



Cuernavaca Uncovered

Cuernavaca has fascinated many people. In ancient times

it drew natives who built pyramids there. With the conquest it drew Cortez the conqueror who built his palace atop the pyramids he destroyed. In recent times it drew Diego Rivera the muralist who painted his great mural about the horrors of the conquest on the walls of that same palace of Cortez. The city's year-long mild climate seated within lush and verdant vegetation attracts abundant tourists, both Mexican and foreign. The Catholic Cathedral, perhaps the city's principal architectural glory, once served as a Franciscan monastery. A considerable renovation restored it to its full, original, loveliness.

The nearby Zocalo always teems with dance, music, the joy of Mexican outdoor life. The city enjoys frequent fiestas, a vibrant vitality. Excellent restaurants, hotels, and clubs serve its visitors.

The city has a different feel than its giant northern neighbor, Mexico City. That, with its twenty-two million people, is a hustling city. Cuernavaca moves at a gentler, more relaxed, less pressured pace.

With all of its attributes, the great virtue of the city is its people — charming, kind, friendly, and open. In Cuernavaca, 'Mi casa es tu casa', is a reality much more than a saying. Visitors and students who seek the people's company are always welcomed.

The many language schools are excellent. They compete to serve the student.

John Hines teaches philosophy at the University of Southern Maine.

Students share their experiences of one of Mexico's most inviting cities

I have been to Cuernavaca for the past four summers, and have had just wonderful experiences there.

Cuernavaca is a beautiful city ("City of Eternal Spring"), and quite easy to get around in as the bus system is very good, and there are plenty of taxis. The people are very friendly, and I always felt safe walking around by myself. I had no security concerns whatsoever.

Homestay is a delightful part of the experience. I was made to feel "like family" and included in all sorts of interesting activities. The food too was always delicious. My hostess, Carmen, was an excellent cook.

In short, I have only positive things to say about Cuernavaca. I look forward to returning next summer. Oh, and by the way, I feel that my Spanish has improved a great deal as well. I teach ESL as a volunteer in Indianapolis; so being able to communicate with my students in Spanish is a real plus.

Margaret Smith is a volunteer ESL teacher in Indianapolis.

Cuernavaca is the capital of the state of Morelos and stretches across a beautiful green valley.

The progressive spirit that Emiliano Zapata once inspired here is still felt and Cuernavaca hosts a myriad of activists, writers, musicians, and a growing environmental movement. Furthermore, the presence of indigenous peoples, primarily Nahuatl-speaking, enriches the cultural landscape and serves as testimony to Mexico's great plurality.



Selected schools in Cuernavaca

Berlitz

Berlitz de Mexico has the backing of more than 600 language centers worldwide, and different programs to learn Spanish, including: intensive courses such as Total Immersion; private lessons; semi-private classes (3-4 students).

Berlitz has taught a new language to more than 20 million people all over the world, with the help of good teachers, small groups, state-of-the-art materials and the Berlitz Conversational Method, which is designed to help students learn from their first class.

Berlitz has 38 language centers in Mexico.

Cemanahuac

Established in 1974, Cemanahuac's Educational Community offers a total immersion experience in language, culture, history, current events, art, dance, and all the magic that is Mexico... or students can just study Spanish. Cemanahuac is a language school that is famous for being much more, such as their tours to Teotihuacan, the greatest anthropological site in Mexico, the marvelous Anthropology Museum, Xochicalco, a local anthropology site, or walking tours of Cuernavaca led by Charlie Goff, whose infectious excitement has made him an internet star.

There are classes in Mexican culture and history, and even a popular Meso-American cooking class, starting with grinding corn and finishing with eating delicious tortillas, spicy tamales, savory gorditos, chocolate atole, etc.

Cemanahuac also features a rural campus where many students choose to spend at least a week. Buenavista de Cuéllar, 50 miles south of Cuernavaca, has welcomed Cemanahuac students for over 20 years. This is a chance to experience traditional, rural Mexico where the majority of Mexicans live.

Cemanahuac is located in a large villa only a short walk from the Cathedral and Central Market area. It has a large pool, gardens, 30 classrooms, a library, email room, small restaurant, seminar meeting rooms, an infirmary, and facilities for the handicapped. Most students choose full immersion and life with a matched local family but Cemanahuac also has one-bedroom apartments available for those who prefer privacy.

