



MEDIA RELEASE

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TRAVEL ALERT FOR MEXICO SHOULD NOT DISCOURAGE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRAVELERS

Although the U.S. Department of State has extended a travel alert for Mexico, the alert specifically states that millions of U.S. citizens safely visit Mexico each year, including tens of thousands who cross the land border every day for study, tourism or business and nearly one million U.S. citizens who live in Mexico.

“American tourists from all over Southern California continue to pour into Baja California and we welcome them with open arms,” said Oscar Escobedo, Tourism Secretariat of Baja California.

This is not a new alert. It is an extension of an alert already in place.

What has been extended is a travel alert, not a warning. Travel warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable, and/or when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. A travel alert, on the other hand, disseminates information about short-term conditions of which U.S. citizens abroad should be aware to maximize their safety.

The alert for Mexico does not discourage U.S. citizens from traveling to the country's tourist destinations. Mexico is still regarded by the international community as a safe travel destination.

U.S. citizens traveling throughout Mexico should exercise caution in

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unfamiliar areas and be aware of their surroundings at all times. All tourists should observe the same safety precautions as if they were back home.

Mexico is only one of a handful of countries currently on a State Department “travel alert” list, referring to short-term conditions, while nearly 30 others are on a “travel warning” list that describes long-term conditions.

Last year Baja California was visited by twenty million people, four million of which were tourists. December 2009 saw a 6.2% jump of the number of flights from the United States in comparison to December of the previous year.

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