

# Contents

List of Maps	x
Acknowledgments	xi
About the Authors	xii

## **Introduction** 1

---

Why We Love Mexico	1
About This Guide	2
Where Should I Go?	7
<b>Comparison of Mexico's Beach Resort Destinations</b>	<b>8–9</b>
A Brief History of Mexico	13

## **Part One Planning Your Visit to Mexico** 21

---

Air Travel	21
Things to Know before You Go	25
Special Considerations for Traveling to Mexico	32
<b>A Calendar of Festivals and Events</b>	<b>34–35</b>

## **Part Two Accommodations and Restaurants** 42

---

Where to Sleep and Eat	42
Accommodations in Mexico	42
Restaurants in Mexico	58

## **Part Three Arriving and Getting Oriented** 68

---

Arriving by Air	68
Arriving by Car	70
Getting around the Mexican Coast	71
Things the Locals Already Know	76

## **Part Four Cancún** 82

---

Mexico's Resort Boomtown	82
Quick Facts about Cancún	84

## vi Contents

- Where to Stay in Cancún 88
- Where to Eat in Cancún 100
- Sightseeing in Cancún 112
- Tours and Side Trips from Cancún 114

### **The Maya World 116–117**

- Exercise and Recreation in Cancún 121
- Shopping in Cancún 123
- Nightlife in Cancún 124

## **Part Five Isla Mujeres 126**

---

- An Island Retreat 126
- Quick Facts about Isla Mujeres 127
- Where to Stay in Isla Mujeres 130
- Where to Eat in Isla Mujeres 138
- Sightseeing in Isla Mujeres 143
- Tours and Side Trips from Isla Mujeres 145
- Exercise and Recreation in Isla Mujeres 146
- Shopping in Isla Mujeres 147
- Nightlife in Isla Mujeres 148

## **Part Six Cozumel 149**

---

- Cruising to a Quiet Island 149
- Quick Facts about Cozumel 150
- Where to Stay in Cozumel 154
- Where to Eat in Cozumel 164
- Sightseeing in Cozumel 172
- Tours and Side Trips from Cozumel 175
- Exercise and Recreation in Cozumel 175
- Shopping in Cozumel 178
- Nightlife in Cozumel 178

## **Part Seven The Caribbean Coast 180**

---

- The Riviera Maya and More 180
- Introduction to the Caribbean Coast of Mexico 181
- Quick Facts about the Caribbean Coast 184
- Puerto Morelos 185
- Punta Maroma 192
- Tres Ríos 193
- Punta Bete 193
- Playa Xcalacoco 195
- Playa del Carmen 196
- Xcaret 207
- Paamul 208
- Puerto Aventuras 209

Akumal	209
Xel-Há	212
Xel-Há to Tulum	212
Tulum	213

**Part Eight Mazatlán 222**

---

Pacific Playas	222
Quick Facts about Mazatlán	226
Where to Stay in Mazatlán	226
Where to Eat in Mazatlán	236
Sightseeing in Mazatlán	244
Tours and Side Trips from Mazatlán	246
Exercise and Recreation in Mazatlán	248
Shopping in Mazatlán	250
Nightlife in Mazatlán	251
<b>Mazatlán's Carnaval</b>	<b>252</b>

**Part Nine Puerto Vallarta 253**

---

Wide Beaches and High Culture	253
Quick Facts about Puerto Vallarta	255
Where to Stay in Puerto Vallarta	260
Where to Eat in Puerto Vallarta	274
Sightseeing in Puerto Vallarta	282
Tours and Side Trips from Puerto Vallarta	284
Exercise and Recreation in Puerto Vallarta	285
Shopping in Puerto Vallarta	289
Nightlife in Puerto Vallarta	290

**Part Ten Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo 292**

---

The Twin Paradises	292
Quick Facts about Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	293
Where to Stay in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	296
Where to Eat in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	302
Sightseeing in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	307
Tours and Side Trips from Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	309
Exercise and Recreation in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	309
Shopping in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	312
Nightlife in Ixtapa and Zihuatanejo	312

**Part Eleven Acapulco 314**

---

Pacific Playground	314
Quick Facts about Acapulco	315
Where to Stay in Acapulco	318

## **viii Contents**

Where to Eat in Acapulco	329
Sightseeing in Acapulco	339
Tours and Side Trips from Acapulco	343
Exercise and Recreation in Acapulco	345
Shopping in Acapulco	346
Nightlife in Acapulco	347

### ***Part Twelve* Puerto Escondido 349**

---

A Beachin' Hideaway	349
Quick Facts about Puerto Escondido	350
Where to Stay in Puerto Escondido	352
Where to Eat in Puerto Escondido	357
Sightseeing in Puerto Escondido	362
Tours and Side Trips from Puerto Escondido	363
Exercise and Recreation in Puerto Escondido	364
Shopping in Puerto Escondido	365
Nightlife in Puerto Escondido	366

### ***Part Thirteen* Huatulco 367**

---

The Bays of Oaxaca	367
Quick Facts about Huatulco	368
Where to Stay in Huatulco	370
Where to Eat in Huatulco	376
Sightseeing in Huatulco	380
Tours and Side Trips from Huatulco	382
Exercise and Recreation in Huatulco	384
Shopping in Huatulco	386
Nightlife in Huatulco	386

### ***Part Fourteen* Los Cabos 388**

---

From Serene Retreats to Party Central	388
Quick Facts about Los Cabos	391
Where to Stay in Los Cabos	394
Where to Eat in Los Cabos	408
Sightseeing in Los Cabos	420
Tours and Side Trips from Los Cabos	422
Exercise and Recreation in Los Cabos	427
Shopping in Los Cabos	432
Nightlife in Los Cabos	435

**Appendix: Elementary Spanish 437**

- General Conversation 437
- Numbers 438
- Food and Dining 438
- Beach and Outdoors 439
- Shopping 440
- Place Names 441
- Other Common Words 441

**Accommodation Index 442**

**Restaurant Index 446**

**Attraction Index 449**

**Nightclub Index 454**

**Subject Index 456**

**Reader Survey 469**