

VACATION NIGHTMARE IN MEXICO

Introduction

Focus

Mexico is the second most popular foreign destination for holidaying Canadians. So Canadians were shocked when an explosion rocked the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel, injuring hundreds and killing five Canadian tourists. This *News in Review* story will examine what happened at the resort and whether the resort responded appropriately. In the wake of the explosion and recent bouts of violence, the Mexican tourism industry is finding it a challenge to convince travellers that the country is a safe place to visit.

Did you know . . .

The Grand Princess Riviera Hotel is situated along the Gulf of Mexico near the town of Playa del Carmen, located south of Cancun. It is a sprawling 676-room beach resort where hundreds of Canadians were vacationing at the time of the explosion.

Vacations usually provide an exciting opportunity to enjoy new experiences and to get away from our daily routines. But sometimes they can turn into nightmares. Unfortunately, this is what happened to visitors to the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel in Mexico. On November 14, 2010, an explosion ripped through the hotel's Platinum Lounge, killing seven people, including five Canadian tourists. Another eight Canadians were among the hundreds injured by the blast.

The explosion was so powerful that it pushed the floor of the lobby into the ceiling, scattering dust and debris throughout the adjacent courtyard. It also caused windows in the nearby restaurant to shatter and shook hallways and guests' rooms. Shocked and panicked vacationers and hotel staff tried to assist those who were injured with limited first-aid supplies while waiting over 30 minutes for ambulances to arrive. The CBC television documentary *Vacation Nightmare* reported that an ambulance was not immediately called for by hotel staff. When the call was eventually placed, a full explanation of what happened was not given. Ambulances that should have taken no more than 10 minutes to arrive took over 30 minutes because they were held up at the hotel's security gate. Meanwhile, it was further reported that a "scuffle" broke out at the hotel's entrance between hotel staff and reporters, and that the police were not allowed into the hotel.

In the hours after the explosion, worried family members tried to find

out the status of their injured loved ones, with little assistance from hotel staff, who had returned to a "business as usual" approach. It took Terra Charmont, from Alberta, more than seven hours to find out from a hotel representative that her son and husband had been killed instantly in the blast. Darlene Ferguson, also from Alberta, succumbed to serious injuries after being rerouted from the poorly equipped local hospital to one in Cancun, over one hour away (CBC, *Vacation Nightmare*). The Canadian government requested that Mexican authorities conduct a timely and open investigation into this tragedy.

The initial cause of the explosion was thought to be a build-up of natural gas fumes from the mangrove swamps underneath the newly built resort. Later investigations concluded, however, that a faulty gas line—which was never shown on the hotel's blueprints—slowly leaked into the lobby until it ignited that morning. Prosecutors have laid homicide and professional charges against five hotel employees and contractors for this unauthorized gas line and for its improper maintenance (www.cbc.ca/news, January 31, 2011).

Mexico had been plagued by a series of violent episodes where tourists had been caught in the crossfire of gunmen. So for a hotel and country determined to protect the image of its vital tourism industry this explosion posed yet another challenge to the shaken tourism industry. The challenge: convince tourists that the country remains a safe destination.

To Consider

1. Have you or one of your classmates travelled to a beach resort destination within Mexico or elsewhere? If so, briefly share your travel experience. Did the travel experience meet your expectations? Would you return to this destination? Explain why or why not.
2. If you have not travelled to a beach resort destination or to Mexico, what factors would motivate you to travel there in the future? What factors might prevent you from travelling to such a destination?

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Video Review

Did you know . . .

Tourism is Mexico's third-largest source of income. Foreign tourists spent USD\$11.3-billion in 2009 (*Business Week* online, May 10, 2010).

Pre-viewing Activity

Read the following news headlines and respond to the questions. Compare your responses with a classmate's.

"5 Canadians killed in Mexico hotel blast"

"Mexico opens homicide probe into blast"

"Mexico's troubles fail to deter Canadian tourists"

1. What event has happened?

2. What are the consequences of this event?

3. How do these headlines make you feel about visiting Mexico?

Video Questions

Respond to the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. How many Canadians visit Mexico each year?

2. Why is Mexico such a popular vacation destination?

3. List the events that are darkening Mexico's sunny image.

4. How many people were killed by the explosion at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel?

5. What was initially believed to be the cause of the explosion?

6. Using a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being poor, 10 being excellent), rank the hotel's response to the explosion in terms of:

a) emergency procedures and preparedness _____

b) handling the media _____

c) responding to the victims and their families _____

Did you know . . .

Ninety-seven per cent of international tourists to Mexico have travelled there on more than one occasion (Mexican Embassy Press Release, February, 2011).

7. After the explosion, how did the hotel try to protect its image?

8. What message did the hotel send to the victim's families when it declined interviews with the media?

9. What did the investigation into the explosion conclude? Were charges laid?

10. Why do you think this *News in Review* story was titled "Vacation Nightmare in Mexico"? If you could retitle it, what would you choose and why?

Post-viewing Activity

Read the following statement from Allejandro Vargas, a Mexican reporter who was beaten and barred from entering the resort.

"It is very important for all of us as professionals and media to convey what happened because we do not want this to affect our industry and our state, not for an isolated event. We'd rather go deep and investigate the truth" (CBC, *Vacation Nightmare*).

1. In your own words, explain why you think the journalist made this statement.

2. Do you agree or disagree that the hotel's image would have been protected if they had told the truth? Discuss your stance with a partner.

3. Is the explosion at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel an isolated event or will it deter travellers to Mexico? Explain your position.

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Explosion Rocks Resort

Focus for Reading

While you are reading the following information, record in your notes answers to the 5Ws: What? Where? When? Why? Who?

What happened?

Picture this: you are starting another day of vacation, enjoying the warm tropical breeze, towering palm trees, white sandy beaches, and glistening blue waters of the Mexican Mayan Riviera. Suddenly you hear an enormous crash and feel the room around you shake. You have no idea what has happened. For many tourists staying at the 676-room Grand Riviera Princess Hotel this is what they experienced at about 9:00 a.m. on November 14, 2010.

In a moment, an idyllic beach vacation turned into a real-life nightmare when the Platinum Lounge in the hotel's lobby exploded. This powerful blast killed seven people—five Canadians and two Mexican workers—and injured many more, including eight Canadians (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011).

Witness accounts of this powerful explosion reported that the floor of the lobby was hurled through the ceiling, blowing out windows and sending wall and ceiling panels over 50 m onto the grassy courtyard. The blast left a half-metre-deep crater where the lobby once stood, shattered windows, shook the walls of the nearby restaurant, and sent what felt like a tremor down hallways and into guest rooms throughout the sprawling beach resort. Several tourists were buried in the debris, cut from flying glass, and even thrown into the courtyard from the force of the explosion (*Toronto Star*, November 15, 2010, A1).

Where did it happen?

The explosion destroyed the Platinum Lounge of the Grand Riviera Princess

Hotel. This lounge is part of a smaller lobby situated on the east side of the sprawling resort only a few metres from the beach and approximately one kilometre from the hotel's main gate. The hotel is located near the town of Playa del Carmen, which is roughly 60 km south of Cancun within the state of Quintana Roo.

When did it happen?

At approximately 9:10 a.m. (local time) the lobby explosion occurred. Numerous calls were made to the local 066 dispatch (equivalent to our 911), first reporting that there was a kitchen fire and then later stating that there had been an explosion resulting in many injuries. By 9:45 a.m. ambulances arrived at the scene after being delayed at the resort's main gates. Because security personnel were unaware of the explosion, they consider the ambulances to be unauthorized and prevented them from entering the resort.

At the end of January 2011, formal charges were laid against five employees and contractors from the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel as a result of a homicide investigation conducted to determine the cause and responsibility for this deadly explosion.

Why did it happen?

Mexican authorities initially said that swamp gas—a bio-gas produced by rotting vegetable matter—that had built up beneath the newly constructed hotel might have triggered the explosion. A representative from Mexico's Environmental and Natural Resources

Secretariat argued against the “swamp gas theory” by stating that the explosion was “due to an operational problem in the hotel’s infrastructure, and not an accumulation of gas in underground caves” (www.cbc.ca/news, November 17, 2010).

Three days after the explosion, Mexican authorities ruled out swamp gas as a cause and instead launched a homicide investigation focusing on the hotel’s construction. Contrary to early reports that no gas lines were in the area of the explosion, investigators had found an unauthorized gas-line extension that was not part of the building’s blueprints. As a result, the hotel was fined almost half a million Canadian dollars for inaccurate building plans. The investigation also found that this gas line had been damaged and possibly leaked prior to the explosion due to its improper installation and maintenance (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011).

At the time this *News in Review* guide went to print, homicide and technical and professional charges had been laid against five employees and contractors from the Grand Princess Riviera Hotel by Mexican state prosecutors. But the investigation was not complete (www.cbc.ca/news, January 31, 2011).

Who were the Canadian victims?

Darlene Ferguson, 51, from Ardossan, Alberta, was in Mexico for her son’s wedding and was playing with her young grandson near the resort’s lounge when the explosion occurred. Luckily her grandson suffered only minor injuries, but Ferguson died from her injuries after being rerouted from the poorly equipped medical clinic in Playa del Carmen to Cancun, almost one hour away. To make matters worse, while en route to Cancun, the ambulance ran out of gas and upon arrival at the hospital Ferguson’s frantic family was asked by the clinic director

for gas money and upfront payment for patient care. In the CBC documentary *Vacation Nightmare* the clinic director stated: “I know. I know. Maybe it’s a big mistake for my part, but in this moment we don’t have money.”

Malcolm Johnson, a 33-year-old realtor from Nanaimo, B.C., was in Mexico for his own wedding. Just days after saying “I do,” and on the same day as his daughter’s first birthday, Johnson left his wife and daughter to go into the lounge for a morning coffee when the explosion occurred. Johnson’s mother, Lynda Huolt, witnessed the explosion and went into “panic mode.” After phoning hospitals, they were directed to the Mexican consulate in B.C., which told them that Johnson had died. “Every time I look at the news, I see my son’s face on TV. It’s just hard” (*National Post*, November 15, 2010).

Elgin Barron of Cambridge, Ontario, was a single man in his 50s vacationing with work colleagues. He also died in the explosion. Friends and neighbours said he was a quiet but friendly man. Friend Michelle Provencher said that Barron was an avid runner, gardener, and keen motorcyclist and “was such a lovely man. He really, really was” (*Toronto Star*, November 16, 2010, A4).

Chris Charmont, 41, and his nine-year-old son, John, from Drumheller, Alberta, were on vacation in Mexico and in the lounge checking the weather. His wife, Terra, and their 10-year-old daughter, Megan, were also with them but were still sleeping in their room that fateful morning. After being awoken by the explosion Terra grabbed her daughter and ran to the site of the disaster, seeing mounds of debris, people in shock or covered in blood, frantic hotel workers begging for ambulances, and vacationers trying to help the wounded with minimal first-aid supplies. By the afternoon the

only information she had received from the hotel was that the wounded were transported to nearby hospitals. Panicked from not knowing the whereabouts of her husband and son, Terra found herself completely at a loss about what to do: “Do I wait for the hospital to call or do I go find them? Because, in my mind, my little boy is scared. He’s hurt. He doesn’t understand what’s happening to him” (CBC documentary *Vacation Nightmare*).

It was not until that evening that a public relations representative from

the hotel told Terra and her daughter the horrific news that Chris and John had died. The hotel representative even tried to sedate Terra as her traumatized daughter was screaming “don’t hurt my mommy!” In the end, it took over seven hours for Terra to find out that her husband and son had died instantly in the blast. Terra’s mother also criticized Canadian officials for not adequately helping her daughter during this horrific experience.

Analysis

1. Suppose you had been vacationing at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel when the explosion occurred but had not been injured. What do you think you would do immediately following this situation? For example: Would you help the injured? Would you stay at the resort or arrange to return to Canada? Record your thoughts and then share with a partner.
2. Using information from your answers to the “5Ws” (what, where, when, why, who) write a one-page travel article for your local newspaper outlining the causes, outcomes, and overall handling of this event by hotel and government officials. You may need to check recent news sources (e.g., www.cbc.ca/news) to gather any updated information. Remember to include a catchy title for your article.
3. Organize yourself into a group of four. Within your group each member should select one story concerning a Canadian victim. Record your personal reflection on how the story made you feel. (You may need to reread the segment outlining the Canadian victims’ stories before beginning this task.) Working in a clockwise direction, silently read and respond to the next story. You may also want to respectfully comment in writing on your group member’s reflection. Continue responding in silence to all the stories. You may choose to conclude by orally sharing your thoughts in your group, or as a class, or to independently write a half-page personal reflection.

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Protecting an Image?

Further Research

Before travelling to Mexico, or to any other destination, it is wise to check the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Web site (www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/report_rapport-eng.asp?id=184000) for updated travel advice, reports, and warnings and to register yourself with the Canadian government before travelling abroad.

Following the deadly explosion at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel, the staff and management of the Riviera have come under heavy criticism for the way this tragic event was handled. Criticisms include delays in getting proper medical attention for victims, the lack of information provided about the victims, the prevention of the media and even the state's attorney general from entering the resort, and the hotel's decision to take a "business as usual" approach just hours after the blast. These decisions left many to wonder if the hotel chose to protect its image at the expense of its guests.

Emergency Procedures

Fourteen minutes after the explosion ripped through the Platinum Lounge at approximately 9:10 a.m., the first emergency call was placed. The dispatcher asked if there had been an explosion but was told that there was a kitchen fire. In the span of the next 20 minutes an additional seven emergency calls were made. By the third call, it was admitted that an explosion had taken place and that multiple ambulances were needed. Seventeen minutes after the initial call ambulances arrived at the hotel's main gate but were refused entry by hotel security staff. Even the police and attorney general, Francisco Alor, had been stopped at the gate. Alor reported that he heard over the resort's radio system that security staff should "stop everyone" (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011).

Meanwhile, at the explosion site, frantic and ill-prepared hotel staff and frightened guests were trying to tend to the injured with extremely limited first-aid supplies. According to the CBC documentary *Vacation Nightmare* the resort did not have complete first-aid kits and lacked a defibrillator. In addition, hotel staff were poorly trained—they did not know how to operate oxygen

cylinders, and the lifeguard appeared with a box of band-aids when a spinal board was needed.

"Business as Usual"

Once the ambulances were allowed through the resort's gates, it was reported in the CBC documentary *Vacation Nightmare* that local journalists were chased and beaten by hotel staff. The attorney general had to call the army in order to get past hotel security.

Inside the resort, hotel life continued as usual, with staff trying to calm guests and offering them margaritas. Staff in the main lobby were booking tourist excursions while family members like Terra Charmont, whose son and husband died in the blast, were desperately trying to find out what happened to their loved ones. *Vacation Nightmare* reported that a staff member who had been helping injured guests was told to change his bloody clothes and return to work. Some of the staff even pretended not to speak English and to tell their guests that everything is "safe" and "taken care of." The resort remained open in the aftermath of the explosion and posted signs that read "under construction" around the blast site.

The Hotel's Perspective

For a resort that can accommodate up to 2 000 guests in a region that is highly dependent on tourism, it is crucial for the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel to protect its image as a safe and enjoyable destination.

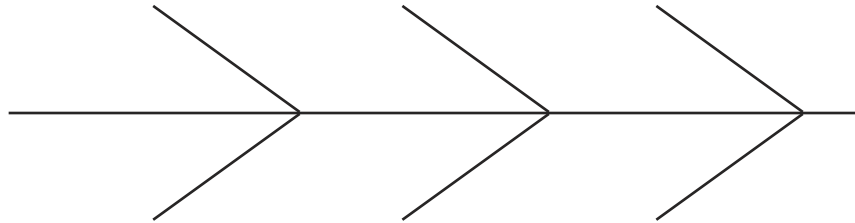
After many declined and cancelled interview requests with the CBC, the hotel issued an e-mail response from its director general, Mascia Nadin, stating that the hotel did "everything possible" to handle the "devastating incident." The director went on to further explain the hotel's actions in the minutes after the

explosion as “trying to assist the wounded guests, calming those who witnessed the accident, and trying to limit the access to the affected area of the numerous extraneous people (e.g., local press and photographers) who just wanted to take advantage of the situation.” The e-mail strongly opposes the investigation’s findings that a faulty gas line was to blame for the explosion stating that “this line was NOT improperly placed” (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011).

Along with a \$500 000 fine for incorrect building plans, pending criminal charges against five of its employees, and the potential for civil lawsuits, the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel was also contending with local protests in support of the two Mexican workers who lost their lives in the explosion. Among other things, the protestors were demanding fair compensation for the hotel workers killed in the blast.

Follow-up

1. Using information from this guide and/or the video, record in a “fishbone organizer” (like the one below) how the hotel *actually* responded to the explosion (record on the top half of the organizer) and how you think the hotel *should* have responded (record on the bottom half of the organizer) immediately and in the days following the explosion.



2. Working in small groups or as an entire class, determine whether you agree, somewhat agree, disagree or somewhat disagree with the following statements. Be prepared to orally share and justify your stance.

Statement 1: “It is my perception, without any question, that the hotel tried to take care more of its image than solving the serious crisis it was facing.” — Francisco Alor, Attorney General (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011)

Statement 2: “Your life is in danger—you can be the next.” — Protestor slogan held outside the Grand Princess Riviera Hotel in response to the deaths of two Mexican workers (www.cbc.ca/news, January 31, 2011)

Statement 3: “The hotel did everything possible to handle the devastating incident.” — Grand Princess Riviera Hotel director general, Mascia Nadin, in an e-mail to the CBC (www.cbc.ca/news, January 31, 2011)

3. You have been hired by a public relations firm to help the Grand Princess Riviera Hotel director general draft a follow-up e-mail to the one initially sent to the CBC on January 31, 2011. (The link to the initial e-mail is www.cbc.ca/news/pdf/email-response-from-grand-riviera-princess-hotel.pdf.) Your e-mail is to be approximately 150-200 words and should focus on convincing the media that the hotel’s first priority is the safety and well-being of its guests—not the hotel’s image, as has been reported.

VACATION NIGHTMARE IN MEXICO

Mexico — A Tourism Profile

Did you know . . .

The Mexican tourism industry has been hit hard by the global economic downturn, the H1N1 flu outbreak, and ongoing violence in the country linked to drug trafficking.

Did you know . . .

Tourism Mexico projects that the number of Canadian visitors will increase to 1.5 million by 2011 and reach three million in the coming years (*The Globe and Mail*, December 17, 2010, B6).

Before Reading

Using an atlas, a Mexico tourism Web site (www.visitmexico.com/wb2/), or travel brochures, create a list of things to see and do while on vacation in this destination. You may wish to work on your list with a classmate.

Tourism Overview

Known for its beach resorts and ancient relics, Mexico is one of the world's top 10 destinations. A record number of 1.4 million Canadians travelled to Mexico last year. After the United States, Canada is the second largest source country for international visitors.

The majority of Canadian visitors stay in the Cancun and greater Quintana Roo region, followed by Puerto Vallarta and Mexico City. A strong Canadian dollar against the Mexican peso and competitively priced beach resort vacations, numerous cultural excursions, and opportunities for outdoor activities ranging from golf and rock climbing to scuba diving make Mexico an attractive destination.

Country Snapshot

Location: southern part of the North American continent

Land area: 1 964 375 sq km, which is divided into 32 states

Population: 112 468 855

Currency: Peso (at the time of print, one Canadian dollar would buy 12 pesos)

Number of International Tourists: 21.5 million

Things to See and Do

Mexico's varied climate, landscape and cities provide visitors with a wide range of travel experiences. This diverse country is divided by Tourism Mexico into six main tourist regions.

Baja Peninsula: located in the northwest part of Mexico, it is known

for golfing, scuba diving and whale watching; however, due to drug-trafficking violence near the Mexico-U.S. border, Canadians are advised to avoid any non-essential travel to this region

Northern Mexico: known for its desert climate, rugged landscape, and industrial cities; similar to the Baja region, travel at this time to the northern region is not recommended

Central Mexico: known as a cultural region since it is home to many historic cities, world heritage sites, festivals, museums, and art galleries

Southern Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico: coastal region ideal for ecotourists and adventure tourists wanting to explore mangrove swamps, marshes, and forests

Yucatan Peninsula: characterized by its white sand beaches, scuba diving along the world's second largest coral reef, and opportunities to explore ancient Mayan ruins

Pacific Coast: known for its water sports such as surfing, boating, and fishing, which are contrasted by its cities and towns with rich cultural and culinary traditions

Visiting Mexico — Is it safe?

Mexico's tourism industry has recently faced a number of highly publicized violent events and disasters that have called into question whether it is safe to visit this country. Some of these include:

- September 2010 – In Acapulco, gunmen seized 20 Mexican tourists in the daytime—mistaking them for rival drug-gang members—and deposited their beheaded bodies in a mass grave.
- November 2010 – Five Canadians were killed in an explosion at the popular Grand Riviera Princess Hotel in Playa del Carmen due to a faulty gas line.
- January 2011 – A British Columbia man was caught in gang-related crossfire and shot in the leg by a stray bullet while shopping in a market with his wife in Mazatlan, on the Pacific coast.
- An Ontario couple celebrating New Year’s Eve 2011 in Playa del Carmen were arrested by Mexican police for being intoxicated and fighting with each other. While in custody, the female alleges she was sexually assaulted by the officers. The matter is being investigated by authorities in Quintana Roo, with assistance from Canadian consular officials.
- A Montreal police officer was severely beaten in a bar while vacationing in Cancun in 2011.

Despite these startling events, Canadians continue to flock to this popular destination. In fact, the number of “snowbirds” or retirees escaping the Canadian winter to Mexico has dramatically increased from 6 000 to 75 000 over the past 10 years.

Yet, according to Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, of the estimated 1.4 million Canadians who travelled to Mexico in 2010, 35 to 40 incidents of assaults and even murder were reported (www.cbc.ca/news, January 24, 2011). But, for Mike DiLorenzo, the British Columbian who was shot in the leg by a stray bullet, he “still feels safe in Mexico” (www.ctv.ca/news, January 11, 2011). One day after the explosion at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel, some Canadian guests were making arrangements to return home, while others, like Chris McDonald, chose to continue their vacation and felt that “honestly we’re all safe here” (*Toronto Star*, November 16, 2010, A4).

So, is it safe to visit Mexico? You be the judge.

Analysis

1. Create a mind map to showcase the features and challenges that characterize Mexico’s tourism industry. Start by placing the words *Mexican tourism* in the centre and then branch out to related subtopics such as: types of tourists, attractions, activities, tourism challenges.
2. Working with a partner, or in a small group, start by individually recording in a T-chart under one heading “reasons for visiting Mexico” and under the other heading “reasons against visiting Mexico.” Using this information, debate and discuss the reasons “for” and “against” visiting Mexico. Flip a coin to decide who will argue “for” and who will argue “against.” Debate your points for at least three to five minutes, then switch sides and resume the debate, defending your new position. Once the debate is over, write a one- to two-paragraph summary explaining whether or not you would visit Mexico.
3. You have just returned from a one-week vacation in Mexico and are eager to post details about your travel experience on a “trip advice” blog. Your travel blog needs to concisely explain where you visited, when you travelled, what attractions and activities you participated in, and if you would recommend Mexico to future travellers.

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Activity: Selling Mexico

Tourism is Mexico's third largest source of income, and the country is the world's 10th most visited tourist destination. Even though the ongoing drug-related violence and the recent deadly explosion at the Grand Riviera Princess Hotel have not slowed the steady growth of Canadians flocking to this destination, it has resulted in a decline in overall tourism spending, as vacationers feel less secure leaving their resort compounds. In response to this trend, Alberto Lozano, a spokesperson for the Mexican Embassy in Ottawa, stated that they (Mexican Tourism) "have to work very hard to improve our image of Mexico" (*Toronto Star*, December 17, 2010, B6).

One strategy has been the launch of a new media campaign to promote the country's culture alongside its more familiar beach images. Print and television ads running in North America show these contrasting images accompanied by the slogan "Come visit Mexico – the place you thought you knew." The campaign intends to focus on the good things about Mexico and to create a "new, fresh impression" to attract first-time as well as returning travellers (*Toronto Star*, December 17, 2010, B6).

Check out the "The place you thought you knew" campaign on the Mexican Tourism Board Web site's home page at www.visitmexico.com/wb/Visitmexico/Visi_Home?show=regions. Examine the advertisement in terms of the techniques and styles used, the intended audience, and the ad's overall effectiveness.

Now it's your turn! As part of a marketing team hired by the Mexican Tourism department, your task is to create an ad that not only highlights and promotes a specific region of Mexico but also reassures potential travellers that this is a safe destination.

Your ad needs to contain specific and accurate information about:

- Where your region is located and a brief description of its surrounding landscape
- What activities and experiences the region offers for a wide range of travellers
- Where to stay
- What is best time of year to visit the region based on climate and events
- Why this is a safe destination

Your advertisement can be produced either digitally or in hard copy. Suggested formats include a brochure, pamphlet, Web page, poster display, or video clip. The advertisement needs to include text information and a variety of related visuals. It also needs to have a catchy slogan and to be creatively and professionally presented. Share your finished product with other design teams and explore Mexico from the convenience of your classroom.