



INFORMATION FOR **FOREIGN AND VISITING STUDENTS**

www.marista.edu.mx



DEAR STUDENT

Welcome to the Universidad Marista and the beautiful city of Merida, that from now on begins to be a part of a new experience in your life.

We believe that the best way to be integrally formed and to better know yourself is to know the environment that surrounds you, which is why our doors are always open to other cultures and ways of thinking, which can enrich our environment and our knowledge.

In order for you to get to know us a little better as well as the environment that surrounds us, we have prepared this guide with brief but important information that

will be useful for you to choose UMM as part of a new academic, professional, cultural and human experience... a lifetime experience.

Our University is well known by its tradition of more than two centuries of Marist education, one of them here in Yucatan. The academic quality, the kindness of its people, the willing to serve and the behavior of our students, are some of the reasons that make our university different from others. That is why we are certain that when you become part of our community, you will keep our name and prestige high at all times.

We will be very happy to have you here!

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WELCOME TO YUCATAN

You are about to experience a different way of living.

The memories of this trip will join you for the rest of your life and if you take advantage of your time here, you will get to know many landscapes, environments, people and ways of thinking. We will do our best for you to have the best time of your life.

Yucatan is the heart of the Mayan lands and Mayan culture. Before the arrival of the Spanish conquerors, the Mayan zone included not only the Southeast of Mexico, but also Guatemala, Belice, Honduras and El Salvador. The estate of Yucatan is surrounded by the Gulf of Mexico, the state of Quintana Roo and the state of Campeche.

Merida is 30 minutes from Progreso Beach by car, 3 hours from Cancun and 2 hours from Chichen Itza. It is also less than 2 hours from Miami and Cuba by plane.

Yucatan is divided in 106 municipalities; the main cities, besides Merida, are: Valladolid, Progreso, Izamal, Tizimin, Motul and Ticul. The economy of the state is basically based on tourism and commerce, followed by agriculture, cattle breeding



and poultry farming. Recently the *maquiladoras* (contracted factories in Mexico managed by a foreign company and exporting its products to the country of that company) and the companies of massive fruit and vegetables production have become an important entrance of foreign money.

Merida, Yucatan's capital, was founded in 1542 by Spanish conqueror Francisco de Montejo "el Mozo". He called it Merida because it reminded him of the Spanish Merida (because of the Mayan ruins of ancient Mayan city *Tho*, similar to Roman ruins in Spanish Merida).

The city of **Merida**

Merida has a population of nearly one million inhabitants. The city is not that big but it has all services and it's the most important city in the southeast of Mexico. Year after year, Merida has been ranked as one of the top 5 cities to live in Mexico, often placing it in first or second place. The safety and respect for property are a way of life that identifies the Yucatecan people.

Merida is a 500 year old city in which the Mayan miscegenation with Spanish colonialism is a reality in every way like in no other place in the world, because the Yucatan Peninsula was the ceremonial center of the Maya and Merida was the main captaincy that controlled throughout southeast Mexico and Central America.

Merida is very traditional and, at the same time, global. There are almost all of international franchises and big shopping malls, as well as traditional markets and regional restaurants.

Merida is a cultural city. We suggest that you check out all the activities offered each day of the week:

<http://www.merida.gob.mx/municipio/eventos.html>



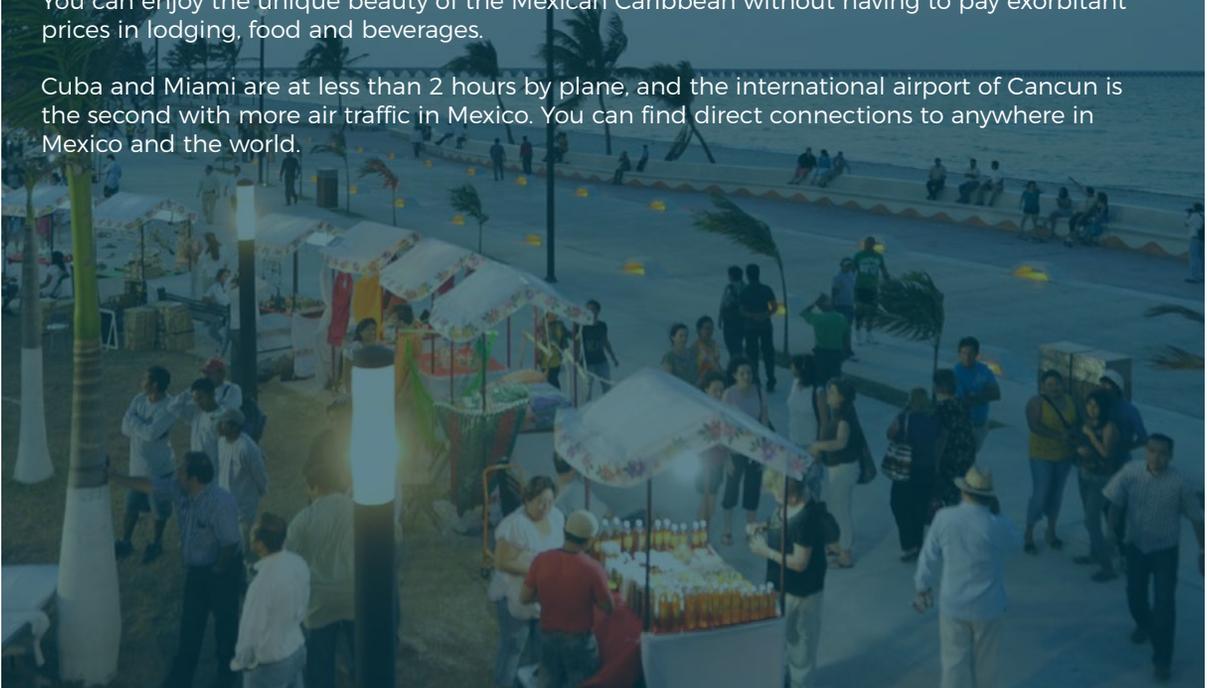
Strategic location

Merida is only 30 minutes from Progreso beach, with its white sands and emerald sea. A beach where you can enjoy the sun 365 days a year, as well as enjoy the seafood dishes by the sea.

The coasts of Yucatan are chosen by retired Canadians and Americans from September to March to get away from the cold. They did not choose Yucatan randomly! The white sand beaches, emerald sea, safety, cost of living and the best cardiac care centers in the country are here. Merida has the best and largest hospital infrastructure of southeastern Mexico.

Blue Caribbean beaches are only 3 hours from Merida. Cancun, Playa del Carmen and Tulum are available for the students with buses leaving every half hour from 2 bus stations. You can enjoy the unique beauty of the Mexican Caribbean without having to pay exorbitant prices in lodging, food and beverages.

Cuba and Miami are at less than 2 hours by plane, and the international airport of Cancun is the second with more air traffic in Mexico. You can find direct connections to anywhere in Mexico and the world.



Nature and archeology



The secluded and paradisiacal beaches of Celestun, the Mayan pyramids through the jungle, cenotes –or sinkholes- with transparent underground rivers, waterfalls and jungle of Chiapas... these are just some of the attractions that you can reach while living in Merida. Not to mention the aforementioned beaches of the Mexican Caribbean.

You can dive or snorkel in the world's second largest coral bank, or swim among the caves of the *cenotes*.

You can practice windsurf at Progreso beach, catalogued by its winds as required destination for those who practice that sport.

You can go fishing at a natural fish bank where the Gulf and Caribbean streams come together, at the sanded streets island of Holbox.

You can visit and have lunch at the *haciendas* around the state, considered the castles of Yucatan.

You can visit the Mayan archeological sites of: Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Ek-Balam, Palenche, Bonampak and Calakmul.

You can visit the enchanted towns of San Cristobal de las Casas and San Juan Chamula in Chiapas, and bathe in the natural waterfalls in the middle of the jungle.

Depending on how adventurous you are, southeastern Mexico offers a lot of activities and places to discover.

Infrastructure

Merida is the best communicated city by land of the southeast. Through its roads, you can go through the whole peninsula without having to zoom out and make triangulations. Like Rome, all roads of southeast of Mexico lead to Merida.

Merida has a privileged medical service which is achieved with many years of effort and the academic and professional quality of our specialized physicians. The construction and remodeling of hospitals, both public and private, makes Merida a city with the highest quality of health services and the medical center across the southeast. Merida has 3 of the best hospitals in the southeast: Merida Clinic, Medical Center of the Americas and Star Medica, all associated with prestigious US hospitals.

Merida is also the higher educational center in southeast Mexico. Students come from other parts of the country and the world, giving to Merida a youthful and international touch. Merida also offers a dynamic social life, with numerous cultural and academic activities, which combined create an environment for students eager to learn and know.

Religion

Most of the population of Yucatan is considered Roman Catholic, with little percentage of Protestants and other religious practices. The

church and religious activities play an important role in everyday life of Merida. The society is conservative and homogeneous with social life around the family and friends.

Important dates in the region

- January, 1: first day of the year: (national holiday, non-working day)
- February: second Monday, Mexican constitution (non-working day)
- February: Carnival, traditional holiday at the region (non-working days Monday and Tuesday)
- March: third Monday, nativity of Benito Juarez (non-working day)
- March/April: Holy Week and Easter (two weeks of school holidays)
- May, 1: Labor Day (non-working day)
- May, 5: Battle of Puebla (non-working day)
- September, 16: Independence of Mexico (national holiday, non-working day)
- November, 1 and 2: day of the Dead and all Saints day (tradition holiday, school holiday)
- November: third Monday, Mexican Revolution (national holiday, non-working day)
- December, 12: Virgin of Guadalupe (religious holiday)
- December, 25: Christmas (non-working day)
- Two months of summer vacation due to switch of semester
- One month of winter vacation due to switch of semester

HOW TO GET TO MERIDA

Merida is a city connected by land and air. The easiest way to get to Merida is by plane. It has an international airport, and although the frequency of flights is not plenty, it is enough to make good choices.

International flights

From the US:

- United Airlines from Houston, TX (3 flight a week)
- Aeromexico from Miami, FL (2 flights a week)

From Italy:

- Blue Panorama from Milan (1 flight a week)

National flights

- Aeromexico, Viva Aerobus, Interjet, Volaris from Mexico City (daily flights).
- Viva Aerobus from Guadalajara and Monterrey (1 daily flight).

If you come from Europe or South America and you have to make flight connections, we recommend having at least 3 hours between

connections, especially if you are getting through Migration and Customs in the US or Mexico.

The cheapest way to travel is to arrive to Cancun and take a bus from there to Merida. It can be taken from the airport or from the bus station.

By bus

The cost of travelling by bus can vary depending if it is a regular or first class service. Prices can go from \$370 to \$650 for a one way ride.

You can arrive to any of these 3 bus stations in Merida:

- 1) Fiesta Americana
- 2) Altabrisa
- 3) CAME (downtown Merida)

If you are asked where you prefer to arrive, we recommend you choose either Fiesta Americana or Altabrisa, although there are fewer frequencies.

To look for departures and prices, go to:
<http://www.ticketbus.com.mx/>





HOW TO GET TO UMM

Public transport

Our public transport is “folkloric” and deficient, and maybe the first times you use it, it will be a little difficult for you. But with these instructions you will get to UMM for sure. Buses can vary in size and color.

- To get to UMM from *Calle 60* or *Gran Plaza* shopping mall – take bus that says “*Tapetes*” or “*Chablekal*”. It will drop you off under the bridge.

- To get to UMM from *Prolongacion Paseo de Montejo* – If you live in the north of Merida you should take two buses, one that takes you to Gran Plaza, and there you would transfer to the bus that says “*Tapetes*” which you can take at the main gate of the store *Sanborns*. Take the bus that says “*Gran Plaza*” or “*52 Norte*”. It will drop you off at Gran Plaza and from there, take the one that says “*Tapetes*” or “*Chablekal*”. It will drop you off under the bridge.

Once under the bridge, you should walk towards UMM (we add some images below to illustrate your way from under the bridge to UMM).

We suggest that whenever you take a bus you ask the driver if he stops at UMM. Cost per each bus transfer: \$7.00



By taxi

Ask the taxi driver to get at the exit of the road Merida-Progreso. At the junction with the Periferico Norte, take the right and at the first roundabout (under the bridge) turn in U. Follow the signs to the University.

The approximate cost from downtown to UMM is: \$180

From close neighborhoods: \$70

From the airport to north Merida: \$270

Phone number to ask for a taxi cab: 923 2304

Other phones: http://www.merida.gob.mx/turismo/contenido/servicios_in/taxis.htm

Marist bus

We have a shuttle service that goes from Downtown all the way to UMM making some stops along *Calle 60*.

From	To	Departure	Arrival
Downtown (<i>Plaza Grande</i>)	UMM	06:20	06:50
UMM	Downtown	11:00	11:45
Downtown	UMM	12:00	12:50
UMM	Downtown	13:05	13:50
Downtown	UMM	14:15	14:50
UMM	MEGA	19:30	20:00
UMM	Downtown	21:00	21:45

A black and white photograph of a modern university building with a prominent concrete structure and large windows. The building is partially obscured by a dark teal overlay at the bottom. The sky is cloudy, and there are trees in the foreground and background. The text 'OUR UNIVERSITY' is written in white on the teal overlay.

OUR UNIVERSITY

The Marist University of Merida (UMM) is a private catholic university founded in 1996. It is an educational institution with quality certification by the Federation of Mexican Institutions of Higher Education (FIMPES).

Marist mission

Our mission is to form academically, humanly and christianly young students with the Marist educational charisma of humility, family environment, prolonged presence with students, love to hard work supported by confidence in Mary, in a task shared by Marist brothers and lay people qualified professionally and apostolically, through the substantive functions of teaching, research, extension and community service and development.



Educational model

“Being to serve”

A model that is based on the four pillars of education: learning to do, learning to live, learning to learn and learning to be.

As said in our slogan “Being to serve”, we strive to have training experiences that promote learning about the human condition and ethics of mankind considering the context that surrounds us: a world that requires the appreciation for diversity, inclusion and care for nature. A motto that commits us to promoting learning processes for life.

Our university is Catholic, and that is why during the school year we have several events related to our faith. However, UMM maintains an absolute respect for other religions and beliefs.



How many we are

Our project is to be a university of a size where we can have a personalized attention and continue our mission.

Our University started in 1996 with only 142 students, 30 faculty members and 4 bachelor programs. Today we have more than 2500 students and more than 400 faculty members.

One of our characteristics is that 80% of our teachers work in their professional area in addition to their academic experience, so the combination of theory and practical experience is a factor that stands out in the classroom.

Academic offer

UMM offers 15 bachelor degrees, 14 master's degrees and 2 doctorates (PHD), as well as many other courses and workshops. You can check find more information in our web site: www.marista.edu.mx

Cycles

Studies at UMM are divided in two semesters:

1st semester: from August to December. It starts in mid-August and ends in mid-December.

2nd semester: from January to June. It starts in mid-January and ends in mid-June.

Confirm the exact dates here:

<http://www.marista.edu.mx/p/560/calendario-escolar>

Important academic information

When choosing the courses that interest you, keep in mind that only courses of odd semesters can be taken during the first semester, and only courses of even semesters can be taken during the second semester.

Visiting students can take up to 6 courses during the semester.

Three partial tests are taken during the semester. There is a final ordinary exam that is averaged with the partial tests for the final grade. All courses are taught in Spanish, unless a specialized course is requested.

Exchange and visiting students can take any course without cost, as long as there is an Agreement between institutions.

If you wish to take a specific cultural or Spanish course, as well as workshops and guided visits (non-curricular, it will have an additional cost, which will be specified by the International Programs coordination depending on the number of hours and number of students).

Grades

The grade system used by UMM is endorsed by the Ministry of Public Education of Mexico.

- Based on 100%, from 0 to 100
- 60 is the minimum to pass
- 16-week semester system, with 48 or 64 hours per course, depending on the number of hours allocated weekly.

1 credit = 1 hour of class

1 credit = 1 hour of individual study

1 credit = 1 hour lab

A full course has 6 to 8 credits divided in 4 hours/class, and 2 or 3 hours of individual study. The courses that include lab are generally 8 credits.

A validation is made for foreign students, updating credit numbers according to their country.

Grade	Interpretation	Credits	ECTS
100 - 96	A+ (Exceptional)	UMM	
95 - 90	A (Excelent)	4	3
89 - 85	A- (Very good)	5	3.5
84 - 80	B+ (Good)	6	4
79 - 75	B (Average)	7	5
74 - 70	B- (Low average)	8	6
69 - 65	C+ (Regular)	11	9
64 - 60	C (Sufficient)		
59 or less	F (Failed)		

Symbol	Description	Interpretation
A	Passed	Accredited course
NA	Failed	Not accredited course

Ordinary	Passed in the first round of examination
Extraordinary	Passed in the second round of examination

Important at UMM

- Your attendance and punctuality to class. 80% class attendance is required to be able to submit final exam. In case you cannot attend for some important reason, you will have to contact the professor with cc to the coordination of International Programs.
- Delivery of homework and tasks on time.
- Quality of homework and tasks.
- Kind treatment to your professors and classmates.
- Teamwork.
- Appropriate dress and behavior in the classroom.
- Give your email and phone number to a classmate so he/she lets you know when a class is cancelled or any other important information.
- Try to know the coordinator of your area of study.
- If you have any issue with a class or a professor, please alert the coordinator of your area of study as well as to the International Programs coordinator. Do not wait until the semester ends when there is no solution to the problem.
- To claim any final grade, it is important that you attend the feedback offered by teachers. If you do not attend, you have no right to complain about your grade.

Other important tips about UMM

- While we receive more and more visiting students every year, some professors are not yet accustomed to having them in their classes.
 - Introduce yourself with them in the first day of class and make sure they write your name in the attendance list.
 - Ask for their emails and give them yours for any notification.
- If you fail any course in your ordinary exam, in most of the courses you will have the option of taking an extraordinary exam to recover and pass. For this you must be present at the time of extraordinary exams, which is always after ending the regular semester.
- You will find a stationary in the C Building's second floor, where you can print your homework with extra cost.
- Do not forget to get your UMM student ID for discounts at museums and public transport, as well as to make use of the Library.

Community service

We have Community Service and Learning by Serving programs as an important part of our University.

We seek to promote the integral formation of students by giving them the opportunity to serve and participate in the development process of the regional community.

The Learning by Serving program is based in learning experiences on attention to human and community needs. Planned and structured opportunities are presented to promote learning and integral human development of our students. Learning by Serving is a process of experience and learning that requires meditation and evaluation at the end of each service experience.

One of our main points for community service

is in the south area of the city, which is highly unprotected and poor: the Emiliano Zapata Sur. For more information, please contact: **abuensfil@marista.edu.mx** or **ebrondo@marista.edu.mx**

Extension

UMM has a large number of events and activities in which all students have the opportunity to participate: music, sports, cultural events, workshops, lectures, language center, etc.

If you want to know which events are coming or if you are interested in taking a workshop, you can check our web site or contact **rdiego@marista.edu.mx**

If you want to practice a sport, please email to **rcueva@marista.edu.mx**



REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITING STUDENTS

Health insurance

It is compulsory for UMM students to have a health insurance. Not having one will cancel your enrollment.

The health insurance that UMM offers only covers regular students, so every visiting student with a stay of less than a year must have an international health insurance in order to be enrolled as a UMM student.

Please ask your insurance company to give you a letter (in Spanish or English) certifying that you have a contract with them, along with the coverage included.

Your health insurance must cover at least:

- Coverage in all Mexican territory.
- Coverage for 24 hours.
- Coverage for diseases and accidents.
- Coverage during all your stay at UMM including vacations.
- The insurance policy must include specifications such as phone numbers and

your insurance number.

- The insurance policy must be in Spanish or English. It is important that you ask your insurance company to which Merida hospital they have an agreement in case of emergency.

Visa

To study at UMM –or any other university in Mexico– as a foreign student for a year, it is compulsory to have a Temporary Resident Student Visa. This procedure must be made directly at the Embassy of Mexico in your country of origin. You must pay a fee for the issuance of the visa, and when you enter the country you must show that visa so a FMM (migration form) is given to you. Once in Mexico, you have 30 days to trade that FMM and obtain your Temporary Resident Student Visa card for 365 days at the Immigration offices in Merida. You must take some documents with you in order to make that trade.

Immigration offices in Merida

Phone number: 925 50 09

Address: Av. Colon #507 Esq. con calle 8, Col. Garcia Gineres, C.P. 97070 Merida, Yucatan.

Hours of operation: 09:00 to 13:00 (we suggest you arrive at 08:00).

If you are a student with a nationality that does not require visa to enter Mexico as a Visitant Without Gainful Activities, you can stay in the country for up to 180 days although you're an exchange student. It is very important that you have a Letter of Acceptance that specifies the time you are going to study. You must show it at the moment of your entrance to Mexico so Immigration gives you the maximum stay -180 days- because although the law says "up to 180 days", they can authorize your stay for fewer days.

The immigration form for tourists (FMT) will

be given to you at the plane. You must fill it out with personal information -including your signature- and submit it along with your valid passport to Immigration authorities. Please check for how many days they authorized your stay. Save your FMT with your passport in a safe place.

Check this link to confirm that you do not require a visa as a visitant:

http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Paises_No_Visa

Foreign students cannot work in Mexico by law. A student can only work if he or she is enrolled in a professional internship program at a university, which in most of the cases are poorly paid. Should you be interested in an internship, you better ask the International Programs coordinator.

MORE TIPS

Weather and dress codes

- Our city is extremely hot, from April to August the temperature is on average 35° to 40° Celsius. That is why we tend to dress as light as possible.
- September is very rainy. The rainy season goes from June to October.
- October is one of the nicest months due to its temperature and clear nights.
- The lowest temperature reach in winter is 15°C in January or February. A light sweater or jacket is sufficient for this season.
- Merida has high humidity, with an average of 80% to 90%. If you suffer from any allergies to humidity we recommend you have an antihistamine (this is easy to find in drug stores in Mexico without prescriptions).
- During the rainy months there are lots of mosquitos, which can be very annoying and you may be allergic to their bites. If you have any medication or special repellent at

home, bring them. Here you will find the most common brands, either cream, spray or electronic.

As you will see, our hot weather makes us dress simple and comfortable, but that does not mean that any kind of clothes is allowed anywhere. We recommend these tips for you to dress properly:

- Do not wear shorts or very low-cut blouses to go to UMM (bermudas are accepted).
- UMM students generally wear jeans, t-shirts or casual shirts, sneakers or sandals.
- Do not wear shorts to go around the city, wear them when you go to the beach (bermudas are acceptable).
- In the evenings you should dress more formally to go to some restaurants and bars.
- Ties are only used at weddings, proms or during Christmas parties.

Dealing with people

- When you walk through the streets an informal greeting is appreciated, such as “hello”, “good morning”, “good evening”, etc. Smile when you meet someone in front.
- Ask for things saying “please”.
- Say “thank you” for any kindness to yourself.
- Many times our people are too friendly. You need to say NO when you feel they are over friendly.
- The students from UMM are reliable, but you put a limit to how much confidence you want.
- If you make a friend in Merida, they will want to invite you to their home for sure; it is polite to accept, especially if they are from UMM. Once with the family, try to be open to talk as they will be asking a lot about family and life, this is very common in Mexican families.
- Saying hello with a friendly smile and a handshake is used and gives a nice image of personality and adaptation. Also greeting energetically and respectfully to adults is recommended.
- It is common among young people giving a hello kiss on the cheek to women. If you are a man you must take a step closer to her and very simply put together your cheek with her cheek, which will be more than enough. Among women is equally. Man to

man a clash of hands slapping the shoulder is common, or a simple handshake. Do not expect a kiss or give a kiss in response between men, it would cause a misunderstanding.

- It is very common for young people to meet socially at night to attend to nightclubs. However, you should be cautious when going to discos or “clubs” because the image of foreigners tends to be badly abused by waiters or people who want to take advantage in such places, raising tuition bills or consumer tips. You can always ask the cost of the drinks or ask for the menu to verify the price and prevent abuses. Similarly, it is advisable to always keep the table in case a reservation is taken and prevent other people from adding consumptions that were not asked from you or your friends.
- All service in which you have obtained assistance from waiters, both in restaurants, bars, or nightclubs, the proper tip in Mexico is 15% of total consumption. For many of the waiters working in the service, the strong side of his salary comes from their tips.

Safety

Merida is a very safe and quiet city, but foreign students will surely attract attention and some people will try to be friendly with



Talking about money

them, sometimes too much.

We recommend:

- Never getting into a car with strangers.
- Try to avoid walking alone on the streets, especially at night.
- Do not give copies of house keys to anyone.
- Do not let into your house to anyone unless you already know them.
- Driver education is still very poor, so we suggest having caution to go through crosswalks on the street because, although the pedestrian has priority, many drivers do not respect them.
- The social life of young students in the city begins Thursday night. Friday they usually go to have lunch somewhere and then go out at night at around 22:30, sometimes until 4:00. Saturday is the same. Sunday is usually movies day and they end up early, between 22:00 and 23:00.

The currency in Mexico is the Mexican peso (MXN). It is indicated with a sign "\$". We have paper bills, paper and plastic fiber bills, and coins. There are bills of \$ 1000, \$ 500, \$ 200, \$ 100, \$ 50, and \$ 20.

The coins can be \$ 10, \$ 5, \$ 2, and \$ 1 peso and cents can be 50 ¢, 20 ¢ and 10 ¢.

The first expenses that you will make at your arrival are:

- If no one picks you up at the airport, you will have to pay for a taxi cab. They will possibly accept us dollars as hotels do, but no other currencies.
- Your landlord will ask you at least one month of rent in advance, so you will have to be prepared to pay at least two months.
- We suggest you check the exchange rate before you come.

Credit cards

- You can use credit cards or debit from your country as long as they are affiliated to Visa, MasterCard, Plus, Cirrus or Red networks.
- If your bank is only from your home country it will be harder to manage your money. The more your bank has worldwide recognition, the easier procedures and transactions will be.
- In ATMs you can only withdraw \$3,000 to \$6,000 pesos per day, depending on the card you own. In UMM we have a Banamex ATM.
- To open a bank account you must have a student visa.
- It is not recommended to bring cashier's checks or bank's checks because they are generally not accepted in banks or elsewhere. As for the traveler's checks, it is best to bring American Express. If you bring traveler's checks from another company, or some other type of check, check first if they are accepted in Mexico.

Phone calls

- To the US or Canada: 001 + area code + phone number
- To Europe and rest of the world: 00 + country code + city code + phone number
- You can call 090 to the international operator and ask for a collect call to your house.
- There is a telephone service to access to 01 800 in the United States but it has a cost. To use this service mark the 01 880 and the 01 800 in the United States.
 - » Locate Telcel stores: <http://www.telcel.com/portal/contactanos/cacs/begin.do#>
 - » Locate Iusacell stores: <http://www.iusacell.com.mx/tiendas/index.php>
 - » Locate Movistar stores: <http://www.ofertia.com.mx/tiendas/Merida/movistar-calle-30-no-93-campestre-97120-merida-yucatan/filial-157508825#brochure/view/page/1>



What can you bring?

There are several things you might want to bring, like electrical appliances: laptop, tablets, hair dryers, or iron. You will need a voltage adapter AC 110v-60 hz.

Notice that the electrical contacts in Mexico are “American” type and flat (there are only two entries in the contact in the wall and the electrical contact of the device itself regularly has flat contact pieces of the same length and width), so if you bring an appliance with a different contact, you have to get here an adapter (for European and South American students).

Anything else you could bring? Some ideas are: an international student ID, a backpack to carry your books and other items, a small suitcase for your trips in Mexico. If you’re going to live with a family it would be good to bring a typical gift or handcraft from your country for them.

ACCOMMODATION

Our goal when it comes to accommodation is to give you advice and guide you with the options available, so you make the best decision. Your safety and your freedom of choice are the most important things. You can choose to live with a family, in an apartment or to share a house.

We are committed to remain a serious institution with our students, property owners and families participating in our programs. Before choosing where you want to live you should know that it is advisable to stay in the same house, apartment or family home by the set time.

While we offer accommodation options and help you so that you make a good choice, we are not responsible for the relationship and dealings with the owners or managers of houses, except for families.

We suggest you choose a zone in the north of the city to live, and preferably close to *Calle 60* or *Prolongacion Paseo de Montejo* (*Campestre, Villas del Sol, Sodzil, Chuburna*).

Single house or apartment

This is the most expensive option, because living alone always involves more costs, and it also implies greater responsibility and a high degree of maturity. In general we do not recommend newcomer students to live alone, because the adjustment period is a bit difficult and it is always better to have company.

The approximate cost of rent is \$4,000 a month for a one bedroom house, and close to \$8,000 for a two or more bedrooms house.

When you rent a house or a room, usually you will have to pay one month deposit – which is rarely returned-, one month's rent in advance and the cost of the contract which is often the same amount of the rent. In summary, you would have to pay three times the cost of the monthly rent. You should keep that in mind in order to bring enough cash.

Share house or apartment

This is one of the best options. It gives you freedom, it is cheaper and you get to share expenses and make great friendships. This is a good way to get to know about Mexican culture, so we suggest you share with students of other parts of Mexico. Living with unknown people can be difficult in the beginning, but it can be a great experience once you set the ground rules.

The rent can go from \$2,500 to \$4,600 a month in addition to extra services that will be shared between all the people living in the house.

The more people live in the same house, the cheaper it will be. If you pick this choice, just make you share with a number of people you are comfortable with.

Host families

This is an experience of “total immersion” into Mexican culture. You should be willing to follow the rules that the family set for the home, such as not arriving very late on weekends, let them know where you are, and whether if you get on time to have lunch with them (there are rules that, if you choose this option, will be given to you).

It is important to let you know that this is the most difficult choice, since to integrate to a family requires a lot of effort and commitment on both sides. But in return of what you have to give, you will have one of the best cultural experiences.

It is through this family that you will meet Mexican society, their cultural values, traditions and most representative customs. Within groups of families who work with us, there is great diversity of family situations: with college age children, teenagers, young children or without children; in some cases home mother lives alone. This last option may be the best for students who want a more independent experience. However, and in any way, do not let this worry you; it is more likely to still enjoy a family atmosphere because families are very united in Mexico.

Keep in mind that no matter the family you have, staying with one is the safest environment and this way you can always practice your Spanish better.

You will notice that many of your classmates still live with their parents. In Mexico, as in many Latin American countries, family members generally remain at their parents' home until they marry.



Your family will receive a monthly sum of money previously agreed, and to maintain a good relationship between family and student, the rent will be paid directly by the student, under the supervision and care of the UMM. This rent covers your lodging and three meals a day (it does not include: laundry service, use of phone, air conditioning).

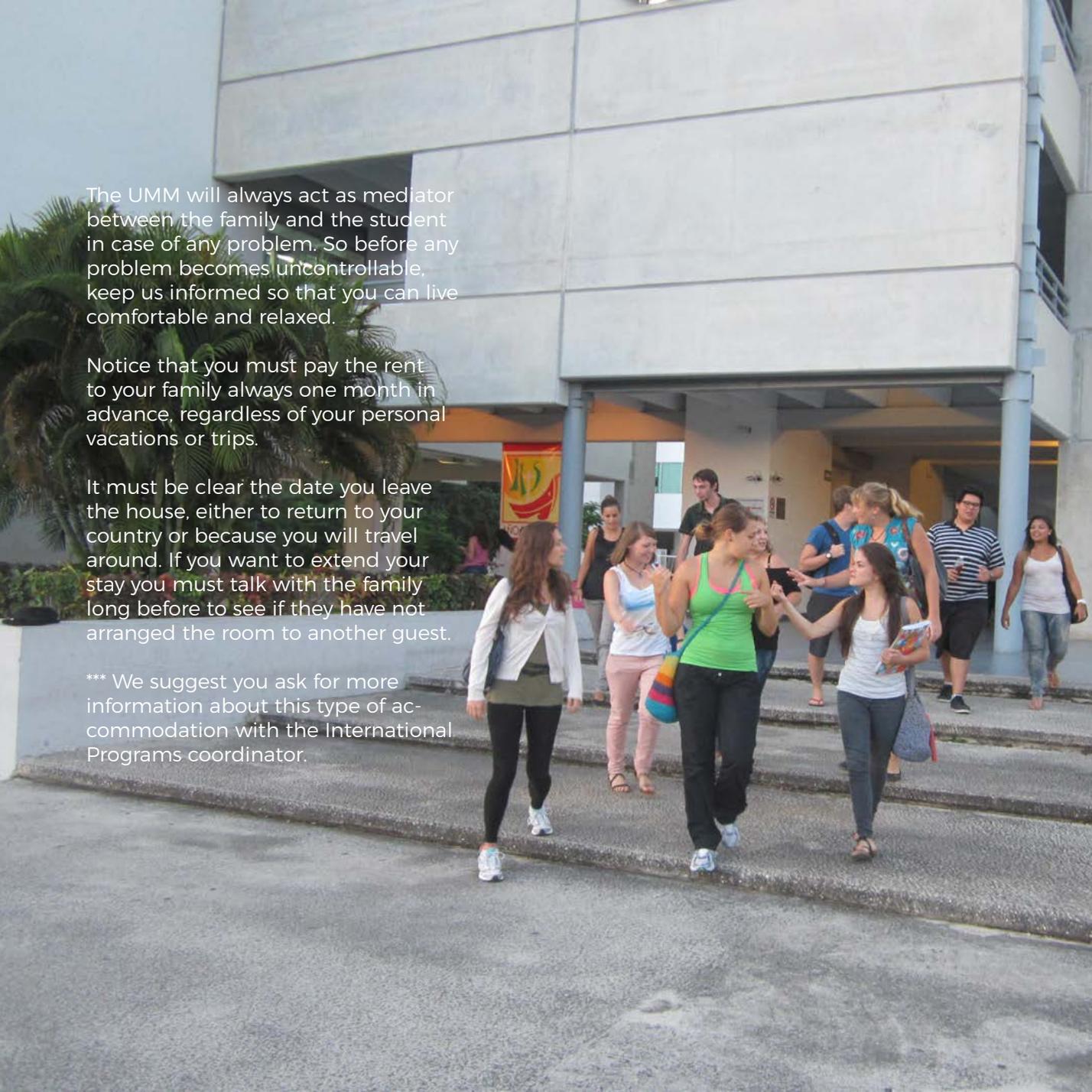
Paying your rent does not allow you to treat your home as a hotel. By accept living in a Mexican home, you agree to also follow the rules of the house.

The UMM will always act as mediator between the family and the student in case of any problem. So before any problem becomes uncontrollable, keep us informed so that you can live comfortable and relaxed.

Notice that you must pay the rent to your family always one month in advance, regardless of your personal vacations or trips.

It must be clear the date you leave the house, either to return to your country or because you will travel around. If you want to extend your stay you must talk with the family long before to see if they have not arranged the room to another guest.

*** We suggest you ask for more information about this type of accommodation with the International Programs coordinator.



CONTACT

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Fire office 066 / 924 92 42
Tourist assistance patrol 983 11 84 / 928 65 47
Red Cross 924 89 13 / 928 53 91
Federal highway police 946 12 03
Merida police 925 25 55
Tourist police 925 25 25
Tourist information 920 40 44
State police 925 93 67
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