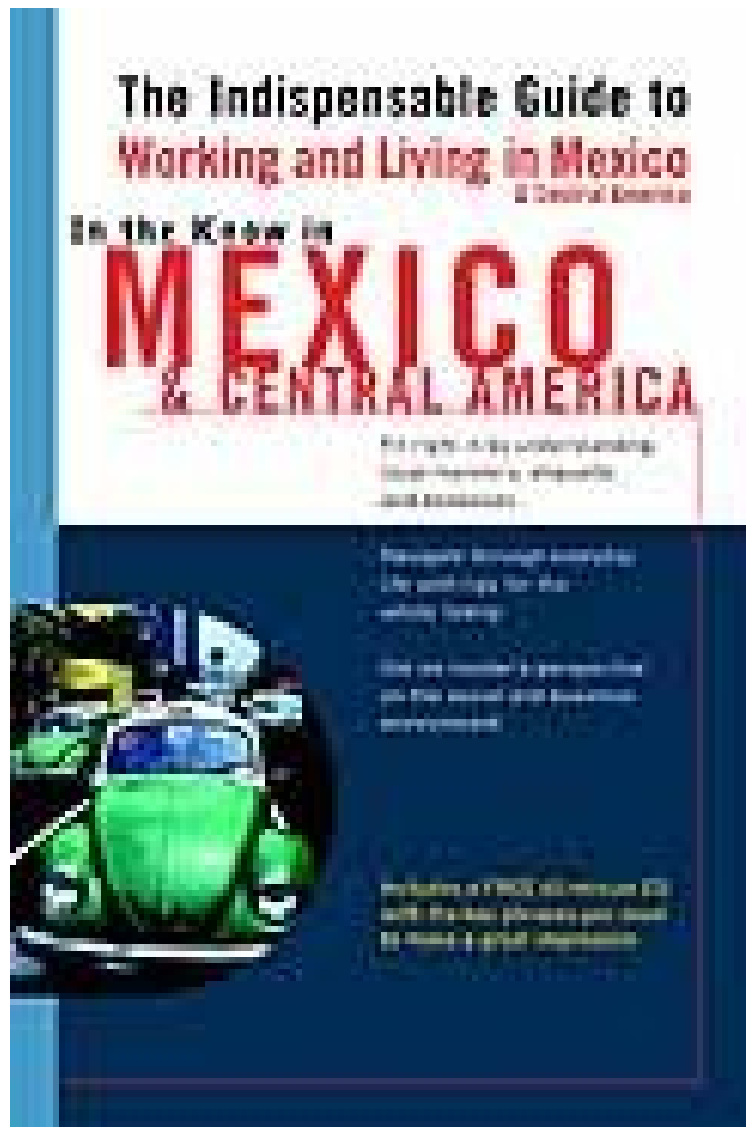


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In the Know in Mexico Central America: The Indispensable Guide to Working and Living in Mexico Central America

Jennifer Phillips

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Jennifer Phillips : In the Know in Mexico Central America: The Indispensable Guide to Working and Living in Mexico Central America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In the Know in Mexico Central America: The Indispensable Guide to Working and Living in Mexico Central America:

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food advertisements means less filling, less cloying, easier, more refreshing, less calories, and in most cases less nourishment. The concept is now being applied to other areas of life where overload is likely, as for example, the need for useful cultural information in a global and mobile world. In the Know in Mexico Central America is a good example of this trend to hand over only the essentials in an easily digestible form. It is clearly pitched to a US American audience, and its greatest strength is the clear, lucid and fresh language with which it gives an overview of the basic issues of culture, individual and family expatriation, managing in a new environment and learning to navigate local business behavior. With the growing number of ESL speakers, such writing is increasingly important. More than a third of Phillips's book is dedicated to background of the region it addresses. Geographic, historical, demographic, social and political information is organized by country. This is bare bones data that does not provide a good read, but succinctly presents the country of one's interest. Since much of the history of countries in this region is common and intertwined, there is considerable repetition here. One wonders whether presenting the information from a regional point of view first might both lighten the text and provide better perspective for the end user. In the middle section of the book, the boilerplate of culture general theory is presented and applied to expatriation in a jargon-free, personal and breezy US style. This is useful basic information about coping with transition. It does not purport to provide detail or insight into the values, behaviors and receiving culture that would help us to learn to value it on its own terms. At least 90% of this material could have been written for US Americans going abroad to almost any destination outside Canada and Northern Europe. The last 40 pages provide the text of language training found on the CD and practical appendices containing contacts and resources as well as metric equivalents and the like. This book and CD are like training wheels on a child's first bicycle. They provide the totally uninitiated with enough short-term linguistic and cultural awareness to avoid an immediate crash. But the real task of learning to balance and ride the streets of a new culture still remains. At best the book steers the rider toward desiring and acquiring this skill; at worst it instills false confidence. Today when the traditional colonial model of expatriate privilege and handholding is caving in due to the sheer mobility generated by the global economy, do-it-yourself expatriates and business travelers need someplace like this to start, but also need to know that there is lots more to learn. Like many US publications, In the Know in Mexico Central America is illustrated with whimsical cartoons that the US reader will probably enjoy and identify with. Unfortunately, at least some of the illustration space could have been better used. The absence of a map of the region is startling, given the generally acknowledged US ignorance of geography. Using a paragraph to describe the flags of each nation, when a small cut would do, seems strangely anachronistic in a visual Internet age. It is unfair to fault a book for what it is not, but we wonder more about the role of the print medium to do what online materials can now much better deliver. For example, nothing that we could see tells the potential purchaser or user that the CD is audio rather than data; the reviewer shoved it into his computer by instinct, not his Walkman. Given the capacity of the CD medium, one imagines it could have been used better to support the cultural as well as the linguistic content. Is there value for money here? Living Language's courses were originally developed by US government experts for overseas-bound service personnel and diplomats, the Living Language line has been commercialized expanded to include cassettes and CDs and entry-level books such as this

Be IN THE KNOW BEFORE YOU GO Doing business across borders is very different from doing business across town; subtle and not-so-subtle differences in attitudes and etiquette play a big role. Did you know? Flowers are so inexpensive and plentiful in Mexico Central America that they're considered to be too cheap to give as a gift. Be patient, and don't rush into discussing business. You can ruin a business deal if you don't spend time on small talk. A lot of Mexicans and Central Americans hate to deliver bad news; they are more likely to tell you what you want to hear In the Know in Mexico Central America helps you: Fit right in by understanding local manners, etiquette, and behaviors; Navigate through everyday life with tips for the whole family; Get an insider's perspective on the social and business environment The book includes a FREE 60-minute CD with the key phrases you need to make a great impression. From the Package edition.

Praise for the In the Know series: "I am extremely impressed. The author did an excellent job of explaining the culture, incorporating illuminating examples, and providing useful suggestions. Thank you for producing such a useful and readable guide to doing business abroad." —Eric Wiesen, Evaluation Specialist, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Relevant to everyone from the business traveler or expatriate on assignment to the casual reader." —Hai Yan Zhang, Intercultural Consultant to Fortune 500 companies in the United States and China From the Inside Flap Be IN THE KNOW BEFORE YOU GO Doing business across borders is very different from doing business across town? subtle and not-so-subtle differences in attitudes and etiquette play a big role. Did you know? Flowers are so inexpensive and plentiful in Mexico Central America that they're considered to be too cheap to give as a gift. Be patient, and don't rush into discussing business. You can ruin a business deal if you don't spend time on small talk. A lot of Mexicans and Central Americans hate to deliver bad news; they are more likely to tell you what you want to hear In the Know in Mexico Central America helps you: Fit right in by understanding local

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