



## The World's Top Retirement Havens in 2007

### **Mexico** - Our New Winner

by Laura Sheridan - 09/01/2007

Whether your retirement is fast approaching or just something you find yourself often dreaming about, you've probably imagined spending it in some far-flung tropical haven. But moving to a country that you know little about is a lot of hassle, right? It's probably not worth the time and effort, you think. Besides, all your family and friends are here.

Take it from us: it's worth it. If you look beyond your own shores you'll find that many countries around the world offer far greater benefits and advantages for retirees than those offered at home.

One of the simplest ways to improve your retirement lifestyle is to choose the retirement destination offering you more of what you want at the best price. It's a question of priorities. What's important to you? Is cost of living Number One on your priority list? Maybe for you weather is the key consideration. Are your must-haves telecommunications and infrastructure? Proximity to the States and Canada may also be a factor.

Maybe you aren't anywhere close to retirement. Nevertheless, it's important to think about and plan for your future. Like every phase in your life, you'll be surprised how fast retirement creeps up on you. That's why, once a year, in our Global Retirement Index, we look closely, specifically, at the best opportunities worldwide for retirement living. Where will the pensioner's dollars go furthest? Which country is the safest? Where is the health care best? We give top priority to those things that matter most to anyone planning for retirement, including programs of special benefits for retirees (tax breaks, discounts, and freebies, for example, that various governments proffer to residents, sometimes specifically to foreign residents in an effort to attract investment and retirement dollars).

We can show you the opportunities and possibilities, the winners of our top retirement countries, but it have up to you to decide what your main priorities are before you find your ideal retirement haven. The aim of our Index is to give you a good starting guide.

Moving up four places to take our top spot as the world's top retirement haven this year is Mexico. Mexico offers the perfect mix of centuries-old traditions and contemporary lifestyles. Moving to Mexico means you can still have all of the amenities you grew accustomed to north of the border: cable TV, high-speed Internet, and modern home appliances. And if you prefer, when you move to Mexico you can even bring all of your favorite things with you without paying import taxes.

Goods and services cost less, so you can afford the kinds of luxuries only the very wealthy enjoy up north: a maid, a cook, and a gardener for example. In your retirement here, you'll have time to volunteer at the local school, time to golf in the mornings, time to relax on the beach...time to savor life. Whether your vision of the ideal retirement involves shopping, fishing, sunbathing, diving, biking, mountain climbing, parasailing, collecting crafts, visiting archeological sites, partying, going to concerts, attending the theater, or fine dining, in Mexico you can engage in all of these activities, and many more.

If health care is a concern, you should know that in much of Mexico the health care is first rate. Private clinics and hospitals are staffed by expert physicians (many of whom trained in the U.S., Europe, or in Mexico's own world-renowned teaching hospitals), and medical care and prescription drugs will cost you only a fraction of what you would pay in the States. In our Index, Mexico scores 79 out of a possible 100 points in this category.

Mexico is such a diverse nation that everybody can find exactly what they want. You don't have to choose between water or mountains; here you can have both. And because of geographic diversity, you can also choose the climate to enjoy during your Mexican retirement: from hot and dry in the north, to hot and humid in the south, to spring-like temperatures all year round in the Colonial Highlands.

You can also own your dream retirement home in Mexico—for much less than it would cost you most anywhere in the U.S. or Canada. The real estate market offers endless possibilities for your retirement. Mexico receives a high score of 84 in our Real Estate category. Despite what you may have heard, it's not too late to buy real estate here. Whether your dream retreat is a graceful colonial home with lavish gardens, a simple beachfront bungalow where you can prop up your feet on the rail and watch the tide roll in, an expansive hacienda with enough acreage for horses to roam, or a cliff-side villa with sunset views and cool, steady breezes, you are likely to find it in Mexico...provided you look in the right place.

Wherever you go in Mexico, the people will charm you, the natural beauty will seduce you, and the remarkably affordable cost of living will entice you to stay. Whatever your motives for settling in Mexico--whether you hope to escape the fast pace of life up north, enjoy a better lifestyle for less than you'd pay at home, or discover a safe haven where the crime rate is low and you can enjoy a "small-town" existence--you're likely to find your quality of life improved in this country.