

Briana Conley

Mexico: The Lost Wonder

My Mexican immersion included four weeks of intense grammar and verbal usage. In week one, I visited the local shops in Cuernavaca, downtown Mexico City and Teotihuacan. My favorite location in Cuernavaca was the Jardín Borda which contained dozens of lush trees and a beautiful fountain, it resembled a paradise. In Mexico City, I visited the Templo Mayor Museum, the National Palace and the Zocalo or town square. Inside the Zocalo, there was a gorgeous cathedral that contained the most beautiful artwork. I was in awe the entire time I was in the cathedral. The National Palace contained artwork of Diego Rivera. His murals portrayed the difficulties the natives faced during the Spanish Conquest. I was amazed how Teotihuacan was preserved after hundreds of years. I climbed the Pyramid of the Sun which towers 280 feet in the sky.

I stayed with a wonderful host family in Cuernavaca. My host mother, Clara, was kind and generous. She always had a pleasing countenance and excelled in everything she did. Her family accepted me with open arms. Clara's grandchildren and I got along so well that they allowed me to play the Nintendo Wii game with them!

In week two, I visited the archeological site Xochicalco and a Floraplant. Xochicalco contained ceremonial hoops that are intact whereas some of the hoops had fallen apart. The temples were so well preserved that I was able to climb several of them. The Floraplant contained hundreds of flowers ranging from daisies to marigolds. I was shown the greenhouses where the process of germination begins. I travelled to Buenavista at the beginning of week three.

I lived with a wonderful host family in Buenavista. My host mother, Josefina, treated me as her own child. We spent evenings watching soap operas or dance competitions which were enjoyable. The townspeople were kind and willing to help a stranger. During the day, I attended classes at Cemanahuac Institute in Buenavista. The owner of Cemanahuac in Buenavista was married to an administrator at the Cuernavaca location. Throughout my stay, I visited Taxco and a local tannery. Taxco is the silver capital of Mexico and it was built in the mountains. I purchased a lovely ring with a gorgeous pink stone as its setting. I needed more time at this location to truly appreciate Taxco's beauty and landscape. The tannery was an interesting place to visit because I had no idea where leather originated. Buenavista was my favorite city due to its appeal of modernism and colonialism.

I stayed in Acapulco and Miacatlán my last week in Mexico. I enjoyed staying in a 5 star hotel and the amenities were a nice perk. The final days of the immersion were spent at an orphanage called Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (Our Little Brothers and Sisters). The orphanage resembled a private boarding school. At a young age, the orphanage teaches the children how to be self-disciplined. When I arrived, the kids were happy and enjoyed being there. At Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos, my goal was to teach the young boys how to plant and grow a moringa tree and explain the process of double digging which helps incorporate air and organic matter into the soil. Once fully grown, the tree has many beneficial and nutritional values. The children had a wonderful time learning about agriculture and meeting new friends. The boys helped me dig and turn the soil, find rocks to make a boundary for the garden, plant the seeds and water down the garden once completed. This opportunity provided an unparalleled enhancement to my academic and professional career.



