



PALMARA

YACHT CHARTERS'

100 THINGS TO DO: PUERTO VALLARTA

eBook

2024

CLICKABLE
LOCATIONS
INTEGRATED

SECRET
BEACHES YOU
WON'T WANT
TO MISS

UNLOCK
HIDDEN GEMS

OVER 125
FUN FACTS

MUST KNOWS
BEFORE VISITING
PUERTO VALLARTA

DISCOVER
VALLARTA LIKE A LOCAL





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PALMARA CHARTERS

PALMA = PALM TREE. ALMA = SOUL. MAR = SEA. PALMARA



KELDON



KELLY

ABOUT US

Our mission has been straightforward from the start: to simplify the process of booking a voyage on the finest boats with the most skilled crews in Vallarta. Our aim is to open up the beauty of Banderas Bay to more individuals, allowing them to revel in its extraordinary vistas and marine life. The allure of being out on the water is truly magical—a sense of freedom where every moment is savored without distraction. It's this very essence we wanted to share with others, leading to the inception of Palmara.

Benefiting from Kelly's rich experience in the charter business in Colombia and Keldon's proficiency in marketing and business in Canada, we found the ideal blend of skills and experience to bring our vision to life. Rest assured, for all your boat rental needs in Puerto Vallarta, we're here to serve you with pleasure!



OUR DOG COCO

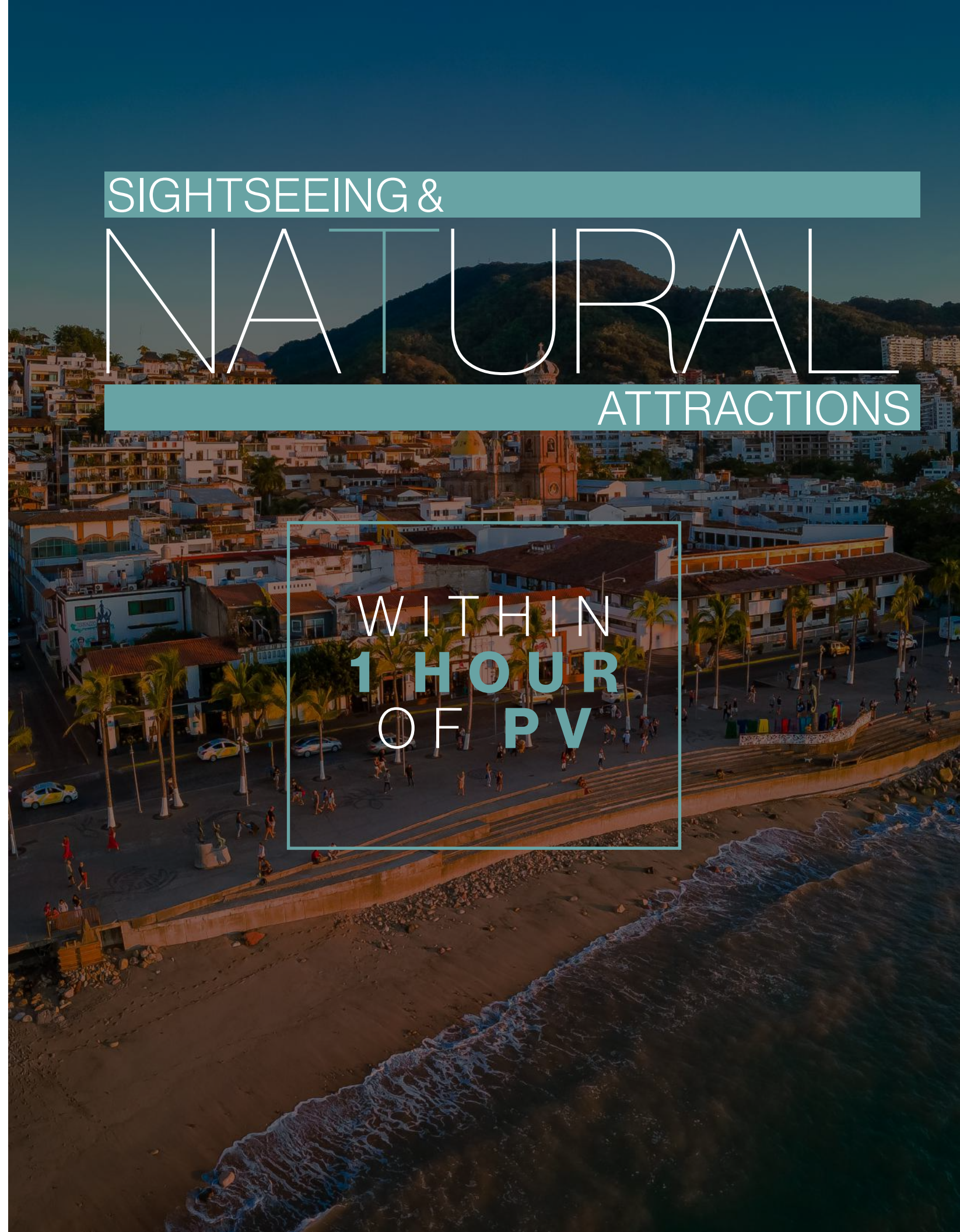


SIGHTSEEING &

NATURAL

ATTRACTIONS

WITHIN
1 HOUR
OF PV





01 THE MALECON

PALMARA

The Malecón (meaning “boardwalk” in English), is a popular promenade located in downtown (Centro) Puerto Vallarta, Mexico sitting steps away from the ocean. It was first built in the 1930s as a seawall to protect the city from flooding. However, it quickly became a popular spot for locals and tourists alike to gather, stroll, and enjoy the views.

Over the years, the Malecón has been extended and improved,

and is now one of the most iconic features of Puerto Vallarta. Offering a wide range of quality restaurants and shops - and is often one of the first places anyone visiting the city explores.

The Malecón, boasts an array of captivating metal sculptures and dynamic public art installations. Notably, the iconic Los Arcos archway stands as a focal point, complemented by ever-evolving sand sculptures crafted by local artists.

This area particularly comes alive during Dia de los Muertos, Christmas, Semana Santa, and other festive occasions, making it a cherished locale for celebrations in the heart of Puerto Vallarta.

Immerse yourself in the spirit of the city amid artisanal shops, restaurants with ocean views, and lively street entertainers. With its diverse offerings, the Malecón invites you to leisurely spend several hours, especially on a sun-drenched afternoon.

But more than anything, it's nighttime when the Malecon is at its most charming.

The sound of the ocean waves crashing against the shore, the warmly lit walkway, views of Catedral de Guadalupe lit up, and hundreds of families enjoying the warm evenings together. This area has something for everyone, which is why we believe it's a must-visit on your trip to Vallarta.

In addition to its shops and restaurants, the Malecón is also home to a number of interesting attractions such as the Puerto Vallarta Naval Museum and Huichol art stores, which show-



cases the history and culture of the region - but more on that later.

FUN FACTS:

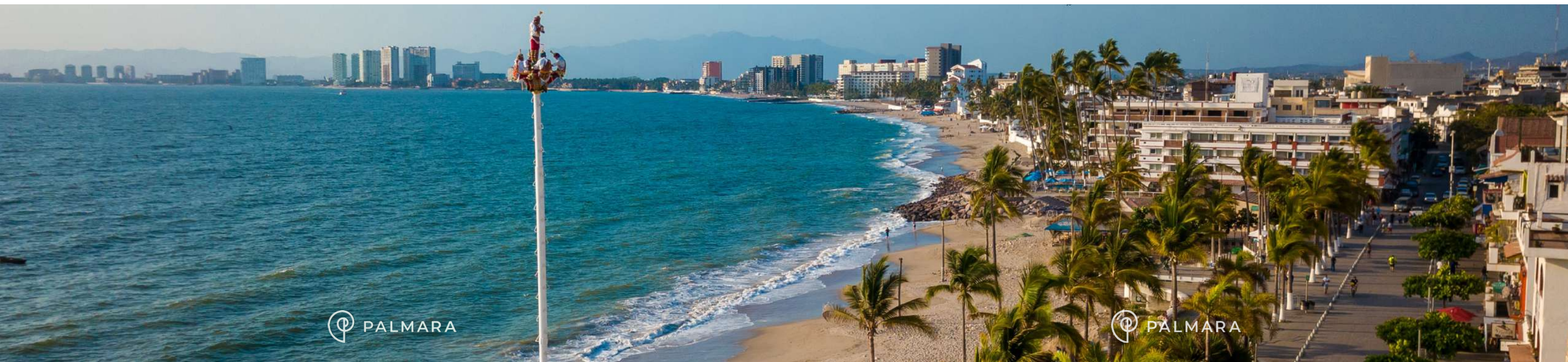
- In the 2011 film "Limitless," featuring Bradley Cooper, there's an exhilarating scene where he races a Maserati along Puerto Vallarta's iconic Malecón.

A keen eye will catch the iconic black and white lighthouse,

a fixture on the Malecón since 1932, in the scene.

- The Malecón was originally called the Paseo de la Revolución, but was renamed the Malecón in the 1960s.
- The Malecón in Puerto Vallarta is approximately 1.3 kilometers (about 0.8 miles) long.

[Directions: Malecón](#)



02 ISLA RIO CUALE

The Isla Rio Cuale is a small island located along the Rio Cuale river, which runs through the center of Puerto Vallarta. The island is accessible via a footbridge from the Old Town Zona Romantica), Gringo Gulch (Centro), and from the Malecón boardwalk itself. The island is a peaceful and tranquil oasis, with lush vegetation, colorful birds, and several attractions/restaurants to keep you entertained.

Take a leisurely walk and explore the island's lush forests and gardens, which are home to a number of interesting plants and a variety of feline cats that roam the island. In addition to its natural beauty, Isla Rio Cuale is also home to a small cultural center which showcases the history and culture of Vallarta.

The island also hosts a bustling artisan flea market, brimming with an array of locally crafted goods, includ-

ing souvenirs, jewelry, and crafts, often at unbeatable prices. Plan your visit during daylight hours, as vendors typically close their stalls come sundown.

You may notice as you walk through the island, a bronze statue of a man in a director's chair. This is John Huston, the director of the 1964 film "The Night of the Iguana," which really put Vallarta on the map internationally since the movie starred Richard Burton - one of Hollywood's biggest stars at the time. Filmed in Mismaloya, the world was able to see the beauty of Puerto Vallarta for the first time, which quickly brought interest as a vacation destination. During high season (Nov-April), there's often public



screening of old movies shown in the small "town square," so if you're lucky you may be able to watch a movie under the stars. Additionally, this area hosts live theater performances, traditional dances, and painting classes.

If you're looking for a bite to eat, restaurants like Las Brazzas, River Cafe, Rico (Indian), and Oscars (which offers homemade tequila tasting as well) are fantastic options. But if you're looking for an excel-

lent gastronomic experience that has been rated a top 120 restaurant in all of Mexico, Tintoque is a wonderful choice.

FUNFACTS:

- The island was originally inhabited by the indigenous Huichol people.
- In the 19th century, the island was used as a quarantine station for immigrants.

Directions: Isla Rio Cuale

03 LOS MUERTOS PIER

Los Muertos Pier is a 330 foot long pier completed in 2013, and has since become a popular tourist attraction in Vallarta, and a symbol for the city. Located in the heart of the city's Old Town district, the pier stretches out into the Bay of Banderas, offering stunning views of the water and the surrounding mountains.

Los Muertos Pier is a popular spot for tourists and locals alike, and it is a great place to take a leisurely stroll, enjoy the views, and people-watch. The pier is in a prime location, within close proximity to a variety of shops, restaurants, and bars, offering a range of dining and entertainment options.

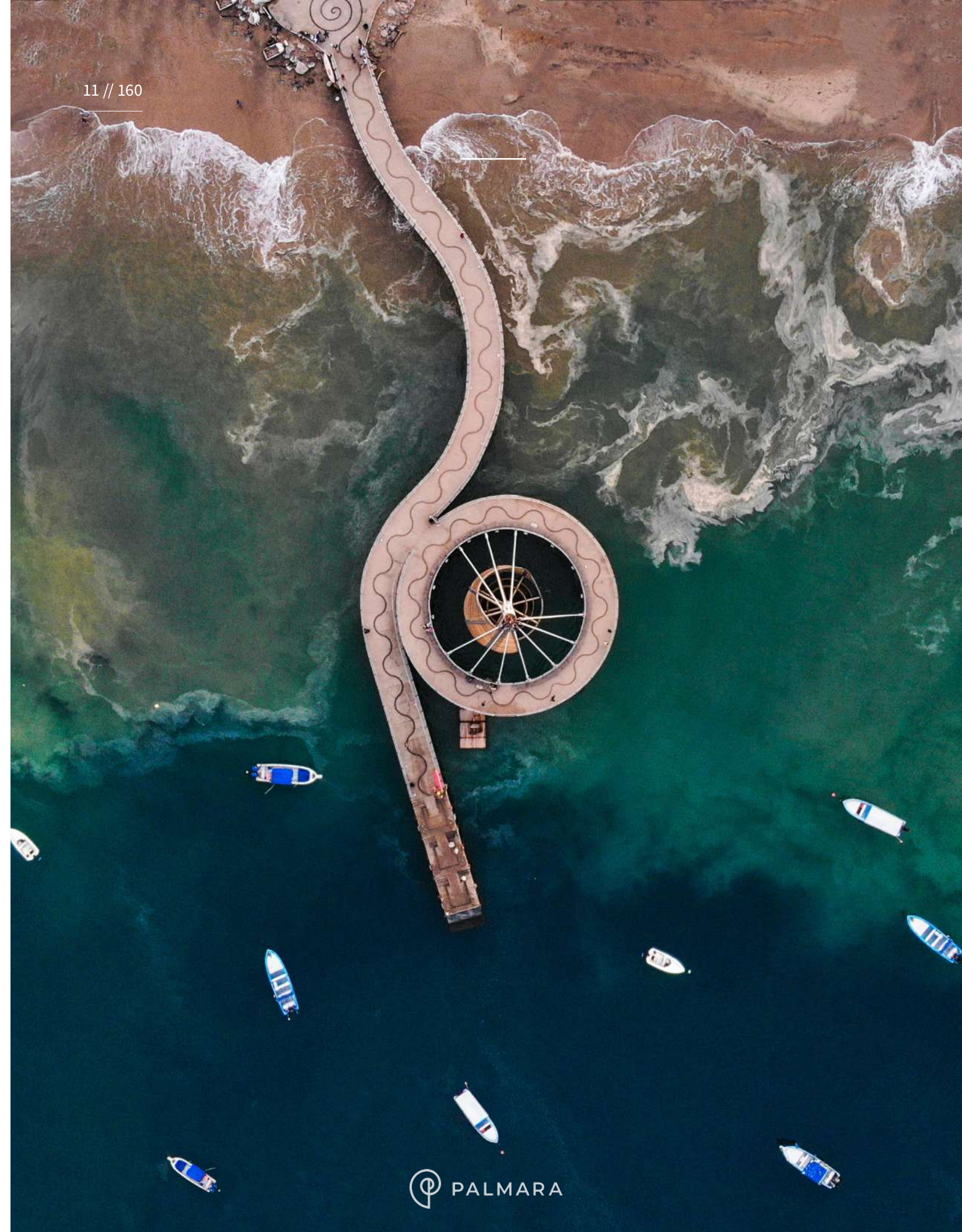
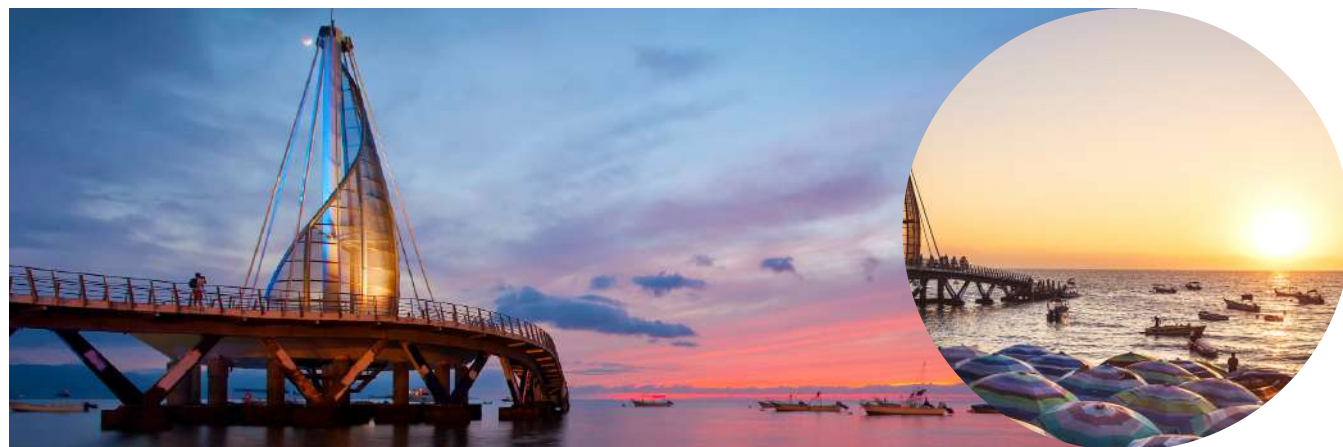
A major attraction of Los Muertos Pier is its stunning sunsets. It provides an ideal vantage point to witness the sun setting over the bay, making it a favored gathering spot for everyone looking to relish a peaceful evening. Notably, this spot is also a frequently used pickup and drop-off point for boat tours heading south.

The pier is also a popular spot for fishing, where you can often see people casting their lines off the pier in search of a catch around sunset. The dock at the pier is one of the main pick-up and drop-off spots for boat charters and tours heading south, so it's usually quite busy during the day.

FUN FACTS:

- As legend has it, the pier is named either after Playa de los Muertos (Beach of the Dead), which is believed to have gotten its name from a shipwreck that occurred off the coast of the beach in the 16th century, OR the beach earned its name because it was a burial ground during the time of the Spanish conquest. No one really knows.
- The pier was designed by Mexican architect José de Jesús Torres Vega and is meant to look like a ship's sail.

Directions: Los Muertos Pier



04 MIRADOR DE LA CRUZ

Located on the hill beside Gringo Gulch (in Centro), is the famous Mirador de la Cruz (Cross Viewpoint translated to English). This short hike up the hill is something we believe everyone who has the time to do so, must visit! Once at the summit, you can climb the tower and view Puerto Vallarta from its highest point, allowing you to see for miles in every direction. This birds eye view of the bay allows you to understand how far away different landmarks are, such as how far away Los Arcos is from downtown for example.

This is also one of the best ways to view whale breaches in the migration season (Dec-Mar), so if you have binoculars - definitely bring them here. The vantage point at the top allows you to really take in the scale of Vallarta and see all its neighborhoods you wouldn't normally see.

We recommend sturdy shoes for comfort and support, and bringing water so you have something to drink along the way. There is a small store at the top, so if you're thirsty, that'll be the place to get something nice and cold.

FUNFACTS:

- The lookout point is located approximately 200 meters above sea level.
- The hike to the lookout point takes approximately 15-20 minutes or less depending on your speed, and there is NO entry fee at the top.

[Directions: Mirador de la Cruz](#)



05 BOTANICAL GARDENS

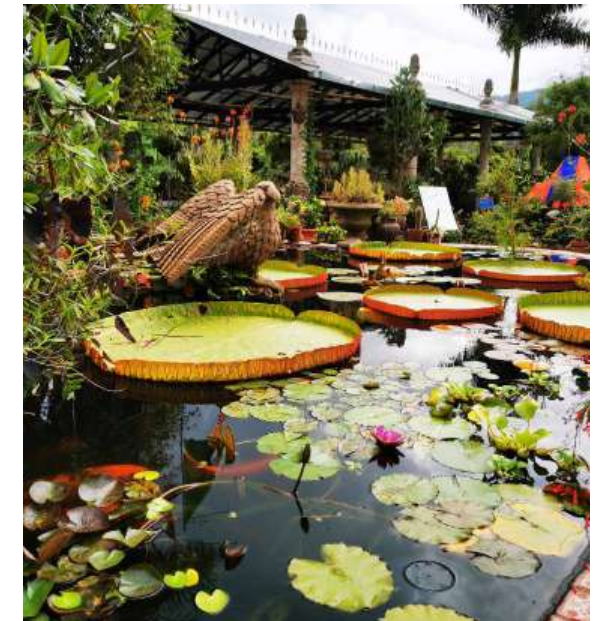
Founded in 2004 and opened to the public in 2005, Puerto Vallarta's Botanical Gardens, also known as El Jardín Botánico, is a beautiful and serene place located in the mountains just outside the city. It offers visitors the chance to see a wide variety of plants and animals in their natural habitats.

El Jardín Botánico is home to more than 3000 species of plants, including cactus, orchids, and hibiscus to name just a few. The garden is divided into different sections (Palm Garden, Rose Garden, Orchid House, Jungle Trails), each featuring plants which are native to a specific region. The garden also has a medicinal plant section and a butterfly garden, where visitors can admire the beauty of these winged creatures.

You can either casually walk along the marked trails at your own pace, or take a more in depth tour by a guide who provides additional information on each plant/animal as you walk by. The choice is yours.

The Botanical Gardens is not only a great place to learn about plants, but is also a wonderful environment to relax and enjoy the natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta. Being that the gardens usually take 3-4 hours to complete, there's a restaurant on site if you are in need of a hot meal.

The drive from downtown Vallarta to the gardens is about 45 minutes, so make sure you provide yourself adequate time to get there and back if you have other plans that day.



FUNFACTS:

- 35,000-40,000 people visit the gardens each year.
- The gardens are located 1,300ft (400 meters) above sea level.
- The garden covers an area of 79 acres (32 hectares), of which 73 acres (30 hectares) are solely for preservation

[Tickets & Info: Botanical Gardens](#)

[Directions: Vallarta Botanical Gardens](#)

06

VISIT **CASA** **KIMBERLY** & WALK GRINGO GULCH

Gringo Gulch is located in the Centro area of Puerto Vallarta, near the Malecón boardwalk and Rio Cuale river - just behind Cathedral Guadalupe (the one with the crown on top). Known for its cobblestone streets, colonial-style architecture, and eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, and bars - this is a wonderful neighborhood to explore. The neighborhood is named after the gringo (foreign) residents who lived there in the early 20th century and had colonial style (and colorful) homes built on the hillside.

One of such residents was famous Hollywood actor Richard Burton, who had a love affair in the 1960's with Elizabeth Taylor. You can see the white bridge that was built connecting their two properties, an iconic landmark in the city still standing strong today.

This building goes by the name Casa Kimberly, which has nine luxury suites available for nightly rental year round, and a high end restaurant called the Iguana (who's name is based on the movie Richard Burton starred in called, "The Night of the Iguana"). On Tuesdays and Fridays, a 10+ piece mariachi band



plays here for the restaurant goers.

Around Casa Kimberly lies the rest of Gringo Gulche's colonial buildings built upon the mountainside. You'll likely need to walk through this neighborhood as you embark on the El Mirador hike to the viewpoint (#4/100). If you venture here, be prepared for walking up and down many stairs, which is a main characteristic of the Gringo Gulch charm, and the

many incredible views of the ocean (this may not be for everyone due to its steep streets).

FUN FACTS:

- The most iconic part of Casa Kimberly is "Puente del Amor" or "Bridge of Love." This bridge, which connected the couple's separate villas, allowed Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton to visit each

other without leaving the property as to avoid paparazzi.

- Two of the Diamond suites available are named Cleopatra and Velvet, both in honor of movies Elizabeth Taylor starred in.

[More info: Casa Kimberly](#)

[Directions: Casa Kimberly](#)



07 PALO MARIA WATERFALL HIKE

A short ride by car or bus to the south from Centro just past Conchas Chinas, across from Garza Blanca is a fantastic hike.

This hike takes you through the shallow river stream a number of times (so plan on getting your shoes wet), and through some rocky terrain until you reach the natural waterfall. The hike itself is rated easy to moderate and usually takes about 30 minutes or so depending on your pace.

Once you reach the waterfall, take a dip in the water to cool off (usually much colder than the ocean), and

swim amongst the freshwater fish. The water is crystal clear and has sections deep enough to cliff jump off the rocky mountainside. Be careful in doing so of course, because the only way up is using a rope to hold onto while trekking up the wet rocky surface.

There are no facilities at the waterfall, so visitors are advised to bring plenty of water, sunscreen and a picnic lunch. For those more adventurous and brave, there are several other waterfalls to see if you hike up the left side of the cliff face and over the top at the first main waterfall. We hope you enjoy the hike as much as we do!

[Directions: Palo Maria Waterfall](#)



08 FIND A PLACE TO WATCH THE SUNSET

A truly spectacular part of visiting Vallarta is witnessing its picture perfect sunsets. When the sun sets over the Pacific Ocean, the stunning display of warm colors that stretch across the sky, from shades of orange and pink to deep reds and purples - it takes your breath away. The warm tropical climate and clear skies provide the perfect backdrop for breathtaking sunsets, making them one of Vallarta's most special characteristics of nightlife here.

Many will choose to watch the sunset from the beach, either by relaxing on the sand or taking a stroll along the water's edge. Others prefer to enjoy the sunset from a hilltop or rooftop, offering a panoramic view of the city and the surrounding mountains. Thankfully, Vallarta has

countless restaurants along the hillside providing an extraordinary vantage point of watching the sun set, allowing patrons to enjoy a delicious meal while watching the sun disappear.

If you're cruising the waters on a boat, this may be the best place to watch the sunset because of the added spectacle of light dancing off the waves surrounding you.

The sunsets are particularly magical when there's substantial cloud in the sky, because once the sun dips below the horizon (depending on type of cloud/ how high the clouds are in the sky), the clouds are lit up with a bright pink color. It's really quite the sight, and never gets old no matter how many times you see it.



"Sayulita Beach"



FUNFACTS:

- The pink color of clouds at sunset is caused by a phenomenon called Rayleigh scattering. When sunlight passes through the atmosphere, it's scattered by air molecules. The shorter wavelength colors of light, such as blue and violet are scattered more than the longer wavelength colors, such as red and orange. This is why the sky appears blue during the day.
- At sunset, the sunlight has to travel through more of the atmosphere to reach our eyes. This means that more of the shorter wavelength colors are scattered away, leaving the longer wavelength colors to reach our eyes. This is why the sky appears red and orange at sunset.
- The intensity of the pink color of clouds at sunset depends on a number of factors, including the amount of dust and pollution in the air, the thickness of the clouds, and the angle of the sun.

09 LOS ARCOS

One of the first places we recommend while cruising the ocean is visiting the infamous Los Arcos (the arches). Get ready to be amazed by the vibrant marine life and diverse bird population thriving among the towering rock formations. Seeing these magnificent rocks up close is sure to leave you in awe. It's the perfect location for snorkeling, scuba, and lounging on the boat with a drink in hand admiring these incredibly massive rocks. especially since it's a protected marine area (which usually means there's more marine life here since fishing is not allowed).

These rocks have long been a sacred site for the indigenous people of the area, so if you look close enough it's possible to find several ancient petroglyphs carved into the rocks.

One of the most unique experiences around Los Arcos is taking a sunset cruise and watching the sun disappear behind the rocks. You'll be able to soak in the natural beauty of Los Arcos through a different lens compared to a daytime excursion, which also provides for fantastic picture/photography opportunities! Visiting Los Arcos is a must-do for anyone traveling to Puerto Vallarta.



Whether you're interested in snorkeling, scuba diving, bird watching, or just enjoying the natural beauty, there's something for everyone at Los Arcos. So try not to miss out on this unique opportunity to visit Los Arcos the next time you're in Puerto Vallarta.

FUN FACTS:

- Millions of years ago, the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range, which runs along the Puerto Vallarta coast, contributed limestone to the formation of Los Arcos. Higher sea levels at that time led to erosion by waves, creating the arches and rock formations we observe today.
- The unique blue footed booby can be seen perched on the foliage that covers the rocks. See if you can spot it!

Directions to closest viewpoint on land: [Los Arcos](#)



10 NOGALITO HIKE & WATERFALL

Important notice:

****This hike is only suitable for dry conditions. During rainy season this place is inaccessible****

This is a wonderful hike with a spectacular final destination. But first the slightly tricky part will be finding the hike. To locate the starting point of the hike, keep your eyes open while driving towards Mismaloya - it will be on the left side before you reach Mismaloya and right across the street from Playa Punta Negra. Google map "El Nogalito" to be directed to the restaurant. Once you make the turn off of the main highway road, the dirt road is really only accessible with an SUV with clearance, so taking a small car is not advisable.

Once you park your car in the parking lot, head up the inclined driveway towards the restaurant.

You can eat and drink here before or after your hike, whatever your heart/stomach desires.

As you navigate the restaurant grounds, a path will guide you towards the hike itself.

The journey spans approximately 1-2 hours, contingent on

your pace, through the rocky terrain. Along the way, you'll encounter a petite freshwater pool, a fantastic place to take a quick dip and relax.

However, the true spectacle awaits just beyond this modest oasis—a breathtaking waterfall. To enhance your experience, we often bring hammocks and snacks to relax by the pool's side and savor the cool, invigorating waters. Though the water may be notably brisk, it's always exceptionally refreshing after your hike. The opening of the rock once you reach the waterfall itself is a wondrous sight to behold. Nature never disappoints!

[Directions: Nogalito Hike](#)



This hike is only suitable for dry conditions. During rainy season this place is inaccessible.



11 CHICO'S PARADISE



This place is super unique and a must see if you have the time. Located 45-minutes south from downtown Puerto Vallarta, Chico's Paradise with its distinctive charm, makes an ideal spot for a family outing, whether for lunch or dinner. Here, nature's artistry takes center stage, as water erosion has sculpted intriguing rock formations that cradle shallow, inviting pools.

While some adventurous souls may find joy in taking daring leaps from these natural rocks into the refreshing pools below, Chico's Para-

dise offers so much more. It's a sanctuary where you can leisurely explore the intricacies of the weathered rocks, all the while finding respite from the sun's relentless rays. This unique experience promises not just a meal but a memorable adventure for the entire family.

If you're lucky enough to see this, there's a man who frequents Chico's Paradise and dives into the water off the rocks doing flips while blindfolded. It's a shocking sight to behold.

Directions:
Chico's Paradise



SIGHTSEEING & NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

1 HOUR +
OUTSIDE OF
VALLARTA



12 YELAPA

Yelapa is a small fishing village located on the Pacific coast 20 miles (32 km's) south of Vallarta, and is only accessible by boat, or hiking through the jungle (which we don't suggest you try...however it is possible). The village is known for its pristine beaches, crystal clear waters, and laid-back atmosphere. It's not uncommon to see a variety of wildlife, including monkeys, parrots, and toucans. Shows like Survivor and the film "Night of the Iguana" have been shot here on the shores of Yelapa because of its jungle-like vibes.

Yelapa is a popular destination for travelers who are looking for a more authentic and off-the-beaten-path experience in Mexico. The village is relatively small and unassuming as it's only inhabited by 1,500 people. Of which the indigenous have been here for centuries.

There are several waterfall hikes that you can walk to by foot, or you can even ride a donkey! We recommend planning a full day around experiencing Yelapa so you can really take it all in without being in a rush.

FUN FACTS:

- The town's name is derived from the Nahuatl word "yelapa" which means "where the river meets the sea."
- Yelapa was once a popular destination for pirates.
- There are no cars in Yelapa.



PALMARA

13 MAJAHUITAS BEACH

This boat access only beach located about 10 miles (16 km) south of Vallarta, is the beautiful cove of Majahuitas. A magical and picturesque location.

The cove is small and secluded - the beach is a narrow strip of golden sand, surrounded by rocky cliffs and lush vegetation. There is a 3 star small resort on the beach, but if you want to have a meal and beverages, we recommend you bring your own food and drinks.

During the day, Majahuitas is a perfect place to escape the crowds and enjoy the natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta. The crystal-clear waters are perfect for swimming, snorkeling, and paddleboarding, while the sandy beach is ideal for sunbathing and lounging. Visitors can also take a hike along the shoreline or explore the nearby jungle trails.

Majahuitas transforms into a different scene as the sun sets below the horizon. From being a tranquil beach club by day, into a party under the starlit sky - it becomes an outdoor nightclub, something the beach has become famous for.

The party is known for its lively atmosphere, ambient



Tulum vibe decor/lighting and live DJ entertainment, who often plays a mix of Latin and international music to keep the party going all night. There's also often a bar service, where you can purchase drinks and refreshments. This is a wonderful way to meet new people and let loose for a night if going out to a club isn't your thing.

Our advice, plan your trip back ahead of time, because it's secluded, and things can get more complicated to get back to Yelapa or PV in the dark (especially if you don't speak spanish).

FUN FACT:

- Majahuitas is part of the Islas Marietas National Park, a protected marine area.

More Info: [Majahuitas Beach Club](#)

Location: [Majahuitas Beach](#)

PALMARA

14 MARIETAS ISLANDS

Formed millions of years ago by volcanic eruptions, the Marietas Islands are a small group of islands located off the coast 15 miles (24 km) west of Vallarta.

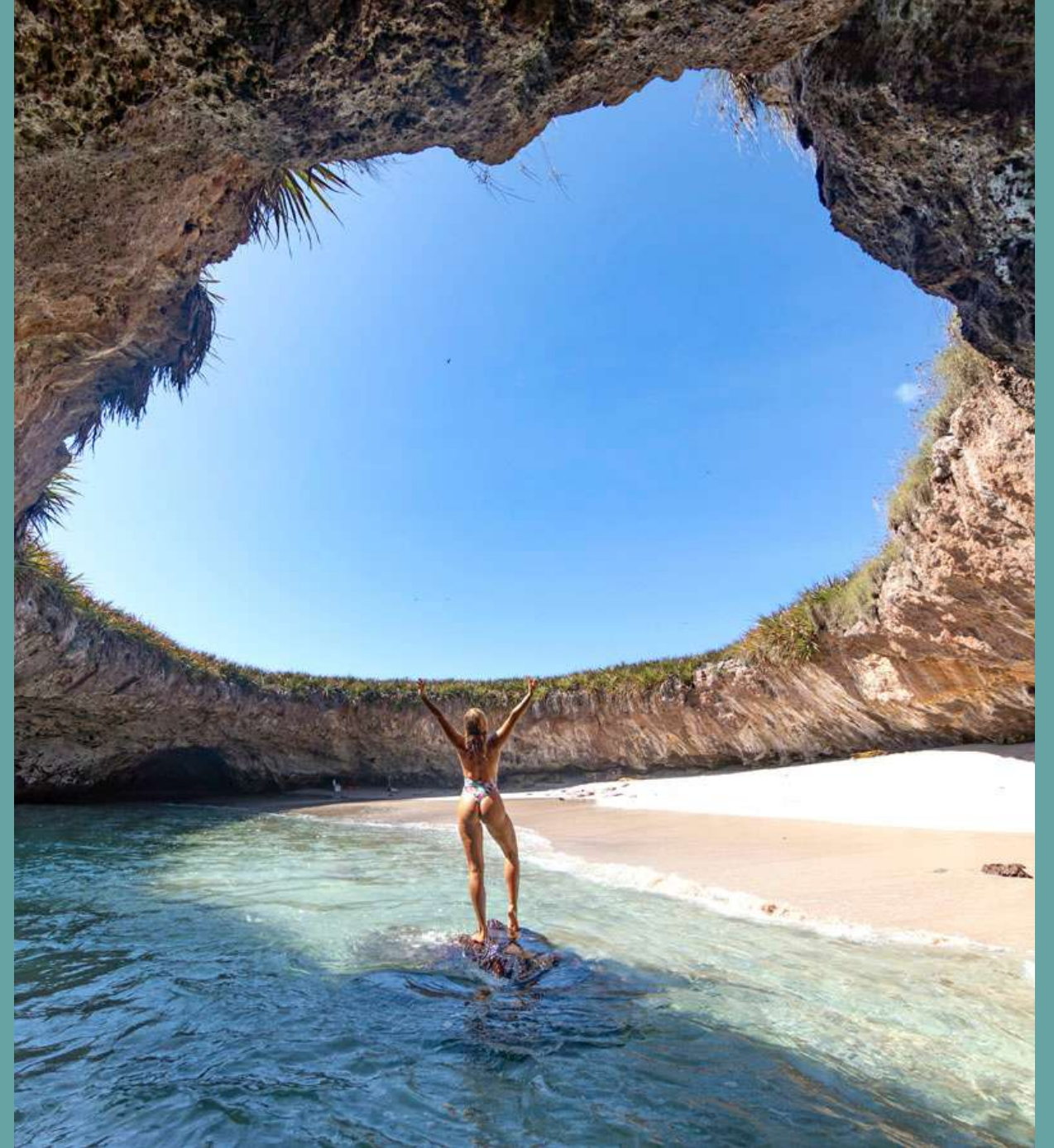
The islands are part of a protected nature reserve, which due to its strict protection, has given rise to an abundance of marine life around the islands.

The Marietas Islands are a popular destination for tourists, who come to explore the islands' rugged beauty and clear blue waters. When venturing around the shores of these islands, you'll likely witness a variety of species, including sea turtles, dolphins, whales, a wide range of tropical fish, and maybe even the rare blue-footed booby.

These special islands are also well known for their hidden beach (Playa del Amor), which is located inside a sea cave on one of the islands. The beach can only be accessed by swimming or kayaking through a narrow opening in

the cave, opening up to one of the most spectacular views you've ever seen. The hidden beach is a popular spot for photos and being an exclusive location, since only a handful of people per day are allowed in due to conservation efforts.

The Marietas Islands are a beautiful and unique destination, offering stunning scenery, abundant wildlife, and a rare opportunity to see some of nature's most unique displays. Whether you're a nature lover, a beach-goer, or simply looking for an unforgettable experience, the Marietas Islands are a must-visit.



FUN FACTS:

- The islands were named after the Mexican frigatebird, which is known as the "Marietta."
- The islands were once used as a military bombing range by the Mexican government.

However, the bombing range was closed in the 1960s, and the islands were declared a national park in 2005.

[More Info/Tours: Marietas Islands](#)

[Location: Islas Marietas](#)



PALMARA

15 MONKEY MOUNTAIN HIKE

Monkey Mountain, known locally as **"Cerro del Mono"** is a popular hiking destination near Punta de Mita, Nayarit.

This hike offers the chance to enjoy a scenic trek through lush tropical jungle terrain, and a stunning 360 view once at the top. Located about 10 minutes drive from Punta de Mita or 20 minutes south from Sayulita, this hike is easily accessible by anyone.

Trail Difficulty: The hike to Monkey Mountain varies in difficulty, with sections that can be moderately challenging. It's recommended for those with a moderate fitness level and some hiking experience. The trail can be steep in places, and you may encounter uneven terrain.

Duration: The hike typically takes around 2 to 3 hours to reach the summit, depending on your pace and how many breaks you take along the way. The return trip is often faster.

Scenic Beauty: As you ascend, you'll be surrounded by dense jungle vegetation. Luckily the trail is shaded for much of the hike, providing relief from the sun. We recommend arriving here as early as you can, since the later in the day you start- the more likely it'll be crowded. Plus the sun is much less intense before 10am.

Christmas time and other holidays like Semana Santa (in April) for example make this hike a busy one, so it's suggested to venture out to Monkey Mountain mid-week for the most relaxed experience.

The lush greenery and tropical flora add to the beauty of the journey. Mosquito repellent can help keep some of the bugs off, and always be on the careful lookout for scorpions.

SAD FACT:

- There are no monkeys found on Monkey Mountain ;(

Directions: Monkey Mountain

16 SAN PANCHO

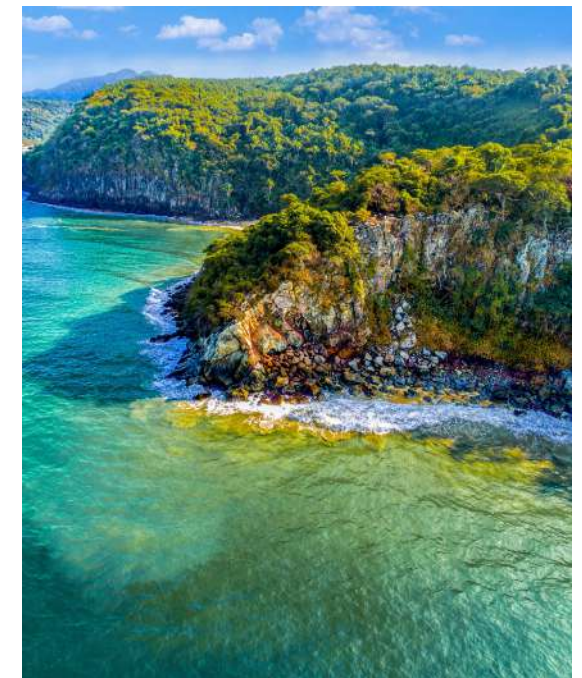
PALMARA

San Pancho, known formally as San Francisco, is a small beach town located in Nayarit, about 10-15 minutes north of Sayulita on the Pacific coast. It is known for its relaxed and laid-back vibe, stunning natural beauty, and friendly artistic community.

Visitors to San Pancho will find miles of pristine sandy beaches, surrounded by lush jungle and tropical greenery. The town is also home to several excellent restaurants, serving up fresh and flavorful local cuisine. With a range of activities from surf lessons, to horseback riding, or fishing trips - there's no shortage of activities in San Pancho.

One of the main attractions of San Pancho is its sense of community. The town is home to a vibrant and eclectic mix of residents, including artists, surfers, and expats. There is also a strong focus on environmental sustainability and preserving the natural beauty of the area, which many visitors find appealing.

Whether you're looking for a relaxing beach vacation, a cultural experience, or a chance to escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, San Pancho is a great choice. It's also a lot less busy than Sayulita, which makes it the perfect option if you're looking for that small surfer town vibe without too many people.



FUN FACT:

- San Pancho is home to an exclusive polo and equestrian club, which hosts polo matches and other equestrian events. It also offers horseback riding opportunities if you're so inclined.



17 CHIMO OVERNIGHT TRIP

PALMARA

Chimo is a small town in the state of Jalisco - located in the Sierra Madre Mountains, about 18 miles (30 km) south from Puerto Vallarta.

Chimo is a quiet and rural town tucked into a small inlet off the coast, with a population of just over 1,000 people. Chimo is home to a number of small farms and ranches, where you can experience the local agriculture and lifestyle.

However this destination is mostly known for its peaceful and scenic setting, and is a small fishing town best suited for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers.

With its small size, there aren't a ton of options as far as entertainment goes, but our personal recommendation is visiting Happy Hill - Treasure by the Sea Resort. Located about 500 meters from the beach up the mountainside, Happy Hill provides comfortable accommodation with a stunning coffee bar, freshly cooked meals

by their wonderful chef, a well stocked bar with many options, and an outdoor swimming pool overlooking the ocean. A breathtaking view that in itself is worth making the trip for...seriously.

With their 5 suites equipped with air conditioning and king sized beds, there's space for a large group to be more than comfortable.

The grounds and landscaping are meticulously manicured and well maintained, making the stay at Happy Hill that much more enjoyable.

Chimo is for those interested in really getting away for a night or two and spending time with nature, and feeling like you're going back in time.

[Location: Chimo](#)

[More Info: Happy Hill](#)



18 QUIMIXTO

PALMARA

Nestled in the same tropical region as Yelapa and Majahuítas, this secluded beach destination is a treasure waiting to be explored. To reach this coastal wonderland, the adventure begins with a boat ride – the most convenient way to embark on your Quimixto journey. While it's technically possible to hike through the jungle from Yelapa, the boat ride promises an easier and more thrilling start.

As you approach the beach, a small cluster of cozy restaurants welcomes you, and behind them lies a tight-knit community of local residents. Quimixto embodies the spirit of a tranquil coastal haven with a touch of Mexican charm. It's a place where time slows down, and the ocean breeze carries laughter and good vibes.

One of the stars of the show in Quimixto is casual horseback riding. Set

off from the beach, cross the river, and venture up the hill toward a hidden oasis – the waterfall. It's not just a ride; it's a journey through pristine nature and a taste of local life.

At the waterfall's peak, take a well-deserved break and unwind with cold beers and mouth watering Mexican appetizers like ceviche, pico de gallo, and guacamole paired with crispy tortilla chips. The refreshing splash of the waterfall is pure bliss under the sun's warm embrace.

But here's the thing: you should be a moderate to strong swimmer, for the waterfall's current is exhilaratingly powerful. You can get up close and personal with the cascading water, feeling its strength and energy like never before. When the time comes to descend from this natural wonder, you can bask in the warmth of the sun's rays on the beach. Dive into the clear blue



waters of Quimixto for a memorable snorkeling adventure. It's a world of vibrant marine life and underwater beauty waiting to be explored.

Quimixto is not just a destination; it's an experience that rejuvenates the spirit and offers a slice of Mexico's coastal paradise. So, pack your sense of adventure and your love for nature, and let Quimixto's energy wash over you!

[Location: Quimixto](#)



19 SAN SEBASTIÁN DEL OESTE

Nestled in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountains just 70 kilometers outside of Puerto Vallarta, lies the hidden gem of San Sebastián del Oeste. This small town is known for its colonial architecture, picturesque plaza, and rich cultural heritage was founded in 1605 by Spanish conquistadors - who discovered silver in the area. San Sebastián quickly became one of the most important mining centers in New Spain, reaching its peak in the 18th century with a population of over 10,000 people.

The silver mines were operated by the Spanish, while the labor was provided by indigenous people and African slaves. The mining operations were so extensive that the town of San Sebastián grew to become one of the largest and most prosperous in Mexico.

After Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, the mining industry in San Sebastián

continued to flourish. The mines were taken over by Mexican citizens, and the town became a major center for the production of silver and other minerals. However, the mining industry in the region began to decline in the early 20th century due to a combination of factors including the depletion of the mines, the rise of other industries, and political instability in the country.

While the silver mines eventually declined, San Sebastián's charm remained. Visitors can wander the cobblestone streets and admire the well-preserved colonial buildings, including the Parroquia de San Sebastián, a beautiful church dating back to the 17th century. The town's main plaza is a lively gathering place, where locals and tourists alike come to enjoy the sunshine and the views of the surrounding mountains.

Without question, the best view in Jalisco is at the top of the mountain outside San Sebastian. At the main square in town, a pickup truck takes you up the mountain



with other tourists throughout the day. Ask around the town and you'll be given instructions on where the truck picks you up and when it gets there. They do a few rounds per day, so if you're there long enough you will see the truck. This was an absolutely surreal view at the top and is 100% worth it!

Surprisingly you can find incredible authentic French cuisine with stunning views of the lush mountains below at "Villa Nogal," enjoying a savory rack of lamb and/or if you're in the mood for traditional homemade Italian food, "Montebello Restaurante Italiano" is famously known even by people in Vallarta for having exceptional cuisine.

If you're looking for dessert, look no further than Villa Cocoa for hand made chocolate that'll blow you away. Some people we know have said it was the best chocolate they've ever eaten in their life, and I



have to say they're not wrong. The chocolate here is exceptional, and a short walk away from the main town square - and even closer if you decide to dine at "Villa Nogal."

It's best to visit San Sebastián during the dry season, from November to May. During the rainy season, the roads can be muddy and slippery.

FUNFACTS:

- San Sebastián now only has less than 1,000 residents. A far cry from it's 10,000.
- The climate here is significantly different from Vallarta. With a drier and cooler air, the average temperature hovers around 74.9°F (23.8°C).

Directions: San Sebastián del Oeste

20 LAS ANIMAS & ANIMA BEACH CLUB

Ánima beach club has more recently become a popular spot for those taking their boat/yachts out on the water.

With the unveiling of Ánima Beach Club in 2023, both locals and tourists have been eager to experience its vibrant Tulum-inspired ambiance alongside their friends. And from the moment you step foot inside, it's immediately clear why! music, and excellent food/drink options, Ánima is a luxurious destination you don't want to miss.

For a more child friendly area, the neighboring stretch of beach Las Animas (meaning "the souls" in English) is perfect for families. With numerous restaurants located right on the beach, this place is a wonderful hangout spot for the day. Sunbathing under a palapa as you're served margaritas to quench your thirst, while watching your kids jump off the dock into the water is a common activity at Las Animas.

This is a boat access only beach as well, but with its larger concrete dock, it makes it easy to get in and out of your boat here. There are also no hotels or overnight accommodation, making this is strictly a day trip destination.

Location: Ánima Beach Club

Location: Las Animas Beach



21 MASCOTA

Mascota is a small and welcoming town located 2 hours and 15 minutes by car east of downtown Vallarta.

In 2015, Mascota was declared a Magical Town (Pueblos Magicos), which are towns recognized by the Mexican government for their "magical" qualities, whether that be their astonishing beauty, rich history, or extraordinary legends. Mascota's history dates back to 1530 when the town was founded by Spanish conquistadors. Much like San Sebastián del Oeste, Mascota served as a major mining center during the colonial era.

Similarly, Mascotas climate differs from the warm humid air of Puerto Vallarta, and has temperatures in the low 20's Celsius (73 degrees Fahrenheit) most of the year. The town's economy is supported by agriculture, with crops like corn, beans, and coffee being grown in the surrounding areas. The fertile land and favorable climate contribute to the agricultural heritage of Mascota.

It has important buildings from artistic, religious, and historical heritage such as the Main Square, the Municipal Palace, the Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows, and the Unfinished Temple of the Precious Blood of Christ. It also has exciting museums that cover the archaeological, historical, and cultural facets of the Magical Town. These are the Archaeology Museum, the El Pedregal Museum, the curious Raul Rodriguez Museum, and the El Molino Museum.

The nearby Mascota Reservoir (Presa de Mascota) is a recreational area for boating, fishing, and picnicking. It's a popular spot for both locals and tourists to enjoy outdoor activities.

For nature and outdoor sports lovers, Mascota offers the Juanacatlán Lagoon, Corrinchis Dam, El Molcajete Volcano, La Narizona Rock, El Maipai Petrified Field, El Rincón de Ixcatan Waterfall, El Ocotillo Canyon, El Tacote Canyon, and La Mesa Colorada.



FUN FACTS:

- The name Mascota means "place of deer" in the Nahuatl language.
- The Aztecs, who referred to themselves as the "Mexica," were a Nahuatl-speaking people who established a powerful empire in Mesoamerica.

Directions: Mascota



GUAYABITOS

Guayabitos is north of Vallarta by 90 minutes or so by car. A place more local Mexicans and those from Guadalajara visit because of its proximity to the highway to and from Guadalajara, and because it's a bit of a distance from Vallarta. However it's certainly a destination worth visiting in our opinion.

The town is famous for hosting the annual "Desfile de las Ballenas" (Whale Parade), celebrating the migration of humpback whales along the coast. Not only that, but the beaches that surround Guayabitos are stunning. Here are the main beaches close to Guayabitos:

Guayabitos Beach: This is the main beach in the area, known for its wide expanse of golden sand and calm, shallow waters. It's an ideal spot for swimming, sunbathing, and water sports. The beach is family-friendly and usually not too crowded. Except for Sundays. This is ALWAYS the busiest day to visit any beach.

La Peñita Beach: Just north of Guayabitos, you'll find La Peñita de Jaltemba, another beach town with a more relaxed and authentic atmosphere. The beach here is known for its tranquil waters and a long stretch of soft sand.

Los Ayala Beach: South of Guayabitos, Los Ayala beach offers a serene and less touristy experience. It's perfect for those seeking a quieter environment, and you can often spot colorful fish in the clear waters.

Playa del Coral: This beach is famous for its coral reef, making it a popular spot for snorkeling and scuba diving. It's located just a short boat ride away from Guayabitos.

FUN FACTS:

- Guayabitos follows the Mountain Standard Time (MST) zone, which is one hour behind Puerto Vallarta's time zone. So although Guayabitos is only 90 minutes drive or less away from Vallarta, if it's 12:00 PM in Puerto Vallarta, it will be 11:00 AM in Guayabitos.
- Rincón de Guayabitos is the official name of this town, but most people simply refer to it as "Guayabitos."

Directions: Rincón de Guayabitos



23 TALPA DE ALLENDE

Talpa de Allende is a small town located in the state of Jalisco, about 2.5-3 hours by car to the east of Puerto Vallarta.

Known for its rich cultural and historical heritage, this little town and its surrounding farmland is a wonderful option for farming and buying land to grow crops and/or livestock. The town's main church, the Parroquia de la Inmaculada Concepción, is a beautiful colonial-style church built in the 18th century, and is a must-see for visitors.

Talpa de Allende is also home to the Shrine of Our Lady of Talpa, a pilgrimage site visited by Catholics from all over Mexico. It's said that the Virgin Mary appeared in a local peasant woman's dream around 1730. The statue is said to have been brought to the town by a Spanish soldier in the 16th century, and since then, it has been the focus of religious devotion and pilgrimage.

In February, the town celebrates "Fiesta de la Virgen de la Candelaria" (Festival of Our Lady of Candelaria), a festival that honors the town's patron saint. This is a great opportunity to experience the

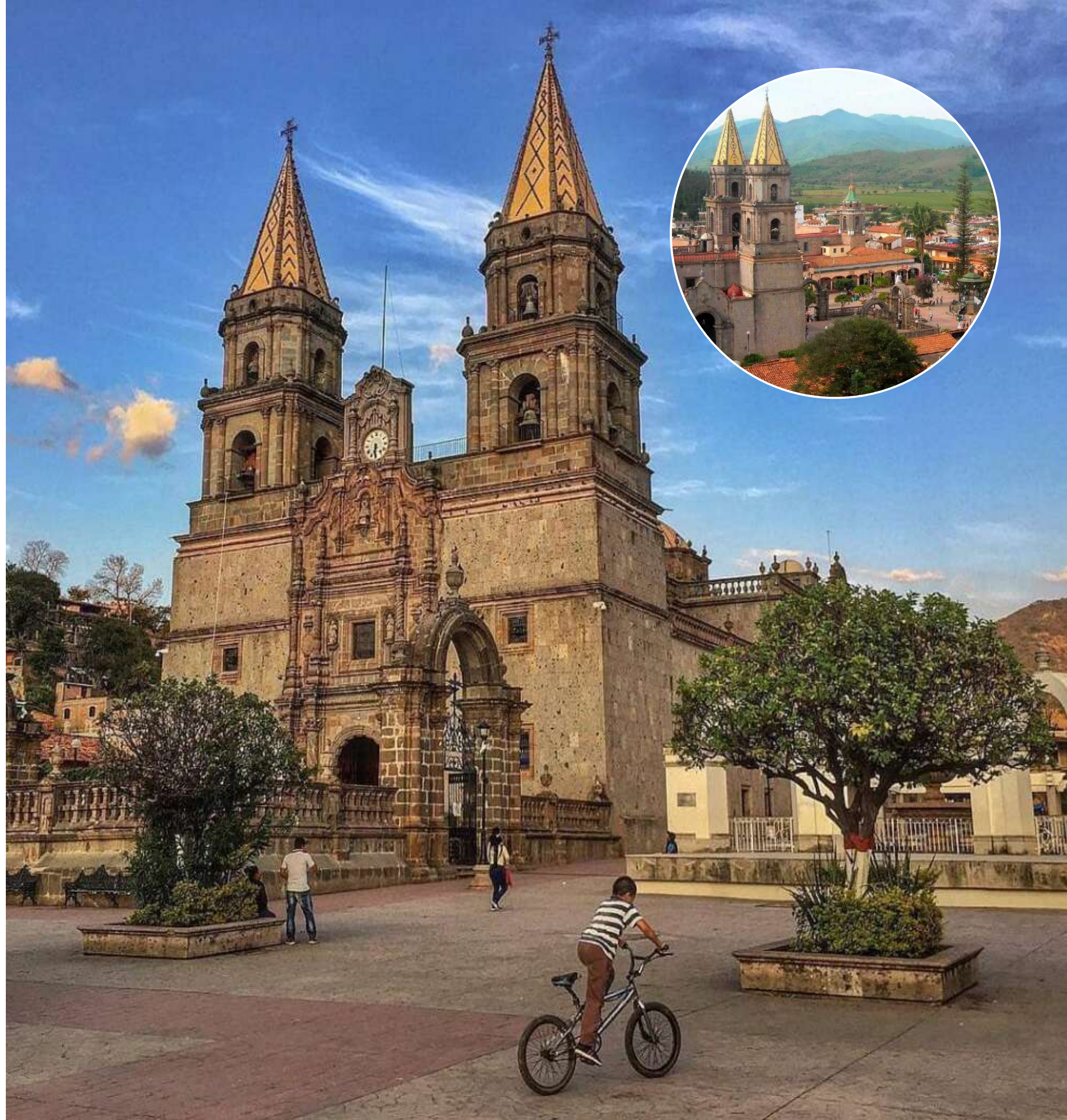
traditional culture, music, and dances of the town as everyone comes out to celebrate.

In addition to its religious significance, Talpa de Allende is also known for its picturesque colonial architecture, narrow streets, and traditional handicrafts. The town is surrounded by beautiful natural scenery, including mountains, forests, and waterfalls.

Some claim that mariachi music originated in Talpa de Allende, but many cities around Guadalajara and Jalisco claim mariachi music came from their town.

FUNFACTS:

- Talpa de Allende is famous for its annual religious pilgrimage, known as the "Peregrinación a Talpa." Pilgrims from various regions of Mexico make the journey to Talpa to pay their respects to the Virgin of Talpa.
- The pilgrimage typically takes place in the weeks leading up to May 31st, the Feast of Our Lady of Talpa.



24 AGUA TERMALES (HOT SPRINGS) IN NAYARIT

Unbeknownst to most, but just outside of Puerto Vallarta are multiple locations with natural hot springs. Places like Nuevo Ixtlan Aguas Termales and Rancho Aguas Termales, are beautiful places to drive out to and relax for the day.

While Vallarta is often associated with its stunning beaches, vibrant culture, and lively cityscape, there's a hidden gem tucked away just a short 1.5-hour drive from the bustling downtown core—Aguas Termales Nuevo Ixtlan Hot Springs.

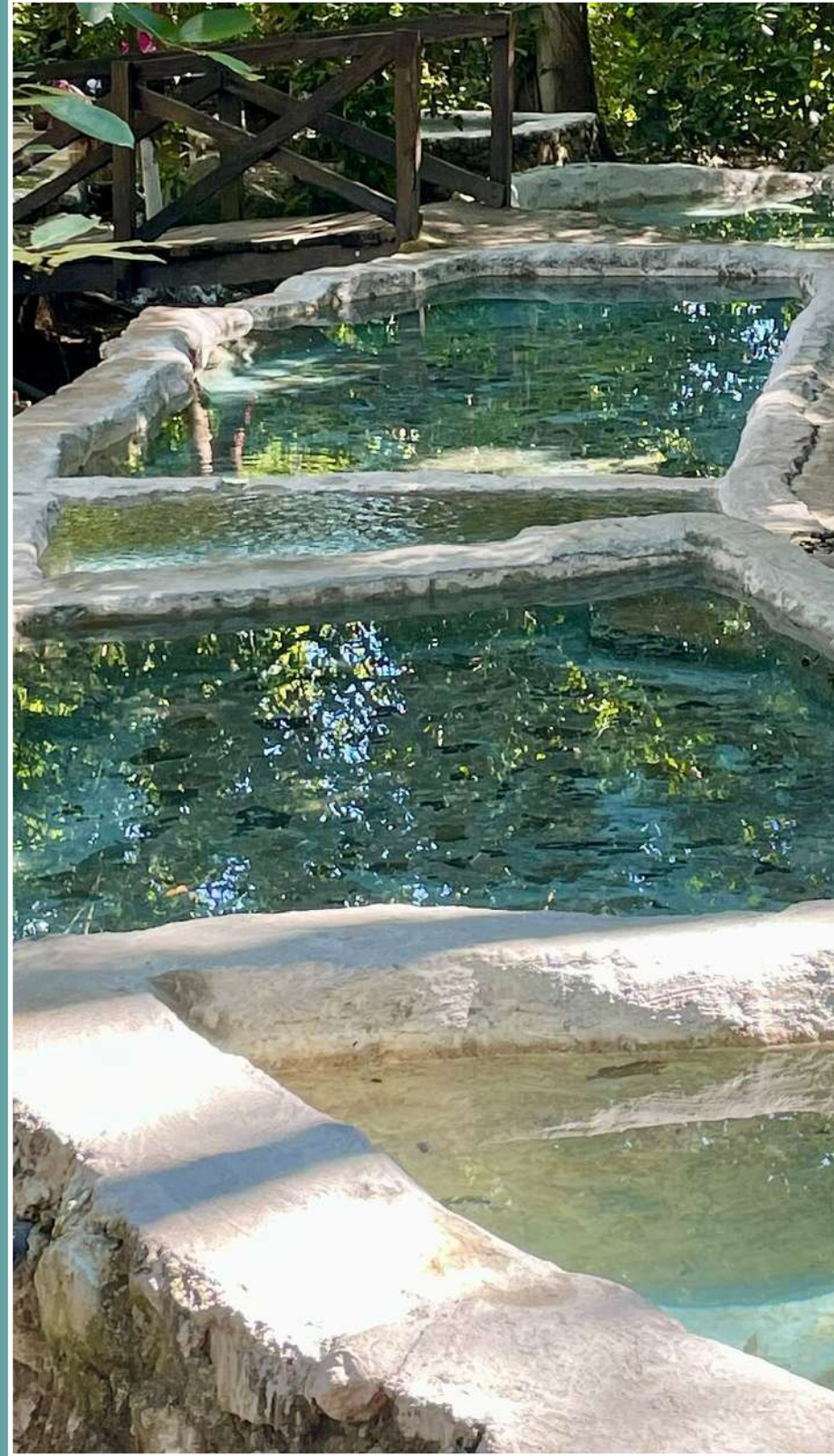
While hot springs might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Puerto Vallarta, this natural attraction offers a tranquil escape and a refreshing change of pace.

For a mere 80 pesos per person, you gain access to an experience that boasts a remarkable balance of affordability and extraordinary relaxation. The hot springs are a well-kept secret, where the rejuvenating properties of naturally fed spring water are abundant and readily available.

Unlike other more touristy destinations, the Aguas Termales Nuevo Ixtlan Hot Springs are a hidden oasis where the pools are regularly replenished by the natural, mineral-rich waters.

FUN FACTS:

- The Sierra Madre Mountains, known as the "Mother Range," span across Mexico for approximately 1,000 miles (1,600 km's). The Sierra Madre has cultural significance for the indigenous populations of Mexico, particularly the Huichol people, who consider these mountains sacred.
- Natural hot springs, or geothermal hot springs, are renowned for their therapeutic properties. The mineral-rich waters are believed to relieve various ailments, including stress, arthritis, and muscle pain.



25 TEQUILA, JALISCO

Situated not far from Guadalajara, the charming town of tequila has become a worldwide gem, supplying the world-famous spirit of tequila for generations.

The drive itself is about 3.5 hours from Puerto Vallarta, so visiting Tequila is not overly far to get to, and can be comfortably done within a single day. Firstly, upon arriving in Tequila, you will be struck by the beautiful scenery of the region, which is characterized by rolling hills covered in agave fields. The town of Tequila itself is also a sight to behold, with its charming cobblestone streets, brightly colored colonial-style buildings, and picturesque plazas.

An absolute must is taking a tour of a tequila distillery. These tours provide you a behind-the-scenes look at the process of making tequila, from the cultivation of the agave plant to the bottling of the final product. You will learn about the history of tequila production, the different types of tequila, and the traditional methods used to make it. Not to mention, stepping inside some world famous facilities such as Jose Cuervo. The tequila of Jose Cuervo has been produced at La Rojena since 1795 - Latin America's oldest active distillery.

During the tour, you'll have the opportunity to sample different types of tequila, from the traditional blanco (white) tequila, to the more aged and nuanced reposado (rested), and añejo (aged) tequilas. This allows you to appreciate the different flavors and aromas found in tequila. At the end, you can purchase tequila here of course - and it will be the cheapest price of tequila you'll likely ever see. So stock up if you're a tequila lover!

On these tours, you'll be driven around in a unique open concept vehicle, likely shaped like a tequila bottle, chili pepper, or a wooden barrel. The drivers have to meander the narrow streets around parked cars all day long - which in itself is quite impressive to watch.

Though not widely known, among the 3,000 (or so) Tequila brands available today, all are crafted by fewer than 200 distilleries.



Additionally, Mexican laws state that tequila can be produced only in the state of Jalisco and limited municipalities in the states of: Guanajuato, Michoacán, Nayarit, and Tamaulipas.

Finally, the opportunity to explore the town of Tequila and its surroundings, find traditional crafts, local cuisine and other cultural experiences is always fun. From the traditional Mexican dances and music to the handcrafted pottery and textiles, there's plenty to see and do. Some visitors choose to take a traditional train ride through the agave fields, or enjoy a horseback ride to take in the picturesque views of the region. The choice is yours.

FUNFACTS:

- Tequila is made from the heart of the blue agave plant, specifically the Weber blue agave. The plant is native to the region and has been cultivated and used for centuries in the production of tequila.
- Tequila comes in various types, including Blanco (unaged), Reposado (aged for at least two months but less than a year), Añejo (aged for at least one year but less than three years), and Extra Añejo (aged for three years or more). The flavor does not improve after 7 years of aging. Each type has its unique flavor profile.
- Mexico has consistently produced over 300 million liters of tequila annually, making it one of the world's most prominent spirits.

Directions: Tequila, Jalisco



26 MAYTO & TEHUAMIXTLE

Mayto is another picturesque coastal village located south of Vallarta in the Cabo Corrientes municipality of Jalisco.

It is known for its pristine beaches, abundant wildlife, and peaceful ambiance. It's still relatively unknown by most, so development hasn't quite hit Mayto yet, but that won't last too long once more people get wind of how surreal this place is. Currently, there is accommodation once you arrive, so feel free to check out the Hotel Mayto if you plan on staying overnight and want to book ahead of time. Of course if you're taking a yacht you can anchor and stay overnight on the vessel, which is also a popular option.

Mayto boasts an expansive and untouched beach with a long stretch of golden sand, perfect for leisurely walks, sunbathing, and swimming in the clear blue waters.

Turtle Sanctuary: Mayto is home to a sea turtle sanctuary dedicated to the conservation and protection of these endangered creatures. Visitors can participate in turtle release programs and learn about the efforts to preserve their natural habitat.

The village is surrounded by diverse

ecosystems, including mangroves, estuaries, and tropical forests, attracting a wide variety of bird species. Birdwatchers can spot colorful tropical birds and migratory species in their natural habitats.

Camping under the stars at Mayto Beach is perfect for stargazing because there's no light pollution. Listening to the calming waves as you drift off to sleep - what more do you want right?

How to get there: A 2 hour boat trip from Marina Vallarta, this journey is certainly worth it for its unique experience and beautifully maintained natural beaches. If driving, give yourself about 3 hours to comfortably make it to Mayto.

Directions: Mayto Beach

Tehuamixtle, situated in close proximity to Mayto presents a distinct ambiance, offering a unique experience in the same regional setting.

The name "Tehuamixtle" means "place of stones" in the indigenous language of the region. The village is situated near the mouth of the Cuale River and

is surrounded by lush vegetation and tropical forests. Despite its popularity as a tourist destination, Tehuamixtle has managed to maintain its traditional way of life and close-knit community. There are several small restaurants and food stands in Tehuamixtle that serve traditional Mexican seafood dishes and other local specialties. Some of the popular options include:

- **El Rincón de George:** This is a small, family-owned restaurant located on the beachfront in Tehuamixtle. They serve fresh seafood dishes, including ceviche, fish tacos, and grilled shrimp.
- **Mariscos El Limón:** This is another small seafood restaurant located in the center of Tehuamixtle. They serve a variety of dishes, including seafood soup, fish filet, and shrimp cocktails.
- **La Palapa de Oscar:** This is a beachfront restaurant that specializes in grilled fish and seafood dishes. They also serve a variety of cocktails and drinks.

Directions: Tehuamixtle



Tehuamixtle



Mayto beach



Mayto beach camping

WATER & BEACH

27 DAY PASS AT ALL INCLUSIVE RESORT

Surprisingly, this option is sometimes overlooked because when you envision a resort, the typical image involves staying for a week or more. However, for those seeking to enjoy the amenities and facilities of a resort without committing to an extended stay, this presents a fantastic option.

Along the Banderas Bay coastline, a diverse array of resorts awaits, offering a spectrum of prices, luxurious experiences, amenities, and accommodations suitable for families

or exclusive adult retreats. The decision is yours, and with such exceptional choices, there's truly no wrong option.

A day pass at an all-inclusive resort allows you to totally relax and live the beach life for a day. Lounge by the pools, play volleyball, drink and eat as much as your heart desires.

Day passes are usually available for purchase at the resorts front desk. Obviously the earlier you arrive, the more you'll be able to maximize your day pass - so we recommend getting there around 9am.



28 WHALE WATCHING

Puerto Vallarta is home from December to March as one of the highest concentrations of humpback whales in the world.

For whale watchers, it's an absolute dream! Each year, hundreds of whales migrate to the region to mate and give birth, a special event to witness in person if you have the opportunity.

It's an exhilarating moment when you spot the first plumes of mist rising into the air in the distance, whether you're on land or by the shore. That sight always ignites a rush of excitement, and you can't help but keep scanning the water for more, knowing you've caught a glimpse of a whale!

Undoubtedly, the best way to see them is up close on a whale watching tour or your own private charter. If you're fortunate enough to get real close to them, it's always a special moment. It's truly awe inspiring, and nothing else matters - all you want is for them to stay longer.

The sight of a massive humpback launching itself out of the water and landing with a splash is thrilling and yet humbling. Depending on the proximity of the boat to the whale, you may also be able to hear the male whale's singing as they attempt to attract a female.

The experience can be made more memorable if the weather is calm, and the view of the surrounding sea is clear. Luckily during the winter months when the whales are here inside the Bay of Banderas, the weather is often perfect!

On a whale watching tour, visitors can expect to see a variety of whale behaviors, including breaching, tail slapping, and singing. The tours also offer the opportunity to see other marine life, such as dolphins, sea turtles, and a variety of fish.

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FUNFACTS:

- Humpback whales have relatively long lifespans, with some individuals living for up to 50 years or more.
- Humpback whales have remarkably large and efficient lungs, capable of holding up to 5,000 liters of air, allowing them to stay underwater for 15-30 minutes at a time.
- Humpback whales are one of the larger species of whales, typically ranging from 12 to 16 meters (40 to 50 feet) in length. They can weigh up to 30 metric tons (66,000 pounds).

[BOOK NOW](#)



29 SNORKELING

Thanks to the calmer waters within the bay, Vallarta provides an abundance of tranquil snorkeling options.

Among the top choices in the area are Los Arcos, Majahuitas, Mismaloya, Careyeros, and Colomitos. These locations showcase diverse underwater landscapes, predominantly characterized by rocky coral formations. If equipped with your own snorkeling gear, any rocky stretch along the coastline is likely to host a vibrant array of fish, ensuring an enjoyable experience.

While snorkeling, anticipate encountering a diverse array of marine life, including tropical fish, rays, and sea turtles. Numerous snorkeling tours and operators not only provide equipment but also offer valuable guidance and insights into the underwater world, ensuring an informative and secure time snorkeling.

However, guided tours are not obligatory for exploring the bay; there are plenty of independent options if you prefer a self-guided adventure. If you seek specific details on where to explore, feel free to reach out, and we'd be delighted to assist you. This is especially beneficial if you plan to use one of our boats, as it enables you to reach the most secluded and optimal waters for a memorable snorkeling experience.

FUN FACT:

- Water temperatures during high season months in Vallarta typically range from 75°F to 80°F (24°C to 27°C), making it comfortable for snorkeling.

[More Information: Palmara Yacht Charters](#)



30 PARASAILING/ BANANA BOAT (LOS MUERTOS BEACH)

Parasailing offers an exhilarating aquatic adventure, tethering you to a parachute-like canopy as you're towed behind a boat.

As the boat gains momentum, the canopy fills with air, effortlessly lifting you above the ground. From this vantage point, you'll be treated to breathtaking views of Vallarta, the Sierra Nevada mountains, and the aquamarine waters below — a perspective rarely witnessed by most. The sensation of soaring through the air, accompanied by the sights and sounds of the ocean, creates an indelible and unforgettable experience.

allows groups to share the excitement. The boat's speed while towing the banana floaty adds an extra layer of fun to the adventure. You can even opt to try both activities, making it a comprehensive and memorable water excursion for everyone involved.

[Directions: Los Muertos Beach](#)

Typically lasting 8-10 minutes in the air on average, this activity is located on the north side of Los Muertos Beach."

Trained staff oversee the experience, offering guidance, instructions, and ensuring the safety of your time in the air before safely guiding you back down to the beach.

If you prefer a communal experience, consider riding together on a banana floaty, especially when the water is calm. This option, organized by the same group that facilitates parasailing,



31 JET SKI

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If you're craving an adrenaline-pumping adventure, look no further than jet skiing. It's the perfect choice for those seeking a high-speed, action-packed experience. Imagine yourself racing across the waves, with the wind and water spray invigorating your senses, all while taking in the breathtaking coastal vistas.

Jet skiing in Puerto Vallarta offers the chance to test your skills, performing tricks like jumping waves and making sharp, exhilarating turns. Whether you're a seasoned rider or a first-time adventurer, jet skiing promises an electrifying way to savor the stunning beauty of Puerto Vallarta's bay.

Our guides explain how to use the jet ski properly, and how to remain safe at all times. The most common time frame to experience the jet ski is 30 minute or 1 hour time slots.

FUNFACT:

- The first personal watercraft was invented by Clayton Jacobson II in the 1960s. He called it a "water jet" and later founded the company Kawasaki Jet Ski, which is now a well-known brand in the industry.

[More Info & best prices:](#)

[Palmara Yacht Charters](#)



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32 FISHING

Puerto Vallarta is a popular destination for fishing, with its warm waters and abundant marine life. The area offers a variety of fishing opportunities, from deep-sea fishing in the open ocean, to inshore fishing inside the bay where the fish are still plentiful.

We offer fishing charters, from half-day trips to full-day or multi-day excursions. These trips typically include all the necessary equipment, bait, and licenses, as well as experienced crew and guides, who can help with local knowledge, fishing techniques, and safety. Some guests have been known to catch swordfish, sailfish, and countless mahi-mahi along with other varieties. Such varieties of fish in the Bay of Banderas include:

Yellowfin tuna, marlin, red snapper, triggerfish, damselfish, parrotfish, gobies, barracuda, and more.

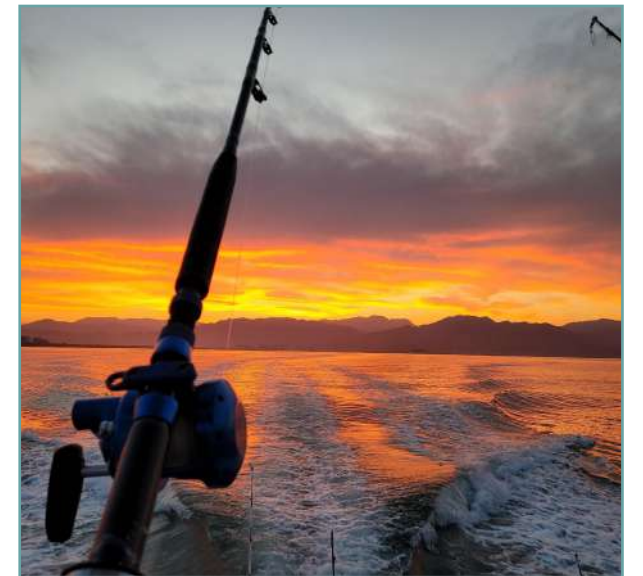
If you're able to catch some mahi mahi, there's not much better tasting ceviche than when it's freshly caught and prepared on the boat for you. Seriously, it might just be the best ceviche you've ever had in your life.

FUNFACT:

- Mahi-mahi are known for their rapid growth. They can grow up to 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) per week, making them an attractive target for sport and commercial fishing.

[More Info:](#)

[Palmara Yacht Charters](#)



33 MISMALOYA

Mismaloya was once a small fishing village, known for its abundant seafood and beautiful natural surroundings.

However things changed in the early 1960s, when the town gained international fame after it was featured in the film "The Night of the Iguana," starring Richard Burton and Ava Gardner. Mismaloya gained further fame in 1986/87 from the filming of "Predator" starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. Puerto Vallarta owes much of its fame to Mismaloya after the release of these two famous films.

Today, Mismaloya is home to a number of interesting attractions, including Mismaloya Beach, the Mismaloya River, Mismaloya Waterfall, and El Eden - a great place to relax and have a delicious lunch while taking in the sights of the jungle.

Nestled along the shoreline, the town boasts several quaint shops and restaurants that showcase a diverse range of local crafts and cuisine. Personally, one of my preferred snorkeling spots is the rocky expanse at Mismaloya Beach, where the tranquil waters exhibit exceptional clarity. The array of fish, especially the striking large blue spotted varieties, up close, is truly remarkable.

FUNFACT:

- The line "Get to the choppa!" from the film Predator became a popular catchphrase and is often associated with Schwarzenegger.



34 PUERTO VALLARTA BEACHES

PLAYA PALMARES

From the Hotel Zone down to Mismaloya

The main attraction drawing everyone to Vallarta is its stunning beaches. Interestingly, as you venture beyond Centro Vallarta (downtown), the water takes on an even more mesmerizing shade of blue and gains remarkable clarity.

Let's delve into the assortment of easily reachable and popular beaches stretching from Puerto Vallarta (Centro) down south, extending as far as Mismaloya (a mere 27-minute car ride from Centro Vallarta).

Playa Paredon: Playa Paredon is a hidden gem that's rapidly gaining popularity, especially among Instagram enthusiasts. This picturesque beach is framed by rocky cliffs, which provide a stunning backdrop for photos. Its tranquil atmosphere and shallow serene waters make it a fantastic spot for relaxation and snorkeling.

Las Gemelas: Las Gemelas, or "The Twins," are two small and idyllic beaches located close to each other. These beaches are celebrated for their calm and crystal-clear waters, perfect for swimming and snorkeling. Surrounded by lush greenery, they offer a peaceful escape from the city's hustle and bustle.

Playa Garza Blanca: Playa Garza Blanca is known for its soft, powdery sands and pristine waters. Nestled in a tranquil cove, this beach is an ideal spot for sunbathing and swimming. It's a peaceful destination where you can unwind and enjoy the natural beauty of the bay.

Playa Palmares: Playa Palmares boasts a long stretch of golden sand and offers panoramic views of the bay. It's a great place to take leisurely walks along the shoreline while relishing the scenic beauty that surrounds you. Palmares is often less crowded, allowing for a more intimate beach experience.

Punta Negra: Punta Negra is a hidden treasure known for its tranquil and secluded atmosphere. It's an excel-

PLAYA CONCHAS CHINAS

PLAYA PAREDON



lent spot for those seeking peace and quiet. The beach is surrounded by lush jungle, creating a serene, natural setting for relaxation and escape.

Playa Conchas Chinas: Playa Conchas Chinas is a charming beach with a touch of luxury. It's located in an upscale neighborhood and is known for its calm waters, making it ideal for swimming and paddleboarding. The picturesque surroundings make it a romantic spot for couples.

Amapas: Amapas Beach is a blend of natural beauty and the convenience of being close to Puerto Vallarta's Romantic Zone. This beach is famous for its golden sands, clear waters, and vibrant sunsets. It's a hub of activity, featuring beachside restaurants and water sports.

Los Muertos Beach: Los Muertos Beach is perhaps one of the most famous in Puerto Vallarta. It's a vibrant and lively beach located in the Romantic Zone. With numerous beachfront bars, restaurants, and water sports, it's a social hub. Definitely the beach with the most close by amenities.

Camarones: Playa Camarones is a family-friendly beach with calm waters and a relaxed atmosphere. It's a great place for swimming and building sandcastles. The nearby restaurants and cafes make it convenient for a day at the beach.

Las Glorias: Las Glorias Beach is known for its long and wide stretch of sand. It's also a fantastic place for long walks and beachcombing. The gentle waves are ideal for swimming and body surfing.

35 BOCA DE TOMATLÁN & COLOMITOS

Boca de Tomatlán, often affectionately known as "Boca," is the southern-most accessible point from Puerto Vallarta via the main highway 200.

It retains its traditional charm as a fishing village, offering a serene atmosphere for enjoying beachside drinks and a refreshing dip in the warm, blue-green waters. Many visitors choose to embark on day trips to Boca, reveling in its tranquil beauty until the sun sets, casting a golden hue over the Pacific.

If your journey extends beyond Boca to explore more southern villages and beaches like Yelapa, a boat becomes your trusty companion. Most travelers first arrive in Boca by car or bus, and then continue their adventure by taking a water taxi to reach their desired destinations.

Colomitos, a concealed treasure situated adjacent to Boca de Tomatlán, unveils its pristine beauty through a brief and picturesque jungle hike.

Follow the well-marked path through the lush jungle, and

you'll find yourself in the serene paradise of Colomitos. With an unobstructed view of the natural beauty, this tiny beach is a favorite escape for those seeking to reconnect with nature.

It's a place where you can truly unwind and relish the pure tranquility of the surroundings, making it a must-visit destination for anyone exploring the Puerto Vallarta region.

Colomitos beach now has a small bar with refreshments, so although we still recommend bringing a bag of essentials with you (water, sunscreen, etc), you can order a nice cold drink after your hike from Boca.

Directions: Boca de Tomatlan

Location: Colomitos Beach



BOCA DE TOMATLAN



COLOMITOS BEACH

36 CATAMARAN ADVENTURE

There's something special about traversing the ocean's surface on a catamaran compared to your traditional boat. Let's discuss what it's like and why it's different from a regular boat trip:

Comfort: Catamarans are known for their stability and ample deck space. You'll find plenty of room to move around, sunbathe, or just enjoy the open deck. The stability of a catamaran provides a smoother ride, which can be especially comforting for those who may get seasick on traditional boats.

Many catamarans come equipped with comfortable lounge areas, often with large nets stretched across the hulls where you can relax at the bow (front) while suspended just above the water. It's the perfect spot for sunbathing, stargazing, or simply enjoying the ocean breeze.

Catamarans often come with equipment for water activities such as snorkeling gear, paddleboards, and sometimes lily pads. You can explore the underwater world, paddle along the coastline, or enjoy a leisurely swim in the pristine waters.

Catamarans can be chartered privately for your group, providing an intimate and exclusive experience. You have the freedom to choose your itinerary, whether it's a day of exploring hidden coves, snorkeling at secluded spots, or simply cruising along the coast with a cold drink in hand.

Chef Service: Numerous catamaran charters in our selection come with the added luxury of an onboard chef. Indulge in the delight of delectable meals and snacks crafted exclusively for you. Whether it's savoring fajitas, guacamole, a personalized menu, or enjoying fresh ceviche and more, the

culinary experience is tailored to your preferences. Adding to the exceptional experience, it's not unusual to reel in a catch while on board and hand it over to the chef for a preparation of fresh ceviche – an unbeatable culinary delight!

The elevated vantage point on a catamaran provides unparalleled views of the coastline, the ocean, and any marine life you might encounter. It's a fantastic way to soak in the natural beauty of the destination.

Relaxation and Entertainment: Catamarans are designed for relaxation. You can lounge in the sun or find a shaded area to unwind. Many also have music systems, so you can enjoy your favorite tunes as you sail. Plus, there's often a friendly crew to attend to your needs.



Sunset cruises on a catamaran are an excellent way to experience the charm of the evening in Vallarta. As the sun dips below the horizon, the warm colors reflecting on the water create a breathtaking sight. It's a perfect setting for a romantic evening or a memorable celebration. A catamaran has proven to be a popular option for larger groups celebrating a bachelor party or birthday's.

[More Info & Booking: Palmara Charters](#)

FUN FACT:

- Catamarans typically have a shallow draft, which allows them to access shallower waters than monohull boats. This feature is advantageous for exploring coastal areas and anchoring in secluded coves.



37 PLAYA CAREYEROS

Careyeros beach is without question in our top 3 favorite beaches in the PV and Riviera Nayarit area.

Located in Litibu, just off the main road you'd take to get to Sayulita - Carreyeros is about an hour and fifteen minutes from Centro PV and 30 minutes by car from Bucerias to give you an idea.

This beach is worth the drive for a number of reasons. First, the color of the light blue waters and white sand are different from beaches found in PV. There isn't much development here either, making it feel more of a quick getaway into nature.

Second, when the conditions are right, this is a phenomenal snorkeling spot because of the many rocks on the far west side of the beach. Shallow waters around you make the snorkeling depth perfect for seeing life swimming all around you - while not feeling intimidated by the vast ocean depth experienced in other locations.

Lastly, this beach has little to no rocks where people swim, which makes it a great place for body surfing. The waves here are often perfect for long rolling waves, giving you the opportunity to body surf from far out, all the way into the shore.



Keep in mind that this beach doesn't have many facilities (except for El Barracuda, a charming beachfront restaurant), so come prepared with food, plenty of water/drinks, and an umbrella to protect you from the hot sun.

PRO TIP:

Wear a long sleeve shirt (UV protected is best), or put on effective sunscreen when snorkeling. Even on a cloudy over-cast day, people can suffer from second degree burns.

Clouds may block visible sunlight, but harmful UV rays can penetrate them, making it imperative to take preventive measures.

Directions: Careyeros Beach



38 YACHT CHARTERS

Renting a boat in Puerto Vallarta to explore Banderas Bay is always an incredible time and is arguably the best way to experience the natural beauty of the area.

The bay is known for its clear waters, lush tropical landscapes, and diverse marine life. We provide different types of boats, such as sailboats, motorboats, or luxury yachts, depending on your preferences and budget. Every boat comes with a captain, and yachts come with additional deckhand staff as well as chefs, bartenders, and massage therapists depending on the boat you choose.

This is the best way to explore the many inaccessible/hidden beaches, coves, and islands in the bay. Truly one of the most fun days you'll have on the water, swimming, snorkeling, and simply enjoying the scenery while aboard a luxurious vessel.

Many people take advantage of their charter and enjoy visiting private uninhabited beaches only accessible by boat - and with the added thrill of a high likelihood of encountering whales and dolphins up close, you have the freedom to pause and appreciate marine life at your leisure. This stands in stark contrast to organized commercial charters with rigid itineraries, where time constraints limit the flexibility of your exploration.

From sea turtles or a ballet (group) of manta rays swimming alongside your boat, you never know what you'll encounter. It's not uncommon for dolphins to actually swim with the boat too, using the wake of the boat to catch fish and play in the water.



For smaller groups looking to experience first-class service, we have a beautiful selection of boats with professional crews - and for large groups (40-50 people), we have boats to accommodate this need also. Many boats come with a tender (small shuttle boat) that transports your group from the yacht to the beach safely and effectively. So, if you see a beach you'd like to visit along your journey, let the captain know and you can explore untouched sands.

[More Info & Booking:](#)
[Palmara Yacht Charter](#)



BEACH WALK FROM NUEVO TO BUCERIAS/LA CRUZ

PALMARA

This beach stretches approximately 20 kilometers (12 miles) long, offering ample space for a leisurely stroll.

Unlike some of the more crowded and bustling beaches in Puerto Vallarta, the beach from Nuevo Vallarta to La Cruz is often quieter and less crowded - making it an ideal location for a peaceful and uninterrupted beach walk.

Along the way, you may encounter local vendors selling candy, fresh fruits (mango/pineapple usually), handcrafted jewelry and much more. It's an opportunity to engage with the culture, local artists, and maybe even practise your Spanish!

Your beach walk culminates in the fishing village of La Cruz de Hua-

nacastle. This picturesque town offers a marina, local markets, and a tranquil atmosphere. It's a great place to explore, dine, or watch the sunset over the bay.

The beach along this stretch is renowned for its spectacular sunsets. As the day draws to a close, the sky is painted with vibrant colors, creating a magical atmosphere.

Location: Public Access Starting Point in Nuevo

Note - Unless you are staying at a resort like Paradise Village (where the start of the beach begins), you'll have to start at Coco Beach where the public access entrance is.



PADDLEBOARD & KAYAK

PALMARA

Paddleboarding involves standing on a large, stable board, which is similar to a surfboard but wider and more buoyant.

The first challenge is finding your balance, but most people get the hang of it quickly, even if they're new to the sport.

If you take a paddleboard out in the morning off the shores of Bucerias, you may see dolphins swimming right next to you. It's an absolutely magical experience. Paddleboarding provides an excellent core workout, engaging your core muscles, as well as your legs, back, and shoulders.

The gentle rhythm of paddling on calm waters is incredibly relaxing, allowing you to unwind and clear your mind. When you're surrounded by water on your board, there's not much else you can do - which in itself is a unique experience.

Kayaking on the other hand offers

a more stable way to explore the bay and coastline. You can easily paddle through the crystal-clear waters, enjoying the scenic views and marine life around you with a bit more speed than paddleboarding. Both activities are excellent times out on the water and can be found for rent/use fairly easily.

FUN FACTS:

- Paddleboarding has ancient origins, with roots in Polynesian and Hawaiian cultures. It was used for transportation and as a sport, known as "Hoe he'e nalu."
- The word "kayak" comes from the Inuit language, where it originally referred to a hunting boat made of sealskin stretched over a wooden frame.



41 SCUBA DIVING

The Bay of Banderas boasts exceptional diving locations catering to both seasoned and novice divers.

Los Arcos stands out as one of Vallarta's premier diving destinations, renowned for its captivating underwater landscapes, accessible depths for beginners, and flourishing marine life, a testament to dedicated marine conservation efforts.

Another widely acclaimed site is the Marietas Islands, distinguished not only by its marine conservation initiatives, but also by the enchanting coral reefs and rocky underwater terrain surrounding the islands. Divers can anticipate encounters with a diverse array of species, including tropical fish, rays, whales, and sea turtles. The park is a haven for unique regional species like the Cortez rainbow wrasse and the Pacific seahorse.

For those eager to explore these underwater wonders, various dive shops throughout the city offer lessons, as well as the necessary equipment and boat transportation to reach the chosen dive spots.

FUNFACTS:

- "SCUBA" stands for "Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus," highlighting the equipment's self-sufficiency.
- The deepest scuba dive on record is 1,090 feet (332.35 meters) by Ahmed Gabr in the Red Sea in 2014. This is an extraordinary feat, as extreme depths can be perilous.
- Scuba diving as we know it today originated in the early 20th century with the development of the aqualung by Jacques Cousteau and Emile Gagnan. This invention made underwater exploration more accessible.



42 TURTLE HATCHING

Observing the hatching of turtles is a distinctive and exhilarating wildlife encounter, and this phenomenon is accessible in numerous locations around the bay.

In Puerto Vallarta, sea turtles typically lay their eggs and undergo the hatching process during specific times of the year, with slight variations based on the species. To provide a general guideline:

Olive Ridley Turtles: These turtles primarily nest from June to December, with the peak nesting season occurring from July to November. Hatching usually takes place around 45-55 days after the eggs are laid.

Leatherback Turtles: Leatherback turtles tend to lay their eggs from November to February. Hatching occurs approximately 60-70 days after the eggs are laid.

Loggerhead Turtles: Loggerhead turtles nest in Puerto Vallarta from April to September, with the majority of nesting happening in June and July. Hatchlings emerge around 50-70 days after nesting.

Turtles select sandy beaches for laying their eggs, and after a period of incubation, the eggs hatch, giving rise to baby turtles that embark on their journey to the sea. Along the coastal beaches in the region, the enchanting sight of dozens, or sometimes even thousands of baby turtles can be witnessed hatching and making their way to the water. The abundance of these hatchlings depends on the time of year and the specific location of the hatchery.

On the flip side, there's the captivating egg-laying process where mothers breach the water, meticulously dig a hole (a process taking about an hour), and lay the eggs (known as a clutch) before delicately covering the



hole with sand once again. This entire process is always a remarkable spectacle! If you're eager to witness the hatching, inquire about potential hatcheries in the vicinity of your stay; there could be one nestled along the beach nearby.

FUNFACTS:

- The number of eggs in a clutch can vary by species, with an average of 100 to 150 eggs. Leatherback sea turtles lay fewer, larger eggs compared to other species.
- Female sea turtles return to the same beach where they were born to lay their eggs. This homing behavior is still not completely understood by scientists.

43 SURFING: SAYULITA & PUNTA MITA

Located 45 minutes north of Puerto Vallarta, Sayulita is a small coastal town that despite its small size has a lot to offer visitors.

From its vibrant culture, to its delicious food and great nightlife, Sayulita has become the central hub for surfers visiting Mexico's west coast.

One of the first things you'll notice about Sayulita is its laid-back vibe. The town is known for its relaxed atmosphere and friendly locals, making it the perfect destination for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Whether you're lounging on the beach, strolling through the streets, or taking a yoga class, you'll find that the pace of life in Sayulita is slow and easy.

The town is home to a number of water sports companies that offer everything from surfing and paddleboarding, to snorkeling and scuba diving. Another aspect that makes Sayulita special is its food. The town is home to a number of excellent restaurants that serve a wide range of cuisines, from traditional Mexican dishes to international favorites. Many of the seafood restaurants source their fish from the local fishermen, making it a fresh and delicious option.

The annual surf competition is hosted here. Be sure to look online for the exact dates if you'd like to attend.



43

SURFING PART 2: LA LANCHA & PUNTA DE MITA

PALMARA

Numerous lesser-known spots along the coast near Sayulita offer ideal conditions for catching impressive swells.

While there are fantastic options north of Sayulita, let's delve into a more detailed exploration of the surfing experiences at La Lancha and Punta de Mita in Nayarit, both situated a few miles south of Sayulita.

La Lancha beach is known for its consistent waves and long rights (wave break that consistently peels from right to left), making it ideal for intermediate to advanced surfers.

On the other hand, Punta de Mita is known for its consistent surf and a variety of surf spots, including beginner-friendly waves. Both beaches offer beautiful scenery and a laid-back surf culture. The water temperature is warm, and the locals are friendly and welcoming to surfers.

The laid-back surf culture of Nayarit only adds to the enjoyment and creates a relaxed and carefree atmosphere. Whether it is your first time surfing or you are an experienced surfer, a day at La Lancha and Punta de Mita is sure to leave you with memories that will make you want to come back as soon as you can. Especially La Lancha. This is in my top three favorite beaches in the bay, and a place you just can't help but feel relaxed and more in tune with nature.

The great part of both Punta de Mita and La Lancha is the proximity from the beaches to the surfboard rental shops. You're able to rent boards in both locations and walk from the shop to the beach - so

the process is made real easy if you're in need of a board rental. For your convenience, here is some quick surfing terminology:

Duck Dive: Duck diving is a technique used to get a surfboard under an approaching wave when paddling out. It's essential for navigating through oncoming waves.

Barrel: A barrel, also known as a tube or pit, is a hollow section inside a breaking wave. Surfing inside the barrel is considered the ultimate thrill.

Break: The place where waves break is called a

"break." It can be beach breaks (waves breaking on sand), point breaks (breaking along a rocky point), or reef breaks (waves breaking over a coral reef).

FUNFACTS:

- Surfing made its debut in the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.
- Surfing originated in Hawaii, where it was an integral part of the culture. The ancient Hawaiians were among the first to ride waves on wooden boards.

Location: Punta de Mita (Stinky's)

Location: La Lancha



44 LEARN TO SAIL

Puerto Vallarta emerges as an ideal locale for sailing enthusiasts keen on honing their skills, thanks to its tranquil waters, balmy climate, and an array of sailing schools and experienced instructors ready to guide you through every stage of the learning process. Whether you're taking your first steps into sailing or seeking to refine your existing expertise, Puerto Vallarta caters to a diverse range of learners with various classes and courses tailored to your individual needs.

Numerous sailing schools and instructors in Puerto Vallarta specialize in introductory classes, covering fundamental aspects such as boat handling, navigation, and safety. These courses seamlessly blend classroom instruction with hands-on training on the water. As you explore different schools, it's beneficial to inquire about the type of sailboat used in the training, allowing you to research and familiarize yourself with the vessel beforehand.

FUNFACTS:

- Sailing has a rich vocabulary of unique terms, such as "tacking" (changing direction by turning the bow of the boat through the wind) and "jib" (a smaller foresail at the front of the boat).
- Sailboats have "windward" and "leeward" sides. The windward side faces into the wind, while the leeward side is sheltered from the wind.



ENTERTAINMENT & NIGHTLIFE (INDOORS)



45 LA BODEGUITA DEL MEDIO SALSA NIGHT

For an unparalleled experience of dancing to Cuban-style salsa, La Bodeguita unquestionably stands out as the premier destination in town.

Catering to dancers of all levels, from beginners to advanced, the venue boasts a diverse array of talented dancers and partners. Infused with vibrant energy, this restaurant hosts live bands several times a week, ensuring a lively and entertaining ambiance. If you're in the mood for an authentic Cuban cigar, they have a humidor on hand. Don't forget to leave your mark by signing your name on the wall or ceiling, a tradition embraced by thousands—if you can find a spot!

On the culinary front, La Bodeguita treats patrons to a menu brimming with Cuban and Caribbean delights. Classic Cuban cocktails like mojitos, daiquiris, and piña colodas are excellent here. Culinary highlights include dishes such as ropa vieja, Cuban sandwiches, and a selection of seafood.

Not limited to just dancing, La Bodeguita extends its offerings to salsa classes. Frequenting by the

city's finest dancers, this venue naturally provides some of the most exceptional salsa classes available. Immerse yourself in the lively atmosphere and revel in the expertise of the performers who regularly grace this vibrant establishment.

FUN FACTS:

- Salsa dancing is a popular dance style that originated in the Caribbean, particularly in Cuba and Puerto Rico. It evolved from a blend of various music and dance styles, including Afro-Cuban rhythms, Latin jazz, and Son Cubano.
- Salsa has two primary styles: Cuban (Casino) and New York. The Cuban style is more circular and incorporates Afro-Cuban movements, while the New York style is linear and emphasizes intricate turn patterns.

Directions: La Bodeguita



46 NIGHT CLUBS

If you're looking for a night out clubbing with a combination of reggaeton and electronic music to dance the night away, look no further than the many sought after night clubs in Vallarta.

You can't miss Zoo, La Vaquita, and Mandala since they're located right on the Malecon. Bar Morelos is located directly behind Mandala on Morelos Street, while Co:De is in the Romantic Zone. La Santa and Strana are more in the Hotel Zone side of Vallarta, north of downtown along the main highway.

Puerto Vallarta's nightlife kicks off fashionably late, typically igniting around 11 PM and carrying on well into the early morning hours. While the dress code at many clubs and bars leans towards casual, it's worth noting that certain venues may enforce a more formal attire

policy. Cover charges and drink prices vary from club to club, but as a rule of thumb, they generally align with what you'd find in North American cities.

It is important to note that while partying in Puerto Vallarta can be a lot of fun, it is important to be aware of your surroundings and take safety precautions, such as not leaving drinks unattended and not walking alone at night.

If you're looking to enjoy a different style of music and still dance, right around the corner from the clubs along the malecon is Yam Bak. With three different floors all exposed to the outdoors, you can

enjoy your artisanal beer while enjoying the fresh sea breeze. On weekends, Yam Bak hosts a DJ (House/Trance vibes often) on the middle floor which is a cool vibe if you're into some dancing.

The top floor is still a part of the vibe but with a more relaxed environment, allowing you more opportunity to have a conversation on the balcony and hang out where the music isn't as loud. This place tends to get busy and has become a popular spot - so get there around 9:30 or so before it gets crowded.

Location: Mandala Night Club

47 ACT 2 PV

ACT 2 PV is a popular theater and performing arts venue located in the Romantic Zone of Puerto Vallarta.

It offers a variety of live shows, including plays, musicals, concerts, and other performances like drag shows.

The cabaret shows at ACT2PV are the main attraction and feature talented performers singing and dancing to a variety of music genres, including Broadway show tunes, popular standards, and contemporary hits. The shows are high energy, colorful, and often include elaborate costumes and sets.

In addition to cabaret shows, ACT2PV also offers live music performances, featuring local and visiting musicians playing a range of styles, from rock and pop to jazz and blues. The venue also hosts comedy acts, ranging from stand-up comedy to improv, as well as drag shows, featuring talented drag performers putting on energetic and entertaining performances.

To catch a performance at ACT 2 PV, you have the option to either visit the theater's website or drop by the box office in person to secure your tickets. The theater's schedule is consistently updated, allowing you to check the website for the current lineup of shows and their respective timings.

Once you've obtained your tickets, arriving early at the theater gives you the opportunity to find your seat and indulge in a pre-show drink or snack at the bar. With comfortable seating and excellent sightlines, the venue offers a relaxed atmosphere for you to thoroughly enjoy the performance.

If you find yourself craving a bite either before or after the show, you're conveniently situated in an area with fantastic options—whether it's savoring street tacos around the corner or exploring more formal, sit-down dining choices.

Directions: ACT2PV



48 KARAOKE

If you're looking to sing, look no further than Centro Vallarta where you'll find most of the karaoke bars in Vallarta.

If you need some tequila to help loosen you up and get more in the zone to sing, don't worry you're in Mexico so there's plenty of tequila for that!

Listed below are some of the well known locations around the city to indulge in a fun night with friends, and the high chance of meeting new ones!

Karaoke Bars in Vallarta: [La Martina Karaoke](#), [Kooky Karaoke](#), [Karaoke Liberty](#), and [Monkey Business](#). In Nuevo Vallarta there's also [La Regadera](#). Most hours of operation are 8pm-4am, so karaoke bars are a perfect destination after the bar/club if you're looking to keep the night going.

FUN FACTS:

- Karaoke, which means "empty orchestra" in Japanese, was invented by Daisuke Inoue in Kobe, Japan, in the early 1970s. He created a machine that played instrumental tracks for customers to sing along with in bars.
- The Philippines is often referred to as the "Karaoke Capital of the World." Karaoke is an integral part of Filipino culture, and there are numerous dedicated karaoke bars and videoke machines in homes and public spaces.



49

MARIACHI/LIVE MUSIC

Experiencing mariachi music live is a must-do activity when visiting Mexico, and Puerto Vallarta is a great place to do so. In fact, the music genre has its roots not far from here, as it originated from Guadalajara, a short 4 hour drive away.

Mariachi is a traditional Mexican musical genre, characterized by its colorful and ornate costumes, lively rhythms, and soulful melodies. Many restaurants, bars, and other venues in the city offer

regular mariachi performances, so if you spend enough time in the city, you'll hear a number of live performances. Even when lounging on the beach, there are times when mariachi bands come and play to people (for a fee of course).

One such example where a fantastic mariachi band can be heard is visiting/having dinner at [Casa Kimberly](#) (as discussed in #6/100) on Tuesday and/or Friday evenings. Or in the Fluvial neighborhood, there's [Las Viudas de Zapata](#) which frequently

has live mariachi to entertain guests while they eat traditional Mexican cuisine.

As a thriving artistic city, Vallarta not only has mariachi, but excellent live performances with full band ensembles as well, most commonly found throughout Centro and Romantic Zone areas.

As for live music, there are plenty of restaurants that host live musicians on a regular basis. [Cuates y Cuetes](#) and all around the Romantic Zone area is full of talented live performers.



CASA KIMBERLY



FUN FACTS:

- The exact origins of mariachi music are debated, but it likely emerged in the Mexican state of Jalisco during the 18th century. It is believed to be a blend of indigenous, Spanish, and African musical influences.
- The iconic charro outfits, worn by Mariachi performers, are inspired by the traditional dress of Mexican cowboys known as "charros."



50 WATCH SPORTS AT A SPORTS BAR

Picture yourself enjoying a chilled beer, relishing delectable wings, and passionately cheering for your team as the warm breeze envelops you—right in the midst of winter.

Puerto Vallarta provides impeccable weather, elevating your sports-viewing experience with an additional layer of comfort.

Whether you're a die-hard football fan, a passionate basketball aficionado, a baseball enthusiast, or a dedicated hockey supporter, the American sports have a special place in the hearts of many. We also certainly can't forget about the PGA Tour and one of Mexico's favorites - Formula 1!

Rooting for your favorite team while away from home can be an exhilarating experience, and sports bars in Puerto Vallarta cater to those cravings.

Puerto Vallarta and Riviera Nayarit boast a variety of sports bars where you can catch the big games. From lively establishments in the Zona Romántica to beachfront venues in the Hotel Zone, Nuevo Vallarta to Bucerias and further north, there's a spot to suit every taste.

Many sports bars in Puerto Vallarta offer an extensive selection of beers, both local and international, to quench your thirst. From refreshing Mexican lagers to hoppy IPAs, there's a brew to satisfy every beer aficionado. Complement your drink with a plate of spicy, tangy, or savory wings, perfectly seasoned to tantalize your taste buds.

FUNFACT:

- Mexico's most watched sport is soccer. The country has their own professional league called Liga MX, which consists of 18 teams. Liga MX has attracted renowned international players over the years, and many Mexican talents have emerged from the league.
- Mexico has a proud history of success in the Olympic Games, winning medals in boxing, diving, and taekwondo. Mexico hosted the Summer Olympics in Mexico City in 1968, which was notable for the high-altitude conditions and iconic sporting moments.



51 BOARD GAMES NIGHT

It's always a fun night out with friends/family when everyone gets together at the boardgame restaurant "La Expedition."

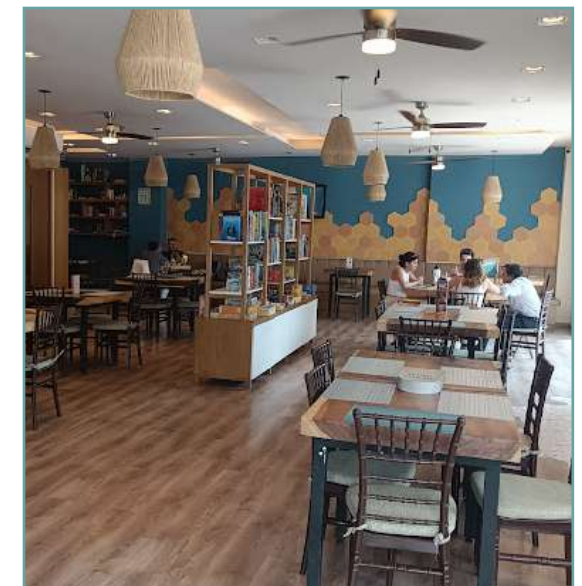
Located right by the Coppel off of the main road in the Hotel Zone, this place offers everyone something of all ages. With endless boardgames to choose from (hundreds of games literally), seriously if you don't know where to start, ask their employees for a suggestion. They can explain the game to you if you've never played before, which helps immensely because the most difficult thing with any game is to learn the rules.

Not only do they provide you with games, but they serve alcohol, food, and many different drinks like sodas, special coffees and snacks. The place is clean and very welcoming, located right next to a few fantastic taco locations outside as well, if everyone is craving some tacos afterwards (which is a common occurrence in Mexico).

FUNFACTS:

- The best-selling board game of all time is "Chess." It's estimated that over 1 billion people worldwide know how to play chess.
- The highest Scrabble score for a single word is 365 points. It was achieved by Karl Khoshnaw in 1982 for the word "CAZIQUES," which means native chiefs.

Directions: La Expedition



52 WATCH MOVIE AT VIP THEATRE

(and discount night)

For those looking for an enhanced movie experience, we recommend indulging in Cinépolis VIP theater at La Isla Shopping Mall. The Cinépolis VIP theater takes the experience to a whole new level of luxury. Step into a world of comfort and indulgence as you enter the VIP theater. The plush, spacious seating ensures optimal comfort throughout the movie. Sink into the cozy recliners, adjust the position to your liking, and prepare to be transported into the cinematic realm.

At Cinépolis VIP, the state-of-the-art sound systems and high-definition screens deliver an immersive audiovisual experience. The cutting-edge technology ensures that every dialogue, explosion, and musical score resonates with crystal-clear clarity, captivating your senses and enhancing the storytelling on the big screen. Prepare to be captivated by the breathtaking visuals and impeccable sound quality that brings movies to life.

The hallmark of the Cinépolis VIP experience lies in the

impeccable service and gourmet offerings. As you settle into your comfortable seat, a friendly and attentive staff member will be at your service throughout the movie. Gone are the days of traditional movie snacks – Cinépolis VIP offers a full menu of mouthwatering culinary delights. From appetizers to main courses and decadent desserts, the diverse menu caters to a variety of tastes and preferences. The best part? All your food and drinks are delivered right to your seat so you won't have to leave the movie and wait in line.

****On Tuesdays, La Isla has their discounted night, at 50% off their normal ticket price****

There are normal theaters as well at Lago Real Mall (Nuevo Vallarta), and at Galerías Mall (across from cruise ship port), and on Wednesday's provide an affordable and enjoyable cinema experience, for roughly \$2 USD a ticket.

84 // 160

85 // 160

FUN FACTS:

- "Cleopatra" (1963), starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton (discussed in #6/100), is known for its length. It is one of the longest mainstream films, running at over four hours.
- "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides" (2011) is often cited as one of the most expensive movies ever made, with a production cost of over \$378 million.

More Info:

[Cinépolis La Isla Tickets](#)

[Directions: La Isla Movie Theatre](#)



53 SHOPPING AT LA ISLA

La Isla is a popular shopping center located in the Hotel Zone area of the city, La Isla offers a variety of shops, restaurants, and entertainment options, making it a great destination for visitors and locals alike.

One of the highlights of La Isla is its beautiful waterfront location. The shopping center is situated on a small island in the Marina, and it offers stunning views of the water and the city. If you're looking for a Starbucks coffee, you can find that here amongst other great cafes and juice bars.

At La Isla, what makes the experience so charming is how you can seamlessly move from one store to another. The sun shines through, bringing warmth and a cool breeze, making it feel like you're shopping both indoors and outdoors at the same time.

When you're done shopping and are craving some delicious food, look no further than across the street. Campomar for its seafood and atmosphere, La Vaca for its Argentinian steak, and Dorothy/La Dolce Vita are all excellent choices for an exquisite dining experience!



Directions: La Isla Shopping Center

OUTDOOR

ENTERTAINMENT



54 ATV/SIDE BY SIDE OFF ROADING

An ATV and off-roading experience in a side-by-side vehicle (4 seater) in Puerto Vallarta is a thrilling and adventurous way to explore the surrounding jungle landscape (depending on the tour you choose).

You can cross Jorullo Bridge (470 meters in length and 150 meters in height). With the canopy of the jungle down below and all around you, this is a wild experience, and certainly a memory you'll keep forever.

Expect a mix of challenging terrain, steep inclines, and bumpy roads, as well as breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. Depending on the time of year, you could luck out and get to drive through lots of mud. The experience can be physically demanding, but also offers an adrenaline rush and a sense of excitement as you navigate through the rough terrain.

The tour companies provide you with: a helmet, goggles, and a bandana to protect yourself from all the dust/

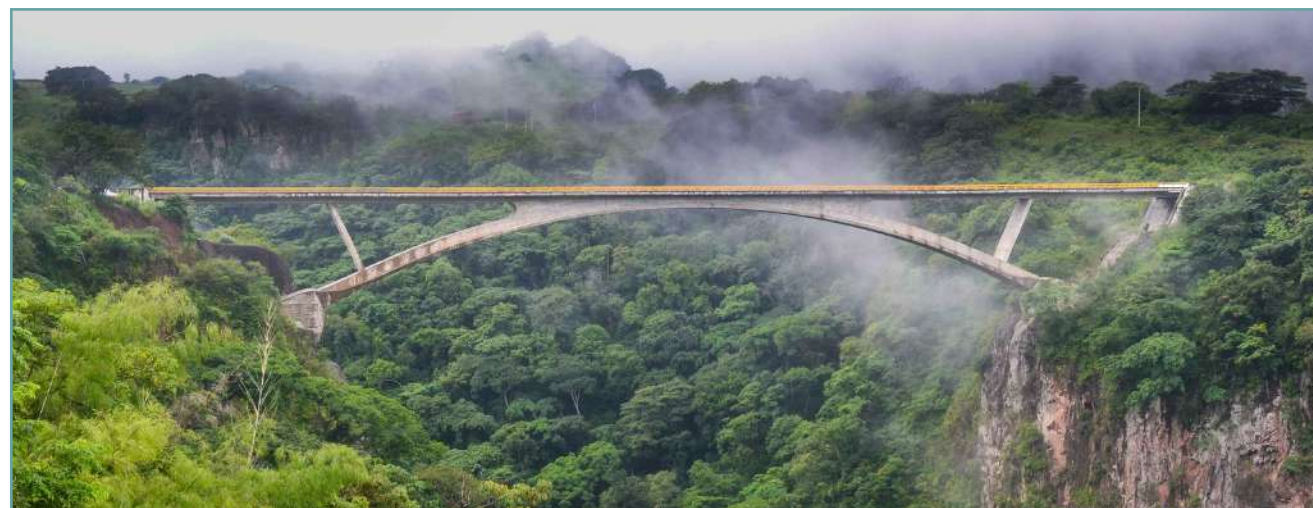
dirt, so they'll make sure your trip is thrilling but also comfortable.

Since there are a number of tour companies that offer ATVing and side by sides through the jungles of PV, each tour will have other options you can partake in while in the jungle.

FUNFACT:

- The longest suspension bridge in the world was the Akashi Kaikyō Bridge in Japan, also known as the Akashi Strait Bridge. It has a main span of approximately 1,991 meters (6,532 feet).

Location: Jorullo Bridge



55 HORSEBACK RIDING

Horseback riding around Vallarta is a great way to explore the natural beauty of the area, especially in places that can be too difficult to walk (shallow rivers, mud, steep inclines). The region's hilly terrain, lush tropical forests, and picturesque beaches make for a perfect setting for horseback riding.

In Puerto Vallarta, you'll find a plethora of tour operators offering horseback riding experiences. From leisurely beach rides to thrilling mountain adventures, there's something for everyone. Explore winding trails, traverse mountain slopes, and ford shallow rivers for an unforgettable journey into the heart of nature.

Most tour operators provide well-trained and well-cared for horses, and will make sure you have a safe and enjoyable ride. Safety is a top priority, so riders are provided with helmets (in most cases), and a safety briefing before the ride. It's best to wear long pants and closed-toe shoes for the ride.

It's also recommended to book in advance, especially during the high season, and to check for the tour operator's reputation, horses condition and safety measures.

FUNFACTS:

- Hernán Cortés, the Spanish explorer, is credited with bringing horses to Mexico when he arrived in the early 1500s.
- There are over 300 different horse breeds world wide
- Jalisco Mexico is often referred to as the "Land of the Charros" due to its deep-rooted equestrian culture. The charro is a skilled horseman and a key figure in Mexican rodeo.





ROMANTIC SUNSET DINNER OR OVERNIGHT CHARTER

A romantic yacht charter under the stars with a private chef as part of an overnight trip - or a delightful sunset dinner for two. Which one appeals more to you?

Imagine sailing away on a luxurious yacht, gently rocking on the tranquil waters of the bay. Your private chef, skilled in crafting delectable gourmet dishes, prepares a memorable multi-course dinner just for the two of you (or with guests of course). The yacht features open-air dining with a beautifully set table, complete with candlelight and elegant tableware. As you dine, the soothing sound of the waves provides the soundtrack to your romantic evening.

After dinner, retire into a luxurious cabin designed for comfort and intimacy. The cabin is adorned with soft, high-quality linens, plush pillows, and all the amenities you need for a restful

night's sleep. As you wake up, the sun's first rays over the ocean greet you. Breakfast, lovingly prepared by your chef, is served on the deck, allowing you to relish the breathtaking morning views. The day is yours to explore the coastline, swim, or simply bask in each other's company.

For a shorter but equally enchanting experience, picture a romantic dinner on the yacht during sunset as it gently rocks on the tranquil waters. Your private chef creates a culinary masterpiece designed to impress your taste buds.

After the meal, you can stargaze on the deck, sipping on your favorite wine

or champagne. The yacht provides a front-row seat to the celestial spectacle above. It's an ideal setting for romantic conversations, making cherished memories, and celebrating a special occasion.

Whether you choose an a romantic yacht experience with a private chef offers an unforgettable journey that combines luxury, culinary excellence, and the beauty of the open sea to create lasting moments of love and connection.

[More Info: Palmara Charters](#)

RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT

An unforgettable experience is witnessing the Rhythm of the Night show "Alma."

The tour begins with a sunset cruise along the coast of Puerto Vallarta where you can enjoy the sunset, music, and drinks aboard the boat. As the sun sets, the catamaran will anchor in the private cove (Las Caletas), where you'll be greeted by tiki torches and candles that light the path.

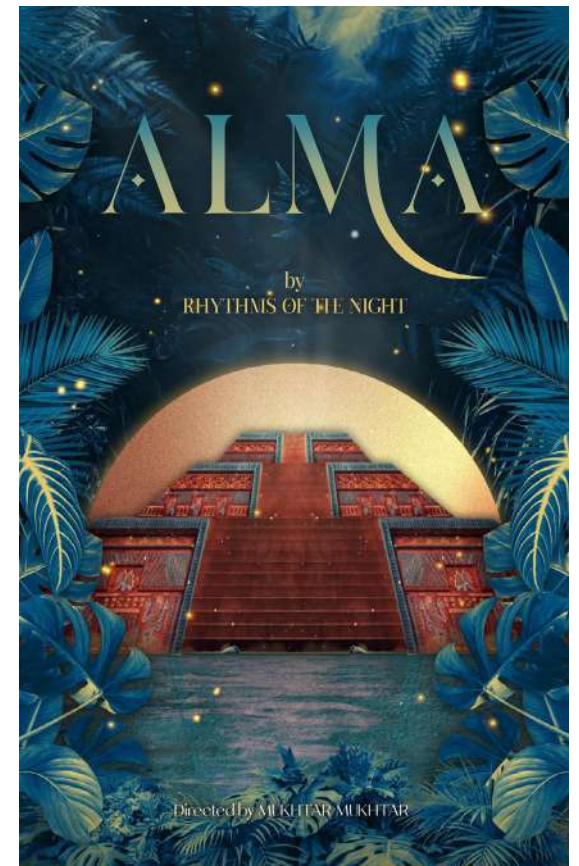
This has become one of the most popular evening shows in Puerto Vallarta that typically combines elements of dance, music, and theater to tell a story. The performance showcases Mexican culture and folklore, and features traditional Mexican dance styles such as salsa, mariachi, and flamenco. The show typically takes place in the evening and lasts around 2 hours.

Audience members can expect an immersive and high-energy performance, with stunning visuals, lively music, and talented dancers similar to that of cirque du soleil.

You'll also experience exquisite cuisine during your time at Las Caletas, adding to the unique experience. This is one you won't want to miss!

[Tickets: Alma Show](#)

[Location: Las Caletas Beach](#)



58 RAZORS/ BUGGIES ON THE STREET

Renting razors (off-road vehicles similar to side by sides) in Puerto Vallarta is an adventurous way to explore the beautiful scenery and rugged terrain of the surrounding area.

With a razor, you can access areas difficult to reach by foot or traditional vehicles, such as beaches, mountains, and forests - but most people simply stick to paved roads.

The experience of renting a razor can vary depending on the company and package you choose. Some rental companies offer guided tours with experienced guides who will take you to the best spots and provide safety tips along the way. Others offer self-guided rentals for those who want to explore at their own pace.

You may notice these vehicles throughout the city with their brightly multicolored LED lights and loud music as they pass by you. Equipped with an incredible sound system, it's extremely satisfying to blast the music of your choice as you rip through the city with the wind blowing in your hair. It's basically guaranteed fun, so you can't go wrong with this choice.

Now switching gears to the Buggy Car. A similar experience to the razor but with some inherent differences. Mostly the ride quality, since you're seated lower to the ground, and its off road capabilities aren't the same. It's still a great time, just a different type of ride.

Renting buggy cars in Puerto Vallarta is certainly a unique way to explore the city and its surroundings too. Buggy car rentals in Puerto Vallarta are available for both half-day and full-day rentals, and are relatively easy to drive.

Both have similar features but the Razor is definitely a more "wow" factor type of vehicle. You'll see what we mean when you witness one of these in person.

More Info: [PV Cool Rentals](#)

More Info: [Buggy Town](#)



59 PIRATE CRUISE DINNER & LIVE SHOW

Embark on a captivating journey the moment you step onto our meticulously crafted pirate ship, carefully replicated to evoke the essence of a genuine buccaneer vessel.

Upon boarding, a spirited crew welcomes you, donned in authentic pirate costumes, breathing life into the experience. Committed to staying in character throughout the excursion, they infuse an authentic touch, ensuring your journey feels like a genuine step back in time.

The pirate ship excursion is far from a simple boat ride. Instead, it's a full-fledged adventure. Throughout the cruise, you'll enjoy a variety of engaging activities, including sword fighting demonstrations, treasure hunts, and swashbuckling contests. The crew encourages passenger participation, making it an interactive and entertaining experience for all ages.

The highlight of the excursion is the live pirate show. The crew stages a thrilling performance, complete with cannon blasts, dramatic sword fights, and a spectacular fireworks display that lights up the night sky. This show not only provides entertainment but also offers a fun way to learn about the history and culture of pirates in the region.

As you enjoy the cruise, a delicious meal awaits. Traditional Mexican dishes, rich in flavor and culture, are served on board. You'll dine alongside the pirate crew and fellow passengers, creating a convivial atmosphere that encourages camaraderie and new friendships.

The pirate ship excursion is family-friendly, making it a great choice for those traveling with children. The engaging activities and lively crew appeal to kids and adults alike.



This excursion is a must-do activity in Puerto Vallarta, combining history, entertainment, and natural beauty into a memorable adventure. Remember to book your tickets in advance, as the pirate ship tours tend to fill up quickly due to their immense popularity.

FUNFACTS:

- The "Jolly Roger," a black flag with a white skull and crossbones, became the universal symbol of piracy. It was raised to intimidate targets into surrendering without a fight.
- Pirate ships were most prominent during the "Golden Age of Piracy," roughly spanning from the late 17th century to the early 18th century. In fact, it is said that pirates would attack the shores of Puerto Vallarta during the colonial era.



60 LOS ARCOS AMPHITHEATER SHOW

As you walk the Malecon and come to the arches (Los Arcos) next to the water, you may be in for a treat.

This outdoor amphitheater has spectacles of all kinds meant for the whole family. Anything from comedy routines, magicians, native dances, singers, full bands, and more!

You never know what you'll get, so being around the area as nightfall approaches is never a bad place to be. With countless restaurants and bars surrounding the arches amphitheater, you have some

fantastic options for dinner before and/after the live performance. Often there are vendors selling snacks like cotton candy and potato chips throughout the show as well.

There's no better place to watch a live performance than right there next to the rolling waves of the bay. The best part is, you can come and go as you please. There's no pressure to stay if you feel like moving on. But if you have kids especially, this is an excellent (and

free) way to entertain the family when walking around downtown. This is a place to buy local artwork as well. Usually artists display their paintings and work all around the amphitheater.

Directions:

[Los Arcos Amphitheater](#)



61 CROC VIEWING AREA

The crocodile viewing area is located near the Puerto Vallarta International Airport, making it easily accessible for those arriving or departing from the city.

It's situated in the vicinity of the Ameca River, a perfect habitat for crocodiles to live comfortably. To ensure the safety of visitors and to offer a close-up view of the crocodiles, there are observation platforms and walkways set up. These platforms provide a secure vantage point for observing the crocodiles in their natural habitat, surrounded by lush vegetation, and other wildlife and bird species in the vicinity.

The crocodile viewing area is not just about entertainment; it also offers an educational experience. Informational signs and guides are usually available to provide insights into the crocodiles' behavior, habitat, and their significance in the ecosystem. You may see crocodiles throughout your travels in Vallarta, but this is the place you can see the most in one place safely.

The crocodile habitat is not only for public enjoyment but also plays a role in conservation efforts. By providing a protected area for crocodiles, it contributes to preserving the species and maintaining the balance of the local ecosystem.

Lastly, there is often no entrance fee. It's a cost-effective and enjoyable attraction for families and individuals. It goes without saying, but be careful at all times and pay close attention to your surroundings when walking around the area.

FUN FACTS:

- Many crocs can live for several decades in the wild, with some individuals reaching 70 years or more.

- They can hold their breath for extended periods, sometimes up to 2 hours, while only needing to blink a few times per hour.
- Crocodiles have several unique features, including a third eyelid (nictitating membrane) that protects their eyes while underwater, and specialized glands on their tongue for excreting excess salt.

Directions: [Croc Viewing Area](#)

Directions: [El Cora Crocodile Sanctuary](#)



62 GOLFING

Golfing in Puerto Vallarta might just be the most underrated thing to do in Puerto Vallarta.

Millions of people come from all over the world to experience Vallarta's incredible beaches, nightlife, and experience Mexican culture. But if you're a golfer, you're in for a pleasant surprise.

Vallarta and its surrounding areas boast golf courses that rival some of the finest in the US and across the globe. Despite the world-class quality, golfing in Puerto Vallarta remains a relatively undiscovered gem, making it an exclusive and distinctive experience that has yet to fully capture public attention.

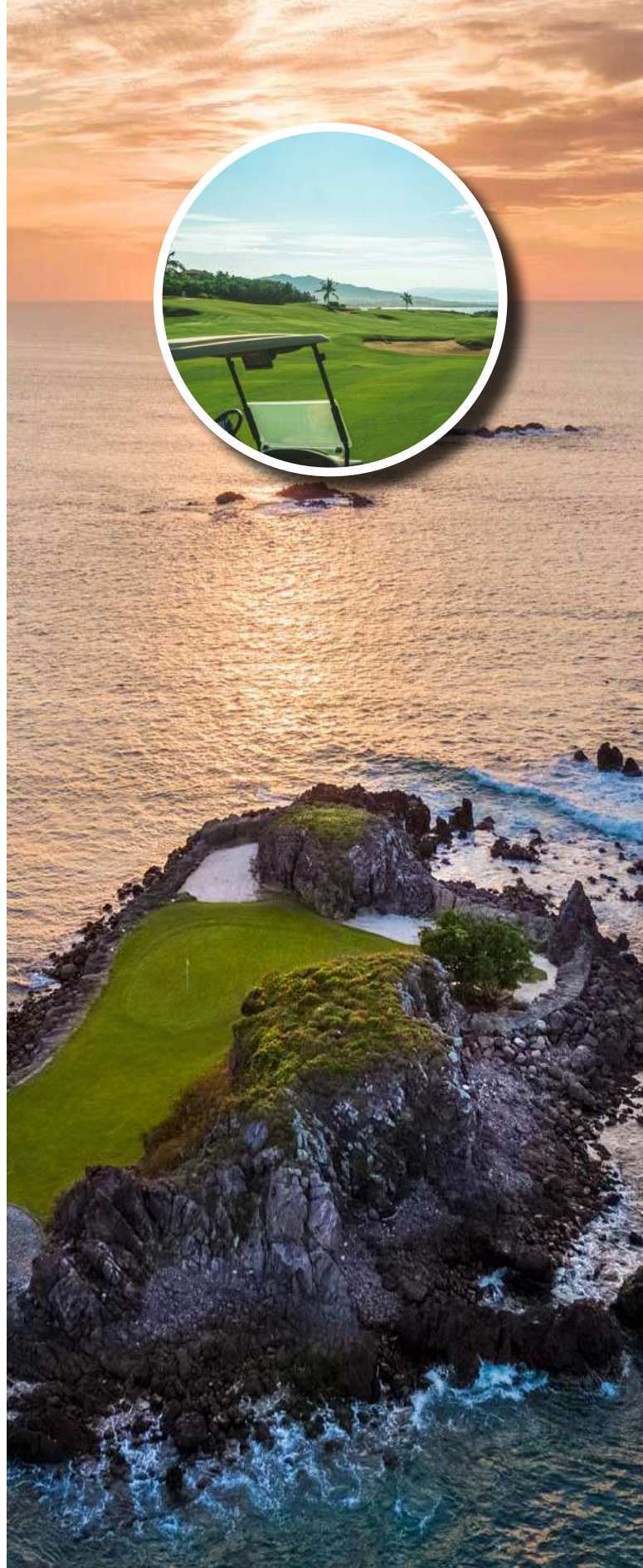
Here is a list of the courses in the Vallarta region:

- Marina Vallarta Golf Club
- Vista Vallarta Golf Club
- Litibu Golf Course
- El Tigre Golf & Country Club
- Punta Mita Golf Club
- Vidanta Golf
- Flamingos Golf Club

With its stunning scenery, challenging courses, and top-notch facilities, you're sure to have an unforgettable golfing experience here. Golfing in Puerto Vallarta won't be staying under the radar for long, and you'll see why. The variety and scenery of these courses is a golfer's dream.

FUN FACTS:

- The Mexico Open at Vidanta is a PGA Tour event held annually at the Vidanta Vallarta golf course in Nuevo Vallarta, and is a part of the official FedEx Cup rankings.
- The odds of making a hole in one for an average golfer are estimated to be about 12,500 to 1.
- The term "caddie" originated from the French word "cadet," which means a young gentleman. In the early days of golf, cadets often carried golf clubs for aristocrats.



FOOD
&
DRINK

63 STREET TACOS

(can you try them all)?

While conquering every street taco vendor and restaurant in PV might be a lofty goal, what you can certainly accomplish is indulging in the diverse array of taco varieties available. For aficionados of spicy cuisine, Puerto Vallarta is a haven.

Most vendors boast their own distinctive homemade salsas, allowing you to customize each taco with a flavorful kick. So, dive into the taco scene and relish the multitude of options awaiting your taste buds.

The most traditional street taco in Puerto Vallarta is the "**al pastor**" taco, made with pork marinated in adobo spices, then cooked on a vertical spit, similar to shawarma. The meat is thinly sliced and served on a small corn tortilla with cilantro, onions, and a squeeze of lime.

Another popular street taco here is the "**carnitas**" taco, made with slow-cooked pork that's crispy on the outside and tender on the inside. It's usually served with salsa and lime.

Then there's tacos de **birria** (signature dish of Jalisco), which is a type of meat stew (beef or goat/lamb usually) cooked with a variety of chiles and spices, which gives it a rich red color. The dish is often used to make tacos, which are made by filling tortillas with the juicy meat from the stew.

The tortillas are then fried in a small amount of the fat that rises to the top of the stew, giving them a crispy texture and appearance (known as "**dorado**" in Spanish - which translated means "golden" in English).

When served, the tacos are typically accompanied by a flavorful broth from the stew called "**consomé**." Even for those out there who aren't big soup lovers, this is an absolute must try.

If we were to mention all of the varieties of tacos just in Puerto Vallarta, it would quickly add up to the length of a small novel. But these are certainly the must-try tacos in the city and in the bay of Banderas. However I must mention these tacos too are excellent and all worth trying if you're able to see them on your adventures:

- **Arrachera** - arrachera is a well-known cut of beef in Mexico, typically found in high-end taco restaurants and is often the most expensive option on the menu. Made from flank steak, which is thinly sliced and cooked to be slightly pink in the middle. The steak is then cut into strips and served on a tortilla. This type of taco is particularly popular in Northern cities like Tijuana and Monterrey, but can also be found in upscale taco restaurants in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Puerto Vallarta.
- **Bistec** - bistec is a type of street taco that is made with steak. The steak is usually sliced thinly and cooked quickly on a flat top griddle.
- **Barbacoa** - barbacoa is a method of cooking where meat is roasted over a long period of time in a pit or open fire. In recent times, barbacoa mostly refers to a specific type of taco made from lamb or goat meat, but it can also be made with beef,



TACOS DE BIRRIA & CONSOME



a delicacy and is often served at big parties or celebrations. It is not typically a regular dish as it takes a long time to prepare.

- **Suadero** - suadero is a type of beef that comes from a specific part of the cow, located between the leg and belly. It's generally slow-cooked together with other cuts of meat in animal fat. The result is a very tender meat, with a texture similar to room temperature butter. It has a strong beef flavor and can be a bit greasy due to the fat from the meat.
- **Carnitas** - carnitas, also known as "little meats," is a type of taco filling made from pork. Carnitas are often made from pork shoulder, also known as pork butt. The meat is typically cut into chunks, seasoned, and then slow-cooked.
- **Tacos Dorados** - tacos dorados are similar to hard shell tacos, and are often filled with a variety of meats like barbacoa or chicken. They can be prepared in two different ways. One way is that the tortilla is filled with meat and then closed and fried with a toothpick. The other way is that the tortilla is filled with meat and rolled up like a flute and then fried. Tacos dorados are typically served crispy and garnished with cream, lettuce, and cheese on top.

Lastly, aside from tacos, many of these places will offer a torta - which is another famous street food in Puerto Vallarta. A torta is simply a Mexican sandwich typically made with a bolillo roll and filled with various meats, cheese, avocado, lettuce, and tomato. The "torta ahogada" is a specialty of Guadalajara, Jalisco, and consists of a pork meat sandwich, covered in a red tomato sauce.

FUN FACTS:

- The word "taco" is believed to have originated from the Nahuatl word "tlahco," which referred to a piece of tortilla wrapped around food.
- Mexico City holds the record for the largest number of tacos consumed in a day. In 2011, the city set the world record by serving over 160,000 tacos in a 24-hour period.





64 DINNER ON THE BEACH

Given Puerto Vallarta's reputation for its exquisite beaches, what more fitting way to relish them than through a gastronomic delight?

Numerous establishments in the Romantic Zone, situated along Los Muertos beach in proximity to the Los Muertos Pier, provide a distinctive culinary experience—dining directly on the beach. These establishments boast meticulously curated outdoor seating arrangements right on the sand. It's a culinary affair that seamlessly merges the allure of the beach with a delectable dining experience.

The ambiance is laid-back and casual, with the sound of the waves and the warm sea breeze providing the perfect backdrop for a romantic dinner (or proposal setting), or simply a fun night out with friends/family.

Many of the menus feature a mix of Mexican and international dishes, with an emphasis on seafood (we always recommend the fresh mahi mahi caught that day). All in all, dining on the beach in Puerto Vallarta is a unique and unforgettable experience. Whether you're looking for a casual, laid-back atmosphere, or a more upscale dining experience, you'll find it here. The sound of the waves, the sand between your toes, and the sea breeze make it an unique and pleasant experience you will most certainly enjoy!



65 TEQUILA TASTING



You haven't experienced Mexico fully unless you've tried some tequila!

With plenty of tequila specialized shops along the malecon, throughout the marina and in various spots around the bay, you can't miss an opportunity to try several varieties.

make their drinks taste smoother than with blanco tequila.

Añejo (extra-aged): Añejo tequila is aged for at least one year, often in oak barrels previously used for aging whiskey or wine. It has a complex and rich flavor, with notes of caramel, vanilla, and spice.

Remember, tequila is traditionally sipped, not taken as shots. You'll learn to appreciate the aroma, taste, and finish of each tequila.

Extra Añejo (ultra-aged): Extra Añejo tequila is aged for at least three years, and has a deep, rich, and complex flavor with hints of wood, fruit, and spice. If you can get your hands on this, it's well worth the try - because if you've never had this, it's a rich flavor and so ultra smooth that even people generally not into tequila enjoy its taste!

Here are the general varieties of tequila you'll find:

Blanco (white): Blanco tequila is unaged and has a clean, crisp, and slightly sweet flavor. It is often used in cocktails, such as margaritas and palomas.

Reposado (aged): Reposado tequila is aged for at least two months, typically in oak barrels. It has a smooth, mellow flavor with hints of wood and vanilla. Many choose reposado as a sipping tequila, but it is a favorite among most bartenders to help

In Vallarta, you'll also find a ton of juices and mixes infused with tequila. So in case pure tequila is too strong for you both in alcoholic content and flavor, there are plenty of other tamer varieties to satisfy you.



FUN FACTS:

- Tequila and mezcal are both agave-based spirits, but they have distinct differences. Tequila can only be made from blue agave, while mezcal can be produced from various agave species. Mezcal often has a smokier flavor due to its production process.
- Traditional tequila production involves using a tahona, a large stone wheel, to crush the agave fibers. This method is labor-intensive but is believed to contribute to a distinct flavor profile.

66 RESTAURANTS WITH THE BEST VIEWS

Explore the city's finest dining tables, each offering breathtaking vistas for a truly special dinner. Let's go over some of the most notable establishments.

For a dining experience high up in the hills with a panoramic view of Puerto Vallarta and the ocean, head to **La Carmelita**. Secluded and tranquil, you'll be treated to spectacular views while enjoying a glass of wine. The atmosphere at La Carmelita is cozy and welcoming, with a rustic decor that adds to the charm of the restaurant. Guests can choose to dine inside or outside on the terrace, which offers stunning views of Puerto Vallarta and the surrounding hillsides. Some of the standout menu items include the coconut shrimp and the ribeye steak with chimichurri sauce.

La Cappella offers a stunning view of Puerto Vallarta's most iconic building, the Catedral de Guada-

lupe. Located in Centro, this restaurant is perfect for a romantic evening with a close-up view of the beautifully adorned church, especially at night. The restaurant is known for its Mediterranean cuisine, which includes a variety of fresh seafood, pasta dishes, and creative salads. One of the most popular items on the menu is the grilled octopus, which is served with roasted vegetables and a delicious chimichurri sauce. The restaurant also has an extensive wine list, featuring bottles from around the world that pair perfectly with the menu items.

Barcelona Tapas, situated in Cinco de Diciembre, offers a variety of tapas while overlooking the city and Bahía de Banderas. Each floor offers a different view



LE KLIFF



LA PALAPA

of the city, making it a great spot for a casual meal with friends or a romantic date. As the name suggests, the word "tapas" is a Spanish term referring to a type of small dishes or appetizers typically served in bars and restaurants.

The word "tapas" literally translates to "cover" or "lid" in English, and the name originally came from the practice of serving small snacks on top of a drink to keep insects out of the glass.

Le Kliff, located between Conchas

Chinas and Mismaloya, is named after its location on the side of a cliff. With breathtaking views of Los Arcos in the distance and the ocean just steps away, it's an ideal spot for a romantic dinner or special occasion. But the food at Le Kliff is just as impressive as the views.

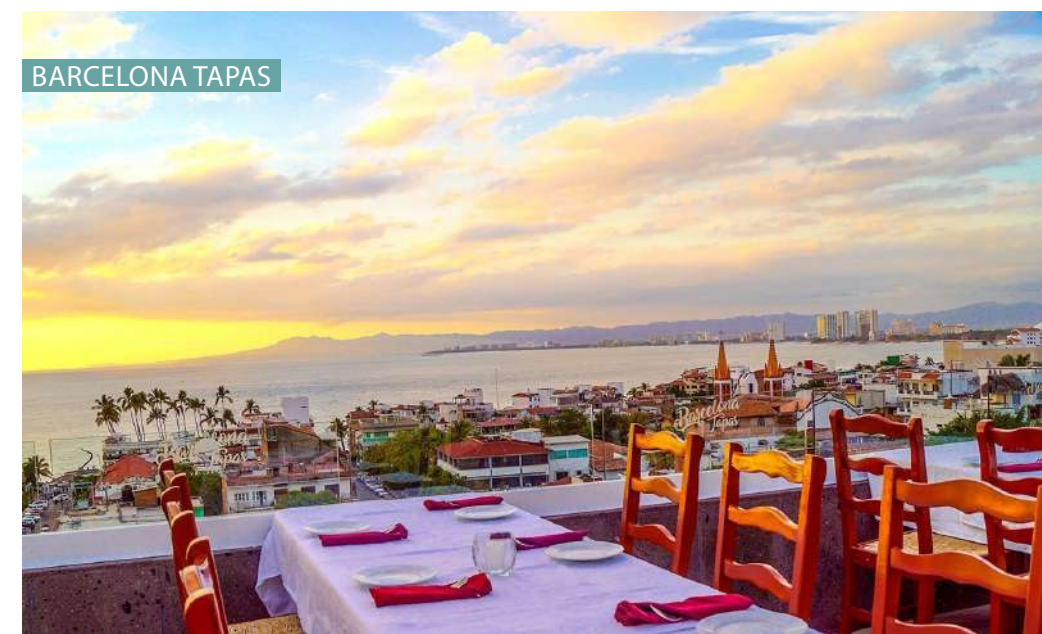
The menu features a range of gourmet dishes, including fresh seafood, tender meats, and innovative vegetarian options. Some of the standout dishes include the octopus carpaccio, the lobster ravioli, and the filet mignon with truffle sauce.



INSU SKY BAR



IK BAR



BARCELONA TAPAS

67 CAFÉS & COWORKING SPACES

Discover coffee shops for either your daily caffeine fix, or the ideal location for digital nomads seeking a dynamic workspace.

Many cafes in Vallarta provide co-working spaces, fostering a social atmosphere where you can work and connect with like-minded individuals. These spots not only offer a comfortable work environment, but also serve as great places to meet locals and fellow expats living and working in Vallarta.

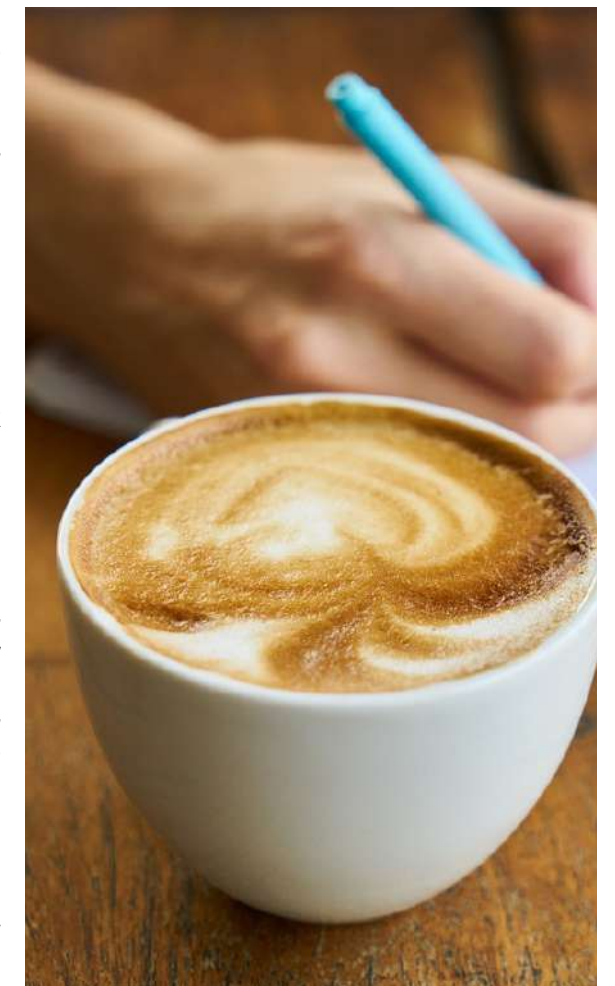
Furthermore, the coffee culture in Vallarta has evolved to incorporate a wholesome alternative—reishi mushroom coffee. This distinctive addition to the menus across the bay offers an excellent choice for individuals desiring a coffee experience minus the caffeine kick and its potential acidic impact.

If you enjoy reading, there's a café in Marina Vallarta called the [Living Room](#) with a full bookstore, offering amazing drinks while you explore their book collection (both in Spanish and English). It's a relaxing atmosphere, and another excellent spot for meeting new like minded book/coffee enthusiasts.

Use maps to find the best cafes around your neighborhood, or walk around during the daytime. You're bound to find one!

FUN FACTS:

- The ganoderma/reishi mushroom is considered an adaptogen, which means it helps the body adapt to stress and maintain balance. Drinking a coffee with this mushroom infused significantly boosts your immune system.
- It's estimated that people around the world consume over 2.25 billion cups of coffee every day.
- Coffee is believed to have originated in Ethiopia.



[More Info: HEALTHY REISHI COFFEE](#)

IK Mixology Bar & Cuisine, is known for its creative cocktails and trendy atmosphere. The bar features a sleek and modern decor, with comfortable seating and dim lighting that creates an intimate ambiance. They offer seating upstairs or right on the beach. In fact, you may see a proposal here quite often. The romantic setting on the sand and the lighting make for an incredible location for a proposal.

The bartenders here are highly skilled and passionate about mixology. They use fresh ingredients and premium spirits to craft unique and flavorful cocktails. Some popular drinks on the menu include the Mezcal Fashioned, the Elderflower Spritz, and the Watermelon Margarita. The view here is much closer to the water than the other restaurants listed above, and in fact is right on the water overlooking the famous Los Muertos Pier. The night I had the seafood pasta here was something else. The best seafood pasta I've had not only in Vallarta, but anywhere. The flavor of the sauce (I asked for some chili to be added) was perfect!

Insu Sky Bar, located in Nuevo Nayarit, this rooftop tapas bar is a fantastic setting for watching the sun dip below the horizon. With incredible cocktails and tapas, this is one of the best date night spots in Nuevo. The location right on the ocean above the rest of the surrounding area is a treat. Even the elevator to take you there is encased in a glass wall, allowing you to see the Nuevo Nayarit all around you as you rise to the top floor.

While there are plenty of restaurants in Puerto Vallarta with nice views, these hand-picked restaurants stand out for their delectable cuisine and unforgettable vistas.

68 FARMERS MARKET

For those staying downtown, explore vibrant local farmers' markets offering fresh ingredients sourced just a short drive away.

While numerous spots in tourist-frequented areas offer fresh local produce, key locations include the Romantic Zone, Bucerias (Sunday market), Nuevo (in Jarretaderas on Tuesdays), and La Cruz. If you're settling in for a few weeks, inquire with locals to discover the closest market and its specific operating day in your neighborhood. Each area designates a particular day when these markets come alive in the morning. Step away from the routine of grocery shopping under harsh fluorescent lights. Instead, relish the outdoor experience of purchasing locally harvested ingredients directly from Mexican farmers.

Downtown adds an extra charm with local vendors bringing a fantastic variety of fruits and vegetables in their pickup trucks. These mobile produce stores circulate different areas each day of the week. If you're curious about their schedule near your location, drop us a message, and we can assist in connecting you. Embrace the convenience of these roaming produce vendors for a unique and refreshing shopping experience.

Bonus: Organic Select located in Versalles has a supply of raw meats such as liver, and raw milk if you're looking for something like this. Most Americans and Canadians don't have access to raw milk, so if you're wanting some nutritious unpasteurized milk, that's the place to go!



69 CIGARS & LOUNGE

In Puerto Vallarta, you have several excellent options for purchasing high-quality cigars. One great place to find quality cigars is the Marina Vallarta market, which operates from November to April. Here, you can discover a vendor who specializes in offering top-notch cigars.

The city boasts numerous Cuban cigar shops located in Centro and the Romantic Zone. Some noteworthy establishments include **El Gato**, **Havana Cigar & Rum** and **Vallarta Factory**, which offers a diverse selection of cigars. At Vallarta Factory, you can not only purchase cigars but also savor exquisite drinks, delectable food (2 for 1 pizza on Saturdays), and

homemade chocolates. Absolutely worth going to this place, it's slightly under the radar but well worth it.

If you're seeking cigars and expertise from true enthusiasts in the cigar world, **Casa del Habano** is your ultimate destination. This establishment not only provides an exceptional variety of cigars but also serves as the only place in Puerto Vallarta where you can enjoy cigars indoors, relaxing in their air conditioned lounge. It's an excellent opportunity to explore different cigar types and enhance your cigar knowledge talking to the owners and patrons of this highly sought after establishment.

FUN FACTS:

Cigars are typically made from three main types of tobacco leaves: the wrapper, binder, and filler. Each type of leaf contributes to the cigar's flavor and burning characteristics. There are customs and etiquette associated with cigar smoking. For example, it's considered impolite to tap the ash off a cigar too frequently, as a longer ash can insulate the cherry (the burning part) and enhance the flavor.





70 CRAFT BEER TASTING

If you're getting tired of drinking light beer like Corona and Pacifico, there's excellent craft beer breweries and distributors for your tastebuds.

Being in Mexico can have its challenges at acquiring a beer that's more than 4.5%, but luckily for you, craft beers like IPA's, Pilsners, and Stouts have become more popular in recent years here in Vallarta - giving rise to a craft beer culture.

There are several in house micro brewery options such as YamBak (our personal favorite choice), as well as Los Muertos Brewing (with several locations around town), Brewhaus Cerveceria, and Monzon Brewing Co. If you're looking to have some different bottled varieties, you can find a nice selection at any La Comer, Chedraui, Ley, and Vallarta Beer Gardens in Nuevo even has craft beers on tap too

(as well as individual bottles for purchase).

The link below is a wonderful resource for all the best beer locations in PV. Thanks to Foursquare for providing this article.

FUN FACT:

- IPAs have their origins in the 18th century when British brewers began adding extra hops to their pale ales to help preserve the beer during long sea voyages to India. This practice led to the creation of India Pale Ale.

[More Info: Beer Locations](#)

71 SPECIAL COCKTAIL BARS

If you spend much time downtown, along the beach, and in neighborhoods like Versailles, you'll quickly find out just how many special cocktail lounges and bars Vallarta has.

Some of the notable and easiest to access bars in a higher end caliber include: **El Colibri**, is a restaurant and cocktail lounge located in Centro, Puerto Vallarta that serves traditional Mexican cuisine with a modern twist. Famous for their extensive array of mezcal and tequilas, the skilled craftsmen behind the bar at El Colibri create exceptional drinks that are truly unmissable. Believe me, these drinks are not just visually stunning; they taste as exquisite as they appear.

as well spinning a mix of electronica music like deep and progressive house.

[More Info: El Colibri](#)

[Directions: El Colibri](#)

The ambiance adds another layer of uniqueness. As you step through the dimly lit entrance, you're welcomed by the expansive night sky. Half of El Colibri remains uncovered, allowing the refreshing, warm breeze to sweep through all night, ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

Elixir Mixology Bar is a beautiful cocktail bar located in Zona Romantica that specializes in creative and innovative cocktails. The bar features a sleek and modern design, with a long bar that provides the perfect backdrop to showcase their bartenders' skills as they mix and shake up drinks. The menu features a variety of unique cocktails, including the signature Elixir cocktail made with tequila, mezcal, and pineapple juice. The bar also offers a selection of small plates and appetizers to enjoy alongside your drinks.

[Directions:](#)

[Elixir Mixology](#)

The food menu features dishes made with fresh, locally sourced ingredients and a variety of spices and flavors. Some of the standout dishes include the shrimp tacos, mole poblano, and cochinita pibil. Often El Colibri has a live DJ

Mezcal y Sal is a restaurant and mezcaleria located in the heart of Puerto Vallarta's Old Town. The menu features traditional Mexican dishes with a contemporary twist, made with fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Some of the standout



dishes include the octopus tacos, tuna tartare, and shrimp ceviche. This place is great for vegetarians and vegans for their wide array of options!

The restaurant also offers an extensive selection of mezcal and tequila, with knowledgeable staff on hand to help guide you through the different varieties and flavors. The creativity and arrangement of each drink is a form of art - where you almost don't want to destroy the perfect creation in front of you by taking the first sip. The atmosphere is lively and vibrant, with live music on certain nights of the week, a truly great place for night time cocktails.

[Directions: Mezcal y Sal](#)

72 VIDANTA DINING & THEME PARK

You've likely seen the large **Vidanta World** sign as you cross the bridge into Nayarit from Jalisco - it's hard to miss! Once inside, this incredible resort offers an array of dining options, ranging from fine dining restaurants to casual eateries, all designed to provide guests with a diverse culinary experience.

Many are unaware that these restaurants are open to the public too - so if you make the drive into the grounds and state you're there for "consumption," you can dine at one of their restaurants.

Here's a short description of some of Vidanta Nuevo Nayarit's restaurants:

- **Epazote:**
 - Cuisine: Contemporary Mexican cuisine.
 - Specialties: Traditional Mexican flavors with innovative culinary techniques. Try the mole or the ceviche.
- **Samba:**
 - Cuisine: Brazilian steakhouse
 - Specialties: Succulent meats like filet mignon, ribs, and sausages, carved tableside. Extensive salad bar too.
- **Azur:**
 - Cuisine: Mediterranean
 - Specialties: Fresh seafood, pasta dishes, and a wide selection of Mediterranean-inspired appetizers. The paella is a must-try.
- **Bavaria:**
 - Cuisine: German
 - Specialties: Classic German dishes such as schnitzel, sausages, and pretzels, paired with German beers.

- **La Cantina:**
 - Cuisine: Mexican
 - Live music and entertainment often accompany dinner.
 - Specialties: Authentic Mexican dishes like tacos, enchiladas, and guacamole
- **Tramonto:**
 - Cuisine: Italian
 - Atmosphere: Elegant and refined, with a contemporary Italian ambiance and beautiful views of Banderas Bay.
 - Specialties: Homemade pasta, wood-fired pizzas, and classic Italian entrees like osso buco and tiramisu.

On another note, when their Vidanta World theme park is opened, you'll be able to enjoy the park and finish off the evening with a beautiful culinary experience. We're all waiting for this park to come to life!

Get a sneak peek of the future at Vidanta World, with

the already completed marvel, The Crater. This ingeniously engineered attraction transports you into a jungle oasis, complete with technical water displays, mesmerizing lighting visuals, and an immersive soundscape enveloping you.

As the park continues to unfold, our anticipation grows. Thus far, Vidanta World stands as an impressive and enchanting destination, reminiscent of the magic of Disney World but adorned with vibrant Mexican cultural influences.

FUNFACT:

- Being one of Mexico's largest and most well known resort operators, Vidanta has several resort destinations in Mexico, including Nuevo Nayarit, Riviera Maya, Los Cabos, Acapulco, and Puerto Peñasco. They even have their own mini cruise ship.

Location: Vidanta Nuevo Nayarit



CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL

ACTIVITIES

73 CATHEDRAL VISITING

Undoubtedly one of most notable landmarks in all of Puerto Vallarta is the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe).

Standing as the tallest of its kind in Puerto Vallarta, this cathedral commands unparalleled attention. Nestled in the heart of downtown, it captivates with its illuminated splendor at night. Renowned for its distinctive crown design adorning its peak, this cathedral is a beacon of architectural distinction in the city.

The [Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) was constructed in the early 20th century and completed in 1951. The Cathedral is dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of Mexico, and it is the seat of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Puerto Vallarta. The church is also famous for hosting the famous "Noche de Reyes" (Night of the Kings) celebrated every January 5th, when thousands of people come to the church to sing carols and witness the blessing of the

Kings of the Reyes Magos (Three Wise Men) who bring gifts to the baby Jesus.

The Cathedral is open to the public and can be visited daily, it is a must-see attraction for tourists visiting Puerto Vallarta, not only for its architectural beauty, but also for its historical and cultural significance.

Other notable cathedrals in Vallarta worth visiting are: [Iglesia Bíblica Cristiana](#) located in Cinco de Diciembre. The church is led by a team of Pastors and Christian leaders who are committed to spreading the Word of God and helping people grow in their faith. It's a place where people of all backgrounds and denominations are welcome. This church is within walking distance of Our Lady of Guadalupe, so you can easily manage to see both of these landmarks within the same hour.



Arcangel is located in the neighborhood of Pitillal. La Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel (Parish of Saint Michael the Archangel) is a Roman Catholic church located in Pitillal, a neighborhood of Puerto Vallarta. The church is dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, one of the seven Archangels of the Catholic Church.

This church was built in the early 20th century, and is a traditional Mexican church with a mix of Spanish Colonial and Mexican Baroque architectural styles. The Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel is an active church and the center of the spiritual life of the community regularly open to the public while holding regular mass services.

Additionally this church also has a small museum inside, which showcases the history of the church and the town. It is worth visiting if you are in the area and want to learn more about the history and culture of Pitillal (Vallarta's largest neighborhood).

While many tourists typically gravitate towards the well-known south and west side of Highway 200, situated

closer to the beach and the main route connecting the airport to Puerto Vallarta or northward to Sayulita, there's a compelling case for venturing beyond. The less-explored north and east side of this highway, where the local residents call home, offers a distinct and authentic experience. Among the notable neighborhoods in this area is Pitillal, presenting a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in genuine city life away from the bustling tourist hotspots.

A visit to the Parroquia de San Miguel is the perfect compelling reason to explore this vibrant community.

Situated in the Romantic Zone, Iglesia de la Santa Cruz may not command the same level of prominence as the previously mentioned churches. However, if you embark on a tour of the old town, chances are you'll encounter this church, especially as you await the renowned "churro guy" positioned on the nearby street corner. Although less celebrated, it serves as a regularly used church throughout the week and is certainly worth a visit.

There are plenty of other

churches and cathedrals all around the city - these are just a few of the more notable ones. These cathedrals are a big part of the local infrastructure and history of the city, and are used daily by residents of Vallarta.

FUNFACTS:

- Lady Guadalupe is one of the most revered religious figures in Mexico. The feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, on December 12, is widely celebrated here.
- The image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is highly revered in Mexico. Her miraculous appearance to the indigenous peasant Juan Diego in 1531 is a foundational story in Mexican Catholicism.



74 ART GALLERY IN CENTRO

When you find yourself in Centro, a must-see experience awaits in the form of stunning art exhibits.

Surprisingly to those less acquainted with the city, Puerto Vallarta is renowned for its remarkable life-sized art displays and numerous galleries. The town is adorned with murals and sculptures that have infused the malecon with an artsy character for years.

For an immersive exploration of PV's vibrant art scene, the Art Gallery Night Walk every Wednesday evening from October to May is highly recommended, offering a captivating journey through the city's artistic offerings.

During the day, a visit to Galeria Dante is a must. Housed in a charming hacienda-style building, this gallery showcases

a diverse collection of paintings and sculptures created by local artists. The variety of artistic expressions here is truly astonishing, making it a must-see for art enthusiasts.

Not to be overlooked is the Huichol art, a testament to the rich culture of the Huichol people native to the Jalisco state and Sierra Nevada Mountain region. Numerous shops in the area display and sell their art, but witnessing the unique spectacle of multicolored beads adorning the wooden surface of their animal sculptures is an experience that demands a personal encounter.

For an authentic encounter with Huichol art being crafted by hand, the Isla Rio Cuale stands

out as the prime location.

FUNFACTS:

- Huichol art is deeply rooted in their spiritual beliefs. Many of their art pieces represent visions and symbols from their religious ceremonies and peyote rituals.
- The process of creating Huichol art is meticulous and requires great skill. It often involves pressing beads one by one into a layer of beeswax or a mixture of beeswax and resin.

Location: Art Gallery Area

Directions: Huichol

Artwork: Rio Cuale



75 NAVAL MUSEUM

This attraction often flies under the radar, but it's a hidden gem on our list. While it may not be a sprawling exhibit, the tour is not only affordable but also offers a comfortable, air-conditioned environment. It's a perfect opportunity for visitors to delve into Mexico's rich history, particularly its maritime heritage.

Amid the well-preserved setting, you'll find an array of wooden replicas, armor, and historical equipment. For those with a keen interest in Mexico's fascinating past, this place is a treasure trove of knowledge and artifacts.

The Naval Museum of Puerto Vallarta is housed in an historic building, which was once the headquarters of the Mexican Navy in the city. The museum occupies two floors, and it features a variety of exhibits and displays, showcasing the history of the Mexican Navy and its role in the development of Puerto Vallarta.

The museum's exhibits include a variety of artifacts and memorabilia, ranging from historic documents and photographs, to uniforms, weapons, and other military equipment. The museum also has a number of interactive displays, including a scale model of a naval ship, which visitors can explore and learn more about the different parts and functions of the ship.

Puerto Vallarta has a long history of maritime activity, with the region being a hub of trade and commerce for centuries, and the Mexican navy has played a crucial role in protecting its coastal waters for many years.

The first recorded military presence in the area dates back to the 19th century, when Mexico established a small naval station to help maintain control over the Pacific coast and protect against pirate attacks. Throughout the 20th century, the Mexican navy continued to expand its operations in the region, with a focus on interdicting illegal fishing and drug trafficking activities.

The Mexican navy continues to play a vital role in the region, not only in terms of security, but also in promoting sustainable tourism and protecting the area's marine resources. The navy has also played a role in disaster relief efforts, responding to natural disasters such as hurricanes and providing aid to those affected.

Directions: Naval Museum



76 HOP ON & OFF CITY TOUR



If your time is limited or you're new to the city and want to learn the lay of the land/Vallarta's history, A hop-on-hop-off bus tour is a perfect way to explore key attractions and landmarks at your own pace. Here's how this tour typically works:

Multiple Stops: This bus tour has a route with multiple designated stops at popular tourist attractions, historical sites, and points of interest throughout the city. An excellent way to understand Vallarta's most significant attractions.

Flexible Schedule: You can purchase tickets for the bus tour, which often come with a specific duration (24 hours or 48 hours). During this time, you can board and disembark from the bus as many times as you'd like at any of the designated stops.

Informative Commentary: These buses often provide pre-recorded or live commentary in multiple languages, offering information and insights about the attractions you pass by. This commentary enhances the educational aspect of the tour.

Convenience: You can choose to spend as much or as little time



as you want at each stop. If you're interested in a particular site, you can get off and explore, and then catch the next bus when you're ready to continue. These buses are also wheelchair accessible.

Scenic Views: Open-top buses provide the best vantage point when driving around, allowing passengers to enjoy scenic views, take photos, and get a feel for the city's atmosphere without having to walk - allowing you to see the most of PV in the shortest amount of time.

Ticket Options: Typically, there are various ticket options available, such as one-day or multi-day passes. Discounts for seniors, children, and students are often offered.

[More Information:](#)

[Hop On & Off Tour](#)



77 GETAWAY RETREATS & YOGA/SPIRITUAL RETREATS

For an unparalleled all-inclusive experience amid the scenic Sierra Madre Mountains, a visit to La Dulce Vista in Nayarit promises an extraordinary retreat. Located just an hour's drive northeast from Puerto Vallarta, this hidden gem nestled in the heart of the mountains invites you to a tranquil sanctuary where you can relax, reconnect with nature, and even extend your getaway with an overnight stay.

La Dulce Vista caters to day spa enthusiasts, offering a plethora of amenities, including rejuvenating jacuzzis, invigorating pools, therapeutic hot tubs, inviting hammocks, and numerous serene corners to wander and relish the breathtaking surroundings.

Immerse yourself in the serenity of La Dulce Vista by hopping on one of their bicycles for a leisurely 5-minute ride or a scenic walk to the nearby hot springs by the river. The hot springs boast three tiered pools, each offering a distinct temperature experience.

The highest pool provides the warmest water, gradually cooling as you descend, ensuring a comfortable temperature for everyone to unwind, destress, and bask in the natural surroundings.

Beyond the hot springs, La Dulce Vista offers an array of activities, including horseback riding, a tequila mixology class, Mexican cooking lessons, and several hiking trails. Nestled on the premises are cozy villas available for rent, complete with breakfast included. This hidden



gem, often overlooked by those with limited time, is well worth the journey. The drive from Puerto Vallarta provides a glimpse into the local resident lifestyle, winding into the hills before reaching the peaceful retreat of La Dulce Vista.

[More Information:](#)

[La Dulce Vista](#)

[Directions: La Dulce Vista](#)

77 YOGA/SPIRITUAL RETREATS

Discover retreats dedicated to yoga and spiritual enlightenment, scattered across Punta Mita and other areas throughout the bay.

Tailored for those seeking a profound exploration of their subconscious mind and a heightened connection with their body, these retreats foster a stronger mind-to-body relationship.

Such retreats typically integrate various practices, including sound healing, yoga sessions, meditation, prayer, and more. However, the emphasis on specific practices varies from one retreat to another, as each is organized and led by different individuals. It becomes your prerogative to discern which retreat aligns best with your preferences.

Participants often emerge from these experiences with a renewed sense of purpose, increased empowerment, and a feeling of healing. While takeaways vary, it's safe to say that individuals commonly leave as improved versions of themselves after a week or weekend, having connected with both themselves and like-minded individuals.

To find upcoming retreats during your stay in Vallarta, consider exploring Google, Facebook groups, or seeking recommendations from the local community.

FUN FACTS:

- Regular yoga practice is associated with improved flexibility, strength, balance, and posture. It can also reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while enhancing mental clarity and focus.
- Yoga originated in ancient India over 5,000 years ago. It is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy, particularly in the texts known as the Vedas.



78 BAÑO DE GONG



A "Baño de Gong," also known as a "Gong Bath" or "Gong Meditation," is a therapeutic and meditative practice that involves the use of gongs to create soothing and immersive sound experiences.

It is a form of sound therapy that aims to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and induce a deep meditative state. The beauty of participating at a Baño de Gong is not only the end result for you personally, but the like minded gentle hearted people there. A wonderful place to meet new people who may share many of the same interests as you.

Here's how it typically works:

Setting: Gong baths are usually conducted in a quiet and comfortable space, often in a meditation or yoga studio. Participants typically lie down on mats or sit in a relaxed position, making themselves comfortable.

Gong Playing: A skilled practitioner or gong master plays gongs of varying sizes and types. Gongs can produce a wide range of sounds, from soft and subtle vibrations to powerful and resonant tones. The gong master uses mallets or gong mallets to strike or rub the gongs in specific ways to create a diverse and immersive sound

experience.

Sound Waves: As the gongs are played, they emit sound waves that wash over the participants. The sound vibrations can be felt throughout the body, creating a sense of being "bathed" in sound.

Meditation and Relaxation: Participants are encouraged to focus on their breath and let go of thoughts and tension. The immersive sound experience helps to quiet the mind, reduce stress, and induce a state of deep relaxation. Some people may even report experiencing altered states of consciousness or profound insights during a gong bath.

Benefits: Advocates of gong baths claim various benefits, including reduced anxiety, improved sleep, enhanced creativity, and increased mental clarity. The practice is also believed to balance the body's energy and chakras.

Duration: A gong bath session



can vary in length, typically ranging between 60-90 minutes depending on your instructor.

If you enjoy meditation and connecting to your higher self, or just want some relaxation - we highly recommend this!

FUN FACTS:

- The use of gongs in healing practices dates back thousands of years, with origins in Asian cultures. The gong's vibrations are thought to bring the body and mind into a state of harmony and balance.
- Despite the name, a gong bath doesn't involve water. The term "bath" is used metaphorically to describe how the sound washes over and "bathes" the individual.

79

SPANISH LESSONS

One of the most effective ways to learn a new language is through immersion, and studying Spanish in Mexico offers just that.

When you're surrounded by native speakers and the language is an integral part of everyday life, you're more likely to pick it up quickly. Puerto Vallarta, with its vibrant local culture, is an ideal place for this immersion experience.

Preparing for your trip to Mexico is now easier than ever, thanks to the plethora of free language teaching apps available for download on your smartphone. However, there's nothing quite like immersing yourself in a Spanish-speaking city to practice what you've learned and enhance your language skills. Since Vallarta is a tourist destination, so many locals speak excellent English. This is one of the best cities in all of Mexico to learn and study Spanish.

Puerto Vallarta, in particular, offers a wide range of Spanish classes tailored to various proficiency levels, from beginners taking their first steps in the language to advanced learners looking to refine their skills. The beauty of it all is that you'll never be alone on your language learning journey, as you'll be surrounded by fellow students who share your enthusiasm for mastering Spanish.

So, don't hesitate to join a class and embrace this unique opportunity to learn and practice the language in a supportive and vibrant environment. Any bit of Spanish you try speaking out on the streets and in restaurants etc, goes a long way. It is warmly welcomed by the locals, and they appreciate any attempt to speak their language.

FUNFACT:

- Approximately 460 million people speak Spanish as their native language, making it the second most spoken language in the world by native speakers, after Chinese.



80

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

(Nov 1st & 2nd specific)

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a Mexican holiday celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. The holiday is a time to remember and honor deceased loved ones, and is celebrated with a variety of colorful and vibrant traditions.

On Día de los Muertos, people visit the graves of their loved ones and decorate them with flowers, candles, and other decorations, but treat this more as a celebration of life rather than a mourning of death. They also prepare special food and drinks, such as pan de muerto (bread of the dead) and calaveras (sugar skulls), to offer to their deceased loved ones.

The most iconic symbol of Día de los Muertos is certainly the calavera, a skull or skeleton figure often decorated with bright colors and intricate designs. Calaveras are mainly used as decorations, while also used to make a variety of traditional foods and crafts. Many people will paint their face during these days to look like a catrina (skull-like figure).

Another important tradition on Día de los Muertos is the ofrenda (altar/offering), which is set up to honor the deceased. Ofrendas are typically decorated with candles, flowers, and pictures of the deceased, and they may also include food like sugar skulls (calaveras de azúcar) and bread of the dead (pan de muerto), and other offerings which are often belongings of the deceased (jewelry for example).

Día de los Muertos is a vibrant and colorful holiday, celebrating life and remembering loved ones who have passed away. The holiday is an important part of Mexi-



can culture, and it is celebrated with a variety of traditions and customs that continue to remain strong today.

FUNFACTS:

- The vibrant orange marigold flower (cempasúchil) is considered the "flower of the dead." It is believed to help guide the spirits of the deceased back to the world of the living.
- The animated film "Coco" (2017) is a wonderful representation of this holiday. Coco was a major box office success, grossing over \$800 million worldwide. It won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature and Best Original Song for "Remember Me."

81 SEMANA SANTA

April specific

Semana Santa, or Holy Week, is a religious holiday in many Christian countries (mainly Latin America, Spain, and Philippines). It is the week leading up to Easter, and it is celebrated with a variety of religious traditions and customs such as commemorating the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is one of the most important events in the Christian calendar.

In Mexico, Semana Santa holds deep significance as a period of prayer and reflection. Many individuals attend church services and actively engage in religious processions during this week. Beyond its spiritual aspects, Semana Santa is a cherished time for families and friends to reunite. It often prompts individuals to take a break from work and school, dedicating the week to cherished moments with loved ones.

A pivotal tradition of Semana Santa in Mexico involves processions, where large statues of Jesus and the Virgin Mary are carried

through the streets. These processions, accompanied by music and various religious activities, form a central and vibrant part of the celebration.

Adding to the cultural richness, Semana Santa in Mexico is marked by the enjoyment of traditional foods. Delicacies like capirotada (bread pudding) and pescado a la talla (grilled fish) are culinary staples associated with the holiday, relished by many throughout the week.

Semana Santa stands as a significant religious observance in Mexico, blending a tapestry of traditions and customs. Whether one is drawn to the religious aspects, cultural expressions, or simply the joy of spending time with loved ones, Semana Santa provides a compelling reason to visit Mexico.

FUN FACT:

- Holy Thursday (Jueves Santo) and Good Friday (Viernes Santo) are especially solemn days during Semana Santa, often marked by important processions and religious events.



82 TEMAZCAL

A temazcal, deeply rooted in Mexican tradition, is a sacred space dedicated to healing and spiritual rejuvenation through the therapeutic practice of a steam bath.

This ancient ritual takes place within a small, dome-shaped structure, typically crafted from natural materials such as adobe. The temazcal's transformative heat is generated by hot rocks and steam.

Dating back to the indigenous peoples of Mexico, particularly with origins linked to the Aztecs, the temazcal has endured as a vital component of healing and spiritual rituals. In contemporary times, this sacred practice remains integral to the cultural fabric of Mexico and extends its influence across various parts of the world.

Participation in a temazcal involves sitting in a circle inside the structure, where a guide leads rituals, chants, and songs. The profound heat and steam induce a purifying sweat, viewed as a means to expel toxins from the body and cleanse the spirit. The temazcal experience is regarded as both sacred and powerful, connecting participants to ancient traditions and promoting holistic well-being.

During a temazcal ceremony, participants enter the temazcal

and are led through a series of rituals and exercises by a trained temazcalero (temazcal leader). The ceremony typically involves sweating, singing, and other activities designed to purify the body and mind. The temazcal is also believed to have a number of health benefits, including stress relief and improved circulation.

Traditional herbs and plants, such as copal, eucalyptus, rosemary, and basil, are often used in the Temazcal to enhance the steam's healing properties and fragrance. The Temazcal experience is often described as a spiritual journey. It is believed to help individuals release emotional burdens, find clarity, and gain insights into their lives. Participants may feel a sense of rebirth after completing the ceremony.

The temazcal is a unique and powerful experience, offering a connection to the ancient traditions and spiritual practices of Mexico. Whether you're interested in healing, spirituality, or simply trying something new, a temazcal is a must-experience activity in Mexico.

You can find several places around Puerto Vallarta that offer



this - and if you're interested we can connect you with the right people!

FUN FACT:

- The word "Temazcal" is derived from the Nahuatl language, where "temaz" means steam and "calli" means house. Therefore, it translates to "steam house."

Locations: Temazcales Around Vallarta



83 CHOCOMUSEO

As the name suggests, ChocoMuseo is a museum dedicated to all things chocolate.

It's not just a museum but an experiential space offering visitors the chance to learn about the history, production, and tasting of chocolate. The museum aims to educate, engage, and delight chocolate enthusiasts of all ages.

This place is renowned for its hands-on chocolate-making workshops, which are led by knowledgeable instructors who guide you through the chocolate-making process. You have the opportunity to create your own chocolate treats, and you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the art of chocolate making.

Since it's a museum, you'll be learning about valuable insights into the history and significance of cacao in Mesoamerican cultures, particularly the Aztecs and Mayans. You'll learn about cacao's sacred role and how it was used as currency and for ceremonial purposes.

Of course the tastings are a highlight at ChocoMuseo, providing you with a variety of chocolate flavors, from traditional to experimental, and explore the nuances of cacao from different regions.

Additionally, the ChocoMuseo has an on-site store where you

can purchase a wide array of chocolate products at any time. These include artisanal chocolates, cacao-based cosmetics, cacao nibs, and even chocolate liqueurs. It's a great place to find unique souvenirs or gifts for loved ones.

One excellent part of visiting here is it's completely kid friendly, and a fun activity for the whole family. The museum sometimes hosts chocolate-themed events, also making it a unique venue for celebrations, parties, and group activities.

FUN FACTS:

- Cacao trees, which produce cacao beans used to make chocolate, can be found in some regions of Mexico, including Chiapas and Tabasco (eastern states).
- Chocolate is a key ingredient in Mexican mole sauce. Mole is a rich, flavorful sauce made with chocolate, chili peppers, and various spices, and it's used in many traditional Mexican dishes.

Directions: ChocoMuseo

84 TOUR INDIGENOUS HUICHOL TRIBE IN SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS

This is one of the most unique things to do on the list. The most authentic look into the past, and a true embrace of Mexican customs and culture, as you embark on a journey to the indigenous lands in the Sierra Nayar region.

Visiting the Huichol people in the remote Sierra Nayar region of Mexico is a profound cultural journey. Trekking into the heart of their villages, you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in their way of life.

This includes learning about their intricate artwork, which features vibrant yarn paintings and beadwork, as well as their deep-rooted spirituality and rituals. You'll gain insight into their daily life by spending time with local families, experiencing their customs, and even participating in their sacred ceremonies.

Exploring local Huichol markets and hiking through the breathtaking natural beauty of the Sierra Nayar region

rounds out this unforgettable experience. This journey fosters meaningful cultural exchange, respect for indigenous traditions, and a profound appreciation for Huichol culture and nature, leaving you with cherished memories and a deeper understanding of their way of life.

There are several tour providers and methods of getting to this remote region, so I recommend searching the web and browsing through the options most comfortable for you.

FUN FACTS:

- The Huichol have a profound spiritual connection with the natural world. They are known for their peyote rituals, where they consume the peyote cactus to communicate with their deities and gain insight.
- The Huichol people primarily inhabit the rugged and remote Sierra Madre Occidental in western Mexico, particularly in the states of Nayarit, Jalisco, Zacatecas, and Durango.



FITNESS & ADVENTURE



85 GYMS, CROSSFIT MARTIAL ARTS & BOXING



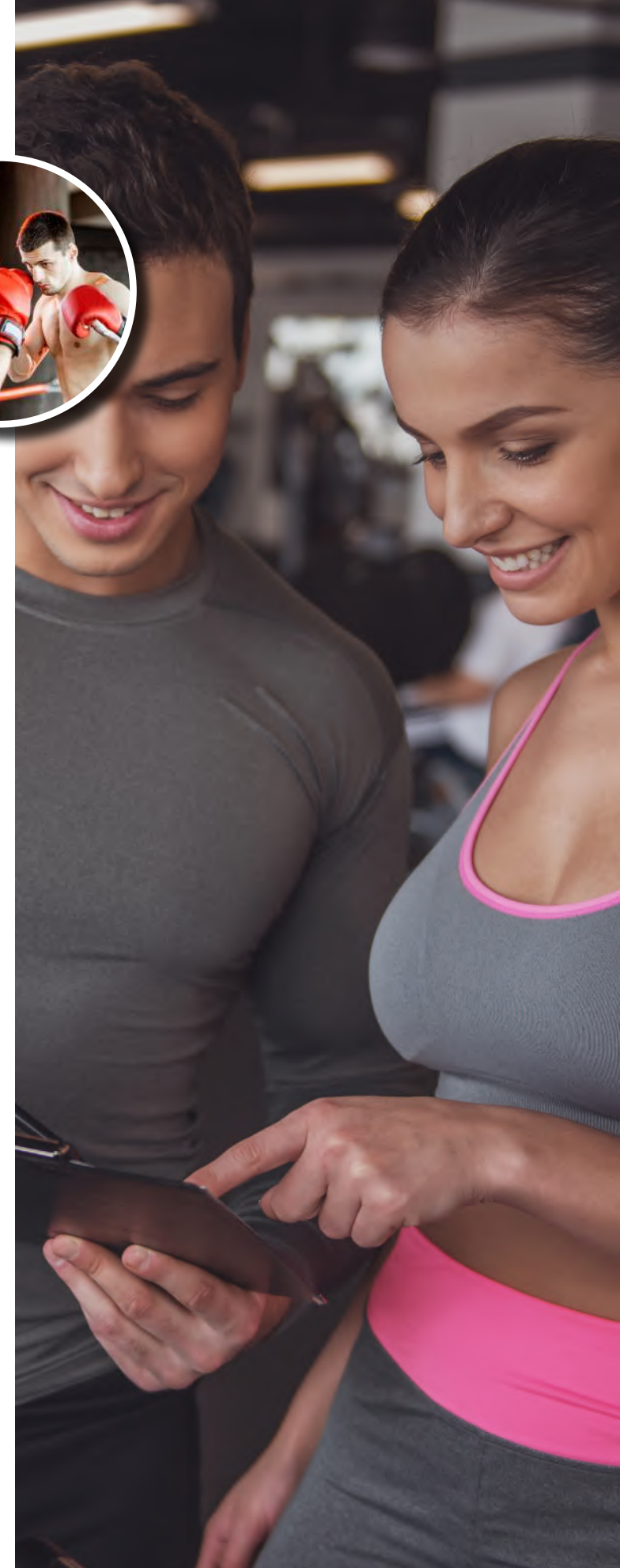
For fitness enthusiasts, maintaining a workout routine is as crucial as indulging in local delicacies.

Fortunately, this region provides a variety of outstanding gyms and fitness centers, ensuring you can stay in shape while relishing your getaway.

While all-inclusive resorts and many hotels typically offer well-equipped gyms to meet your training needs, if you're staying in Airbnb accommodations or planning an extended stay in Vallarta, joining a dedicated gym becomes essential. However, it's worth noting that many gyms in the area may not have air conditioning, making it a crucial consideration

in your selection process. Puerto Vallarta caters to a diverse range of fitness preferences, from conventional weightlifting gyms to crossfit facilities, and even martial arts/boxing gyms.

For a unique experience, places like Pulse Fitness in the Marina offer group boot camps led by a trainer. If boxing, jiu-jitsu, or kickboxing are more your style, numerous well-equipped facilities are scattered throughout the bay, although most may lack air conditioning, so be prepared for an invigorating sweat session!



86 ESCAPE ROOM

Visiting an escape room is an exhilarating adventure in problem-solving and teamwork. Upon arrival, you're briefed on the room's theme and rules.



You'll team up with friends, family, or fellow participants to tackle a series of puzzles and challenges set in a themed, locked space. The countdown clock adds time pressure, while a game master can provide hints if you're stuck.

This venue features three distinct themed escape rooms that undergo regular remodeling, ensuring a dynamic and ever-evolving experience. Each visit promises a unique challenge, offering a fresh and exciting adventure upon your return.

This activity really is the true definition of teamwork, and solving problems as a group. Physical and mental challenges await, leading to those satisfying "eureka" moments (it really is a hit of dopamine when you unlock doors and discover the clues). The goal is to solve all the puzzles and unlock the final mystery to escape the room within the allotted time, typically one hour. The experience is fun, and usually a totally different experience than your normal go to a bar with friends type vibe. It's a fantastic way to bond and share a unique and memorable group adventure.

FUN FACT:

- Escape rooms, also known as puzzle rooms or adventure rooms, originated in Japan in the early 2000s. The concept quickly spread globally, becoming a popular form of entertainment and team-building.

More Info:
[Escape Rooms Vallarta](#)
Directions:
[Escape Rooms Vallarta](#)

87 STADIUM SPORTS CENTER

Stadium in Vallarta, located in the vibrant Cinco de Diciembre neighborhood, offers a wide range of amenities and sports activities that cater to enthusiasts of all ages and interests. Whether you're a seasoned athlete or just looking for some physical activity, Stadium has it all.

For tennis enthusiasts, there are well-maintained tennis courts where you can enjoy a friendly match or improve your skills. Volleyball courts are available for those who love the beachside sport, providing a fantastic opportunity to enjoy the game under the warm Mexican sun.

Soccer lovers will find themselves at home with a variety of options, includ-

ing full soccer fields and street soccer boxes. You can join a league or engage in pickup games, immersing yourself in the vibrant soccer culture of Vallarta.

To stay active and work on your fitness, Stadium provides an outdoor workout area with equipment for strength and endurance training. You can take advantage of the beautiful weather and surroundings to get in a good workout while enjoying the outdoors.

Basketball players have access to courts for dribbling, shooting, and team play. Meanwhile, ball hockey enthusiasts can enjoy a dedicated space to practice their skills. For those who prefer running or jogging, Stadium offers a running track to keep you in shape.

Then there's also a well kept (thick grass) baseball diamond which is great for playing catch if the field is not in use by the city.

They even have large walls for handball! This place really has most things you can think of if you're into playing sports or just enjoy being active overall.

Sports are not the only attraction at Stadium. There's also a vibrant skatepark for skateboarders and BMX riders to showcase their tricks and enjoy the thrill of the sport.

Lastly, there's a dog park located here as well, a fantastic location in the city that safely allows dogs to run, play, and socialize.



- Before the arrival of the Spanish, the Aztecs played a ball game called "tlachtli." It involved trying to bounce a rubber ball through a stone hoop without using hands. You may have seen this in the animated movie "the Road to Eldorado" (2002).
- Mexico City's high altitude of over 7,000 feet (2,240 meters) can provide a competitive advantage to Mexican athletes in endurance sports. This has made the city a popular training location for athletes from around the world.

Directions: Stadium Sports Complex

88 SALSA CLASSES

Just like any dance style, it takes a bit of time and practice to get into the groove. The beginner classes are awesome because they break down the basics and help you build your skills step by step. It's a journey, but a fun one!

Salsa can be as easy or as challenging as you make it. Beginner classes typically start with basic steps, footwork, and partnerwork that are manageable for newcomers. Regular practice and dedication are key to improving your skills.

The time it takes to learn salsa varies from person to person. Some people feel comfortable dancing at a social level after just a few classes, while others may take several months to become proficient. In Puerto Vallarta, look for classes that cater to beginners, so you can learn at your own pace.

Salsa is typically danced with a partner. In classes, you'll have the opportu-

nity to rotate partners, which is a great way to meet new people and practice leading and following.

Once you've taken some classes and feel comfortable with the basics, you can try social dancing. Puerto Vallarta has a vibrant salsa scene with clubs, bars, and dance events where you can put your skills to the test. Don't be afraid to make mistakes; learning is part of the process. With dedication and practice, you'll improve your skills and become a confident salsa dancer in no time. This is one of the best ways to meet new like minded people as well.

As mentioned earlier (#45/100), La Bogeguita on the Malecon is one of the best places to enjoy salsa music and

dance the night away. But other places around Vallarta are known to play salsa music or host salsa nights. These places include but are not limited to: Mantamar Beach Club, Incanto, Roxy Rock House, El Son del So, No Way Jose, Señor Frogs, and Strana.

FUN FACT:

- Salsa dancing is a great form of physical exercise. It can improve cardiovascular health, enhance coordination, and help with weight management. Dancing is also known for its mental and emotional benefits, reducing stress and boosting mood.



89 ZIPLINE & RAPPEL/EL EDEN

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Zipline: Picture yourself rappelling down the cliffside, ziplining at high speed through the dense jungle canopy, and exploring the very set where the movie Predator was filmed.

To cap off your hot and adventurous day, cool down in the refreshing shallow pools beneath a waterfall at ground level. The location is not just beautiful, but it also offers a genuine taste of what it must have been like to film the iconic movie Predator.

The zip-lines on the tour are typically between 400 and 600 meters long and are suspended up to 90 meters above the ground. The tour includes several platforms, where visitors can take a break and admire the stunning views of the jungle below. Some tours also include a visit to a waterfall, where

visitors can take a dip in the refreshing waters and relax after the tour.

This tour is a fantastic adventure suitable for most people, and you don't need any previous experience, making it an ideal activity for families with children, provided they meet the weight and height requirements set by the tour operator. It's a wonderful way to immerse yourself in the natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta, offering an adrenaline rush amidst breathtaking surroundings.

Rappelling: For those seeking an extra thrill, there's rappelling. It's a more intense experience than ziplining,

demanding strength and coordination to successfully and safely reach the bottom. Rest assured, the instructors are well-trained, implementing every safety measure to ensure a secure rappelling experience for everyone.

Lastly, there's **El Eden**—a lush and enchanting natural paradise that has become a popular tourist destination in the Puerto Vallarta area. It presents a unique fusion of natural beauty and adventure, making it an attractive spot for travelers. Here, you can explore locations where several movie scenes were filmed and get up close to some of the costumes and props, adding an extra layer of excitement to your visit.

139 // 160

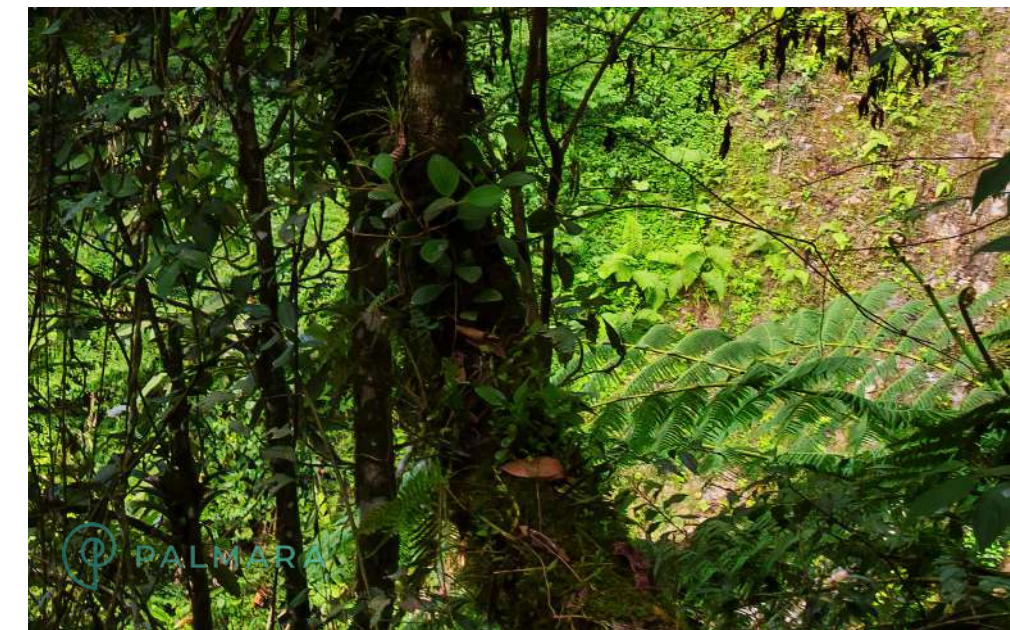
FUN FACTS:

- In Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, "La Bestia" is one of the longest zip lines in Latin America, with a length of over 4,000 feet (1.2 kilometers).
- When filming Predator (1987), the jungle environment was teeming with insects and wildlife, which often disrupted filming. The cast and crew constantly dealt with encounters with snakes, scorpions, and swarms of biting insects.

More Info:

[El Eden de Mismaloya](#)

[Directions: El Eden](#)



90 SKYDIVE

Skydiving in Puerto Vallarta is an exhilarating experience that offers stunning views of the coastline, mountains, and jungle. You'll have the opportunity to jump out of a plane at an altitude of 10,000 feet or higher, free falling for up to a minute before your parachute deploys.

The entire experience typically lasts around 2 hours, including a safety briefing and training on how to exit the plane and control your parachute.

Most skydiving companies in Puerto Vallarta require participants to be at least 18 years old, weigh less than 230 pounds, and sign a waiver of liability. Some companies also require a medical examination to ensure that you are physically able to skydive.

It's hard to argue there is a better way to see the bay and Vallarta in its entirety - because it's not everyday you see the landscape from this vantage point. Even photos/videos online are limited, and no photo ever really does it justice.

Puerto Vallarta offers a number of beautiful skydiving

locations, including the Banderas Bay and the Sierra Madre Mountains. Skydivers can choose from a variety of skydiving packages, including tandem jumps with an experienced instructor, as well as solo jumps for experienced skydivers.

There are two companies in Vallarta that offer the skydiving service, which are listed below.

FUN FACTS:

- During a typical skydive, you can reach speeds of 120 miles per hour (193 kilometers per hour) or even faster in a head-down position.
- Most recreational skydives are conducted from altitudes between 10,000 and 15,000 feet. However, experienced skydivers sometimes jump from much higher altitudes, even exceeding 30,000 feet.
- Wingsuit skydiving allows jumpers to glide like a bird during free fall. Wingsuit flyers can travel forward at speeds of over 100 mph (160 km/h) and cover great horizontal distances.



Location: [FLY Skydive](#) and more info:

[FLY Skydive](#)

Location: [Skydive Vallarta](#) and more info:

[Skydive Vallarta](#)

SPECIAL EVENTS & EXPERIENCE

91 DOUBLE DECKER BUS TO GUADALAJARA

or Mexico City (and other cities).

Several bus companies, including Primera Plus and ETN, operate double-decker buses for the journey from Puerto Vallarta to Guadalajara, providing a convenient and comfortable travel option between the two cities. The bus ride typically spans around 5-7 hours, contingent on factors such as traffic, but the experience is well worth the time.

These spacious buses are not only popular but also arguably the most comfortable mode of long-distance travel in Mexico, extending routes to destinations like Mexico City.

Offering an array of amenities for an enhanced journey, such as air conditioning, reclining seats, on-board restrooms, and entertainment options like movies, games, and music (akin to an airplane), these buses make the travel experience enjoyable.

What's even better is that these bus tickets are generally quite affordable, making the decision

to travel to the big city (or Tequila) by bus an easy one. If you secure a seat at the very front on the top level, you'll be treated to a panoramic view of Mexico's changing landscape. From the mountainous winding roads through the jungle to the entrance into the bustling city of Guadalajara, you can truly absorb the scenic beauty along the way.

FUN FACTS:

- Guadalajara boasts a range of historic sites, including the Guadalajara Cathedral, the Hospicio Cabañas, and the Rotonda de los Jaliscienses Ilustres.
- Guadalajara hosts several annual festivals, such as the International Film Festival of Guadalajara (FICG) and the International Mariachi and Charrería Festival.
- Mexico City was originally founded by the Aztecs in 1325 as Tenochtitlan, making it one of the oldest continuously inhabited urban areas in the Americas.



92 MARINA MARKET THURSDAYS

La Cruz **Sundays**, Romantic Zone **Saturdays**, Nuevo **Tuesdays**.

Every week, from November through May, Vallarta springs to life with its vibrant and bustling markets. These markets not only provide an incredible opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture but also offer hours of exploration amid delightful offerings. Each vendor brings a unique experience, catering to a diverse range of interests.

For food enthusiasts, these markets are a culinary paradise. From the rich and savory flavors of traditional Mexican cuisine to the exotic and aromatic spices of Indian dishes, it's an ideal chance to indulge in a diverse tapestry of tastes—all conveniently gathered in one place. You can meander from stall to stall, sampling delectable dishes, making it a perfect option for a flavorful and varied dinner experience.

Art aficionados will be delighted by the artistic treasures on display. Local artists showcase their work, offering a visual feast for visitors. The markets are like open art gal-

eries, where you can admire colorful paintings, intricate sculptures, and unique crafts. Whether you're looking for a souvenir or a masterpiece, you're sure to find something that captures your heart.

These markets are family-friendly and cater to all ages. Children can enjoy the lively atmosphere, street performances, and the occasional sweet treat. Couples will find it to be a romantic and leisurely date night as they stroll hand in hand, exploring the various stalls and indulging in exotic delicacies.

Additionally, these markets are not limited to full-course meals. They are perfect for those who have already dined but still crave a sweet indulgence. You can cap off the evening with delectable desserts and refreshing beverages, creating a memorable conclusion to your day.



93 ROMANTIC ZONE WALK AND DINNER

The Romantic Zone in Puerto Vallarta is a charming and vibrant neighborhood located on the south side of the city.



It is known for its beautiful cobblestone streets, colorful buildings, and lively atmosphere, which together create a unique and enchanting atmosphere.

As you walk through the streets of the Romantic Zone, you will be surrounded by a mix of old and new architecture, with traditional Mexican-style houses and buildings alongside modern cafes, bars, and restaurants. The area is filled with art galleries, boutique shops, and street vendors selling handmade crafts and souvenirs.

When it comes to food, the Romantic Zone is a culinary haven. The area is known for its diverse range of restaurants, ranging from casual taco stands to upscale fine dining establishments. You can find everything from traditional Mexican cuisine to international



fusion dishes, and seafood is a particular specialty in this coastal region.

Narrowing down restaurant recommendations in this area is quite challenging simply because there are an abundance of incredible dining options. The Romantic Zone boasts a plethora of restaurants, each offering a unique atmosphere and ambiance that perfectly encapsulates the essence of dining in Puerto Vallarta.

With top-notch service, pristine locations, and delectable cuisine that beckons return visits, the dining experience here is truly exceptional. My suggestion would be to explore as many restaurants in the Romantic Zone as your time and budget permit—trust me, you can't go wrong!

94 BIO SPA & TURKISH BATHS

Often on vacation, one of the best things to do with your partner (or alone) is unwinding from the stresses of life to focus on you. Indulging in a spa day where you're treated like a king/queen is needed from time to time.

Thankfully Vallarta has numerous options when it comes to spas and turkish baths outside of the resorts (resorts will often have their own). Places like Casa Velas Spa, CK Spa at Casa Kimberly, and Spa Hacienda Angel are great options.

A Turkish bath, also known as a Hammam, offers unique and distinctive spa experiences compared to traditional spas. A Turkish bath immerses you in centuries-old tradition, originating from the Ottoman Empire. It's a holistic experience that combines body cleansing, relaxation, and social interaction.

In a Turkish bath, you'll enjoy the ritual of warm and cold water plunges, steam sessions, and a deep body scrub using a special exfoliating

glove called a "kese." It's a communal experience that emphasizes cleanliness, rejuvenation, and the restoration of both body and spirit.

On the other hand, a bio spa, short for biologically conscious spa, offers a modern approach to relaxation and well-being. Bio spas emphasize the use of organic and eco-friendly products, focusing on holistic wellness. These spas may offer services like organic facials, aromatherapy, and natural, chemical-free body treatments.

Bio spas align their practices with sustainable and environmentally friendly principles, making them an excellent choice for those who are environmentally conscious. Both Turkish baths and bio spas provide alternative spa experiences that celebrate different aspects of

wellness, whether it's rooted in tradition or modern eco-consciousness. The choice between them depends on your preferences and the type of spa experience you're seeking.

FUNFACTS:

- Many believe that Turkish baths offer therapeutic benefits for conditions like respiratory issues, muscle aches, and stress relief. The combination of heat, steam, and massages can have a soothing and healing effect.
- Turkish baths offer therapeutic benefits for conditions like respiratory issues, muscle aches, and stress relief. The combination of heat, steam, and massages can have a soothing and healing effect.

95

WATCH AIRPLANES LAND OVERHEAD

Do you have a place to watch airplanes take off and land close to your home?

Where you can relax with a drink and hang out on a beach while casually admiring the incredibly close proximity of an airplane flying overhead?

Odds are your answer is no. But luckily for all of us in Vallarta who enjoy airplanes, Playa Boca de Tomates is a setting where you can enjoy airplanes flying in and out of the airport for as long as you feel like. It's a free and easy thing to do if you're looking for something different.

This beach also has plenty of restaurants and tables to sit down, only adding to the comfort of watching planes fly in over your head. It's a unique experience, and never gets boring if you're into aviation!

FUNFACTS:

- The world's longest non-stop commercial flight is operated by Singapore Airlines. The flight from Singapore to Newark covers approximately 15,344 kilometers (9,534 miles) and can take around 18 hours.
- The average commercial airplane is made up of about six million parts.
- Aircraft have different colored navigation lights. Red is on the left wing, green on the right, and white on the tail.

Directions: Playa Boca de Tomates

PLAYA BOCA DE TOMATES

96

MEXICAN COOKING CLASS

Taking a cooking class for Mexican food in Mexico is an incredible and immersive experience.

Mexico has a rich culinary history and taking a cooking class is a great way to learn more about traditional Mexican cuisine.

In a Mexican cooking class, you will learn how to prepare a variety of dishes, from classic Mexican staples like tacos and enchiladas, to more complex and regional specialties. You will also learn about the ingredients and techniques used in Mexican cooking, and you will have the opportunity to try your hand at preparing a variety of dishes.

Classes can range from a few hours to a full day, and can be taught in a variety of settings including traditional kitchens, outdoor patios, or even in a local market. You can learn how to make traditional dishes such as tamales, mole, ceviche, or guacamole, as well as gain insights into local ingredients, spices, and techniques.

Participating in a cooking class in Mexico extends beyond mastering the art of traditional Mexican dishes; it's a journey of immersion into local culture. Moreover, it provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who share your love for food, making it an enriching and sociable experience.

FUNFACTS:

- During the Day of the Dead celebration, people create "ofrendas" (altars) featuring the deceased's favorite foods and drinks, paying homage to their memory.
- A traditional mole sauce often contains 35-40 different ingredients.



97 MASSAGES

What's better than a massage? How about a massage on the beach with the sound of ocean waves cresting and crashing in the near distance?

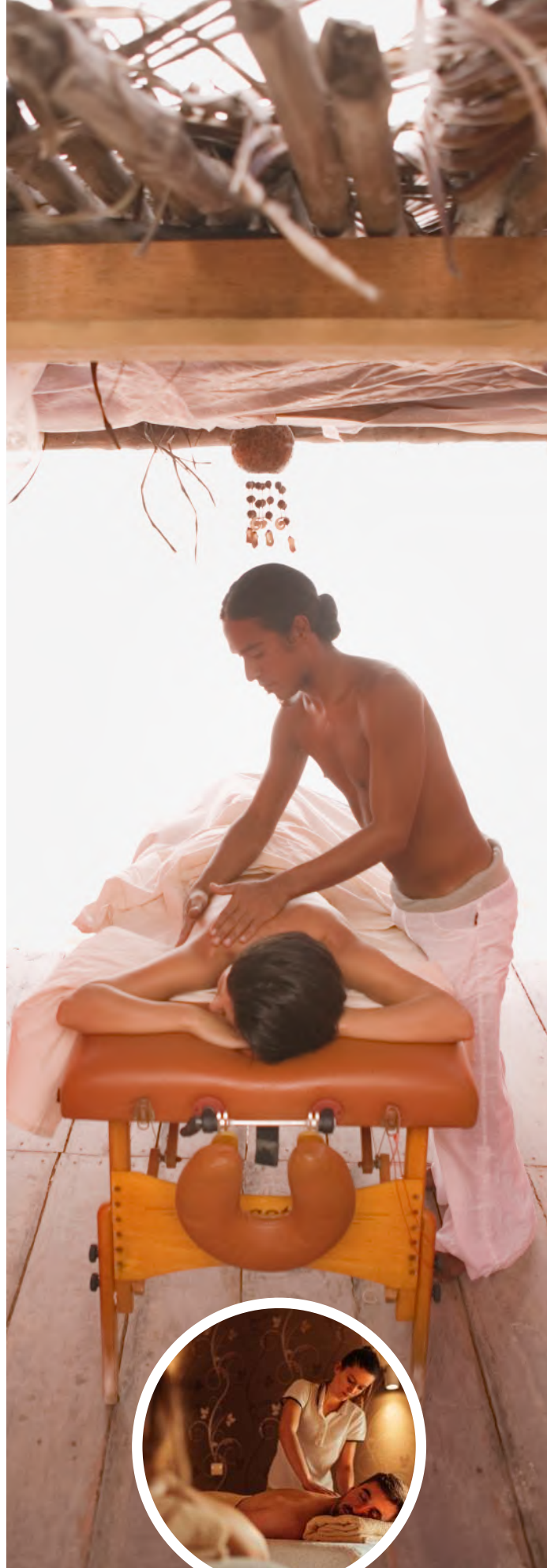
Nearly any public beach will have massage tables and tents set up for the day, so finding a massage on a beach isn't too challenging to find on most days.

If you're looking for a full treatment and/or a deep massage with a quiet room and essential oils, many locations around the city and along the coast offer this service.

Massages are so beneficial for more than just feeling nice. Massages can trigger the body's relaxation response, reducing stress hormones like cortisol while promoting the release of feel-good hormones like serotonin and dopamine. This helps reduce anxiety and promote an overall sense of calm.

They also alleviate both acute and chronic pain conditions. It can help relax muscle tension, reduce inflammation, and improve circulation, leading to relief from conditions such as back pain, arthritis, and headaches. The physical manipulation of muscles and tissues during a massage helps increase blood flow. Improved circulation means that oxygen and nutrients are delivered more effectively to cells, promoting healing and reducing muscle soreness.

Regular massages can help increase joint flexibility and range of motion. It can also reduce muscle stiffness and improve posture, making it an excellent choice for athletes and those with mobility issues. With that said, Vallarta has many very affordable locations both in an air conditioned setting or right on the beach, so treat yourself to a message or two - you deserve it!



98 ESTERO SALADO

El Salado Estuary in Puerto Vallarta covers an area of approximately 169 hectares. This significant ecological site is home to a wide variety of bird species, with over 100 recorded, including herons, kingfishers, egrets, and vultures. Additionally, the estuary is inhabited by various species of crabs, reptiles, and small mammals, making it a thriving and diverse ecosystem.

The area is rich in mangroves, which play a crucial role in supporting local wildlife. In 2007, it was declared a protected natural area to preserve its unique flora and fauna, as well as the essential mangrove ecosystem.

Visiting El Salado Estuary offers an opportunity to experience the natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta while immersing oneself in the serene ambiance of the estuary's rich flora and fauna. It provides an excellent setting for birdwatching, nature walks, and boat tours, allowing visitors to connect with the local environment and learn about

the importance of conserving these vital ecosystems.

FUNFACTS:

- Mangroves are incredibly effective at capturing and storing carbon. They store more carbon per unit area than most other types of forests. They are estimated to store around 24% of the total organic carbon found in marine sediments.
- The dense root systems of mangroves act as natural barriers, protecting coastlines from erosion and reducing the impact of storm surges. They are sometimes called "nature's defense" against storms.

Directions:
Estero Salado



99 WATER PARKS

A day at a water park in Vallarta is always a fun time that offers visitors of all ages a perfect blend of thrill and relaxation.

These aquatic havens are a fantastic choice for families, couples, and friends looking to have a great time under the Mexican sun.

Upon arriving at the water park of your choice, you'll be greeted with the promise of an exciting day ahead. As you enter, you'll have the option to purchase your tickets or use any pre-purchased passes, which are often available for added convenience.

The heart of a water park adventure lies in the vast array of attractions

and amenities available. Visitors are spoiled for choice, with an abundance of thrilling water slides that cater to various preferences and ages. Whether you're seeking high-speed drops, exhilarating twists and turns, or more gentle rides for little ones, you're sure to find a slide that suits your taste.

More Info/Tickets:

Aquaventuras Water Park

Directions: Aquaventuras Water Park

More Info: Splash Waterpark

Directions: Splash Waterpark



100 BEACH PICNIC

A beach picnic with friends, family or romantic partner for afternoon/sunset is never a bad choice.

There are several picnic companies and private contacts we have that organize and can facilitate wedding proposals, baby gender reveals, baby showers, pre birth celebration and spiritual connection services. Whatever your interest is and you want to make the beach your setting - it's possible.

Cushions, pillows, blankets, candles, lighting, fruits, other food, teas, juices etc. These are beautifully done and worth it. The cost of a beach picnic in Puerto Vallarta can vary depending on what you want to include of course. The simple

picnic where you plan to bring your own food, drinks, and supplies, the cost will be lower than if you opt for a catered picnic.

Catered and planned picnics can cost anywhere from 500 pesos per person, or 4,500 pesos for a group of 10. It's truly time well spent, on the beach in a beautiful natural setting, and for the comforts of a living room to be brought to you on the beach is special. You won't want to leave!

[More Info:](#)

[Palmara Charters](#)



BONUS

101 VOLUNTEER AT A DOG RESCUE

Volunteering at a dog rescue is a fulfilling way to give back to the community and help animals in need.

Dog rescues take in abandoned, neglected, or stray dogs, and provides them with the care, medical attention, and training they need to find loving homes.

There are actually many dog rescues in the Puerto Vallarta area, and they're always in need of volunteers to help care for the animals. As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to work directly with the dogs, helping with tasks such as feeding, grooming, and exercising. Volunteering at a dog rescue is a great way to make a difference in the lives of animals, and is a wonderful way to learn more about dog care and behavior.

If you're interested in helping out, we have several dog rescue shelters we can connect you with depending on your location. Contact us for more information!

FUN FACTS:

- Dogs were domesticated from wolves around 14,000 to 17,000 years ago, making them one of the earliest domesticated animals.
- There are over 340 different breeds of dogs worldwide.
- Dogs have a remarkable sense of hearing. They can detect sounds at frequencies as high as 65,000 Hz, while humans can hear up to around 20,000 Hz.



102 PAINTING ON THE BEACH

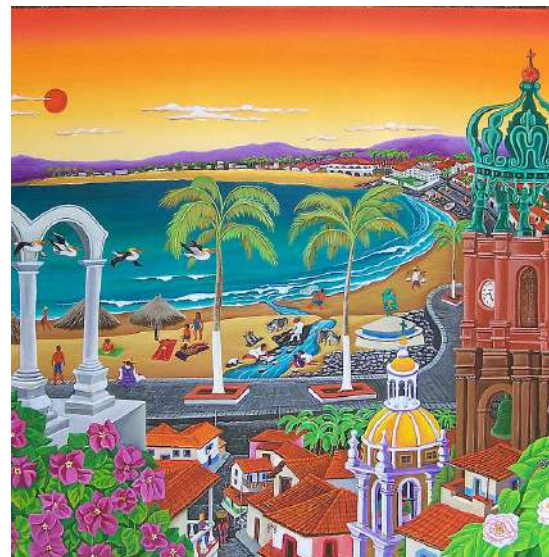
Imagine yourself, on a sunny day, with the sound of waves in the background and the smell of saltwater in the air, your paint and canvas set up on a little table. Surrounded by the natural beauty of the beach. You'll be able to breathe in the fresh ocean air and enjoy the feeling of the sand between your toes as you paint. You'll be able to capture the vibrant colors of the sky, the water, and the natural surroundings, while enjoying the peacefulness of the ocean and the sound of waves.

A professional artist will be there to guide you step-by-step, giving you a few tips and tricks and providing inspiration and ideas if you need them (similar to Bob Ross). The activity is designed to be fun and enjoyable, regardless of your skill level, so you'll be able to paint at your own pace and create a one-of-a-kind masterpiece that you can take home as a souvenir of your vacation.

This activity is perfect for vacationers of all ages, whether you're a seasoned painter or someone who's never picked up a brush before. It's a chance to disconnect from the daily routine and spend some quality time in nature, all while creating something beautiful that you can cherish for years to come.

FUNFACT:

- The oldest known paintings are found in the Chauvet Cave in France, dating back to over 30,000 years ago. These pre-historic paintings depict various animals and are considered some of the earliest forms of artistic expression.

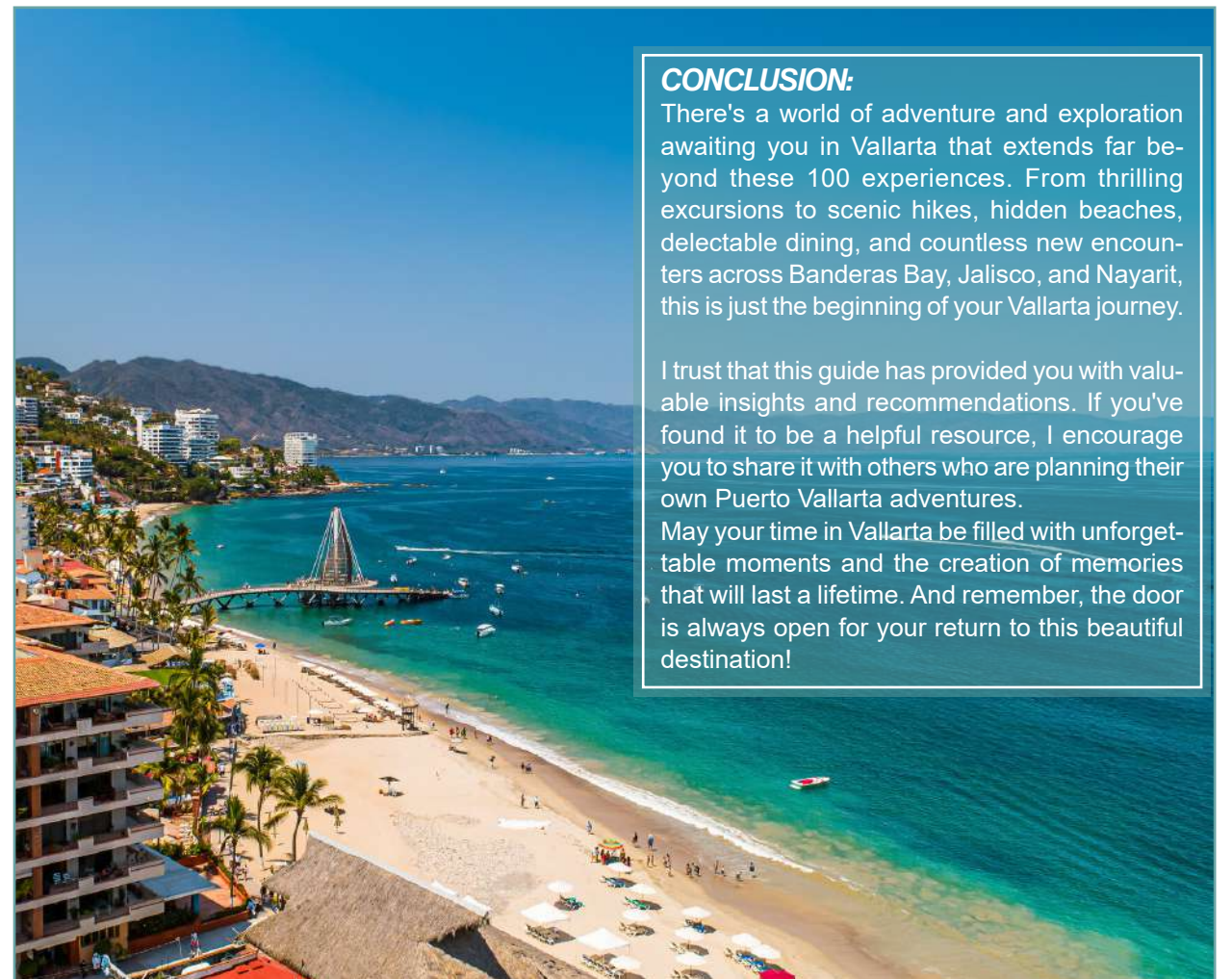


103 SPECIAL EVENTS

For more information, I recommend going online to confirm dates.

- ATP Challenger Tour Tennis
- PGA Vidanta Fedex Cup
- Punta Mita Jazz Festival
- Vidanta Concert Series
- Sayulita Surf Competition

...and many other events throughout the year. Regularly check online and on local Facebook groups for updates on event dates/times.



CONCLUSION:
 There's a world of adventure and exploration awaiting you in Vallarta that extends far beyond these 100 experiences. From thrilling excursions to scenic hikes, hidden beaches, delectable dining, and countless new encounters across Banderas Bay, Jalisco, and Nayarit, this is just the beginning of your Vallarta journey.

I trust that this guide has provided you with valuable insights and recommendations. If you've found it to be a helpful resource, I encourage you to share it with others who are planning their own Puerto Vallarta adventures. May your time in Vallarta be filled with unforgettable moments and the creation of memories that will last a lifetime. And remember, the door is always open for your return to this beautiful destination!

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