?

A: Like in the U.S., you can call 911 in Mexico and connect with an emergency operator.

Q15: Is internet service available at the Hotel?

A: Yes, as do many restaurants and cafes, our hotel provides free WiFi.

Q16: Do I need a special plug/adaptor or transformer to use or charge my smartphone, laptop, etc.?

A: The power plugs in Mexico are the same as in the U.S. You will not need an adapter. Mexico operates on a 127V supply voltage and 60Hz, which is very similar to the U.S.'s 110V and 60Hz. Using electronic devices while traveling in Mexico should be no issue.

Q17: Can I use my cell phone in Mexico?

A: Many cell phone companies include Mexico in their plan's service. You can check with your carrier to see if Mexico is covered in your plan; if not, you may wish to consider purchasing a "travel pass" for Mexico for the duration of the trip.

Q18: How do I make an international call to the U.S.?

A: For international mobile long-distance calls originating in Mexico, first dial + 1 (area code) and 7-digit number. To access the '+' sign on most smartphones, touch and hold the number 0 on the keypad until the plus sign '+' appears.

Q19: Is the hotel room equipped with a hairdryer and an iron?

A: The rooms are equipped with a hairdryer. They can provide an iron if one is needed. .

Q20: Can I drink water from the tap?

A: Tap water is generally unsafe in San Miguel and throughout Mexico. The hotel provides two bottled waters in your room daily. The bottles can be refilled at the filtered water dispenser in the lobby at no cost. Bottled or filtered water is readily available at tourist sites, hotels, restaurants, and mini-markets. Do not forget to use bottled water when brushing your teeth as well.

Q21: Can I drink beverages served with ice in restaurants?

A: Generally, yes, all the good restaurants use purified water for their ice, but if you are concerned, drink refreshments without ice.

Q22: Is it safe to eat in the local restaurants?

A: Yes, but eating from street vendors or open markets can have risks.

Q23: Is tipping expected, and how much?

A: Yes, it is appropriate to tip servers, housekeepers, drivers, etc. The rate is similar to the U.S. at 10-15%.

Q24: What is the pace and activity level of the tour?

A: The tour is moderately active. On a scale of 1 to 10, it is a level 5 to 6. Travelers should be able to walk 2 to 3 miles over uneven pavement or cobblestones, including climbing one or two flights of stairs. In addition, standing up for one to two hours may be required at some sites. The pace is moderate or level 5-6, on a scale of 1 to 10. Our itinerary includes two to three sites daily, allowing for a 90-minute lunch/rest break. Most venues offer benches or seating should you need to catch your breath or rest for a few minutes. Throughout each day, we provide regular restroom breaks at venues and restaurants.

Q25: Should I be concerned about safety in San Miguel de Allende?

A: Although some of the states in Mexico are under a U.S. State Department "do not travel" or "reconsider travel" advisories, Guanajuato State, where San Miguel de Allende is located, is not. It has the same "exercise caution" warnings as France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and other countries in the EU. According to Travel and Leisure, San Miguel de Allende has become a top destination for foreign travelers. However, travel in Mexico may make some visitors (or their relatives) anxious. Once in beautiful San Miguel de Allende, you will quickly see it is not an inherently dangerous place, and your concerns will quickly fade away. Granted, as with any city, there are spots you should probably avoid, especially as a tourist. However, in the tourist-traversed areas, the most prevalent danger is petty theft.

To avoid being a target of crime, tourists need to be cautious, keep a low profile, and watch out for pickpockets. It is advisable not to carry your passports while we are out during the day. We suggest a backpack or tote bag to put things in that is lightweight and easy to carry. Typically, carrying a wallet for men is not recommended. Consider putting any necessary credit or debit cards or small amounts of pesos in an easily accessible place. Carrying these in your front pocket or possibly a money belt.

The best thing is to use the same common sense you would use anywhere: take reasonable precautions to keep yourself safe, be aware of your surroundings, dress inconspicuously, and avoid carrying excessive amounts of cash. As a precaution and to avoid drawing unnecessary attention, we strongly recommend not wearing expensive jewelry or watches.

Q26: Should I enroll in the U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)?

A: The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service that allows U.S. citizens traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Enrollment will enable you to **1.)** Receive important information from the State Department about safety conditions in your destination country; **2.)** Helps the U.S. Embassy or Consulate contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency, and **3.)** It allows family and friends to contact you in an emergency. You can create an account and enroll at <https://step.state.gov/step/> at no cost.

Q27: What is the best way to get around San Miguel de Allende?

A: The easiest way to get around is on foot. Many of the restaurants, shopping, museums, and sites of interest are within walking distance of our Hotel. Taxis are also readily available and convenient alternatives for traveling greater distances.

January 2025