

To prevent the assembly of large estates, Mexican law restricts maximum property sizes, depending on the type of land involved. For example, the limit is 100 hectares for irrigated land and 300 hectares for non-irrigated land.

Mexican real estate transactions can be complex, and Canadians should research potential property purchases very carefully. Real estate agents are not licensed or regulated. Zoning laws may restrict the use of some properties, and financing is not generally available. It can be extremely difficult to evict existing tenants. Closing costs are usually borne by the buyer and include agents' commissions and transfer taxes. The buyer also pays the fee for a notary public or

Do you accept cheques?

¿Se aceptan cheques?

I do not have change.

No tengo cambio.

notario, who must handle all real estate transactions.

Time share properties are becoming increasingly common in Mexico. There have been many complaints about unscrupulous operators in this business, and buyers should proceed with caution. Mexican law allows time share contracts to be cancelled within five days with no penalty.

Returning Home

When planning your trip home, there are a few things to consider. First, make sure you have cash ready to pay the Mexican departure tax. In early 1998, this tax was US\$11.50. The peso equivalent is accepted but Canadian dollars are not. Normally this tax must be paid in cash on departure from Mexico, although in

some circumstances it may be included in airline ticket prices. The tax applies to adults and children two years of age and older.

On departure, travellers must surrender the tourist card they were given when they entered the country.