

## GETTING TO QUERETARO

### PLANES TO QUERÉTARO

Querétaro has a small (but new) international airport ([www.aeropuertosmexico.com](http://www.aeropuertosmexico.com)) with planes arriving from Houston (two daily), Dallas and Shreveport in the USA and from Monterrey in Mexico. You might want to check if one of these flights connects from your departure airport. From the Queretaro airport you just take a taxi to your hotel (250 pesos to downtown).

However, you might find it more convenient to arrive in Mexico City. It is a busy airport with daily flights coming in from France (2), Britain, Spain (2), Germany, The Netherlands, Japan, China, South and Central America, and of course many cities in the USA and Canada. In that case you might find it convenient to either stay overnight in Mexico City and travel to Querétaro the next day or take a direct bus to Querétaro from the airport. The following text gives you detailed instructions on either case.

### ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at the Mexico City airport, you will deplane and go through the process of Customs clearance. Have your passport and the forms you filled out (you will receive one on the plane) ready to hand to the officials. Your passport may or may not be stamped - don't worry about it. At this point, your tourist visa will be completed. The tourist visa will be valid from one to six months. Most Europeans do not need a visa to enter Mexico, but you should check

After this is done, you will proceed to the baggage claim area to collect your luggage. From this point, for your last "clearance" you will be instructed to push a button on a "traffic light". If you get the green light, you may proceed with your luggage to the arrival hall. If you get the red light, your luggage may be inspected.

Outside this exit you will find several money exchange booths. Do change some money to have local currency; the rates are quite good there and you do not pay a commission. If you prefer, there are also several banks with ATMs inside the airport where you can directly withdraw money from your personal account (the exchange rate is even better). For starters, having about \$1000.00 Mexican pesos (ca. \$80 USD) should be enough. It is not advisable to carry large sums of money with you!

If you arrive late in the evening (past 21:30), it may then be convenient to stay the night in Mexico City. There are several good hotels near the airport, but you might want to take a taxi (for your security use only the authorized yellow cabs that you hire inside the airport) to another hotel. The Polanco or Condesa areas in Mexico City are the best options if the next morning you might want to explore the National Museum of Anthropology or downtown Mexico City before heading to Querétaro.

### BUSES TO QUERETARO

If you do not arrive too late, you might want to head directly to Queretaro by bus. There are two bus terminals at the airport, one at each terminal. The bus service is excellent. After clearing customs, you might want to hire a porter to carry your bags; they charge for each bag they carry (\$1 USD per bag) and not for the time it takes, so they can also aid you in getting to the bus terminals. Just tell him/her "Autobus a Queretaro, por favor" (practice the correct pronunciation of Queretaro) and he/she will take you there. If you prefer to carry your own bag, follow the signs to the bus terminal, or ask anybody. Mexicans are very eager to help strangers! The bus company's name is "Primera Plus".

Once at the "Primera Plus" ([www.primeraplus.com.mx](http://www.primeraplus.com.mx)) counter (it is upstairs of the arrivals in Terminal 1, but at the same level of arrivals in Terminal 2), ask for a one-way ticket to Queretaro. Buses leave every 30 minutes and the trip takes approximately 3 hours. It sometimes happens that a bus is fully booked and you may have to buy a ticket for the next one. Tickets cost approximately 250 pesos.

Before boarding the bus you will be asked to take your bags to the baggage handler who will load them in the storage area below the bus and give you claim tickets for your luggage. The trip is nonstop (except if you leave from Terminal 2; you then stop briefly at Terminal 1), so it is recommended that you forget about work for a while and have your laptop in your luggage so that it is stowed in the storage area below (this also makes it safer). You will get a snack and can

watch a movie while you travel (sorry, most will be dubbed in Spanish), but at this time of the year the rainy season is almost over and the scenery on your way to Queretaro is quite pleasant. Enjoy it!

If you stay the night in Mexico City near downtown, you can take a cab from your hotel the next day and head for "Terminal de Autobuses Norte". This is the bus terminal in the northern part of Mexico City. The "Primera Plus" counter is near the southernmost part of the terminal, but the cab driver will know anyhow. You can also take the metro line. Tickets are amazingly cheap (3 pesos per trip anywhere), but you will probably have to make several transfers until you arrive at the "Terminal del Norte" station (yellow line no. 5). Exiting the metro station you will enter the terminal and will have to walk to your right until you find the "Primera Plus" counters. If you prefer, a better bus service is offered by "ETN", with wider seats and internet on board. Primera Plus one-way tickets from here cost 185 pesos, and ETN tickets cost 225 pesos.

## **ARRIVING IN QUERETARO**

Once your bus arrives in Queretaro, you will have to collect your luggage directly at the bus. Then head towards the exit ("Salida"). Immediately after entering the building, you will find the authorized taxis booth. Show them the name of your hotel and you will get the price for the one-way trip. If you are staying at Misión Juriquilla Hotel, the cost is 110 pesos. This would be the most you would pay, since other hotels are much nearer the bus terminal. You can also hire a porter to carry your luggage (tip 10 pesos per bag), but you can also simply follow other people taking a cab.

Once in the taxi line, give your cab ticket to the person in charge and he will give instructions to the cab driver. The cabbie will give you back your ticket and take you where you are going. Have the name and address of your hotel ready. You may choose to tip the cabbie if he is helpful with handling your bags upon arrival at your destination.

It is not advisable to rent a car to come to Querétaro. However, if you are the adventurous type, you can rent one at the several rental agencies in the airport in Mexico City. The difficult part of driving to Querétaro is leaving Mexico City. Once in the highway, which is not far from the airport but it is somewhat tricky to get there, the trip to Querétaro is quite enjoyable. You will have to pay several tolls along the way. Some only take cash; others you can pay with credit card. Once you arrive in Querétaro, follow the signs that say Juriquilla. Eventually you will come to a six lane highway that takes you to San Luis Potosí. Exit at the Juriquilla exit and follow most cars. The hotel is straight ahead at the end of the road.