

Foodorama



Letter # 8: Good bye USA, Hola Mexico

By Foodorama, November 24, 2018

Hi everyone. We are happy to write you this new letter from the 3rd country we are going through: Mexico!!! We arrived last Tuesday (November 20th) in Tijuana but the departure from Los Angeles was amazing. We had to be out of the US no later than November 20, when our special health insurance "world tour" no longer covered us for this country. And here, we can't take any risk: social security as we have in France does not exist. If we get hurt or get sick in the US and can't afford to pay, no one will take care of us. And the rates are exorbitant, sometimes several tens of thousands of dollars (a real business) for services that would be fully reimbursed in France! We are very lucky in France with our social security, despite its flaws. It allows everyone, regardless of their financial means to access the most basic care. So we decided to leave on Saturday (to have a small margin) from Los Angeles and go directly by bus or hitchhiking to San Diego! Bad news, the bus company did not accept to take our bikes (too big according to them)! We try to stop without success and at night, we must realize that we will not be in San Diego tonight. We find ourselves in the suburbs of Los Angeles without knowing where to sleep. While talking at the edge of the road with a caretaker, he offers us to put our tent in his parking lot and go to eat tacos with him. We will spend a night a little noisy but safe.



The next day we decided to leave the city very early with our bikes and retry the stop 50 miles further in a more suitable place. We finally get lucky and in the middle of the afternoon, a car stopped to take us to Ocean Side, on the road to San Diego. As night falls, we still have to find a campsite ... The first after 13 miles has no bicycle fare... (\$ 35 is too much for us to put our tent). So we decide to go 7 more miles (still at night) to arrive at the campsite at 7 pm!! This is our record of miles in one day: 71 miles!



We now have only one day left (Monday) to arrive in San Diego and cross the border on Tuesday. We are still in time ... if a last mishap did not delay us ... Sylvain forgot his waterproof jacket bought in Portland in the car of Brad who took us hitchhiking the day before ... how to find him? We do not have his phone number but when we were in the car, we told him about our project and he now follows us on Instagram! We find his profile, contact his company, get his number... and after 2 hours of investigation he tells us he has found the jacket! Thanks Instagram! But we are already in San Diego and Brad lives in Laguna. We can't ask him to do 3 hours round-trip to give it back to us ... Kalima remembers then that our last WarmShower in LA, Ike, owner of a bike shop in L.A. and another one in San Diego, must just go Monday in San Diego. Quickly, we have to contact him to know if he can stop on the road and get the jacket!! Fortunately for us, he accepts and we wait 4 hours in front of his store in La Jolla (outskirts of San Diego). So we leave again at night and have 2 hours drive to find our new WarmShower in San Diego.



It is time for us to cross the border for Mexico. Sean, a friend met on the road a few weeks earlier, decides to accompany us to Mexico. Border crossing a little complicated for us because we take the path for pedestrians and our big bikes are not made for their small porticoes. Arrived in Tijuana, Sean leaves us and joins San Diego, while we still have 2 hours to go out of the city.



These 4 days were intense for us ... We accumulate the fatigue of cycling and filming. It's time to rest a bit. Kalima has a problem with the front suspension of her bicycle and we decide to spend a week in Ensenada to fix it, until a new suspension arrives from Europe. It will also be a good opportunity to take intensive Spanish classes. And yes, for 1 month, its front suspension no longer works. It's an air suspension and there is a leak ... As soon as the road is in bad shape, she feels all the shocks. It is essential to repair it before crossing Baja California and facing roads in bad condition. Our sponsor Azub proposes to send us a new fork free of charge.



We are looking for a bike shop that accepts to receive the part and change the fork. We are doing an extraordinary meeting there. The director of the bike shop, Jorge, is particularly sensitive to our project that we try to explain to him somehow in Spanish. After an hour he does not only propose to repair the fork but he cooks us a delicious grilled red mullet (his second passion, cooking), helps us to find Spanish classes and even invites us to stay at his home few days the time our fork arrives. Evening menu: champagne lobster! Unbelievable! We are amazed by the kindness and benevolence of the people we meet on the road.



We feel that every problem is an opportunity to meet wonderful people who are willing to help us. Each time we take a lesson in life and find hope! It is wonderful to see how much we can count on each other and that there is a real intercultural solidarity!