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Helping Out in Tequila

Posted February 17th, 2009 - 5:11 am

**In Mexico, Sara and Sébastien Juhen find a rewarding local experience with the help of their CS hosts....**



Our hosts [Mickael](#), who is French, and [Sara](#), who is Mexican, took us to a retirement home in Guadalajara. They go whenever they get a chance to help out and to bring food: the home is in a nunnery and is home to more than 140 older women.

There is no social assistance for the elderly here. In the countryside, the families take care of the elders, but in the city, families often place their aged relatives in homes like this one. No funding from the state though, it's privately run. They survive thanks only to donations, and are taken care of by volunteers like Mickael and Sara, and by the few visitors they receive. Some women were dropped off here by their sons, who promised to come back the next day, and who haven't been seen in ten years. The rooms are dormitories, separated by curtains. A few lucky women have private rooms, generally those that arrived here first. There are no medications or nurses. The beds are regular beds, and are not equipped for elderly home care. We helped them play the lottery, sung Christmas carols, and gave out Christmas care packages of candy and scarves.

Even though we didn't understand everything the women told us, we knew that our presence with them was enough to bring them some joy. We received many "muchas gracias" and "feliz navidad." One lady even gave us a blessing for the rest of our journey! The whole experience was very moving for us, and we felt very lucky for the retirement homes that we are accustomed to at home.

In Tequila, we met our first micro-businessman, the field that we are investigating while we travel. It was by chance: we went to pick up some jellies from a friend of Mickael and Sara, and we happened to ask him a few questions. Faustino makes these jellies in his kitchen and sells them himself from his tricycle in the streets! Bingo! We were able to interview him and his family. It was amazing to hear their stories and to talk with them, all thanks to Mickael who translated for us. We made an appointment for the next day so we could see him do his rounds and take a few pictures. Faustino was very proud of his business and generously invited us into his world.

After resting up in Tequila, we were off to Guadalajara. Sébastien had been sick for four days with a fever and sore throat, so Mickael offered to drive us to give our bodies a break during our long bicycle journey. We left Mickael and Sara after experiencing many aspects of life in Tequila. They knew every corner of the region and we are incredibly grateful for all that they did for us.

**Read more about Sara and Sébastien's journey on their blog! [English](#) or [Français](#).**

