

Mexico is much more than Tequila and Tacos...



Actually that's pretty much it. Just kidding, Mexico is a land of wonders and myths, it's not what you see in the movies and it's definitely not what you see on the news. Do we have those little towns where people still ride around in their burros (donkeys) wearing a sombrero? Of course we still have some, donkeys are tougher than horses and the hat is necessity under the sun. And to we have a constant and never ending feel of danger because of the drug traffic? You can bet you ass we don't. Yes, that has been one of the main issues in the country for a while, and it's the reason we have got unwanted headlines almost every day, but let's get this straight, there is not enough amount of violence in the world to change the warm, fuzzy and cozy feelings that Mexico can make you feel.

Did I sound cheesy? Of course I did, that was the point. If I would like one thing for people to know about Mexico is that bad administrations are not the entire reflection of who we really are. It could give you an idea of some of our stupid, hard-minded and retrograde ways of thinking, but I don't really want to get into politics right now. We have so much more to offer. We do have problems like bad government, insecurity and inflation. But we also have hard-working people, beautiful places and many other positive things.

Let me share with you 10 things I think are interesting from Mexico:

1. We have different ways to put chile on everything. From fruit, candies and chocolate to meat, medicine and alcohol. But understand that it's prepared to give different flavors. Some can be sweet-spicy, sour-spicy or just plain out hot.

2. This list can change a lot if you ask people of different regions of the country. We all have specific accents, gastronomy and traditions. The north that borders with the US, the Pacific Coast or Occident, the center of the country, the capital city, and the south which borders with Belize and Guatemala. You could divide it in a lot more, but I think this will give you a general idea.
3. Tequila might be one of the most famous Mexican things, but it's not produced in all the country. It actually has an "origin denomination" like a lot wines. This one is from a small town in the occident region in Tequila, Jalisco. And no, the traditional way of drinking it is not with a lime and salt.
4. Since we have many different regions, we have many different cooking styles. Much like Brazil, the ingredients depend on the region where you are, but I bet you that you can find something you love, even though you are the pickiest eater in the world.
5. There is nothing better than street tacos after the party late at night. Xis's comes close, but I've have found really hard to get a Xis at 4-5 in the morning (If you know a place close, let me know)
6. The country has almost every eco-system that exists, except for tundra.
7. Drinking is a big part of the culture.
8. Good manners are taught from a really young age, and in a hard way sometimes. Since you are a little kid you learn to say good day, morning and night, thank you and you are welcome for almost everything. What happened if didn't do this or any other proper manner? Mom or Dad will give you the occasional "physical reminder" so you won't forget it the next time. We all learned and stayed with a thing or two at the end.
9. We are very physical with our ways of expressing love, even to people we don't know that much. We are really good at making people part of our families. If you are not used to hugging, kissing on the cheek when you say hello or goodbye and the feeling of people being overly excited when they see you, you might have a tough time adjusting. Especially on family meetings.
10. We wear our heart on our sleeves. Futbol, religion, family, and friends, you name it. We will make you feel part of almost anything.

Don't forget that this is only my perspective. Some other Mexicans can tell you that I'm completely full of shit, but that's how you really start knowing a country, making your own informed perception of it.

Bonus lighting round of fun facts:

-Even though we have Spanish as main language, we also have 68 native languages.

- Most of those languages represent an indigenous culture that could date back hundreds of years ago.
- Mexico should recognize their indigenous cultures a LOT more. And so do I.
- Our national anthem is one of the few that still speaks about war.
- Our currency is the Mexican Peso. Most of them have presidents or war heroes, while two of them have an Aztec Emperor and a painter.
- The capital, Mexico City, is one of the biggest cities in the world
- Throughout history we have been a totally indigenous country, colony, monarchy and dictatorship. We are now a democracy, or so they say.
- We have a dog breed that it's only from Mexico. It's really expensive, rare and ugly, because you know: "hipsters". It's called Xoloescuincle.
- Quesadilla is a tortilla with cheese. People in the capital city like to ask if you want you quesadilla with or without cheese, which is really weird and they are still trying to find a reasonable excuse to do that.