

FAO International Technical Conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries (ABDC-10), 1 – 4 March 2010, Guadalajara, Mexico.

Information for Participants (Updated 11 January 2010)

1. ACCOMMODATION:

With reference to accommodation in Guadalajara for the ABDC-10 conference (<http://www.fao.org/biotech/abdc/>), FAO and Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) identified the following accommodation proposals, located within walking distance to the convention center at the **Hilton Guadalajara Hotel**, which is where the ABDC-10 conference takes place. For ABDC-10 participants, special rates and conditions have been negotiated with the hotels below if they are booked through the CWT office in Guadalajara - details on how to book through the CWT office in Guadalajara are also provided below. (Obviously, people attending ABDC-10 are free to stay in any other hotel of their own choice or, indeed, to contact the hotels below directly).

a) Accommodation Proposals

1. Hotel Name: **Hilton Guadalajara Hotel**

Address: Avenida De Las Rosas 2933 (http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/GDLGHHF-Hilton-Guadalajara/index.do)

Category: 4 star

Allotment: **85 Deluxe Rooms + 35 Club Rooms** (from 28 February to 4 March)

Spaces on hold until/deadline for booking: 23 January

Rates per room per night:

Deluxe Rooms: 129 United States Dollars (USD). The price does not include buffet breakfast, value-added tax (VAT, 15%) or Mexican hospitality fee (2%).

Club Rooms: 149 USD (Continental breakfast included). The price does not include VAT or Mexican hospitality fee.

2. Hotel Name: **Camino Real Expo Hotel**

Address: 1326 Mariano Otero

Category: 4 star

Allotment: **80 Rooms (70 single + 10 double for single use)** (from 28 February to 4 March)

Spaces on hold until/deadline for booking: 31 January

Rates per room per night: 110 USD. The price does not include VAT or Mexican hospitality fee.

3. Hotel Name: **Fiesta Inn Hotel**

Address: Av. Mariano Otero N 1550

Category: 4 star

Allotment: **70 Rooms (50 single + 20 double for single use)** (from 28 February to 4 March)

Spaces on hold until/deadline for booking: 28 January

Rates per room per night: 87 USD. The price does not include VAT or Mexican hospitality fee.

4. Hotel Name: **Guadalajara Plaza Expo Hotel**

Address: Av. Mariano Otero No. 3261

Category: 4 star

Allotment: **50 Rooms** (from 28 February to 4 March)

Spaces on hold until/deadline for booking: 30 January

Rates per room per night: 58 USD. The price does not include VAT or Mexican hospitality fee.

5. Hotel Name: **City Express Hotel**

Address: Av. Mariano Otero No. 1390

Category: 3 star

Allotment: **30 Rooms** (from 28 February to 4 March)

Spaces on hold until/deadline for booking: 30 January

Rates per room per night: 56 USD (Single rooms) . 61 USD (Double rooms) The price does not include VAT or Mexican hospitality fee.

Please note: Rates are in USD and calculated as follows: 1 USD = 13 Mexican pesos. Rates are valid only for a minimum stay of 4 nights and do not include compulsory tipping

b) How to book through the CWT office in Guadalajara:

All room rates are negotiated exclusively for ABDC-10 taking place in Guadalajara from 1 to 4 March 2010. Allotments will be on hold as specified for the single hotels and room rates will be guaranteed only for bookings made through CWT office in Guadalajara by contacting:

Ms. Anabell Alatorre

Carlson Wagonlit Travel Guadalajara

Ph. +52 33 38 25 80 33 / 34

Fax +52 33 38 25 81 97

e-mail: aalatorre@carlsonwagonlit.com.mx

Av. Vallarta No. 1447, Sector Juarez

Col. Americana, CP 44100 Guadalajara, Jalisco, México

www.carlsonwagonlit.com

For booking requests please specify

- Date of arrival
- Date of departure
- Number of rooms and travellers
- Type of room (single room, double room for single use, double room)

Payment of your stay and any personal extras will be made directly at check-out of the hotel. For confirmation of booking you will be asked to provide your credit card as guarantee

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED: American Express, Master Card, Diners Club, Visa.

Please note: Hotel bookings do not represent automatic registration to the conference.

2. REGISTRATION FOR THE CONFERENCE:

Delegates who book through the CWT office in Guadalajara (see above) and who stay in one of the above-mentioned hotels can register and pick-up their personalized badge from 28 February 2010 (2.00 to 10.00 pm) at the registration desk in their respective hotel lobby. Please note that the badge entitles participation to the conference. The main registration desk for ABDC-10 is at the Hilton Guadalajara Hotel, so people staying in other hotels not mentioned above should register there.

3. GETTING TO GUADALAJARA:

Guadalajara is the capital of the State of Jalisco, located on the western side of Mexico. It is the second largest city in the country, and it is easy to reach by bus or plane. Its airport receives international direct flights from some cities in the United States and Canada, and flights from Mexico City.

a) By plane:

Mexico's main airlines are *Aeroméxico (AM)* (www.aeromexico.com) and *Mexicana (MX)*

(www.mexicana.com), both serving Guadalajara International Airport. Low-cost airlines such as Interjet

(www.interjet.com.mx), leaving from Mexico City airport, and Volaris (www.volaris.com.mx), leaving from

the city of Toluca about 1 hour from Mexico City, also have regular flights to Guadalajara. Flights from Mexico City to Guadalajara take about 55 minutes.

Guadalajara International Airport (GDL) (Miguel Hidalgo)

(<http://aeropuertosgap.com.mx/aeropuertos/guadalajara>) is 17 km (12 miles) southeast of the city.

To/from the airport: Buses and taxis run to the city (journey time - 35 minutes). The bus and the airport minibus (*Servicio Colectivo*) meet all flights outside the terminal building and take passengers to the city centre every hour. Tickets are available for purchase at the booth outside Arrivals.

b) By bus:

Mexico has a vast inter-city bus system that offers inexpensive and convenient transportation. There are two grades of buses: First Class has air conditioning and stewardess service, Second Class is the no frills option. As Second Class costs only slightly less, it is recommended that visitors to Mexico travel First Class.

Guadalajara is located 535 km from Mexico City. The trip takes about 8 hours. Buses leave regularly from the Northern Bus Central in Mexico City (www.centraldelnorte.com) to the “New” bus station in Guadalajara (kindly note that the “old bus station” in Guadalajara serves bus rides to the State of Jalisco only).

4. GETTING AROUND GUADALAJARA

Within the city, most of the attractions are quite central and easily reached by foot. However, taxis, buses and metro are available for transportation around the city.

a) Taxi:

Most taxis in Guadalajara have meters. However, some drivers don't always use them. If the meter is not running, make sure to agree on the price of the ride before getting into the cab. Most taxi drivers will rather quote a flat fee for a trip, especially at night. Generally it's cheaper to go by the meter, but if you're negotiating a flat fee and think it's inflated, feel free to bargain. Note that from 10pm to 6am a 'night meter' is used and fares rise 25%. Taking a taxi on the street is discouraged for tourists. Make sure to take them from “sitios”, taxi booths or stands usually located near main attractions, hotels, etc. Although service might be more expensive, they are also safer. Another option is to telephone “Radio Taxis”, which will pick you up wherever you are in the city and take you to your destination for a previously agreed fare.

RadioTaxi local telephone no.: 3632-7401; 3632-7402.

b) Bus

Guadalajara has a comprehensive city bus system. On major routes, buses run every five minutes or so from 6am to 10pm daily. Many buses pass through the city center, so for a suburban destination you'll have a few stops to choose from. The routes diverge as they get further from the city center and you'll need to know the bus number for the suburb you want. Some bus route numbers are followed by an additional letter indicating which route they take through the suburbs.

The TUR buses, painted with a distinctive turquoise color, are a more comfortable alternative. They have air-conditioning and plush seats, and are slightly more expensive. If they pass without stopping, they're full; this can happen several times in a row during rush hour.

The tourist office has a list of the complex bus routes in Guadalajara and can help you reach your destination. You may also ask for specific directions at your hotel reception desk or visit <http://ocoit.jalisco.gob.mx/rutasZMG/index.htm> to check the routes on line.

c) Metro

The metro system has two lines that cross the city. Stops are marked with a 'T'. But the metro is not tourist friendly because most stops are far from the sights. ¹

5. IMPORTANT CONTACTS IN GUADALAJARA:

Emergencies (medical, fire, police, ambulance): 066.
Fire Department: 38 23 3561.
Red Cross: 36 13 15 50.

MEDICAL SERVICES:

Private Ambulance: 3615-0058; 3615 8185 (English Spoken).
Hospital Ángeles del Carmen: Tel: 3813 0042; Emergency Room -Tel: 3813-1224; 3813 2546.
Hospital San Javier: Tel: 36690222; Emergency Room: Tel. 3669-0222.
English speaking Dentist: Hector Haro 3813 0129.

PHARMACIES:

Farmacia Guadalajara: 38 181818 (24 Hrs. delivery).

SELECTED CONSULATES

(more info. at: <http://www.sre.gob.mx/acerca/dir/representaciones.htm#tab3>)

Germany: (33) 3810-2146; (33) 3810-4345.
Canada: (33) 3671-4740.
Chile: (33) 3587-1400.
Spain: (33) 3630-0450 / 0822 / 0466.
France: (33) 3630-3283.
Netherlands: (33) 3673-2211.
United Kingdom: (33) 3343-2296.
India: (333) 826-0555/ 4045.
United States: 33) 3825-2998 / 2700.
Southafrica: (33) 3825-7570/ 8086,

6. MONEY:

Mexican Peso (MXN; symbol M\$)
Exchange Rate Indicators (approx)
1.00 GBP = 21.57 MXN
1.00 USD = 13.06 MXN
1.00 EUR = 19.32 MXN

7. TIME:

Standard time zone: UTC/GMT -6 hours. No daylight saving time in March.

8. TELEPHONE:

Country code: 52 Guadalajara: 33

9. ELECTRICITY:

Electric power in Guadalajara is 110 volts and 60 cycles. If you have appliances working with 220 volts ask for adaptors at your hotel's reception desk. Also take into consideration that outlets have flat slots.

¹ information taken from Lonely Planet : www.lonelyplanet.com

10. CLIMATE:

On the high central plateau, in cities like Mexico City and Guadalajara, the weather is mild throughout the year, though a little cooler from December through to March. The average temperature in March is around 16°C rising to 26°C with sporadic and short lived rains.

11. WORKING HOURS AT OFFICES AND SHOPPING MALLS:

Like most Mexican cities, offices work Mondays to Fridays from 9:00 to 19:00 hours approximately. However, they usually break between 13:00 and 15:00 hours for lunch. Just a few offices work on Saturdays and they close at 13:00 hours. Regarding shopping malls and stores in general, they work Mondays through Saturdays from 9:00 hours till 20:00 hours. Just a few open their doors on Sundays, so be advised and plan accordingly.

12. BANKING HOURS:

Mon-Fri 0900-1600; some banks are open longer hours and others are open on Saturday morning.

13. MONEY AND TIPS:

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted, although cash is necessary for public transportation, taxis, small convenience stores, etc. Internationally-recognized traveller's cheques and credit cards are accepted in hotels, major shops and restaurants. Any problems encountered with the use of credit cards should be referred to the local representatives of the credit card companies. It is common to tip 10-15% of the total bill in restaurants and bars. In hotels, tip for valet parking, bellboys, etc. with 1 to 2 USD.

14. PROTECT YOUR VALUABLES:

A word of caution. International cities which attract many tourists also attract people who steal from tourists. Consequently, please carry your valuables safely, especially on the buses. There are many pickpockets (including children) on the street, the underground and on buses and trams. Once you have checked into your hotel, you should leave your passport in a safe place. A good alternative is to carry a photocopy of your passport with you. Identity cards, keepsakes and anything else not needed in the city are best left at the hotel or place of residence while you are sightseeing, shopping or dining out. Keep photocopies of all these documents in a safe place in case you need to have them replaced.

15. TOURIST INFORMATION:

In case you need tourist information in Guadalajara, go to the Secretariat of Tourism of the State of Jalisco, located on 102 Morelos Street, Tapatía Plaza, which opens Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 to 20:00 hours; and Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 to 13:00 hours, tel. 3668-1600, 3668-1601. You can also visit the office of the Secretary of Tourism (Sectur), on 50 Paseo Degollado, Tapatía Plaza. Office hours are from Mondays to Fridays from 9:00 to 15:00 hours.

16. HEALTH:

Special Precautions:

Diphtheria, Precautions required

Hepatitis A, Yes

Malaria, No

Rabies, Precautions required

Tetanus, Yes

Typhoid, Yes

Yellow Fever, No

Inoculation regulations can change at short notice. Please take medical advice in case of doubt.

(Information sourced by Mexican Government)

Influenza A/H1N1:

For more information visit World Health Organization www.who.int ; Mexican Ministry of Health <http://influenza.salud.gob.mx>.

17. FOOD AND DRINK:

Water in bottles or marked 'drinking/sterilized water' can be drunk without precautions. All other water for drinking, brushing teeth or ice should be boiled or sterilized. Milk in major cities, hotels and resorts is pasteurized; otherwise, it should be boiled. Powdered or tinned milk is available. Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, cooked vegetables and peeled fruit.

18. VISAS:

Please visit the following website to check if you are a national of the countries listed in it:

<http://www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php?page/need visa>

If you are a national of any of these countries, you require a consular tourist visa to travel to Mexico

Passport's holders of these countries require a tourist visa, which can be awarded for up to 10 years and multiple entries. In order to apply for a visa, please visit the Mexican Consulate, Embassy or Mission in your country. If there is no Mexican Representation office in your country, please contact the closest one in a nearby country by phone or by visiting the corresponding webpage. For information on Mexican Representations, visit the following link: http://portal3.sre.gob.mx/english/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=48&Itemid=11

Requirements (this is for general information only. Please check with the Mexican Embassy or Consulate):

1. Passport valid for at least six months from the intended date of entry to Mexico with at least one blank page. It is also required to present passport photocopies of the pages containing holder's photograph and personal details.

2. Fill out visa application form. Once you have downloaded it from the Internet, you may fill it out on your computer.

3. A recent passport-sized photograph.

4. Proof of financial situation:

a) Original work letter expressing salary and period working at the company or institution, or letter from the person (sponsor) who supports you economically, provided that you are a family dependent, which must be proved with e.g. certificate of birth or certificate of marriage. In case of family dependent, it is also required sponsor's passport photocopies of the pages containing holder's photograph and personal details.

b) Original and photocopy of any of the following documents: the last three pay slips, the last three current account statements in which your salary is transferred, the last three saving account statements or the last three international credit card statements, from the applicant or from the person who supports you economically if you are a family dependent.

5. Payment of the issuance fee in cash or postal orders payable to "Mexican Consulate".

Please do not forget to bring copies of the documentation requested, otherwise the application process will be delayed.

Processing time

Processing time varies greatly from one country to another. Please check with the Mexican Embassy or Consulate closest to you; take into consideration that in some cases it can take several weeks to process a visa.

Visa delivery:

1. It can be collected personally at the Consular Section, or:
2. By mail, under responsibility of the applicant. It is necessary to hand in an envelope "Special Delivery", containing name, address and postal code.

Please be aware that if you request that your passport and visa be sent by mail, the delivery time can take extra days after issuing the visa.

The countries listed in the following website do not need a visa to travel to Mexico :
http://www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php?page/not_need_visa

If you are a national of the countries listed, please check with the Mexican Embassy or Consulate closest to you for any possible requirements that you need to comply with, such as:

A passport valid for at least six months from the intended date of entry to Mexico.

Immigration authorities can require your return airline ticket or onward ticket and proof of financial means (international credit cards, debit cards or traveller's cheques).

At the port of entry, the Migration Official will determine the duration of stay in Mexico of the foreign national.