The Tijuana Move

A free sample from the book by Vincent Fisk. Available in English.

Preface

How did I end up in Mexico?

We should probably start at the beginning.

For me, it started out of necessity.

In 2018, I was a single dad raising my two-year-old son alone. I was living paycheck to paycheck in a cramped one-bedroom, one-bath apartment in San Diego, California. The only thing it had going for it was its proximity to my business.

That was it.

The building was a converted roadside motel: cheap, ugly, and poorly thought out. In the middle of the property sat the outline of a former swimming pool, long since filled in and covered with artificial grass. A sad monument to better days.

My unit was on the ground floor, though calling it an apartment was generous. It felt more like a small, overpriced sweatbox. Summers were brutal. With no air conditioning, I relied on high-speed fans that did little more than circulate the smell of sweat and dirty diapers.

The kitchen was the size of a walk-in closet. It had about two feet of counter space and a shallow single-basin sink that looked like it had been pulled out of an RV. To get to the bathroom, you had to walk through the bedroom. No privacy. No space. No comfort.

And the neighbors hated us.

It took me a few weeks to understand why. One evening, I came home from work and saw my nanny letting my son play outside. He was in the front courtyard, formerly known as the swimming pool, running, screaming, and happily smacking a garbage can with a stick.

She thought it was adorable.

The neighbors did not.

They were mostly college kids and single professionals who had chosen the complex for its quiet. We were not quiet. Every time my son let out a banshee wail, I could feel another door slam somewhere nearby. Every time I crossed paths with one of them, their forced smiles said the same thing.

You don’t belong here.

They were right.

The rent was high. Food was expensive. Utilities kept climbing. After paying the bills and the nanny, there was almost nothing left. I was stuck. I didn’t want to leave the family business I had helped build over the

past nine years, but I couldn’t afford to keep living the way I was living.

So I started asking myself some hard questions.

Where could I find a better place to live for less money and still get to work?

Where could my son have more space?

Where could family life feel more normal?

How could I get ahead again?

Then the answer hit me.

Mexico.

Tijuana was right there, just a short drive from my overpriced apartment in San Diego. It was another country, with a different cost of living and a different way of life.

Could I really make the move?

Could I pull it off?

Could I become the kind of guy who lived across the border and actually made it work?

I wasn’t sure.

But I had to find out, because my life was not working. The bills, the stress, and the feeling of being trapped in a hamster wheel were wearing me down. I knew one thing for sure: I was not going to let my story end with me going broke in a converted motel in San Diego.

So I started looking for a way out.

I began scouring Facebook listings for apartments in Playas de Tijuana, a beachside neighborhood where the rent was a fraction of what I was paying in the United States.

I found one.

It was a spacious three-bedroom, one-bath upstairs apartment with ocean views from both balconies. The rent was about half of what I had been paying in San Diego.

I signed the lease and made the move.

That decision changed my life.

It did not solve every problem. It did not magically make everything easy. Moving to Tijuana came with its own learning curve, frustrations, surprises, and mistakes.

But it gave me breathing room.

It gave my son more space.

It gave me a chance to stop surviving and start building.

This book is a collection of what I learned along the way. It is not a sales pitch for Mexico, nor a fantasy version of border life. It is a practical guide for anyone wondering whether moving to Tijuana could help

them live better, spend less, and build a real life across the border.

If you feel stuck, I wrote this for you.

There is always another way.

It may be closer than you think.

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