

### OVERVIEW

If you're looking for a mountain bike adventure with fresh sights and new experiences, then there is no better destination than the mountain, forests, and jungle trails of western Mexico. Here, the days are sunny, clear, and mild no matter the season. With Access Trips, your journey will begin in Guadalajara and wind its way through remote rural villages, volcanic landscapes, and mountain forests. The trails are 100% off-road, and the majority of these are single-track. You'll experience strenuous uphill (although we can shuttle some of these), but you'll be rewarded with long, exhilarating, technical downhill on trails that few people ever travel. Your instructor and guide is an expert with extensive mountain biking experience, including three years on the Mexican national team. With his personalized instruction, you'll get the attention you need to enhance your skills while taking in the distinctive flavors and sights of western Mexico. When you're not on your bike, our Mexican Highlands Mountain Bike Trip gives you unique access to a region of Mexico rarely explored by tourists, allowing you to experience life in picturesque Mexican villages while staying in some memorable accommodations. `_uacct = "UA-675615-1";urchinTracker();`

### IS IT FOR ME?

Our Mexican Highlands Mountain Bike Trip is ideal for intermediate-to-advanced mountain bikers who wish to develop their all-around riding skills. It's the perfect trip for riders looking to escape the rain and snow of North America in favor of clear days and single track.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- \*Spectacular and diverse scenery; volcanic formations, countryside, national parks, and forest.
- \*Rides on the unspoiled Mexican Sierra and its mountain towns.
- \*Excellent single track & off-road trails for intermediate & advanced riders.
- \*Expert instruction from former Mexico national team competitor.
- \*Constant variation and movement; this is a road trip in its best sense, touring the best trails of western Mexico!

### INSTRUCTOR TO GUEST RATIO

1:4

### MAX GROUP SIZE

15

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1: Arrive & Relax

Welcome to Guadalajara, the birthplace of both Tequila and the Mariachi! After your arrival at Guadalajara International Airport (GDL), you'll be picked up by your guide and taken to your hotel for the night; a small, quality accommodation located in the city's center. You'll have your first opportunity to explore the city this afternoon, or you could choose instead to linger at the hotel and relax in the pool or Jacuzzi. Later, we will visit the MTB shop where your bike will be assembled (if you've chosen to bring your own), or you can get a rental adjusted to your specifications. We'll finish your first day in Mexico with a trip downtown and dinner in the colonial area of the city.

#### DAY 2: Downhill trails in the 'Forest of the Spring'

After a light, Mexican breakfast, we will drive for 20 minutes to the *Bosque la Primavera*, a national park where we'll begin our mountain bike trip. *Bosque la Primavera*, which means 'Forest of the Spring' in English, is renowned for the more than 400 thermal springs in its interior. Thousands of years ago, the hot springs, jagged rock formations, and hill terrain of the park were formed by volcanic eruptions. Today, the park boasts such a diversity of plant- and wildlife that it has been nicknamed 'the lung' of Guadalajara

We'll choose from the 40 miles of single track in *Bosque la Primavera*, taking in the stunning scenery while getting comfortable with the equipment, altitude, and group ability level. The ride can stretch from an hour-and-a-half loop to a six-hour epic. The ride itself is fun and unique due to the volcanic ash in the park soil (which creates lots of loose rocks). After the ride, we'll have lunch and drive to the mountain town of Atemajac the Brisuela, where we'll spend the night.

#### DAY 3: Mountains, valleys & remote, rural villages

We'll awaken to the fresh mountain air of Atemajac de Brisuela, a town with an unspoiled country lifestyle. After a healthy breakfast, we'll begin an incredible ride that takes us through mountains and valleys on a single, red-soil track.

The ride will be both fun and hard, lasting 4-5 hours as we wind through small, Mexican towns. For those who need it, there will be vehicle support throughout the ride's different road crossings. Finally, we'll arrive in Tapalpa in time to have lunch above the plaza and explore the town with our afternoon.

**DAY 4: Tapalpa Ride**

You won't imagine a place like Tapalpa exists until you're in it. With its cobblestone streets, colonial-style architecture and lush mountain scenery, visiting this sleepy town is like stepping back in time. It is the perfect place to experience authentic, untouched rural Mexico. Of course, we'll also find some great riding in Tapalpa. There are miles of trails for us to choose from so we'll tailor our riding to the interests and goals of the group. Tapalpa's terrain offers us steep downhill (and some climbs!), incredible views, fun single track, or simple countryside touring. We'll remain in Tapalpa for lunch and then head to Lake Chapala for the night.

**DAY 5: Relaxing & riding at Mexico's largest lake**

In Chapala, we'll stay at a beautiful country house with a huge garden, barbecue, and pool in front of Mexico's biggest lake. After a few days of riding, relaxation will come easily in this luxury accommodation. Our ride today will again be flexible, depending on the energy level of the group. We can do a short, flat ride on the bike trail along the lake, or we can drive to Mazamitla to ride a windy, single-track for a few hours, visit waterfalls, have lunch, and then return to Chapala. Those with more energy could climb Cerro Viejo, the region's second-highest peak - a 1,400 meter climb followed by a one-hour downhill ride back to Chapala. The track here is steep, hard single track on the way up with fast, rock sections on the descent. We'll finish the day in our villa, going out for dinner and resting in the pool.

**DAY 6: Back to la Primavera**

Today is our last riding day. We'll take it slowly with an easy morning in Chapala and then a drive back to La Primavera forest, hopefully to attempt a more technical ride. Afterward, we'll return the bikes to the MTB shop so that they can get cleaned and packed before our departure. We'll have lunch, followed by a leisurely afternoon at the hotel. We also might venture back into Guadalajara to explore the handicraft markets and the mariachis. Our final full day in Mexico will end with an authentic Mexican dinner and a sampling of Guadalajara's rich nightlife.

**DAY 7: Final Day**

We'll wake up, have breakfast, and depart for our flights. If your flight leaves later in the day, you might even have some time for final sightseeing in the city before we return you to the Guadalajara International Airport.

**INSTRUCTION**

We know there are a multitude of other mountain bike tour companies that you could choose from, but we feel that we are unique because we don't just guide you; we actively teach you using expert instructors and small, tailored groups. In order to really make the most of mountain biking, it's essential to know the correct skills and techniques. This will enable you to get off the beaten track to enjoy the most spectacular scenery and the most exhilarating riding. Biking through a breathtaking countryside like western Mexico is enjoyable in itself, but you'll find the experience that much more satisfying if you also improve your biking performance and learn new skills during your travels.

**OUR MEXICAN HIGHLANDS MOUNTAIN BIKE INSTRUCTION PROGRAM****Beginners**

This trip is not recommended for those who have never tried mountain biking. If you have some single-track experience and a decent level of fitness, however, you should enjoy this trip. If you have questions about your ability level, please e-mail us at [info@AccessTrips.com](mailto:info@AccessTrips.com).

**Intermediates**

This trip is suitable for intermediate riders with a good level of fitness. There are some challenging uphill, although we can shuttle several of these if necessary. During the weeklong tour of Mexico, we'll teach you every aspect of riding downhill and cross-country trails. Our expert instructors will work with you to improve your individual riding technique and correct bad habits you may have developed so that you can optimize your riding performance. Our instructors will also encourage you to push your performance in challenging yourself and developing your nerves. They'll provide you with advice and encouragement, as well as help you with such skills as climbing, descending, cornering, balance, weight distribution, fluidity, bike control in varying conditions, drop offs, basic front and back wheel lifts, switchbacks, and emergency stopping techniques. You will also familiarize yourself with bike mechanics, maintenance, and repair.

**Advanced**

Our advanced coaching program will expand upon the fundamentals outlined in our intermediate program, including high performance bike handling, cornering techniques, and climbing and descending skills. Our expert instructors will encourage you to ride more challenging terrain and to work on tricks and natural jumps. They will provide you with valuable mountain bike tips to ensure that you can maximize your riding performance. If necessary, they will also work to refresh your memory of maintenance and repair.

**BEGINNERS**

This trip is not suitable for those who have no mountain biking experience.

**TRAILS**

The highlight of mountain biking in Mexico, particularly in the state Jalisco, is the incredible terrain. The majority of the trails are off-road and single-track. They wind their way from the volcanic landscape of *Bosque la Primavera* ('Forest of the Spring') to the mountain forests of Sierra Madre. Others rarely access many of these trails, so we'll most likely have them to ourselves. The single-track is at times steep and rough, so it will provide a great opportunity for you to develop your downhill and freeride skills. The trip also involves some fairly strenuous uphill. We will have the opportunity to shuttle some of these in our vehicle if the group chooses to do so, but others we will need to ride, so you should have a good level of fitness as well as generally enjoy the challenge of riding uphill.

This is a trip for those who are interested in both awesome mountain biking and in experiencing the beautiful and exotic countryside of Mexico. If your only passion is for extreme single trail descents, this may not be the trip for you. If, however, you love exhilarating downhill but you are also happy to take on the odd uphill and flat in order to experience breathtaking scenery and a lively culture, you should find our Mexico mountain biking tour to be the perfect trip for you.

**ACCOMMODATION**

As with all our tours, we'll accommodate you in quality, locally owned B&Bs, lodges, and boutique hotels so that you can experience the best of the friendly and vibrant local culture. Of course, the emphasis on culture doesn't mean you'll have to sacrifice comfort and style during your trip. In fact, the spectacular countryside scenery provides the perfect background for the amenities offered by our handpicked accommodations (from the Jacuzzi to on-site restaurants). During our trip, we'll experience a range of accommodations. For our first night, we'll be in Guadalajara, the second-largest city in Mexico. Our accommodation here will be authentically Mexican but comfortable and stylish, the perfect introduction to the heart of Mexico. You can expect your room to have all the amenities you'd expect of a high-quality hotel stay: ensuite bathroom, TV, telephone, restaurant, and business center. In your free time, you can visit the beautiful indoor pool and Jacuzzi or listen to live entertainment in the lobby bar. Despite its urban setting and professional atmosphere, this quality hotel remains full of warmth. Next, you'll stay in Tapalpa, a small, mountain town sometimes called 'paradise in the pines.' The accommodation here, designed with sensitivity to both its historical renovation and modern comfort, will be as clean and refreshing as the mountain air. From the bed & breakfast, you'll even be able to see the snow-capped volcano of Colima over the thousands of acres of pine forests. In the morning, you'll enjoy the highlight of your stay: the owner's creative, traditional home cooking. Her recipes, passed down for generations, include tamales of watercress, hot chocolate made with corn, and gorditas with her special toppings. For your second night in Tapalpa, you'll move to another accommodation complete with luxurious decor and amenities. Finally, you'll stay at a country house in Chapala on the lakefront overlooking Lake Chapala, the biggest lake in Mexico. The house has full bedrooms, a beautifully furnished living room, complete kitchen, and a scenic terrace. Outside, you can make full use of the pool and huge garden. Despite its location close to town, you'll be amazed by the tranquility of your stay.

**FOOD**

One of the great pleasures of mountain biking in Mexico is that you can reward yourself each day with a delicious lunch and dinner, be it freshly-caught fish prepared in a countryside cafe or rice, beans, and homemade tortillas served in a small mountain restaurant while overlooking a breathtaking view. Though the villages we visit during the trip are generally very small, they offer an excellent number of restaurants with delicious meals at reasonable prices. These restaurants serve up authentic Mexican dishes like empanadas, rice, beans, chicken, tortillas, and fresh salsas.

Our Mexico adventure tour includes a hearty breakfast of fresh fruit, eggs, tortillas, beans, and natural juices. Lunches and dinners are equally hearty although varied, allowing you to experience the distinctive flavors of Mexican cooking.

For the few meals we don't provide as part of the trip price (which will give you the chance to choose from the array of available restaurants), budget 5-10 USD per meal, depending on where and what you wish to eat.

### **DATES & PRICES**

For detailed dates and pricing information, please see our website at <http://www.accesstrips.com>

### **TRAVEL INFO**

#### **1) ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

**Arrival and Departure Airport:** You should fly into and depart from Guadalajara International Airport (airport code: GDL) in Guadalajara, Mexico.

**Pickup & Drop-off Information:** We provide complimentary airport pick-ups and drop-offs. We will be waiting for you with a sign saying 'Access Trips' as you exit customs at Guadalajara International Airport. If you would like to be picked up from or dropped off to somewhere other than the airport, please email us to discuss.

**Airlines and Checking Equipment:** If you intend to bring your own equipment, please check with your airline regarding policies for checking and transporting sports gear and equipment before you book your flight. This includes inquiring as to weight, charges and liability.

**Flights:** We do not book flights or insurance for our clients. For recommendations, [click here](#)

#### **2) TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS**

**Travel Insurance:** Travel insurance, including emergency evacuation coverage, is compulsory for all our trips. Please do not attend any of our trips without purchasing appropriate insurance coverage. We recommend that you purchase travel insurance that includes cancellation protection so that you will be covered in the event that you are unable to attend our trip (due to injury, illness or other unforeseen circumstances) or in the unlikely event that our trip must be cancelled. We do not provide travel insurance for our clients. Please contact your local travel agent to purchase travel insurance.

**Passports & Visas:** All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum of 6 months validity). Citizens of some countries will also require a visa. Please see below for more details:

Citizens of some countries will also need to acquire a visa before traveling to Mexico. In order to determine whether or not you will need a visa, please refer to the website of the Consulate General of Mexico.

**Age:** We do not have any age restrictions on our trips. The majority of our clients are between the ages of 25 and 45, but we also have many clients who are older and younger than this.

#### **3) HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**Emergency Contact:** If you need to contact Access Travel in an emergency, you can reach us during office hours at the following numbers:

Dialing within North America: 1 (650) 492-4778

Dialing outside of North America: +1 (650) 492-4778

If you feel that you need to contact us outside of office hours, one of our staff members will be available on the following mobile lines:

Mobile-phone: +1 650 521 2662 or +1 650 387 4249

If you do not receive an immediate answer when calling the above numbers, please leave us a detailed message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

**Health requirements:** Please carefully review the health information section of the following webpage for up-to-date health information, including information on the quality of medical care, the availability of medications and the necessity for vaccinations in the destination country.

[U.S> Department of State website](#)

You are responsible for ensuring that you receive any necessary vaccinations before embarking on your trip with us.

**Fitness requirements:** Our Mexican Highlands mountain bike trip is a trip best suited for intermediate through advanced riders, so you need some prior mountain biking experience to participate in this trip. In addition, you should have a reasonable level of fitness and be able to bike for up to 6 hours each day. Van support is available for most of the trip so if you find yourself getting tired (especially on an uphill) you will be able to jump in the van for a break.

**Safety & Security:** To maximize your safety during our tours you should exercise common sense and caution at all times. We recommend that you always stick to set travel arrangements, and avoid unknown areas. We also recommend that you wear minimal jewelry and that you keep valuable items safely stored. Always keep a copy of your passport, airline tickets, traveler's checks and credit card numbers separate from where you keep the originals.

For information on safety and security in Mexico, please review the safety and security section of the [U.S> Department of State website](#)

#### 4) WHAT TO TAKE

**Your Bike:** It is always good to use familiar equipment, so if you have your own bike and are willing to bring it with you, we suggest doing so. Please see below for instructions on traveling with your bike. We recommend that your bike have at least front suspension and that it is a quality brand (Giant, Trek, Kona, Cannondale, Scott, Specialized etc ). If you bring your own bike it is important that you check it thoroughly to ensure it is in good mechanical order before you depart for your trip. Our team is equipped to make minor repairs but to save you hassles during the journey it is a good idea to check your bike before you arrive. If you are not familiar with bike maintenance, your local bike shop can help you with this.

##### Things that you should especially look out for are:

- \* Check wheel rims
- \* Check and adjust all wheel spokes.
- \* Check and grease all bearings.
- \* Check brakes and brake cables.
- \* Check gears and gear cables.
- \* Check and tighten all nuts and bolts (especially bottom bracket / cranks and peddles).
- \* Check chain, quick release clamps, tires, and inner tubes.
- \* Check handle bars and bar ends
- \* Check freewheel and rear cluster
- \* Check seat bracket

**Traveling with your bike:** In our opinion, the best way to travel with your bike is to partly dismantle it and put it in a cardboard bike box. If you no longer have the box that your bike came in, most bike shops will have surplus bike boxes that they will be happy to give you.

To fit your bike into the box you will need to remove the pedals, the seat, the handlebars and the front tire. You should also deflate your tires and air shocks. In order to protect your bike during the journey, you should purchase some foam pipe insulation from a hardware store and tape it around the bike frame, gear shifters and back derailleur. It's also a good idea to pack your clothes (in plastic bags) around your bike to provide extra padding.

If you are unsure about dismantling your bike, take it to your local bike shop and they can help you with this for a small fee. We recommend that you pack your bike into as small a box as possible because the tight fit will help to protect your bike and will minimize your chance of having problems at the airport.

Most airlines are willing to carry bikes and many will do so without charging you an additional fee. However, airlines have different policies and these policies do change over time so we recommend that you contact the airline before you fly to find out about their bike transportation policy.

**Bike Rental:** For those who don't own a mountain bike or who would prefer not to bring their own, we have front-suspension Cannondale F400's and Kona Kula Deluxe's with RST shocks available for rent. Please see the optional extras in our booking form for information about our bike rental prices or email us at [info@accessstrips.com](mailto:info@accessstrips.com).

**Additional things to bring:** To minimize the effort of carrying your bags into your accommodation each evening, we recommend that you pack as lightly as possible.

**We suggest that you bring the following items:**

### **Clothing & Equipment**

- \* your bike (if you decide to bring your own)
- \* helmet & gloves (we will supply these, but you can bring your own if you prefer)
- \* water bottle or camelback (we will supply water bottles but you may like to bring your own)
- \* T-shirts
- \* Padded shorts for biking
- \* a rain coat (just in case!)
- \* cycling shoes
- \* walking shoes
- \* sandals
- \* a sweater for evenings (you're unlikely to get cold, but just in case)
- \* toiletries
- \* money belt
- \* sunscreen
- \* sunglasses
- \* swimsuit
- \* beach towel
- \* first-aid kit (should contain lip balm, aspirin, band aids, a cream for sore muscles (e.g. deep heat), extra prescription drugs you may be taking)

### **Documents & Money**

- \* Passport (with photocopies)
- \* Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- \* Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- \* Credit and/or debit card and/or travelers cheques and/or cash
- \* Any entry visas required

### **Spending Money**

- \* **Meals** - There is only one dinner and one lunch not included in the trip price. You should budget US\$10-15 for dinner and US\$5-10 for lunch.
- \* **Other expenses** - Aside from meals, there are no required additional expenses for this trip, but you might like to take spending money for such things as souvenir shopping, nightlife and internet cafes.
- \* **Tipping** - A 10-15% tip for meals is standard in Mexico.

## 5) USEFUL LINKS

**Country Information:** For additional information about traveling in Mexico, check out [U.S. Department of State Consular Information Sheet: Mexico](#), [Lonely Planet Website](#)

**Currency Exchange:** The currency in Mexico is the Mexican Peso (MXN). For the latest currency exchange information: <http://finance.yahoo.com/currency>

## 6) ABOUT ACCESS TRIPS

**Who we are:** Access Trips is dedicated to offering a wide range of instructional adventure tours. If you're looking for a vacation that provides a huge sense of personal achievement while still being fun, exciting and rewarding, our tours are right for you. We coined the term `instructional adventure tour` to describe our unique style of travel because as far as we know, we are the only company in the world to specialize in offering a variety of such trips! Instructional adventure tours offer the best of both worlds - expert instruction to help you develop and improve in your favorite pastime (or, if you're a beginner, to help you learn a new pastime correctly from the start), and varied and exciting itineraries to give you a unique and memorable travel experience. Our tours are the perfect mix of a high quality instructional course and an exciting adventure vacation and you'll find there's nothing more satisfying than challenging yourself and reaching new heights in your favorite pastime, while also enjoying a unique and authentic travel experience. Our instructional tours encourage you to develop your potential in a relaxed and non-intimidating setting, regardless of your ability level, and reward you with carefully selected accommodation, delicious food, incredible scenery and unique cultural experiences.

We offer trips in all continents except Antarctica and we currently specialize in snowboarding, skiing, surfing, mountain biking and multisport tours. Our team is made up of instructors who are among the best in the world; we select them not only for their talent and experience (many are professional and competitive athletes) but also for their great personalities and their passion for coaching. Our tours attract men and women of all abilities and ages and, thanks to the fact that all clients have a common interest, our trips tend to be fantastic social experiences in addition to great instructional trips.

**Our commitment to our clients:** Like many travel companies, we are dedicated to offering the highest quality, safest and best value trips that we can. But our client mission is much more than this: on top of offering an excellent product, we are committed to making a positive change in the lives of our clients. We at Access Trips have all benefited in meaningful ways from the remarkable power of having a passion in life - of having a pastime that brings you pleasure, friendships, a sense of achievement and a total escape from the pressures of everyday life. Some of us have found self-confidence, others friendships, and others motivation and drive as a result of our involvement in sports. We want our clients to also experience the pleasure of finding and pursuing a passion. It is our goal that clients return from our trips having found a new passion or solidified an existing one, having made lasting friendships, having experienced a deep sense of achievement as a result of reaching new heights in their favorite sport, and having acquired a new perspective on life as a result of the unique experiences that our trips provide. We have had more than a few clients who have returned from our trips and decided to make major life changes such as changing careers to pursue more meaningful work, moving countries to be closer to the outdoors, and changing universities to be around more like-minded people. We do not expect our trips to have such a dramatic impact on all our clients, but we do hope that all our clients can be inspired in some small way from the experience of sharing their passion with us.

**Our commitment to others:** Although we are ultimately a for-profit business, Access Trips is about so much more than just turning profits. We operate Access Trips because we are passionate about travel, sports and the outdoors and because we love to share this passion with our clients, our employees and the local people we encounter during our travels. It is deeply important to us that our business contributes to the world in a favorable way and that we use our resources to affect as much positive change in the world as we can. We believe that we have three major responsibilities: to our clients, to our employees and to the world at large (which includes the environment and local communities) and we are doing everything we can to serve these three groups to the best of our ability. Please see the company section of our website (<http://www.accesstrips.com/company/mission/>) to read more about the actions we are taking to fulfill our mission and to effect positive change in the world.

## 7) FINAL NOTE

The information contained in this document is provided in good faith. Due to the nature of travel, details in this document may change. You should thus use the above information as an indication only and not as a contractual obligation on the part of Access Travel, Ltd.

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

Please have a look at our Terms & Conditions at <http://www.accesstrips.com/company/termsandconditions/> before you make your booking. Thanks!