



**Full name:** Noa Green

**Email:** [noa.gcv@gmail.com](mailto:noa.gcv@gmail.com)

**Degree Program at TAU:** MBA

**Host University:** ITAM, Mexico

**Exchange Term:** Summer semester 2018 (3 Months July-September)

---

**Exchange Experience:**

**City and Country:**

Mexico City is a huge city, and even though it has an image of a dangerous city, it is a great place to stay at. It has tons of amazing street-food options, fascinating museums, parks, bars and more. The city offers great public transportation including metro, buses and metro buses. The central neighborhoods feel safe and are really fun to walk around (mostly around - Roma, La Condesa, Reforma, and Colonia Juarez).

The country has endless options for traveling, from the famous Caribbean beaches of Cancun, Isla Mujeres, Tulum, Holbox, Bacalar, to the Pacific beaches which are wilder and more suitable for surfers. Closer to the city you will find the famous Moon and Sun pyramids, and many other small magical towns (Pueblos Magicos) with tons of history, culture and nature. If you come in the summertime, it's the whale-shark season and you can get a chance so swim next to the biggest fish in the sea - an amazing experience.

**Host University:**

While I enjoyed my studies at ITAM, it's really important to notice that even though they say they offer many courses in English, it's not really the case. In the summer semester there was one course in English and all other courses were offered in Spanish. The Spanish language course was not offered during the time I was there. Hence, I would recommend this university if you have a good level of Spanish. With that, most of my teachers agreed that I'll answer the exams, and prepare my presentations in English, so all I had to do was to understand the teachers in class who spoke in Spanish.

Another important issue with the school is that the MBA campus is really far from the city center. I would recommend living in the more central neighborhoods like Roma/La Condesa/Colonia Juarez, close to the metro bus line 1. To get to the university you'll need to take metro bus 1 to "Doctor Galvez" and from there bus Ruta 41. Another option is to take an Uber, which is better at night. I usually had a ride from the classmate back to the city center, but the metro bus is pretty safe at night.

In class there were only 3 international students (including myself). Within the intense course I took, the classmates were from a specific program where they study together so they were friends and invited us for afterschool activities (highly recommended - going to Xochimilco with a group of locals!). The campus wasn't very lively during the summer, but there were different activities in the BA campus.

**Classes I took:**

*Entrepreneurship:* course in English. The course and exam were not difficult but did require readings, class presentations and class participation. An Intense course 11 mornings (3 hours each time) within 2 weeks.

*Leadership:* Course in Spanish. Teacher was great, class was pretty interesting. We had a personal project and 2 group presentations.

*Online Marketing:* My favorite class! In Spanish, course was divided into 3 modules, each with a great teacher from the industry. Course is practical and relevant.

**Accommodation:**

The school can help with finding rooms in a shared apartment around the school, but as I previously mentioned I recommend staying in the city center. You can find a room for rent in different Facebook groups or even Airbnb (which is more expensive but easier). It might be easier to start with an Airbnb and find a shared apartment once you are already there.

**Visa:**

There's no need for a visa for less than 180 days.

**Transportation:**

Metro and metro bus are super useful, with buses/trains every few minutes. Can be very busy during rush hours. Tickets - you can buy paper tickets for the metro in the stations but for the metro bus you'll have to use a card, similarly to our RavKAv. You can buy it in the machines in the metro bus stations or metro, costs about 14 pesos and then charge it with credit card or cash. If you forget your card, it's common for people to pay cash to someone at the station and then they 'swipe' the card for them :). People are very nice and will always try to help with directions or anything else. Uber are very popular and with reasonable prices, considered even safer than taxis.

\*The metro bus and metro has special areas for women only.

**Living expenses:**

Mexico City is cheaper than Tel Aviv, but it really depends. For example, you can eat amazing street food at any time of the day and pay about 10 shekels (~50 pesos), but if you sit in a fancy cafe you will pay about 30-40 shekels. Bus/metro costs about 6 pesos which is a bit more than 1 shekel.

**Food:**

I recommend trying as much local street food as possible. There are many different "Tianguis" around the city - which are pop-up markets that visit different neighborhoods on different days of the week. There are many different types of foods to try, my favorites are "Tamales Verdes" which you can buy from stands, usually in the morning, solo or in a bun (Bollo) or "Tacos al Pastor" which is the Mexican version of Shawarma which comes with pineapple. Most of the food is usually not spicy on its own, but will come with salsas on the side which can be very spicy.

**Night Life:**

There are tons of different bars and clubs around the city center, and there's also a line of parties for students and exchange students ("Mexchange") which also organizes trips around the country. Make sure you try the "Michelada" - beer "cocktail" with spicy salsa and a few more ingredients. Notice you can buy "Caugamas" - a bottle of beer of 1.2 liters - you can return it to the OXXO (like am:pm) and replace it with a new one for a large discount (actually, the price in the store is usually the price if you return a bottle).

**Tips:**

- I do not recommend drinking the tap water, instead you can buy large bottles of water (~20 liters) and even have them delivered to your place.
- Make sure you have a metro card with you, but notice that for most buses you'll need to pay in cash.
- Explore the city - the parks, museums, neighborhoods, markets and food. There's also a 6 Flags park in the city! If you go there with friends - notice that if you buy a yearly ticket you get a booklet for discount/free tickets you can use in the same day so it's usually worth it.

**Finally:**

I had a great experience, Mexico City is amazing! Even though it is huge and full of people, which means a lot of traffic and crowded public transportation, it is a city worth exploring. The people are friendly, the food is amazing and there's so much to see and learn. While I was worried my Spanish will not be sufficient to study in Spanish, I was happy to overcome the challenge and improve my language skills.