

TABLE 2
IMPORTS OF HOTEL AND RESTAURANT EQUIPMENT
(thousands of dollars)

	1987	1988	1989	1990
TABLE & KITCHENWARE	174	2,253	3,283	4,313
GLASSWARE	96	221	249	702
KNIVES & BLADES	445	1,014	2,045	1,526
TABLESETS	108	655	1,426	1,367
KITCHEN ARTICLES	131	1622	2709	2,716
BED, TABLE & BATH LINEN	164	613	1,665	1,872
DECORATION	846	3,666	3,579	4,585
FOOD PROCESSING EQUIPMENT	6,633	7,147	10,176	14,270
FURNITURE	123	1,272	3,058	3,935
AIR CONDITIONING EQ.	171	511	703	827
REFRIGERATORS & FREEZERS	931	2,582	3,436	3,924
HEATING & COOKING EQ	892	1,995	2,377	2,948
WASHING & DRYING MACHINES	1,371	2,589	3,471	3,858
COMPUTERS & TELECOM.	2,336	3,191	3,958	4,709
TOTAL	14,421	29,331	42,135	51,552

Source: Import-export data by SECOFI

This table clearly shows the dramatic increases in imports of the majority of these product areas between 1987 and 1990, in particular those which were most protected by restrictive import policies before the 1987 reforms (2).

The U.S. is by far the most important supplier of this type of equipment and supplies to Mexico, with a 65% market share. Geographic proximity has played an important role in this leadership. It reduces freight costs, permits more timely delivery and offers prompt availability of parts and service. Mexican buyers are also more familiar with U.S. products and brands in general and often visit trade shows in the U.S. to shop for the latest novelties. At the same time, many of the hotel chains established in Mexico are American.

The most important competitors, besides the U.S., are France (glasses, tableware, linen), Italy (lighting fixtures, food processing equipment, dishwashers), the Netherlands (food

2 It is interesting to note that total imports in all of the above categories amounted to \$300 million in 1988, up 180% over 1987 levels, and to \$454 million in 1989 and \$564 million in 1990, reflecting an additional 51% and 24% increase respectively. Based on several trade interviews with manufacturers, distributors, end users and the Mexican Association of Tourism Suppliers (AMAIT), it was possible to estimate which proportion of this total was purchased by hotels and restaurants as opposed to households, commercial establishments, hospitals, food processors, etc.