

# Protocols for Safe and Secure Biking in Mexico

**By: The Rental Bike Baron of Costalegre**

Cycling in Mexico can be a wonderful, safe and secure experience provided you read, understand and follow these 3 areas of advice.

**Right-of-way on roads and highways:** Unlike most countries that are home to travelers to Mexico, the practiced right-of-way rules in Mexico are based on size. At the top of this road use chain are the monster double trailer semi-trucks that haul dangerous cargo like propane or gasoline. At the other extreme end is the poor hapless lizard that relies on the compassion of all wheeled vehicles to make it across the road. Somewhere in the lower middle we find ourselves, cyclists out and about exploring Mexico. Of all wheeled modes of transports, we are at the bottom, below semi's, busses, trucks, cars, 3 or 4 wheel ATV's, motorcycles, and scooters. Then again, we are above anything on the road that does not ride on wheels. So pedestrians, burros, dogs and the like beware. When out and about you should always realize that Mexican drivers and pedestrians rely on you understanding your relationship to them and expect you to act accordingly. If you think the car turning in front of you will yield to you, you are going to end up in an accident. If a cow walks into your path, you have the right to plow into it but you, not the cow is going to suffer the consequences. It is called common sense folks and use it or you will lose it.

Ride politely and you will arrive safely.

**Use of safety equipment:** I hail from British Columbia, Canada where we are required by law to wear a helmet at all times when cycling and have approved lighting for riding at night. Mexico has no such laws and only requires helmet and lighting on motorized cycles and ATV's. When cycling in Mexico if you follow the law, you are at extreme risk of accident, injury and possible death. As a valued client of The Rental Bike Baron of Costalegre, we provide all our riders with approved helmets. We strongly recommend that if you **MUST** cycle at night you carry and use,

at least, a hand held flashlight. We also have highly reflective safety strips mounted to our rental bikes. These are attached to the collapsible rear cargo carrier box, which should NOT be removed! One area that is almost always overlooked by cyclists is to take care of your self. The Costalegre has a different climate than most of us are used to and therefore it is easy to become dehydrated or get sunstroke. There are probably 25,000 different types of plastic bottled drinks in this country, ALWAYS carry at least 500ml of some type of liquid. For longer journeys, double that! Remember to pull over every so often and have a nice drink. Your helmet, and you are going to wear it right, will protect you head from too much heat but the rest of you will need an appropriate type and amount of sunscreen and you should also have good sunglasses.

**Security of your rental bike:** Generally speaking Mexico is at least as safe or is safer than most places where we live. However, as we all know, this is not a perfect world and Mexico is not a perfect country although most Mexicans will go out of their way to help you. Bike and bike parts security is the responsibility of each renter. Take appropriate care to see that your bike is secure at all times when left on its' own. When away for brief periods, lock the bike to a secure object or use the lock through the rear wheel and frame member. Also, remove the quick release seat and seat post and keep them with you in the provided shopping bag. If possible keep your bike in a secure lock-up overnight. Finally, all our bikes have decorative Canadian tape banding (hockey tape naturally) to help identify them. In addition all frames have their numbers recorded and kept by us. Frames without numbers have a hidden identity mark for recovery identification.

In conclusion, we have and will continue to strive for your safe, secure and enjoyable cycling experience while visiting the Costalegre. You need to follow our lead and implement our procedures above, use common sense, be a polite rider and please let us know immediately if you have any concerns or constructive suggestions that will improve safety and security for other riders.

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