After You Arrive

hotels: checking in & checking out

hotel rating system

The hotel rating system currently used in Mexico is as follows:

- **One to Five Stars**: one star being the most limited of services, and five stars having superior amenities and international standards.
- **Gran Turismo**: the highest rating in Mexico, reserved for properties with exceptionally high quality amenities; a notch above five stars.
- **Categoría Especial**: reserved for special properties that possess distinct features beyond those included in the star ratings. These might include an historic location (i.e. a converted convent or colonial mansion), a special setting, or a truly unique style of architecture.

This rating system should be used only as a guideline. It is based solely on a set of physical amenities (pools, air conditioning, number of restaurants, etc.) without regard for features such as location, service, historical significance, maintenance, etc. It does not carry any specific pricing significance either, except for the fact that prices usually rise with the number of stars. Note: *All star ratings in this Guide were taken from the "Directorio de Hoteles Mexico" 2009 edition; www.zonaturistica.com.*

It is not uncommon to find four star, and sometimes even three star, properties that surpass higher rated hotels in terms of service and quality. For most international visitors, we recommend using only three stars and above. In Mexico City, Guadalajara and other metropolitan areas, only four star and above properties are recommended.

hotel amenities & ratings

SERVICE	G.T. (deluxe)	5 Star (1st)	4 Star (mod.)	3 Star (budget)	2 Star (economy)	1 Star
Reception	x	x	x	x		
Lobby	x	x	x	x		
Parking Lot	x	x	x	x		
Big Private Room	x	x				
Medium Private Room			x	x		
Small Private Room					x	x
Closet in the Room	x	x	x	x	x	
Bathroom in the Room	x	x	x	x	x	x
Simple Furniture					x	x
Commercial Style Furniture			x	x		
Exclusive Designed Furniture	x	x				
Air Conditioning	x	x	x	x		
Television	x	x	x	x	x	
Cable TV or Satallite	x	x	x			
Wireless Internet	x	x				
Telephone in the Room	x	x	x	x		
Public Telephone					x	x
Handicap Facilities	x	x				
Laundry & Dry Cleaning	x	x	x			
Room Service	x	x				
Babysitter	x	x				
Medical Service	x	x	x	x	x	
Individual Safe Deposit Box	x	x	x			
General Safe Deposit Boxes				x	x	x
Money Exchange	x	x	x	x	x	
Reservation System	x	x	x	x		
Post Office	x	x	x	x	x	
Gourmet Restaurant	x					
Cafeteria Restaurant	x	x	x	x	x	
Bar	x	x	x			
Casino or Similar	x					
Banquet & Convention Facilities	x	x	x			
Pool	x	x	x			
Gym	x					
Tennis Courts	x	x				
Children Payground & Games	x	x				
Stores	x	x	x			
Travel Agency	x	x				

aaa ratings

Thanks to a 1993 agreement between the Ministry of Tourism and the American Automobile Association, AAA is undertaking an ambitious project to inspect lodging establishments throughout Mexico. In 2010, over 600 properties received certification as either meeting or exceeding AAA standards. These ratings are included in this guide, and should be interpreted as follows:

- ♦ Meets AAA basic requirements for recommendation
- ♦♦ Exceeds AAA minimum requirements
- ♦♦♦ Significantly exceeds AAA minimum requirements in many areas
- ♦♦♦♦ Exceptional; exceeds AAA minimum requirements in most areas
- ♦♦♦♦♦ Renowned; awarded only to exceptional properties

Please note that if a property listed in this guide does not contain a AAA diamond rating, this does not mean the property did not pass inspection; it may not have been visited by inspectors.

mini-bars

Most tourist class hotels offer small in-room refrigerators. These are stocked with domestic and imported items (beer, wine, spirits, soft drinks, candy, nuts, etc.). Refer to the price list before diving in. Items are generally expensive.

room floor numbers and elevators

Floor numbers in Mexico are indicated as in Europe. Bottom floors in Mexico are referred to as the "*planta baja*." In elevators the bottom

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hotels: checking in & checking out, *condinues*

floor is indicated by the letters "PB." The next floor up is the first floor (known to most North Americans as the second floor).

upon check-in

The front desk (also known as "*Recepción*") is where guests check-in. Even with prepaid vouchers, guests are asked for a credit card for incidentals. A charge slip is run and the guest is asked to sign the blank slip. While somewhat unusual elsewhere, this is a common practice in Mexico and should not be viewed with suspicion.

upon check-out

Since express check-out is rare in Mexico, guests need to allow a few extra minutes for check-out at the hotel's front desk. Often there will be a line, and the final tally of your charges may take a few minutes. SUGGESTION: Stop by the front desk the day before check-out and request a copy of your bill to review charges. Then report any discrepancies to avoid delays the following morning. If guests need a late check-out (after 1:00pm), inquire at the front desk. There is usually no problem in extending check-out a couple of hours when advance notice is given. Once the bill is settled, guests are often given a "*pase de salida*," or an exit pass. This slip of paper is given to the bellman as you depart the hotel.

television

Most tourist-class properties now have satellite dishes or cable TV and offer in-room movie channels, ESPN, CNN, and a host of other stations. Others claim to have dishes but only tune in domestic Spanish networks and one or two American channels. It is also common upon check-in for properties to hand out a remote control. Remember to return this to the front desk upon check-out.

pool towels

For some reason, terry cloth has taken on extraordinary value in Mexico. An elaborate system of check-in/check-out governs the dispersal of beach towels. (Heaven forbid you should ever misplace one.) Charges as high as $50 U.S. per towel are levied against offenders who forget to return their towels each day.

drinking water

Most tourist-class properties (5 stars & above) have an on-premises water purification system. Look for a sticker on your bathroom mirror about the hotel's purification system, or ask at the front desk. It is also common for purified bottled water to be left (free of charge) in bathrooms. When you see this, it is often a good indication that the hotel water should not be consumed as drinking water.

air conditioning

This is an indispensable amenity for all beach area hotels, and is always offered by hotels with at least a four star rating. Some hotels have a built-in shut off system that kicks in whenever the room's sliding glass door is opened. Also notice hotel rooms that have tile floors, as the combination of cool air and tropical breezes can make the tile slippery.

tipping

The usual rules apply. Tip porters $1.00-1.50US per bag (dollar bills come in handy for tipping). It is also common practice to tip hotel maids, $1.00-2.00US per day). Veteran Mexico travelers suggest tipping maids daily. This way you're assured extra special attention and prompt daily cleaning.

smoking / non-smoking

Almost all upscale properties (Gran Turismo, 5 Star) now offer this option. Inquire at time of booking or upon check-in.

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AAA Recognizes Mexico with Most 4 and 5 Diamond Awards for 2010 in North America

Some of Mexico's exquisite high quality lodging and restaurants were recently recognized by the American Automobile Club as venues that offer guests the best hospitality that can be offered in the industry for 2010, dubbed with Four and Five Diamond Awards.

A total of 1,168 lodgings and restaurants were personally approved by AAA for 2010 in Mexico, of these, 13 lodgings and three restaurants were dubbed with Five Diamond awards, while 111 lodgings and 50 restaurants were awarded the Four Diamond recognition.

Other 2010 AAA Findings

- **Mexico boasts 288 Three Diamond rated lodgings.**
- **14% of the over 600 Hotels rated by AAA in Mexico are 4 Diamond (111 Hotels), more than any country in No. America including the Caribbean**
- **1.5% of the over 600 Hotels rated by AAA in Mexico are 5 Diamond (13 Hotels) a higher percentage than any country in No. America/Caribbean**
- **Quintana Roo has EIGHT Five Diamond rated hotels -- as many as New York City; Riviera Nayarit has THREE**
- **5% of the 642 restaurants rated in Mexico are Four Diamond (50); three restaurants earned the coveted Five Diamond award!**
- **35 attractions in Mexico are rated "GEM" -- exceptional and should not be missed!**

México Tourism Board

1-800-44 mexico | www.visitmexico.com






Money Matters

The Mexican Government passed a new law that went into effect in Mexico beginning September 14, 2010. With this new law, the use of American Dollars (CASH) to make purchases in Mexico will not be as free as it has been in the past. Other payment methods such as credit cards of all types and all issuing banks, Travelers Checks, Mexican pesos and non-American foreign currencies (such as Euros or Canadian Dollars) are not affected in any way by this new law.

The most noticeable differences to your customers will be:

- Hotels and Exchange Booths, and Local Banks will only be able to **change a maximum of $1,500 USD CASH per person per month into Mexican Pesos**. Previously there was no limit.
- Businesses (including restaurants, shops, and Destination Management Companys will only be able to **accept a maximum of $100 USD CASH per transaction**, but the number of transactions per customer is not restricted.
- Certain businesses may not be able to, or **may choose not to accept American Dollars for any purchase** at all (this may include shops, etc), however still accepting Mexican Pesos. If a customer wants to purchase an excursion (for example) that costs $150 US dollars per person, customers will only be able to pay $100 of this amount in USD CASH and the remainder will need to be in another form of payment (credit card, Mexican pesos, etc).
- **Airlines** are advising that within Mexico, they will **only accept Mexican Pesos and credit cards** for any fees (including baggage fees).

Vacationers should never carry large amounts of American dollars with them abroad, but instead they should consider either using a credit card, taking or locally withdrawing Mexican Pesos from an ATM (very easy and convenient), or use Travelers Check's (of any currency).

Banking, Currency & Credit Cards

In terms of convenience, some significant improvements have been made since Mexico's banking industry was partly acquired by foreign, stabal banking institutions.

Its two largest banks are **Banamex** and **Bancomer**. Nationwide there are over 6,300 branches. Many branches have spruced up their public areas, and the number of teller machines in Mexico has grown dramatically over the last decade.

In fact, it is now possible for visitors to access ATMs. almost anywhere and even offer Spanish/English language menus. Machines will dispense pesos. U.S. banks generally charge a fee for every ATM transaction.

Money is often exchanged at "**casas de cambio**" (exchange houses) that are open longer hours and offer quicker service. Although dollars are widely accepted (see note at left), we recommend using pesos during your stay. Note that the worst exchange rates are often at hotels, the best at exchange houses. Expect a slightly lower rate for travelers checks. Exchange fees are not charged. In late 2010 the peso traded at approximately 13 pesos per U.S. dollar and 11 pesos per Canadian dollar.

We recommend exchanging $20-30 into pesos before

Peso To Canadian Dollar CONVERSION TABLE

	EXCHANGE RATE			
	11	12	13	14
PESOS	DOLLAR AMOUNT			
1	$ .09	.08	.08	.07
5	.46	.42	.39	.36
10	.91	.83	.77	.71
20	1.82	1.67	1.54	1.43
30	2.73	2.50	2.31	2.14
40	3.64	3.33	3.08	2.86
50	4.55	4.17	3.85	3.57
100	9.10	8.33	7.70	7.14
200	18.20	16.66	15.40	14.28
300	27.30	24.99	23.10	21.42
400	36.40	33.32	30.80	28.56
500	45.50	41.65	38.50	35.70
1000	91.00	83.30	77.00	71.40
5000	455.00	416.50	385.00	357.00
10000	910.00	833.00	770.00	714.00

Peso To U.S. Dollar CONVERSION TABLE

	EXCHANGE RATE			
	12	13	14	15
PESOS	DOLLAR AMOUNT			
1	$ .08	.08	.07	.07
5	.42	.39	.36	.48
10	.83	.77	.71	.95
20	1.67	1.54	1.43	1.90
30	2.50	2.31	2.14	2.86
40	3.33	3.08	2.86	3.81
50	4.17	3.85	3.57	4.76
100	8.33	7.70	7.14	9.52
200	16.66	15.40	14.28	19.04
300	24.99	23.10	21.42	28.56
400	33.32	30.80	28.56	38.08
500	41.65	38.50	35.70	47.60
1000	83.30	77.00	71.40	95.20
5000	416.50	385.00	357.00	476.00
10000	833.00	770.00	714.00	952.00

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Money Matters, *continues*

leaving the U.S./Canada. This way you'll arrive in Mexico with pesos for cab fare to your hotel. Also, carry $20-30 in one-dollar bills– they're great for tipping. Mexico introduced new bills printed on a shiny, synthetic material in 2002. This makes bills far more durable.

Credit cards are widely accepted, with Visa and Mastercard being the cards of choice. American Express is also widely accepted. When checking into hotels, clients are often asked for a credit card for incidental charges, and asked to **sign a blank charge slip**. This is a common practice and should not be viewed with suspicion.

Capitalizing On The Value Of The Dollar

1. Whenever possible, **eat, sleep, dine, and shop where the Mexican nationals do**. Peso rates at establishments more attuned to a local versus an international market have remained more stable. The greatest bargains are at inland cities, and beach destinations that cater to Mexican travelers more than foreign visitors.

2. **Exchange your dollars for pesos in Mexico**, rather than through a US/Canadian currency exchange company. Rates can be significantly higher in Mexico than abroad.

3. **Use pesos rather than dollars for transactions in Mexico**. In general, restaurants, shops and taxis will exchange your dollars at a rate lower than what is paid by local casas de cambio. By exchanging dollars for pesos, and then shopping with pesos, you will maximize your savings.

Taxes

There are basically two types of taxes you'll need to know about: Transportation/Departure Taxes and Sales Tax.

TRANSPORTATION/ DEPARTURE TAXES

Domestic air travel within Mexico has a departure tax of approximately 170 pesos per person. This tax is now included on tickets issued in U.S. and Canada.

International air travel from Mexico carries a departure tax of approximately $24 US. This tax is sometimes paid in Mexico, but in most circumstances is included on tickets issued outside Mexico (ask your airline for details). This tax is not paid by infants, but children over the age of two pay the full amount.

Mexico Reinstates Visitor Entry Fee

The Mexican immigration authority has reinstated a visitor's fee that was dropped over 30 years ago. Mexico's congress authorized the fee to be collected from foreign visitors with the stated goal of computerizing visitor entry and expanding tourist services. The fee is set at $185 Mexican pesos which is currently about $18 U.S. dollars.

Visitors are not required to pay the fee if they:

- are Mexican citizens;
- are aliens residing in Mexico;
- are students with a current Mexican student ID;
- enter by land or sea but stay less than 72 hours;
- enter Mexico by land, stay more than 72 hours, but do not proceed beyond the 26-kilometer checkpoints; or
- enter Mexico by land, stay more than 72 hours, and do proceed beyond the 26-kilometer checkpoints but only to one of the "exempted" areas listed below.
    - Tijuana, Ensenada in Baja California
    - San Felipe Tourism Development Zone, in Baja California
    - Sonorita, Puerto Peñasco in Sonora
    - Ciudad Juarez, Paquime in Chihuahua
    - Piedras Negras, Santa Rosa in Coahuila
    - Reynosa, China, Presa Cuchiyo in Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon

SALES TAX (IVA)

In 2010 Mexico raised its Value Added Sales Tax from 15% to 16%. However, the States of Quintana Roo (including Cancún, Cozumel, and Riviera Maya), Baja California and Baja California Sur (including La Paz, Loreto, and Los Cabos) are lower, at a 11% rate. The tax applies to the purchase of most items and is paid by everyone, residents and visitors alike. Often this tax is "buried" in the total cost of restaurant bills, store purchases, and excursions.

The "VAT" also applies to the purchase of airline tickets within Mexico (16% for domestic travel and 2.5% for international travel). Consult the airlines for details.

NOTE: Some states have recently passed statewide lodging taxes above the 16%/11% IVA tax.

Tax Back Mexico

As of June 2008, individuals or groups who purchase goods in Mexico can complete a form and present it together with an invoice at the airport and get their Value-Added Tax (VAT) refunded. Half the money gets refunded immediately in cash, and the other half is credited to the purchaser's credit card account. The refund is available for invoices of $120 or more. Tax Back Mexico currently operates in Mexico City, Cancun, Los Cabos, Guadalajara, and Puerto Vallarta. By the end of 2010, it will have added Monterrey, Cozumel, Merida, Loreto, Acapulco, Ixtapa, and La Paz to the list.

Lodging Taxes

2%

Aguascalientes, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Colima, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Distrito Federal, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, Nayarit, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tamaulipas, Tabasco, Yucatán, Veracruz, Zacatecas (1.5%).

3%

Coahuila, Durango, Quintana Roo

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Dining and Cuisine

Dining is one of the most delicious treats of any Mexico visit. The first rule for most North American visitors is to forget what you thought was Mexican food. Many of the dishes we commonly associate with Mexican cooking are either not Mexican at all (*fajitas*, for example), or are prepared using less than authentic techniques and ingredients (melted Cheez Whiz heaped over a dish of corn chips for *nachos*).

Mexican cuisine is delightfully diverse, strongly regional and almost always bold (although not necessarily hot) in flavor. Since Mexico spans several climatic zones, the types of foodstuffs available varies greatly from region to region. Mexico's jumbled topography has limited the "homogenization" of dishes in terms of their ingredients and preparation. What's a favorite on the coast may be unavailable further inland. Herein lies the allure of dining in Mexico.

Remember, Mexican cuisine (much like its history) has been strongly influenced by foreign countries. Spanish, French, and North American practices intermingled with the nation's Pre-Columbian culinary heritage, producing a rich blend of dishes that are copied and envied around the world. Advise your clients to ask what the local regional dishes are and choose one of these.

As to ingredients, the world can thank Mexico and Central America for **beans, corn, squash, tomatoes, jicama, chocolate, avocado, papaya, guava, vanilla**, dozens of **spices**, and of course, **chili peppers**.

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Dining Tips

- **Choosing a Restaurant**: Use the same judgment and common sense you'd use back home - if the place is full, there's probably a good reason. Don't be afraid to venture from the hotel. Expensive doesn't always mean better.
- **¿Zona de no Fumar?** Mexico Restaurant Assoc. has adopted a program to encourage members to offer "No Smoking" sections.
- Mexico has **very good international dining** - from Italian to Japanese to Lebanese.
- **Never buy food from street vendors**. Most have good food at bargain prices, but one bad taco can cost you dearly.
- **Dining prices** have risen in the last few years. While resorts are more costly than inland cities, expect better values and prices when comparing Mexico to other leisure destinations. Nearly all menus will include !5%/11% IVA tax.
- **The typical day of meals in Mexico** goes something like this: a hearty breakfast of fresh fruit, eggs, juice, pan dulce, hot chocolate or coffee whenever you roll out of bed; a satisfying lunch around 1-3pm (more like our dinner); appetizers and drinks about 8pm, followed by dinner between 9-10pm.
- **Meals take longer in Mexico**, since service is often slower and Mexicans enjoy long, lingering meals. The check (la cuenta) is never brought until it is asked for, and then you can expect to wait a while for your change. *Be patient...you're on vacation.*

Beer, Wine & Liquor

Go native – Mexico arguably has the finest selection of beers (*cerveza*) of any country in the hemisphere. Our favorites are **Bohemia, Pacífico, Noche Buena** (a Christmas beer), **Negra Modelo**, and **Superior**. Enjoy wine? Try **L.A. Cetto, Casa de Piedra, Calafia, Chateau Camou, Monte Xanic, Domecq, Santo Tomás,** or **Los Reyes** brands. Stick to domestic wines or be prepared to pay top dollar. Domestic wine is inexpensive and overall good. (See sidebar above.)

Most visitors are surprised to learn that Mexico has the Hemisphere's oldest wine making heritage, originating in the 16th century. A new generation of wine makers with international training is making its mark. There are also a growing number of joint ventures with California vintners (Duetto Meritage is produced by Wente Vineyards and Bodegas Santo Tomas).

Mexican Wine

Seven states in Mexico grow grapes in significant quantities: Baja California, Sonora, Coahuila, Durango, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, and Querétaro.

The wine industry got its start in Mexico in 1524, when the governor of New Spain, conquistador Hernán Cortés, ordered every Spaniard with a land grant from the Crown to plant 1,000 grape vines for every 100 Indians in his employ, every year for five years. Mexicans consume less than half a bottle of wine per person per year, a fraction of what consumers drink in countries that have a love affair with the grape. Argentineans, for example, consume around 50 liters per person annually.

Mexicans still produce far more of the ever-popular tequila and beer. But wine consumption is, indeed, increasing buoyed by a taste for fine wine among Mexican professionals and Baja's homegrown industry.

www.vinomex.homestead.com

DISTINGUISHED LABELS AMONG MEXICAN WINES

Winery Casa de Piedra, Valle de Guadalupe, Baja California Blend- vino de Pierdra, blend of Tempranillo and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Winery Casa Madero, Valle de parras, Coahuila Blend: Casa madero Merlot, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon; Casa Grande Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay.

Winery Chateau Camou, Canada del Trigo, Valle de Guadalupe. Blend: Vinas de Camou, Chardonnay and Fume Blanc de Sauvignon Blanc El Gran Vino Tinto, de mezcla bordelesa.

Winery L.A. Cetto, Valle de Guadalupe. Blend: Reservas Privadas de Chardonnay/ Reservas Privadas de Cabernet Sauvignon y Merlot.

Winery Monte Xanic, Valle de Guadalupe Blend: Vina Kristel, de Sauvignon Blanc y Semillon; Chardonnay. Melot; mezcla de Cabernet Sauvignon y Merlot.

Winery Pedro Domecq, Valle de Calafia, Baja California Blend-Chateau Domecq white and red/ Chateau Domecq Cava Reservada.

Winery Santo Tomas, Valle de Santo Tomas, Baja California Blends: Barbera, Merlot, Tempranillo and San Antonio, Baja California Reserva Unico.





Dining and Cuisine, *continues*

Winery Vina Liceaga, Valle de Guadalupe
Blend: Merlot Gran Reserva.

TEQUILA

The national spirit of Mexico is distilled from the fermented juice of the crushed, pineapple-like base of the Agave cactus. Tequila is native to the State of Jalisco, and is believed to have first been made in the 18th century. As any Mexican will tell you, all tequila is not alike. Tastes range from harsher white tequilas (known as *blancos* and used in mixed drinks) to darker *añejos* that have mellow, brandy-like qualities. In fact, there are now over 580 individual brands of tequila on the market. Best brands: **Hornitos, Herradura Reposado, Don Julio, Porfidio**, and **Tres Generaciones**. Note that recent domestic shortages of Mexico's finer tequilas have driven up prices for certain brands. It's common to pay $10-30 US per shot for the best tequila.

OTHER LIQUOR

The "margarita" cocktail made in Mexico might catch you off guard – it's stronger and less frosty than the ones made back home. Try a "sangrita," a fruit juice made from sour orange and the juice of crushed pomegranates, and sipped with a shot of tequila.

Several regions have their own distilled spirits, often concocted from plants indigenous to the area.

MEZCAL (Mess-KAHL): Produced mostly in the State of Oaxaca, this close cousin of Tequila is sometimes bottled with a small worm, and is available in several flavors.

DAMIANA: Herbal-based distilled spirit made from an herb native to Baja California and the State of Sinaloa; reputed to be an aphrodisiac.

XTABENTUN (Shta-ben-TUNE): Subtle anise-flavored, honey based liquor made in the Yucatán region.

SOFT DRINKS

The ubiquitous Coke and Pepsi are almost everywhere, but try local beverages like **Sidral**, or **Sangría** (non-alcoholic). Mineral waters (plain or flavored) from **Peñafiel** or **Tehuacán** are excellent. **Horchata**, and "**agua fresca de flor de jamaica"** or "**tamarindo"** are delicious native drinks.

Mexican Dishes

BREAKFAST DISHES

You might be missing something special if you order the typical American breakfast in Mexico. Be adventurous and try **huevos rancheros** (a fried egg served on a fried tortilla smothered in spicy salsa), **huevos a la mexicana** (scrambled eggs with salsa), **chilaquiles** (tortillas cooked in a green tomato sauce and served with chicken, cheese and cream), or **huevos con machaca** (scrambled eggs with dried beef). Try a **café de olla** (coffee with cinnamon and dark brown sugar) instead of regular coffee - it's delicious.

REGIONAL DISHES

Known as **platos regionales**, these dishes feature complex ingredients and preparation techniques. They often come from century-old recipes that date back before the

¡Tequila!

A total of 117 million liters of Tequila were exported in 2005, 80% bound for the U.S. - a whopping 10 million cases! However, Americans aren't the only ones who seem to enjoy the drink. Mexico exports Tequila to nearly 100 countries, 12% of which is swallowed by Europeans alone.

Tequila is quickly approaching premium levels, and is now considered to be on par with single malt whisky, brandy and cognac in regard to popularity and cost.

There are 100 species of agave plants, however the Blue Agave, a prehistoric member of the lily family that has spiky blue leaves, is considered the best species for distilling tequila. The Blue Agave, which can weigh from 50-100 pounds, is ready to be harvested when the plant flowers, but because all plants mature at varying times, harvesting must be done by hand.

Once the agave is harvested, the heart of the agave (the piña) is used to begin the distillation process. The pieces of the piña are steamed for a minimum of 48 hours in a steam room to transform it into a starchy sugar.

The cooked piña is put through grinders and then it is pumped into fermenting tanks. The juice is then mixed with selected yeasts in order to convert the sweet juice into alcohol.

There are four types of tequila: ANEJO, REPOSADO, BLANCO, and GOLD. If tequila rests for more than one year, it is called AÑEJO tequila. During this year, the white tequila color changes considerably. It may be gold, deep amber or even dark. This prolonged aging slowly transforms it into a drink they say is 'dressed in tails'.

In order for tequila to merit the name "REPOSADO" (rested), it has to remain in wooden vats or barrels for 60 days or more. During this time, the wood alters the flavor and slightly modifies the color. The time to repose may last for months so long as it does not surpass one year. REPOSADO is smoother than white, and, like "JOVEN" has a natural soft gold or clear honey coloring and a taste that preserves the wood flavor without losing the strong agave essence.

Tequila BLANCO is stored for only a brief period of time, two months or less, before the tequila is passed on to the bottlers.

GOLD tequila is unaged, but treated with additives to achieve some of the same effects as aging. The additive is predominately caramel. The primary difference between white and gold tequilas is the burnt sugar coloration, the use of which varies with the individual manufacturer.

The tequila industry hit troubled times in 2000 due to low-yielding crop of agave, in part due to an extreme cold snap that hit the region during the winter. Since then, prices have risen, as it takes several years for the agave plant to yield fruit.
www.itequila.org

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Dining and Cuisine, *continues*

arrival of Cortés. Some of the more savory dishes include **pozole** (a hominy and pork soup), **mole** (a delicious, dark brown sauce made from over 30 ingredients, served over chicken or turkey), **tamales** (corn meal stuffed with meat, cheese or vegetable and steamed in corn or banana husks), **menudo** (a hearty tripe stew great for hangovers, known in Mexico as *una cruda*).

SEAFOOD

Known as **mariscos**, seafood is abundant and deliciously prepared. Try **camarones al mojo de ajo** (shrimp grilled in garlic and butter), **filete de pescado** (fish filet prepared in numerous fashions, with and without sauce), **ceviche** (an appetizer of conch or fish marinated in lime juice with onion, garlic, chile, and tomato).

BREADS, TORTILLAS, AND SANDWICHES

Bread at a restaurant usually means a **bolillo**, a delicious French-style roll. Surprisingly, it can be difficult to find tortillas at some resort area restaurants! Tasty sandwiches, known as **tortas**, are Mexico's answer to the hamburger.

DESSERTS

Top off your meal with one of these favorite **postres**: **flan** (caramel custard), **mangos flameados** (flambéed mangoes), **pastel de queso** (light, Mexican cheese cake), or **helado** (ice cream).

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"There's a fly in your soup? It's supposed to be there, sir."

Mexico, along with many other countries in the world, has a long history of cooking and eating insects. The closest most tourists have come to entomophagy, or insect eating, is the alcohol-embalmed worm at the bottom of their mezcal bottle. But the aversion tourists have to eating insects is changing. In Mexico City, insects have become haute cuisine, with restaurants specializing in prehispanic foods and charging high prices.

Not just a delicacy, insects are also appreciated for their high protein content as well as their unique flavors. In the Mexican states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Morelos and Veracruz, the people frequently cook "salsa," whose main condiment is crushed jumiles, described as being aromatic with a deep flavor like mint or cinnamon. Another favorite are the chapulines (grasshoppers) marinated in lemon juice, salt and chile powder, and found in many of Mexico's traditional markets.

While beef, pork and chicken are widely available throughout Mexico, other options often find their way to the menu, such as the iguana, a principal dish in some regions of Mexico, served roasted, baked with peanut or chile sauce in tamales, and also found in stews. Another favorite is jabali, a wild pig, found in the Yucatán. And in Puebla, armadillos are often served up in tamales. Ostrich is also a common meat in Mexico.

In addition to being a heavy bean-eating nation, Mexico has several other options for intrepid vegetarians. Huitlacoche, known as "maize mushroom" or "Mexican truffle," is a dark-colored paste of a fungus that grows inside corn kernels whose taste is a blend of sweet corn and mushroom. It's a popular ingredient in quesadillas, crepes, soups, empanadas, and pizza.

While typical soft drinks are readily available throughout Mexico, Mexico also boasts a wide variety of unusual drinks. Atole, a corn-starch-based drink often accompanying tamales, is common, served hot or cold. Freshly-squeezed juices are also found in most restaurants and street corners with regional fruit. Examples include melon juice, watermelon juice and papaya juice.

Source: The Mexico Tourism Board

Typical Cuisine

MAZATLAN

Pickled Marlin: fish marinated in vinegar and vegetables.
Bearded Tamales: shrimp in corn dough with chile ancho.
Carne a la Plaza: beef and potatoes, bathed in a tomato sauce and served with vegetables.
Sinaloa Shrimp: shrimp marinated in lime juice, stuffed with cheese, wrapped in bacon, and grilled.

LOS CABOS

Abalone Appetizer: abalone that has been cooked and diced, bathed in a sauce of pickled peppers, spices and lime juice. Served with avocado and saltines.
Catarina Clams: served breaded and fried, pickled, in soup, or just boiled.

MANZANILLO

White Pozole: This hearty casserole dish is made from a base of pork, chicken or beef. Hominy, corn, and sometimes tomatoes are included while shredded lettuce, radishes, chile, and oregano are used as a garnish.
Enchiladas: tortillas fried with lard, rolled up and covered with minced beef and cabbage, topped with tomato and tomatillo sauce.
Tatemado: casserole prepared with pork backbone, guajillo chile peppers, and spices.

PUERTO VALLARTA

Pico de Gallo: fruit and vegetable salad includes jicama, cucumber, sliced oranges and onion sprinkled with lime and chile de arbol.
Candies: arrayanes (myrtles) nut paste candies, dried fruit rolls, and green mango paste.

IXTAPA-ZIHUATANEJO

Squid with Bread (stuffed squid): diced squid mixed with parsley, garlic and bread crumbs as a stuffing; spooned into whole squid which are then grilled and cooked in white wine. Served with lime juice.

ACAPULCO

Picaditas from Puerto Marqués: thick corn tortillas with hot chile serrano sauce, tomatoes, cilantro and onion, topped with cream and grated cheese.
Fish Tamale with Yerba Santa: fish in a corn husk covered with yerba santa leaf, seasoned with salt and pepper and steamed.

HUATULCO

Vine Soup: made with zucchini (its vines, flowers) and cornmeal dough.
Tasajo: Large, thin cuts of beef, lightly salted and grilled.

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domestic transportation

Mexico's air and surface transportation system is the most extensive in all of Latin America. Significant improvements have been made in the last five years, both on the ground and in the air.

air transportation

The birth of aviation traces it roots back to Mexico. It was here that in 1921 North America's first airline took flight (Mexicana Airlines). For decades air travel to and within Mexico was dominated by two carriers: **Mexicana Airlines** and **Aeromexico**.

However, in 1988 the country liberalized its domestic air service regulations, and soon witnessed an explosion of growth. Seemingly overnight a dozen or so new carriers were born. Most of these carriers have since been purchased by either **Mexicana** (Click) or **Aeromexico** (Aerolitoral, Aero Poniente). The largest independent carriers are **Aviacsa** and **Aeromar**, based in Mexico City, and several low-cost newcomers (see chart). There are currently 26 airports receiving international flights.

air carriers within mexico

Limited to Mexican-based Carriers Only.

CARRIER	CARRIER CODE	U.S./CANADA RESERVATIONS	WEB SITES
Aeromar	VW	1-800-531-7923	
Aviacsa/Aeroexo	SX	1-800-735-5396	www.aviacsa.com.mx
Aeromexico	AM	1-800-237-6639	www.aeromexico.com
Click	MX	1-800-531-7921	www.mexicana.com
Aerolineas Internacionales	N2		www.aerolineasinternacionales.com.mx

Mexico's Newest Low-fare Airlines

Avolar	Hub: Puebla	1-866-370-4065	www.avolar.com.mx
Interjet	Hub: Toluca	52-1102-5555	www.interjet.com.mx
Nova Air	Hub: Mexico City	52-5536-7562	www.novaair.net
Republica Air	Hub: Toluca	52-5203-8090	www.republicaair.com.mx
Viva Aerobus	Hub: Toluca	52 (81) 82. 150. 150	www.vivaaerobus.com
Volaris	Hub: Toluca	52-1102-8000	www.volaris.com.mx

Mexico City Completes Airport Expansion

The airport in Mexico's capital has long had a reputation as a congested, overworked hub. $ 8.8 million was spent on main terminal improvements by the end of 2005, resulting in more then 500,000 sq.ft. of new space.

Key to the expansion plans is the construction of a new building, Terminal 2 (used by Aeromexico & Delta), which is now linked to the main terminal by roadway and light rail.

A noticeable expansion has already been completed, widening the passenger corridor by about 50%. A new second floor area, dedicated to banks and currency exchange, opened in 2006.

International passengers now pass through a more spacious customs, immigrations and baggage area upon arrival. For international flights departing Mexico City, passengers enter the airport from a second level departure area.

ground transportation

Until the 1950's, Mexico's jumbled topography blocked the development of a true nationwide grid of surface transportation. Since then, road building has been a key element of Mexico's drive to integrate frontier regions into the national economy. There are now some 110,000 kms of paved roads in Mexico - up from 85,000 in 1991.

Today a significant portion of Mexico's new highway development is in the hands of the private sector. Modern, safe four-lane toll freeways now connect many Mexican cities. While costly to use (tolls average $8-10 U.S. and may be levied several times during a journey), these new super highways are a welcome alternative to older roads that often lack maintenance and are bogged down with commercial truck/bus traffic.

Several significant new mega-highways are now open. The government announced in early 1996 a plan to invest $800 million for building, renovating and maintaining Mexican bridges and highways. (Descriptions of several new highways follow.)

- **Puerto Vallarta-Guadalajara**: Drive past maguey fields and over coastal mountains on this scenic 4-hour drive that covers a total of 184 km; current one-way toll is $252 pesos.
- **Nogales-Mazatlán**: this route touches the U.S. border, running south through Sonora State and into Sinaloa State. The route takes 14 hours and covers a total of 1,192 km; current one-way toll is $480 pesos.
- **Mazatlán-Los Mochis**: This busy corridor across the State of Sinaloa allows Copper Canyon visitors easy Mazatlán-Los Mochis access to the sunny beach resort of Mazatlán; new highway covers 429 km; one-way toll is currently $240 pesos. The drive takes 4.5 hours.
- **Nuevo Laredo-Monterrey**: ultra modern, safe, and well maintained highway through Tamaulipas and Nuevo León states; 235 km takes about 2.5 hours; toll is 160 pesos one way.
- **Mexico City-Acapulco**: now just a three and a half hour drive (versus previous six); route covers 325 km and one-way toll is currently $415 pesos.

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domestic transportation, ground *continues*

mexican airport codes

CODE	CITY	STATE
ACA	Acapulco	Guerrero
AGS	Aguascalientes	Aguascalientes
CPE	Campeche	Campeche
CUN	Cancún	Quintana Roo
CTM	Chetumal	Quintana Roo
CZA	Chichén Itzá	Yucatán
CUU	Chihuahua	Chihuahua
CME	Ciudad del Carmen	Tabasco
CJS	Ciudad Juárez	Chihuahua
CEN	Ciudad Obregón	Sonora
CVM	Ciudad Victoria	Tamaulipas
CLQ	Colima	Colima
CZM	Cozumel	Quintana Roo
CVJ	Cuernavaca	Morelos
CUL	Culiacán	Sinaloa
DGO	Durango	Durango
GDL	Guadalajara	Jalisco
BJX	Guanajuato/León	Guanajuato
GYM	Guaymas	Sonora
HMO	Hermosillo	Sonora
HUX	Huatulco	Oaxaca
ZIH	Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo	Guerrero
LAP	La Paz	Baja Calif. Sur
LZC	Lázaro Cárdenas	Michoacán
BJX	León	Guanajuato
SJD	Los Cabos	Baja Calif. Sur
LMM	Los Mochis	Sinaloa
LTO	Loreto	Baja Calif. Sur
ZLO	Manzanillo	Colima
MAM	Matamoros	Tamaulipas
MZT	Mazatlán	Sinaloa
MID	Mérida	Yucatán
MEX	Mexico City	D.F.
MXL	Mexicali	Baja Calif
MTT	Minatitlán	Veracruz
LOV	Monclova	Coahuila
MTY	Monterrey	Nuevo León
MLM	Morelia	Michoacán
NLD	Nuevo Laredo	Tamaulipas
OAX	Oaxaca	Oaxaca
PCM	Playa del Carmen	Quintana Roo
PAZ	Poza Rica	Veracruz
PBC	Puebla	Puebla
PXM	Puerto Escondido	Oaxaca
PVR	Puerto Vallarta	Jalisco
QET	Querétaro	Querétaro
REX	Reynosa	Tamaulipa
SCX	Salina Cruz	Oaxaca
SZT	San Cristóbal de las Casas	Chiapas
SLP	San Luis Potosí	San Luis Potosí
TAM	Tampico	Tamaulipas
TAP	Tapachula	Chiapas
TPQ	Tepic	Nayarit
TIJ	Tijuana	Baja Calif.
TRC	Torreón	Coahuila
TGZ	Tuxtla-Gutiérrez	Chiapas
UPN	Uruapan	Michoacán
VER	Veracruz	Veracruz
VSA	Villahermosa	Tabasco
ZCL	Zacatecas	Zacatecas

Mexico City-Guadalajara (via León): drive time has been cut in half (from eight to four hours) via this new 423 km road. One-way toll is currently $463 pesos. The highway provides easier access to popular "colonial city" destinations such as Morelia and Guanajuato.

Mexico City-Oaxaca: a once grueling 10-hour journey has been cut to a pleasant four hours; the route stretches 296 km and current one-way toll is $295 pesos.

Mérida-Cancún: what used to be a six-hour drive has been cut in half, thanks to this new route. Distance is 241 km and current one-way toll is $250 pesos. NOTE: This route is also the fastest way to Chichén Itzá.

Mexico City-Veracruz: very scenic trip past towering volcanoes, farms and ranches. 418 km and a one-way toll of 387 pesos. Drive takes about 5 hours.

For details about toll road travel, contact the **Secretariat of Communication & Transportation**, Tariff Dept. at (555) 687-7921 (Spanish speaking personnel). Other options include the following:

Sanborns Insurance
1-800-222-0158
www.sanbornsinsurance.com

Mexperience
www.mexperience.com

Safemex Travel Assistance
1-866-SafeMex | www.safemex.com

taxis

Overall, taxi rates are reasonably priced. Rates are significantly cheaper in inland cities than beach resorts. In all cases rates are government regulated. It's a good idea to ask before you get into a cab what the charge will be. Most hotels can tell you the exact authorized charge from point to point.

From the airport, you can generally choose from either jitney service (multiple passengers making 3-4 stops) or private cabs (more expensive). Rates are posted inside the terminal and are generally quite economical. Keep in mind that your return trip to the airport might cost more, since a different rate structure usually applies.

car rental

Be prepared for steep rates and limited availability of vehicles. All major rental companies operate in Mexico. You must be 25 years of age, hold a valid drivers license, and a major credit card. Customers are asked to sign two charge slips- one for the rental and the other to cover any damages. This is a normal procedure and should not be viewed with suspicion. Many U.S. car companies operate in Mexico, along with a number of Mexican companies.

RESERVING A VEHICLE

Some package rates are now being promoted for sale in the U.S./Canada. Rates are expensive, even for multiple day packages. Expect to pay $60-90 U.S. per day.

major toll highways



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domestic transportation, ground *continues*

BUYING GAS

Look for PEMEX stations (Mexico's nationally owned service station monopoly). Gas is sold in liters (3.78 liters=one gallon). Gas is available in two grades: "Nova" (blue pumps) is a leaded, 81-octane fuel while "Magna Sin" (green pumps) is unleaded. It is customary to tip your service attendant a peso or two. (There is no self-service.) Gas costs approx. $2.00 U.S. per gallon for unleaded.

INSURANCE

Mexican auto insurance is mandatory, since your U.S. or Canadian policy is invalid in Mexico. Note that even when accepting the rental agency's insurance, deductibles are quite high (often as high as 5% of the vehicle's replacement cost!)

TO THE RESCUE

Major Mexican highways are patrolled by the Green Angels (Los Ángeles Verdes). They patrol more than 48,000 km of highway along 254 designated routes. These government-operated pickup trucks are driven by English-speaking, trained mechanics. They have a nationwide, 24-hour hotline that can be reached by calling (01) 800-903-9200. The service is free, except for parts and gas. (In 2008 the Green Angels assisted 549,690 visitors and serviced 143,500 vehicles while patrolling over 21 million km of highways!)

DRIVING TIPS

Avoid driving at night unless you're on a major highway (cows don't come with taillights); watch for speed bumps (topes) and potholes; slow down at all railroad crossings; illegally parked vehicles are not treated lightly by the authorities; always lock your car. Remember, mileage and speed limits are posted in kilometers. Above all else, drive defensively and never under the influence!

RESOURCES ABOUT DRIVING IN MEXICO

Some of the best advice about entering Mexico with your own vehicle is provided by your local **American Automobile Association** office (AAA). They publish an excellent Mexico travel guide (available to members only). They also offer a full range of services to AAA members (insurance, tourist cards, tourism information). There are AAA offices (www.aaa.com)at several important border crossing points:

Yuma, AZ	520-783-3339
Chula Vista, CA	619-421-0410
El Paso, TX	915-778-9521
Laredo, TX	956-727-3527
Toll Free	1-800-222-4357

Another excellent outlet for information is **Sanborn's Mexico Club** in McAllen, Texas:
P.O. Box 310 McAllen, TX 78502
956-686-3601 • 1-800-222-0158
www.sanbornsinsurance.com

For mileage between most Mexican cities:
www.virtualmex.com/Mileage.htm

Canadian Automobile Association (CAA)
1-800-992-8143 | www.caa.ca

u.s./canada car rental agencies operating in mexico

Avis	1-800-331-1212
Alamo/Class	1-800-424-3687
Budget	1-800-527-0700
Dollar	1-800-800-4000
Hertz	1-800-654-3131
National	1-800-227-3876

DRIVING & CROSSING THE BORDER

TEMPORARY VEHICLE IMPORTATION

Vehicles (including RV's) being taken beyond the border zone (defined as a 20 kilometers south of the Mexico-U.S. border) require a temporary vehicle importation permit (note: vehicles exceeding 3 metric tons require special permit; contact Mexican consulate for details). Permits are not required for travel within the Baja peninsula or in Puerto Peñasco and El Golfo in the State of Sonora. To acquire a permit, simply drive your vehicle to a Mexican customs office at the border and present the original and two copies of the following documents:

- Valid **proof of citizenship** (passport or birth certificate) and tourist card
- Valid, original **vehicle registration** (must be in vehicle driver's name) or original title
- A valid **driver's license** (must be in vehicle driver's name)
- A major **credit card** (must be U.S. or Canadian issued card - not a checking account "debit card"; Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners; card must be **in driver's name.**)

A fee is paid (no cash accepted; credit cards only) of $24US (depending on peso exchange rate) for a multiple-entry permit, valid for 180 days. A permit copy is given to the driver and a hologram is applied to your windshield. *Note that the permit copy and hologram must be returned at the border (look for "Hacienda" office sign) when departing Mexico. Otherwise, subsequent vehicle entry into Mexico may be denied.* Get return receipt from Customs Official.

- **Other Considerations**
  All of the above documents must be in the **same name**. Permit holders must be at least 18 years of age. If the vehicle is not owned outright, a letter from the leinholder authorizing temporary importation into Mexico must be obtained.

Sonora State operates a program known as "Sonora Only." Designed for visitors staying in the State of Sonora, the program eliminates the need for a credit card and waives the $24 fee. In addition to normal proof of citizenship documents (needed by all visitors to Mexico's interior) "Sonora Only" visitors need only to present a valid **drivers license and proof of ownership** or legal possession by the driver. Legal possession can be proven with one or more (as the case demands) of the following four documents:

- **Vehicle registration** (in name of driver) or original title

motorcycle touring in mexico

Two U.S.-based companies recently collaborated to promote adventure riding in Mexico. Sunday Morning Rides, an online portal for motorcycle riders, and Motoquest, a Mexican online tourism resource, came together to expose riders to the best motorcycle routes in Mexico. Now, riders can explore creative historical routes via a mapping system that combines GPS, geographic information systems, database, and Google mapping technology. For more information, visit these websites: www.sundaymorningrides.com or www.motoquest.com.mx.

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traveling to mexico by rv: a checklist

RV-ing in North America is one of the fastest growing leisure activities as baby boomers and families discover the joys of the open road in the comfort of a mobile home. Now more than ever Mexico is becoming the destination of choice for snow birders. Veteran Mexican RV travelers, Bill and Dorothy Bell have prepared the following to-do list.

Preparing for your first snowbird venture to Mexico can be quite a daunting experience. This to-do list was initially created for the first-timer but other seasoned travelers have told me they use it to organize their packing. It is a sequential list beginning with tasks that can be started months before the trip.

Start by purchasing summer items at the end of season sales. You should look for deals on suntan lotions, shorts, bathing suits, towels and water toys, etc. Be a wise shopper and stock up on sandals and footwear. Remember, it is very difficult to get women's shoes over size 7 in Mexico.

1. Get passports and other required documents and photocopy twice. Leave one copy with a reliable person at home and pack the other copies in a safe place inside your RV.
- **get passports for each family member**
- **bring notarized letter from absent parent for children and minors**
- **get updated shots for pets and get the international pet certificate for a dog just before you leave**
- **pack vehicle ownership papers**
- **get authorization papers for vehicle if there is a lien or other owner**
- **boat ownership papers**

2. Make arrangements for home while away.
- **house rental**
- **mail collection/presort**
- **cancel papers and deliveries**
- **bill payment/banking**
- **security monitoring and/or security plan**

3. Go on-line and search for Mexican vehicle insurance. Have them fax the policy to you just before you leave.
- **select quality firms that have secured underwriters**
- **do not double insure for medical, towing, etc.**
- **make sure you are insured for legal representation**

4. Ensure healthcare is addressed.
- **buy medical insurance if you are not already covered by your health provider**
- **purchase prescriptions for duration of the trip**
- **bring an extra pair of eye glasses**
- **replenish your first aid kit and make sure fire extinguisher works**
- **get a good supply of quality suntan lotion, mosquito repellant and "after bite"**

5. Get the vehicle tested mechanically.
- **test for propane leaks**
- **pack large assortment of tools**
- **pack extra oil filter, fan belts, fuel filter, air filter**
- **pack vehicle maintenance book**

6. Purchase/pack water toys or other recreational equipment.
Determine your destinations and various stops for appropriate toys (snorkeling gear, boogie or surfboard, air mattress, inflatable boats, boat, kayak, etc.)

7. Buy/bring maps, guidebooks, Spanish/English dictionary, English novels, language tapes or CD's. A deck of cards and/or board games.

8. Purchase and/or pack books, music, special foods, presents, clothes as you would for any RV holiday. Pack some trinket items for kids and "hospitality" gifts.

9. Address money issues.
- **bank cards, credit cards, travelers checks and US cash as per your preference**
- **take at least 1,000 pesos cash (approx $100US)**

Understand that you ARE going to forget something and that you will be cursing me and the list for not being longer than it is.

Authors and webmasters Dot and Bill Bell give tips and RV travel advice on their website: www.ontheroadin.com.

rv tour specialists

Adventure Caravans	800-872-7897
Fantasy Caravans	800-952-8496
Points South RV Tours (Every state in Mexico)	800-421-1394
Globus (Copper Canyon, Mexico City, Cancún)	800-221-0090
Trailer Park Directory:	www.mexonline.com/camping.htm
RV & Camping	www.ontheroadin.com

domestic transportation, ground *continues*

- **Lease contract** (for leased vehicles)
- **Proof of labor relationship** between driver and car owners (for company-owned vehicles)
- Notarized **permission from the leasing company or bank** (if money is still owed on car) giving the owner permission to take the vehicle to Mexico

Permits are valid for 180 days and may be obtained at the check point at Kilometer 21, south of Nogales on Highway 15. **Permits must be returned to this check point within the allotted six-month period upon departure from Mexico.** For more details please call 1-800-4 SONORA.

INSURANCE

U.S. auto insurance is not valid in Mexico. While Mexican auto insurance is not mandatory, it is highly recommended. There are dozens of companies selling Mexican auto insurance. Helpful contacts are **AAA** (for members only- contact your local office), **Sanborn's Mexico Insurance** (www.sanbornsinsurance.com, 1-800-222-0158), **Nelson Insurance** (1-800-638-9423), **Lewis & Lewis Insurance** (www.mexicanautoinsurance.com, 1-800-966-6830), and **Mexico Insurance Professionals** (www.mexpro.com, 1-888-INS-4-MEX). Several of these insurance companies have offices at most U.S. border crossings.

RV INSURANCE

Sage Insurance Center has a "Specialized Recreational Vehicle Program" that has been developed specifically for U.S. citizens who travel in the United States and to Mexico. While traveling anywhere in Mexico, they are able to offer $1,000,000 Civil Liability Limits, Physical Damage Coverage, 24-hour Crisis Assistance, and 24-hour Legal Aid Protection - all in English. For more information call (702) 547-1900 or visit their website, www.sageinsurance.com.

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domestic transportation, ground *continues*

major inter-mexico bus lines

A SAMPLING OF COMPANIES OPERATING FROM MEXICO CITY
(Area Code for Mexico City is 55-.)

ADO (Autobuses de Oriente)	784-2033
Aero Plus	567-4388
Autotur	566-0055
AV	542-4210
Estrella Blanca	729-0707
Estrella de Oro	549-8520
ETN (Enlaces Terrestres Nacionales)	277-6529
Futura-Turistar-Elite	729-0724
OCC (Omnibus Cristóbal Colón)	700-0606
ODM (Omnibus de México)	535-9005
Oriente	567-3274
Plus Cristóbal Colón	763-8433
Primera Plus	567-4388
Pullman de Morelos	549-3505
TMT Caminante	271-1433
UNO (Linea Uno Omnibus Serdan)	522-1111

NOTE 1: These are local Mexico City telephones. When dialing from the U.S. or Canada, preceed these numbers with international code 011 then country code 52.

NOTE 2: Mexican bus operator Grupo Estrella Blanca operates to 800 Mexican destinations in 27 states with over 5,000 daily departures. Their upscale lines (Futura, Elite, Turistar) can be booked through their central reservations center in Mexico City at 555-729-0707.

buses

Mexico's bus transportation system is so vast that one can see almost every hamlet and village from the seat of a bus. Rates are incredibly cheap (roughly $6 US per hour of transport for first class buses). Service is frequent and surprisingly prompt. Buses run the gamut from sleek air-conditioned coaches to the infamous "chicken and pigs express." Since second-class fares tend to be only about 10% lower than first class, splurge and go first class. Smoking is permitted on board some lines.

Several truly "first class" bus companies now operate service connecting Mexico's major cities. Many lines use ultra-modern Mercedes Benz equipment with on-board service, fully reclining seats, and mini-television screens. Look for companies offering "Servicio Ejecutivo" for greatest comfort and service.

While there are dozens of bus "hubs" throughout the country, Mexico City has the largest bus operation. There are four major bus terminals located in the northern, southern, eastern, and western points of the city. Service is divided accordingly, with departures to cities south of Mexico City (Cuernavaca, for example) leaving from the southern bus terminal.

mexico bus information websites

www.adogl.com.mx
www.odm.com.mx
www.primeraplus.com.mx
www.etn.com.mx

iTicket Bus!
Here's an excellent resource for agents. This multi-lingual site consolidates over a dozen bus lines, and hundreds of departure points. Research and reserve tickets online.
www.ticketbus.com.mx

popular bus routes from mexico city

DESTINATION	DISTANCE (Km)	TRANSIT (hours)	MEXICO CITY TERMINAL	CLASS	BUS COMPANY	DAILY DEPART.	PRICE (US$)
Acapulco	400	5	Sur / Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	Estrella de Oro/Futura/Estrella Blanca	64	31
Cuernavaca	90	1	Sur /Airport	1st	Pullman de Morelos	16	14
Guadalajara	535	7	Norte / Poniente	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus/Futura	69	40
Guanajuato	380	4	Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus	18	27
Morelia	304	4	Poniente /Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus	63	22
Oaxaca	442	6	Oriente/Norte/Sur	deluxe/1st/2nd	UNO/ADO/Cristóbal Colón	21	33
Puebla	130	2	Oriente/Norte/Sur/Airport	deluxe/1st/2nd	Estrella Roja/ADO/Cristóbal Colón	77	6.50
Querétaro	215	3	Norte /Airport	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus/Aero Plus	100+	16
San Luis Potosí	417	5	Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus/Flecha Amarilla	61	30
San Miguel de Allende	280	4	Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/Primera Plus	9	22
Teotihuacán	50	1	Norte	2nd	Autobuses México San Juan Teotihuacán	33	1.50
Toluca	64	1	Poniente/Airport	deluxe/1st/2nd	ETN/TMT/Flecha Roja	200+	4
Veracruz	430	5	Oriente/Norte	deluxe/1st/2nd	UNO/ADO/AU	38	33

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riding the rails à la mexico

TEQUILA TRAIN

The Tequila Express is a fascinating two hour passenger train ride to the town of Tequila where the legendary liquor is made. The train weaves through the rolling hills of Jalisco, past towering red rocks, into fertile farm land, meandering past pueblos dotted with brick houses. From the train the prickly blue agave plant, from which tequila is made, can be seen sometimes stretching as far as the eye can see.

You can tour any combination of over 10 tequila distilleries such as CUERVO or SAUZA, both housed in 17th century haciendas. Tequila Express departs on Saturdays and Sundays at 10:30am from the Guadalajara train station (Estación de Ferrocarriles). Round trip fare is about 950 pesos for adults and 550 pesos for children. Tours can be easily arranged from most hotels. For more information see Guadalajara section in this course or go to www.tequilaexpress.com.mx.

COPPER CANYON

Truly one of the Western Hemisphere's great scenic and cultural Journeys, the Sierra Tarahumara region belongs on the wish list of even the most jaded traveler. It is fast becoming Mexico's most popular soft-adventure attraction while also catering to hard core backpackers, day hikers, mountain bikers, and naturalists. It is also one of Mexico's most popular attractions for senior vacationers. Over 20,000 visitors travel the route annually.

This utterly ingenious train route (Chihuahua al Pacifico Railroad) carries riders from sea level to over 2,400 meters (7,920 feet) starting from the Sea of Cortés port of Topolbampo, through coastal plains, up and over the Sierra Madre mountain range, and then descending to the city of Chihuahua 655 km away.

For more information see Chihuahua State section in this the Inland Cities Guide.

CANYON TRAVEL, the Bulverde, Texas-based operator of train trips in the Copper Canyon, has acquired a 1950s Pullman railcar with a 20-foot open deck that will become a private railcar for group charters of 12 to 20 customers. The air-conditioned railcar is attached to the rear of the Chihuahua Pacific train that climbs the Sierra Madre mountains and skirts the Copper Canyon. For information or reservations, call (830) 885-2000 or visit www.canyontravel.com/.

Another fine outfit is Sinaloa-based BALDERRAMA TOURS. They operate five hotels along the route, rail ticket sales, and full-commissionable package for agents. www.mesicoscoppercanyon.com or 1-800-896-8196.

GRANDLUXE RAIL JOURNEYS, which formerly operated as American Orient Express, is promoting the luxury rail journeys through Mexi-co. Eight-night trips aboard a refurbished, vintage Pullman train begin in El Paso, Texas, and end in Mexico City. The train traverses the famed Copper Canyon and visits San Miguel de Allende, Mazatlan, Guadalajara and Teotihuacan. For information or reservations, call (800) 320-4206 or visit www.grandluxerail.com.

trains

Mexican train travel for foreign vacationers is mostly a novelty for rail buffs. The exceptions are, of course, the magnificent Copper Canyon line between Chihuahua and Los Mochis, the Tequila Express trip from Guadalajara, and the new Expreso Maya (see sidebar).



mexico rail travel websites

www.mexlist.com
www.expresomaya.com
www.ferromex.com.mx
www.railsnw.com

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Domestic Transportation, *continues*

Ferries: Baja Region

Between Baja and Northwestern Mexico there are ocean-equipped ferries known as "**trans-bordadores**". These lines give priority to cargo trucks but also accommodate visitors, either with or without vehicles. Regular ferry service operatoes between La Paz and Topolobamp, and La Paz and Mazatlan. These ferries are oeprated by Baja Ferries (www.bajaferries.com / in English: www.bajaferries.com/index_ing.html) See chart on this page or the Baja Ferries website for schedule and fares.

Ferry Santa Rosalia operates passenger and car ferries between Santa Rosalia and Guaymas. There are cabins with bathrooms and handicapped access. www.ferrysantarosalia.com Note: This site seems only to be visable using Internet Explorer.





Ferries: Yucatan Region

In the Yucatán Peninsula there are passenger ferries connecting several points. Most trips last between 30 and 50 minutes and depart frequently. For the most up-to-date ferry schedules, go to the Cancun Tips website: www.cancuntips.com.mx/transportation/ferry.asp.

MAINLAND to/from ISLA MUJERES

Puerto Juárez Dock
Ultra Mar
Tel. (998) 843-2011
Boats leave both docks every half-hour: Puerto Juárez between 5:30 a.m. and return from Isla Mujeres between 6 a.m. and 1 a.m.

Punta Sam Car Ferries
Marítima Isla Mujeres
Tel. (998) 877-0065
From Punta Sam to Isla Mujeres: 8 & 11 a.m., 2:45, 5:30 & 8:15 p.m.
From Isla Mujeres to Punta Sam: 6:30 & 9:30 a.m., 12:45, 4:15 & 7:15 p.pm.

MAINLAND to/from COZUMEL ISLAND

Playa del Carmen Dock
Cruceros Marítimos del Caribe
Tel. (987) 872-1508.
$120 pesos OW; $240 pesos RT. 14 crossings daily; 40 min trip. 80 pesos ow, 146 pesos rt. First ferry leaves Cozumel at 5am; last ferry leaves Playa del Carmen at 11pm.

Ultramar
Tel. (987) 869-2775
Boats, Ultramar & Ultramar I, leave both docks every hour: Playa del Carmen between 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. and return from Cozumel between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Punta Venado Dock
Transcaribe (car ferry)
Tel. (987) 872-7671
From Cozumel to Punta Venado: 6 & 10 a.m., 4 & 8 p.m.
From Punta Venado to Cozumel: 4 & 6 p.m.

baja ferries (Jan. 2010)

ROUTE	OPERATES	DEPARTS/ARRIVES	TRAVEL TIME	FARE in pesos	AUTO FARE in pesos
Guaymas-Santa Rosalia	M,T,Th,Sa	8:00pm	9 hours	$650-$800	$2,730
Santa Rosalia-Guaymas	Tue,Wed	9:00am	9 hours	$650-$800	$2,730
Santa Rosalia-Guaymas	Fri,Sat	8:00pm	9 hours	$650-$800	$2,730
La Paz-Mazatlan	Sunday	5:00pm/7:00am	14 hours	$1,190 plus $760-1,200 for cabin	$2,440-3,290
La Paz-Mazatlan	Tues/Thurs	8:00pm/8:00am	12 hours		
Mazatlan-La Paz	Mon/Wed/Fri	5:00pm/6:00am	13 hours		
La Paz-Topolobampo	Mon-Fri	3:00pm/9:00pm	6 hours	$1,065 plus $760-1,200 for cabin	$1,040-1,790
La Paz-Topolobampo	Saturday	11:00pm/6:00am	6 hours		
Topolobampo-La Paz	Sun-Friday	11:00pm/6:00am	6 hours		

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shopping

Mexico is a nation of extraordinarily talented artists and craftsmen. Few countries display their culture with such color, artistry and creativity. Using an abundant array of native materials and techniques that have endured for centuries, Mexican artists can often be seen at work in markets and workshops throughout the country. There is great regional diversity, with certain areas famous for a particular craft.

Don't miss the chance to experience market day while in Mexico. Nearly every town has one. These are indoor-outdoor mazes of color, sights, and sounds that overflow with produce, handicrafts, flowers, clothing, and everyday items. Quality conscious buyers should be cautious of prices that seem too good to be true. Dealing with established, reputable dealers is recommended, as is common sense.

Mexico is most famous for the **artesanías** (handicrafts) and manufactured items listed below.

LEATHER

Fine quality shoes, belts, and purses at bargain prices.

BEST PLACES:
Guadalajara • León • Monterrey
Mexico City

TEXTILES & WEAVINGS

Thousands of years of tradition go into handwoven shawls, dresses, blankets, scarves, baskets, and reed mats.

BEST PLACES:
Jocotepec • Pátzcuaro • Mérida
Veracruz • San Cristóbal de las Casas

SILVER

As the world leader in silver production, Mexico crafts exquisite jewelry; always look for the ".925" stamp (meaning 92.5% pure) to ensure quality.

BEST PLACES:
Taxco • Tlaquepaque • Mexico City
Zacatecas • Guanajuato

CERAMICS

From simple trinkets to colorful masks, to massive works of art; the creations of several artists, Sergio Bustamante, for one, are world-famous. NOTE: Ceramicware is often decorated with leaded paint and should not be used for food and drink.

BEST PLACES:
Puebla • Puerto Vallarta • Oaxaca
Guadalajara • Tonalá • Guanajuato
Dolores Hidalgo • San Miguel de Allende
San Cristóbal de las Casas

WOODWORK

Now in vogue in the U.S., Mexico's whimsical and colorful carved animals (alebrijes) are prized souvenirs. The best pieces are found in Oaxaca. Also popular are lacquerware, carved masks, furniture and guitars.

BEST PLACES:
Oaxaca • Michoacán State
San Miguel de Allende • Guadalajara
Tzintzuntzán • Guerrero State

A Closer Look at Mercados

"Pásele marchante, pásele!" This is what vendors call out to their customers in Mexican markets as they stroll through narrow aisles crowded with all types of fresh fruits, vegetables, fish, meat, handcrafts, candies, flowers and much more. The Aztecs called them tianguis, a word in náhuatl that means mercado or market, referring to an open public market in which traders from different parts of the country met to exchange products such as jade, cotton, cocoa, cereals and precious metals.

During their rule in central Mexico, the Aztecs built the Tlatelolco market and due to its important location, it became the main mercado in mid-fifteenth century AD. Other specialized markets were created as well and could be found in different cities that are now neighborhoods, for example the salt market located in Atenantitlán or the slaves market located in Azcapotzalco and Izocan.

Nowadays, the mercados represent an important attraction for national and international visitors since all the folk culture of the city or town can be easily found there. The mercados are everywhere and each one has its own specialty and personality that comes from the raw ingredients to the prepared foods, the colors and unique aromas.

In Oaxaca, tourists can visit Mercado de Juárez, famous for its handcrafts, natural home-made refreshments (known in Mexico as aguas frescas), people selling a wide array of cheese and the best Tlayudas - hand-made corn tortilla with tasajo style beef, lettuce, cheese, sour cream and red or green sauce. Other popular markets can be found in Puebla, where you will find the San Martin Texmeluca market, one of the largest in Latin America, while Morelia offers a candy market with a incredible collection of traditional sweets such as the ate -thick fruit paste.

In México City there are many specialized markets like the flower market in Xochimilco which is 30 acres long, the Sonora market, known as the best place to find medicinal herbs, home remedies not only to cure normal illnesses but to keep bad energy away, and some others like Mercado de La Merced, Mercado de Jamaica, etc.

All of these are settled in a specific area within the city but every week there are smaller and traveling markets, those of which are visited more often by people living in the surrounding towns. For example, the handcraft market of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas or the Saturday silver market offering great bargains in Taxco, Guerrero.

Now you know that visiting a mercado is a must on your next trip to Mexico! It is the best way to experience a day in the life of the Mexican people and learn about local food, traditions, and flavors.

--- Source: Mexico Tourism Boad

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shopping, *continues*

POTTERY

Excellent craftsmanship from centuries of experience; often hand-painted and utilizing unique techniques. Green and black pottery of Oaxaca is an example. *NOTE: Pottery is often decorated with leaded paint and should not be used for food and drink.*

BEST PLACES:
Oaxaca • Guadalajara • Guanajuato
Tonalá • Tlaquepaque • Puebla

RESORT CLOTHING

Several European designer and Mexico-born chains are found in most beach areas, including ACA JOE, Bye-Bye, Guess, Valentino, and Polo.

BEST PLACES:
All major beach resort areas

regarding bargaining

Some haggling over prices is acceptable in certain settings - open air markets, and with beach/street vendors. It is not appropriate in resort shops and stores. Prices generally include the 16% Value Added Tax (11% in Baja and Quintana Roo states).

sports

For today's active traveler, Mexico offers plenty of options. Water sports and fishing dominate the scene at beach resorts, although many also offer excellent tennis and golf facilities. Many resort hotels now offer complete health club facilities.

golf

Mexico continues to maintain and develop new and wonderful championship sea-side links and inland golf course treasures for all to play. Currently over 100 billion dollars' worth of golf-related resort and real estate development is taking place all around Mexico, making golf one of the fastest growing and most important segments of Mexico's tourism and real estate industries. In the last quarter of 2008 alone, at least 20 new golf courses were under development, with some openings expected in the months to come.

Recent surveys show Mexico continues to be the No. 1 destination outside of the continental United States for U.S. and Canadian golfers. This popularity is due in no small part to the fact that many of the top names in the world of golf course design, including Jack Nicklaus, Robert von Hagge, Greg Norman, Robert Trent Jones, Tom Fazio, Tom Doak, a couple of Dyes, Gary Player, Davis Love and a David Duval are creating the best golf course in the world in Mexico.

Main Areas of Golf in Mexico

- Los Cabos, La Paz and Loreto
- Mexican Riviera from Mazatlan, Vallarta, Manzanillo, Ixtapa to Acapulco
- Cancun/Riviera Maya, Cozumel and Merida
- Baja Norte and Sea of Cortez

Professional Tournaments

- PGA event Mayakobá Classic each February at El Camaleón (Riviera Maya)
- LPGA several events, including Tres Marias and the Lorena Ochoa invitational in Guadalajara
- Canadian Tour has four events, El Cid, Mazatlán; La Loma, San Luis Potosí; Yucatan CC, Mérida; Iberostar, Rivera Maya.

The Mexico Open rotates throughout Mexico each spring

Enjoy Golf in Mexico

Many courses offer caddies and stay and play rates. Several Cancun courses have all-inclusive rates, including local transportation, food and beverages in the clubhouse and on course from the beverage cart.

Golf in Mexico... Que Pasa?

Have you been paying attention to Golf in Mexico lately? How about Tiger Woods' new golf course near Ensenada, Greg Norman having some of the best new golf courses in Mexico, Jack Nicklaus being the number ONE architect with over 250 world wide course and 22 in Mexico (that's almost 10% of his world wide effort)?

Cancun and the Riviera Maya were once sleepy Mayan towns. Today it's a whole new ball game, with 13 new courses, site of the first PGA championship, Mayakobá Classic at the Greg Norman design El Cameleon, in the Riviera Maya. Other area courses in the area are by Robert von Hagge, Robert Trent Jones, Jr., Pedro Guereca, P.B. Dye, Nick Price and Tom Fazio.

Who is the best female golfer in the world, Lorena Ochoa, from Guadalajara, Mexico? Why is everyone talking about playing golf in Mexico and buying a second home or a retirement villa?

¿Que Pasa? ¡Viva Mexico!

Today there are more than 210 golf courses in Mexico along the most beautiful soft sand beaches, and inland at or near historic towns and villages. Play them all. Plan now for your client's golf getaway to Mexico and use the resources in this chapter to get the ball rolling.

See you on the links,

Chuck Kinder, C.T.C
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Best's Golf Guide's TOP 10 PRIVATE MEXICO COURSES

	Name of Golf Course	City
1	CABO DEL SOL GOLF-OCEAN	LOS CABOS
2	PALMILLA GOLF CLUB	LOS CABOS
3	FOUR SEASONS PUNTA MITA - PACIFICO	PUNTA DE MITA, Nayarit
4	EL CAMALEON MAYAKOBA	RIVIERA MAYA
5	EL TAMARINDO COUNTRY CLUB	CIHUATLAN, Jalisco
6	VISTA VALLARTA NICKLAUS	PTO. VALLARTA
7	ISLA NAVIDAD COUNTRY CLUB	ISLA NAVIDAD, Jalisco
8	PLAYAS MUJERES	CANCUN
9	VISTA VALLARTA WEISKOPF	PTO. VALLARTA
10	CABO REAL GOLF COURSE	LOS CABOS

Best's Golf Guide's TOP 10 RESORT MEXICO COURSES

	Name of Golf Course	City
1	ELDORADO GOLF COURSE	LOS CABOS
2	CLUB DE GOLF MEXICO	TLALPAN
3	QUERENCIA GOLF CLUB	LOS CABOS
4	GUADALAJARA COUNTRY CLUB	GUADALAJARA
5	CLUB DE GOLF TRES VIDAS	ACAPULCO
6	TRES MARIAS	MORELIA
7	BOSQUE REAL COUNTRY CLUB	VALLE DE MEXICO
8	LAS MISIONES CLUB CAMPESTRE	SANTIAGO
9	CLUB DE GOLF CHAPULTEPEC	NAUCALPAN
10	LA LOMA CAMPO DE GOLF	SAN LUIS POTOSI

mexico golf courses

1 Tijuana/Ensenada
Baja Country Club
Bajamar Golf Club
Club Campestre de Tijuana
Real del Mar Golf Club

2 Guaymas
San Carlos Country Club

3 Loreto
Campo de Golf Loreto

4 Los Cabos
Cabo del Sol Golf Club (36 • Desert/Ocean Courses)
Cabo Real Golf Club
Eldorado Golf Course
Palmilla Golf Club (27)
Querencia
Cabo San Lucas Country Club
San José del Cabo Golf Course (9)

5 Mazatlán
El Cid Golf and Country Club (27)
Estrella del Mar Golf Club

6 Puerto Vallarta/Punta Mita
Club de Golf Los Flamingos
Marina Vallarta Golf Club
Paradise Village Golf & Country Club
Four Seasons Resort Golf
Vista Vallarta (36)
Mayan Palace

7 Guadalajara
Atlas Country Club
El Palomar Country Club
Guadalajara Country Club
Las Canadas Country Club
Santa Anita Club de Golf

8 Manzanillo/Costa Alegre
Club Santiago (9)
El Tamarindo Golf Club
Isla Navidad Golf Club
La Mantarraya at Las Hadas

9 Ixtapa
Marina Ixtapa
Palma Real

10 León
La Hacienda de León

11 Monterrey
Club Campestre Monterey
Club de Golf Valle Alto
Las Misiones Country Club

12 Mexico City
Avandaro Golf Course
Rancho Avandaro Golf Course
Bellavista Golf Course
Chapultepec Golf Club
El Copal Golf Course
La Hacienda Golf Club
Mexico Golf Club
Valle Escondido Golf Club
Club de Golf Los Encinos
Mexico City Country Club
Del Lago Country Club



13 Cuernavaca/Cocoyoc
Club Campestre Lomas de Cocoyoc
Club Deportivo Cocoyoc (9)
Country Club de Cuernavaca
Los Tabachines
Hacienda San Gaspar
Las Colinas

14 Acapulco
Farimont Princess Club De Golf
Club de Golf Acapulco (9)
Fairmont Pierre Marquis Club De Golf
Tres Vidas Golf Course
Vidafel Mayan Palace Country Club

15 Huatulco
Campo de Golf Tangolunda

16 Villahermosa
Campestre Villahermosa

17 Mérida
Club de Golf La Ceiba
Club de Golf Yucatán

18 Cancún
Hilton Golf Course
Club de Golf Pak-Ta-Pok
Moon Palace (27)
Playa Mujeres
Riviera Cancún

19 Cozumel
Cozumel Country Club

20 Riviera Maya
Playacar Club de Golf
Puerto Aventuras Resort Course (9)
Mayan Palace Golf Club
El Camaleón at Mayakoba
Iberostar Paraíso

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STATE	TELEPHONE	CITY	HOLES	PAR	RATING	CHAMP	MEN	WOMEN	CARTS	CADDIES	WKDAYS	WKEND
12 AGUASCALIENTES												
Club Campestre de Aguascalientes (P) Apartado Postal No. 296	(449) 914-2203 (449) 914-1157	Aguascalientes	18	72	71.3	6722	6471	5618	Y	Y	$160	$160
			Bob Walton design.									
Country Club Pulgas Pandas (R) Apartado Postal No. 577	(449) 9140075 (449) 9140023	Aguascalientes	9	36	68.3	6420	6043	5546	Y	Y	$79	$139
			Joe Finger design.									
Deportivo Colon de Aguascalientes (R)		Aguascalientes	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club de Golf Pichacho (P)		Aguascalientes	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1 BAJA CALIFORNIA												
Baja Country Club "Ensenada" (R) KM 16 Carr. Transpeninsular	(646) 177-5523 (866) 599-0631	Ensenada	18	72	73.1	6834	6103	5203	Y	N	$47	$47
			Enrique Valenzuela design.									
Bajamar (R) 21 KM 77.5 Ensenada Toll Road	(646) 155-0151	Ensenada	27	72	73.5	6968	5712	4696	Y	N	$79	$114
			Robert von Hagge design. Mexico's Pebble Beach.									
Club Campestre de Mexicali (P) Carr. San Felipe, KM 2.5	(686) 563-6170 (686) 563-6171	Mexicali	18	72	72.0	6752	6524	6066	Y	N	$30	$45
Laguna Country Club (P)		Mexicali	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Real Del Mar Golf Club (R) KM 19.5 Ensenada Toll Road	(664) 631-3401	Rosarito	18	72	70.7	6460	6043	5534	Y	Y	$69	$89
			Pedro Guereca design. Ocean views on 11 of 18 holes.									
Las Caras de Mexico (R) KM 176.5 Federal #5	(877) 787-2624	San Felipe	18	72	N/A	7202	6337	5772	Y	N	$70	$85
			Bradford Benz design.									
Tijuana Country Club (P) 28 Blvd. Agua Caliente 11311, Fracc. Aviacion	(664) 104-7500	Tijuana	18	72	72.9	6834	6616	5393	Y	Y	$45	$69
			Alister Mackenzie design. Challenging golf course near racetrack.									
2 BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR												
Paraiso del Mar (R) El Mogote	(888) 789-4975	La Paz	18	72	N/A	7157	6679	6161	Y	Y	N/A	N/A
			Arthur Hills design.									
Loreto Bay Golf Course (D) Blvd. Mision San Ignacio s/n	(613) 133-0788	Loreto	18	72	71.5	6800	6400	5497	Y	Y	$60	$60
			David Duval design, with an outstanding 14th hole.									
Cabo del Sol Golf, Desert (R) 12 Carr. Transpeninsular KM 7.5 Cabo San Lucas	(624) 145-8200	Los Cabos	18	72	69.6	6698	6252	6252	Y	N	(L) $185 (H) $200	(L) $185 (H) $220
			Tom Weiskopf design. Desert course with ocean views.									
Cabo del Sol Golf, Ocean (R) 1 Carr. Transpeninsular KM 7.5 Cabo San Lucas	(624) 145-8200	Los Cabos	18	72	74.3	7053	6238	4980	Y	N	(L) $250 (H) $350	(L) $250 (H) $350
			Jack Nicklaus design with 5 oceanfront holes.									
Cabo San Lucas Country Club (R) 26 Lazaro Cardenas s/n	(624) 143-4653	Los Cabos	18	72	73.0	7220	6603	5302	Y	N	$204	$204
			Roy Dye design with view of Land's End.									
Cabo Real Golf Course (R) 10 KM 19.5 Transpenin. San Jose del Cabo	(624) 173-9400	Los Cabos	18	72	74.1	6945	6437	5068	Y	N	$280 $180	$280 $180
			Robert Trent Jones Jr. design. Site of '96 & '99 Senior Slam.									
Club Campestre San Jose (R) 16 KM 119 Libramiento Aeropuerto SJC	(624) 173-9400	Los Cabos	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$220 $160	$220 $160
			Jack Nicklaus design									
El Dorado Golf Course (P) 1 Carr. San Lucas - San Jose KM 22.5	(877) 795-8727	Los Cabos	18	72	74.7	7050	6476	4855	Y	Y	Members	Only
			Jack Nicklaus Signature design. Seven holes on the ocean.									
Palmilla Golf Resort (R) 2 Carr. Transpeninsular KM 7.5	(624) 144-5250	Los Cabos	27	72	72.2	6939	6130	4858	Y	N	$230	$230
			Jack Nicklaus Signature design. Site for the '97 Senior Slam.									
Puerto Los Cabos (R) 20 Paseo de los Pescadores	(624) 173-9400	Los Cabos	18	73	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$135	$135
			Jack Nicklaus and Greg Norman design, 9 holes each.									
Punta Sur Golf Course Los Cabos (D) Paseo Fenisterra #1	(624) 142-0905	Los Cabos	9	70	72.0	6306	5404	5840	Y	N	$63	$63
			M. Schjetnan/Joe Finger design. Delightful ocean view course.									
Querencia Country Club (P) 3 Carr. Transpeninsular KM 27.5	(624) 145-6600	Los Cabos	18	72	74.5	7070	6624	5092	Y	N	Members	Only
			Tom Fazio Design. Host of SHELL'S Wonderful World of Golf									
29 CAMPECHE												
Club de Golf Playa Palmas (P) KM 5 1/2 Carr. Carmen Real	(938) 389-2507	Campeche	9	72	68.9	6234	5938	5144	Y	Y	$60	$65
28 CHIAPAS												
Club Campestre Tuxtla (P)	(961) 615-0637	Chiapas	9	72	71.5	3374	3120	2882	Y	Y	$30	$30
Campiñas Golf Country Club (D)	(961) 140-2048	Chiapas	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$25	$25
4 CHIHUAHUA												
Club Campestre Chihuahua (P) Camino al Campestre s/n	(614) 418-1061	Chihuahua	18	72	71.1	6879	6829	4901	N	Y	$70	$70
			Percy Clifford design.									
Club de Golf San Francisco (P)	(614) 425-1004	Chihuahua	18	70	70.6	6344	6112	5152	Y	Y	$60	$85
Delicias Country Club, S.C. (P) KM 4.5 Carr. Delicias Rosales	(639) 472-5790	Ciudad Delicias	27	72	70.7	6666	6666	5150	N	Y	$40	$60
			David Fleming design.									
Club Campestre Juarez (P) Pedro Pelayo y Av. Campestre	(656) 617-7707	Ciudad Juarez	18	72	71.3	6846	6383	5269	N	Y	$80	$80
			George Hoffman design.									
Mision de los Lagos Romanos (P)		Ciudad Juarez	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$35	$55

DIRECTORY KEY
(R) = Resort Course **(P)** = Private Course **(SP)** = Semi-Private Course **(D)** = Daily Fee **(L)** = Low Season **(H)** = High Season

1 = TOP 30 Private Course ranking
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STATE	TELEPHONE	CITY	HOLES	PAR	RATING	CHAMP	MEN	WOMEN	CARTS	CADDIES	WKDAYS	WKEND
7 COAHUILA												
Club de Golf Bosques de Monterreal (P) Carr. San Antonio Mesa	(844) 438-8170	Arteaga	9	63	61.2	N/A	6646	N/A	N	Y	$80	$80
Jaime Padilla design. Golf at 9,500 feet with views of alpine forests.												
Club de Golf El Socorro (P) Av. Adolfo Lopez Mateos No. 50	(866) 633-1396	Monclova	9	35	68.4	5600	5600	5300	N	Y	$30	$30
Easy and fun for most players.												
Rincon del Montero Hotel & Resort (P) Carr. Parras - Paila KM 3	(844) 422-0540	Parras de la Fuente	9	59	N/A	3625	N/A	3000	N	Y	$30	$30
Club Campestre Saltillo (P) Apartado Postal No. 438	(844) 432-0143	Saltillo	18	72	71.7	6514	6514	5356	Y	Y	$105	$115 Sat - Pros only
Club Campestre Lourdes (P) Apartado Postal No. 501	(844) 417-3422	Saltillo	9	70	70.7	6590	6360	5496	N	Y	$30	$30
Club Campestre de Torreón (P) Apartado Postal No. 946	(871) 721-2323	Torreón	18	71	72.1	6800	6428	5393	N	Y	$70	$90
Closed on Mondays.												
Club Campestre Montebello (P)	(871) 729-8800	Torreón	18	72	N/A	6840	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$90	$90
David Fleming design.												
Club de Golf Los Azulejos (P)	(8715) 750-7490	Torreón	18	72	76.6	7576	7040	5478	Y	Y	$95	$95
Robert von Hagge design.												
15 COLIMA												
Club de Golf Colima (R) Autopista Colima Manzanillo KM. 4.2.	(312) 314-4230	Colima	9	68	N/A	5338	N/A	4235	Y	Y	$40	$60
Las Hadas Golf and Resort (R) 30 Av. de los Riscos s/n, Peninsula de Santiago	(314) 331-0101	Manzanillo	18	71	69.7	6435	5985	4773	Y	Y	$150	$150
Roy Dye designed course. Million dollar island green 18th hole.												
Isla Navidad Golf Course Marina & Resort (R) Paseo Loma Larga 3885 7	(315) 355-6439	Manzanillo	27	72	73.9	6943	6469	5152	Y	Y	$207	$207
Robert von Hagge design. Voted Best Beach Resort in Mexico.												
Santiago Country Club (SP) Av. Camaron 1-A Santiago	(314) 335-0410	Manzanillo	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$50	$55
Larry Hughes design. Small, semi-private course located at Club Santiago.												
6 DURANGO												
Club Campestre Durango (P)	(618) 826-0651	Durango	18	72	69.4	6862	6642	5416	N	Y	$30	$35
Club Campestre Gomez Palacios (P)	(871) 714-2075	Gomez Palacio	18	71	69.7	6286	6121	5091	N	Y	$25	$35
16 GUANAJUATO												
Club Campestre de Celaya (P) KM 264 Carr. Panamericana Mexico-Celaya	(461) 612-1797	Celaya	18	72	70.3	6785	6265	5171	N	Y	$40	$40
Roy Dye design.												
Alamo Country Club (P)	(461) 611-0241	Celaya	18	72	73.6	6934	6367	4925	Y	Y	$60	$80
Club De Golf Santa Margarita (P)	(462) 623-0303	Irapuato	18	72	N/A	6846	6486	5298	Y	Y	$40	$70
Club de Golf Los Nardos (P)		Lago de Moreno	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club Campestre de Leon (P) Exhacienda Cerro Gordo S/N	(477) 717-0521	León	18	72	70.0	6609	6135	4797	Y	Y	$100	$100
Club de Golf Hacienda de León (P)	(477) 717-2500	León	18	72	69.1	6635	6161	4795	N	Y	$70	$80
Marcelino Moreno design.												
Club de Golf en Las Nubes (P)	(477) 717-5989	León	9	36	68.2	6421	6043	6041	N	N	$30	$30
Larry Hughes design.												
Club Vergel de la Sierra (P)	(477) 717-5658	León	9	36	N/A	3047	N/A	2627	N	Y	$100	$100
Marcelino Moreno design.												
Country Club Los Naranjos (P)	(477) 776-0003	León	9	72	N/A	6778	6195	5180	N	Y	$50	$70
Marcelino Moreno design.												
Club Campestre Riama (P)	(464) 648-6083	Salamanca	9	33	N/A	2407	2299	1830	Y	Y	$30	$30
Campo de Golf La Hacienda Santuario (P)	*Isabela Castro design.*	San Miguel de Allende	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$30
Ventanas de San Miguel (P)	*Nick Faldo design.*	San Miguel de Allende	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club De Golf Malanquin (P) Carr. San Miguel de Allende a Celaya KM 3	(415) 152-0516	San Miguel de Allende	9	36	70.5	6724	6489	5735	Y	Y	$55	$80
Clay Fuller design.												
22 GUERRERO												
Club De Golf Acapulco (SP) Av. Costera M. Aleman s/n	(744) 484-0781	Acapulco	9	72	70.0	6898	5801	N/A	Y	Y	$70	$70
Percy Clifford design. Short, fun course. Established in 1957.												
Fairmont Acapulco Princess (R) 22 Playa Revolcadero s/n	(744) 469-1000	Acapulco	18	72	69.4	6112	6085	5400	Y	N	$80	$80
Ted Robinson design. Flat terrain. Water on 12 holes.												
Fairmont Golf Pierre Marques (R) 14 Playa Revolcadero s/n	(744) 435-2600	Acapulco	18	72	67.7	6860	6112	5112	Y	N	$110	$110
Robert Trent Jones, Sr. design. Water on 12 holes, well bunkered.												
Mayan Palace Copra Golf (R) Av. Costera de las Palmas, Fracc. Playa Diamante	(744) 469—6000	Acapulco	18	72	6507	5959	6156	5352	Y	Y	$130	$130
Pedro Guereca design.												
Tres Vidas Golf Course (SP) 5 Carr. a Barra Vieja KM 7	(744) 444-5135	Acapulco	18	72	74.7	7040	5895	5015	Y	Y	$200	$200
Robert von Hagge design. Rates in Top 10 in Mexico. Troon.												
Club de Golf Palma Real (R) 23 Blvd. Ixtapa s/n	(755) 553-1163	Ixtapa	18	72	70.0	6898	6408	5801	Y	Y	$85	$85
Robert Trent Jones Jr. design, alligators in lake!												
Marina Ixtapa Golf Course (R) Calle de Darsena s/n	(755) 553-1410	Ixtapa	18	72	74.1	6781	6328	5197	Y	Y	$75	$75
Robert von Hagge design.												
Nueve Hoyos en el Cielo (P)	(762) 622-1300	Taxco	9	35	N/A	2901	2833	2380	N	Y	$50	$50

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18 HIDALGO													
Club De Golf La Esmeralda (P)		*Jose Guillermo Rapp design.*	Pachuca	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club De Golf Pachuca (P)		(771) 711-3077	Pachuca	18	72	72.3	7200	6900	N/A	N	Y	$40	$80
Club De Golf El Agrario (P)		(778) 738-0211	Tula de Allende	18	66	69.1	4022	4022	4022	Y	Y	$40	$80
11 JALISCO													
Chula Vista Golf Club (P)		(376) 766-2515	Chapala	9	31	N/A	1850	1760	1659	N	Y	$40	$50
Country Club de Chapala (P)		(376) 763-5384	Chapala	18	36	69.8	6879	6879	4901	Y	N	$50	$60
Atlas Country Club (P) Carr. Guadalajara Chapala KM 6.5	11	(333) 689-2620	Guadalajara	18	72	70.6	7169	6378	5589	Y	Y	$85	$110
				Joe Finger design. Visitor's golf package available.									
Guadalajara Country Club (P) Mar Caribe 260, Col. Country Club	4	(333) 817-2858	Guadalajara	18	72	70.8	6821	6490	5464	N	Y	Members	Only
				John Bredemus design. Site of Seniors Invitational every February.									
El Cielo (Palomar) Country Club (SP) Paseo de la Cima 437, Fracc. El Palomar	26	(333) 684-4436	Guadalajara	18	72	N/A	6600	6400	5900	Y	Y	$200	$200
				Victor Langham design. Architecturally breathtaking located high above Guadalajara.									
El Rio Country Club (P) Av. Rubén Dario #1109 1er Piso.	16	(333) 817-0108	Guadalajara	18	72	73.0	6954	6494	5170	Y	Y	Members	Only
				Jack Nicklaus Signature design.									
El Tamarindo Country Club (R) Carr. Melaque-Pto. Vallarta, KM 7.5	5	(315) 351-5031	Melaque La Manzanilla	18	72	73.5	6515	6300	5800	Y	Y	$238	$238
				Dave Fleming design. Jungle setting, a must play.									
Club Campestre Camcel A.C. (P)		(392) 925-9136	Ocotlan	9	68	65.4	5400	5176	4702	N	Y	$40	$40
Marina Vallarta Club de Golf (R) Fracc. Marina Vallarta	28	(322) 221-0073	Puerto Vallarta	18	71	72.0	6700	6093	5259	Y	Y	$135	$135
				Joe Finger design. Challenging layout, oceanfront hole on the Bay. Club Corp.									
Vista Vallarta Nicklaus (R) Circuito Universidad #653	6	(322) 290-0030	Puerto Vallarta	18	72	72.0	7073	6031	5251	Y	Y	$194	$194
				Jack Nicklaus design. Club Corp, site of World Cup.									
Vista Vallarta Weiskopf (R) Circuito Universidad #653	9	(322) 290-0030	Puerto Vallarta	18	72	73.0	6976	5876	4943	Y	Y	$194	$194
				Tom Weiskopf design. Club Corp.									
Club de Golf Santa Anita (P) Carr. Guadalajara-Morelia	21	(333) 686-0321	Santa Anita	18	72	70.8	6811	6546	5521	Y	Y	$100	$150
				Larry Hughes design. Bermuda fairways, Bent-grass greens, well manicured.									
Tapalpa Country Club (P) Carr. Tapalpa - San Gabriel KM 5.5		(343) 432-0710	Tapalpa	9	36	71.3	7260	6680	5400	Y	Y	$40	$40
				Joe Finger design. Mountain course with views of the Valley.									
San Ramon Country Club (P)		*Enrique Valenzuela design.*	Tepatitlan	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ayamonte (P)			Zapopan	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Las Cañadas Country Club (P) Av. Bosques de San Isidro Nte No. 777		(333) 685-0412	Zapopan	18	72	71.0	6663	6731	5228	Y	Y	$60	$80
				Larry Hughes design. Original home to Bing Crosby College Invitational.									
Las Lomas Club de Golf (P)	20	(331) 086-1400	Zapopan	18	71	70.2	6209	5443	4799	N/A	Y	$102	$128
				Charles Mahannah design.									
Rancho Contento Golf Course (P)		(333) 682-1154	Zapopan	9	35	N/A	2800	N/A	N/A	N	Y	$50	$50
				Emilio Rodriguez design.									
21 MEXICO, DISTRICT FEDERAL													
Club de Golf Bosques S.A. de C.V. (D)	23	(555) 589-1200	Cuajimalpa	9	70	66.7	5673	4940	4518	Y	Y	$75	$300
				Jack Nicklaus design.									
Club Campestre Ciudad de Mexico (P)	17	(555) 489-3041	Coyoacan	18	72	73.0	7213	6428	5854	Y	Y	$250	$300
				Willy Smith design.									
Canadas San Fe (P)		*Jack Nicklaus design.*	Mexico City	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club de Golf Mexico (P)	2	(555) 487-2000	Tlalpan	18	72	72.3	7153	6649	5779	Y	Y	$280	$500
				Larry Hughes design.									
20 MEXICO, ESTADO DE (STATE OF)													
Club Campestre Chiluca S.A. de C.V. (P)		(555) 308-1700	Aztipan	18	72	71.9	6776	6404	5453	Y	Y	$320	$450
				Larry Hughes design.									
Club de Golf Bellavista (P)	19	(555) 366-8050	Aztipan	18	72	70.1	6987	6613	5600	Y	Y	$150	$180
				Larry Hughes design.									
Club de Golf La Hacienda (P) Apartado Postal No. 2-161	13	(555) 379-0033	Aztipan	18	72	71.1	7090	6670	5879	Y	N/A	$150	$200
				Larry Hughes design. Site of the Mexican Open.									
Club De Golf Valle Escondido (P) Av. Club de Golf s/n, Fracc. Vallescondido	22	(555) 308-0093	Aztipan	18	72	68.8	6775	6396	5488	Y	Y	$150	$245
				Percy Clifford design.									
Bosque Real Country Club (P)	7	(555) 258-9422	Huixquilucan	18	72	N/A	7322	6445	5266	Y	Y	$300	$420
				Robert von Hagge design.									
Lomas Country Club (P)	29	(555) 291-3863	Huixquilucan	18	71	66.0	6502	6100	5534	Y	Y	$90	$150
				Mahana/Green design.									
Coral Golf Course & Country Club (P)		(555) 972-0343	Ixtapaluca	18	72	69.8	6644	6227	5136	Y	Y	$100	$170
La Purisima Golf & Sports Club (P)		*Marcelino Moreno design.*	Ixtlahuaca	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$40
Club de Golf Nueva Ixtapan (P) Blvd. Arturo A. San Roman S/N		(721) 143-2244	Ixtapan de la Sal	18	72	7200	6666	6120	5162	Y	Y	$220	$220
				Joe Finger design.									
Ixtapan Golf Resort Country Club (P)			Ixtapan de la Sal	18	72	7200	6666	6120	5162	Y	Y	$140	$220
Madeiras Country Club (P)		(555) 877-0676	Izcalli	18	72	68.0	6793	6361	5425	Y	Y	$160	$220
Club de Golf Los Encinos (P)	14	(728) 285-3920	Lerma	18	72	68.7	7043	6248	5000	Y	Y	$150	$300
				Larry Hughes design									

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Club de Golf Malinalco (P) 18	(555) 281-4283	Malinalco	18	72	71.3	7094	6668	5074	Y	Y	$60	$120
Club de Golf Chapultepec (P) 9	(555) 589-1200	Naucalpan	18	72	69.9	7043	6624	5558	Y	Y	$200	$300
Club de Golf la Esmeralda (D)	(551) 994-5710	Tecamac	18	72	N/A	6800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$40	$60
Club De Golf Rancho Viejo (P) Carr. Toluca - Temascaltepec, San Antonio Albarranes KM 45.3	(722) 235-1767	Temascaltepec	9	36	N/A	6820	6300	5300	N	Y	$50	$60
Larry Hughes design.												
Club de Golf Copal (D)	(555) 715-8009	Tlalnepantla	9	70	N/A	5857	5531	5136	N	Y	$30	$60
Club de Golf San Carlos (P)	(722) 216-0528	Toluca	18	71	70.5	6829	6499	5469	Y	Y	$80	$150
Percy Clifford/Pedro Guereca design.												
Campestre Izar (P)	(726) 251-2027	Valle de Bravo	18	72	36	6265	5734	5195	Y	Y	$100	$170
Club de Golf Avandaro (P) Fracc. Avandaro	(726) 251-4064	Valle de Bravo	18	72	72.0	6369	5968	5113	Y	Y	$130	$190
Percy Clifford design, a challenge at every hole!												
Club de Golf Rancho Avandaro (R) Vega del Rio, Fracc. Avandaro	(555) 282-1212	Valle de Bravo	18	72	72.0	6725	6535	5498	Y	Y	$150	$280
High-altitude golf at its best. Panoramic views of valley.												
Club de Golf Santuario (P)		Valle de Bravo	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$35	$45
19 MICHOACAN												
Hacienda Cantalagua Country Club (R)		Contepec	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$50	$100
Club Campestre de Morelia (P)	(443) 314-1203	Morelia	9	72	72.9	6754	6508	5228	N	Y	$30	$40
Tres Marias Residential Golf Club (P) 6	(443) 428-0033	Morelia	27	108	73.9	11359	9526	9526	Y	Y	$150	$200
Jack Nicklaus design.												
Club Campestre de Zacapu A.C. (P)	(436) 363-4420	Zacapu	9	72	70.5	6834	6584	5900	N	Y	$30	$30
Valle Las Rocas Country Club		Zacapu	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$40
23 MORELOS												
Club Campestre Lomas de Cocoyoc (P) Lomas De Cocoyoc	(735) 356-1140	Cocoyoc	18	72	69.7	6724	6287	5013	N	Y	$65	$75
Mario Schejtnan design. Hilly, manicured Championship course with views of the valley.												
Hacienda Cocoyoc (R)	(735) 356-2211	Cocoyoc	9	35	N/A	3031	2775	2555	N	Y	$50	$70
Larry Hughes design.												
Country Club de Cuernavaca (P) Apartado Postal No. 17	(777) 314-0207	Cuernavaca	18	72	N/A	7029	6496	5277	N	Y	$65	$85
Club de Golf Los Tabachines (P) 30 KM 93.5 Autopista Mexico Acapulco	(777) 314-3999	Cuernavaca	18	72	68.6	6052	5787	6244	N	Y	$80	$160
Percy Clifford design.												
Club de Golf Hacienda San Gaspar (P)	(777) 319-4424	Cuernavaca	18	72	68.7	6916	6359	5424	Y	Y	$60	$100
Joe Finger design.												
Club de Golf Tlahuica (D)	(55) 791029	Tlahuica	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$60	$110
Los Colinas Golf Club (P)	(53) 790033	Xochitepec	18	71	N/A	6461	6496	5277	N	Y	$90	$140
Santa Fe Club de Golf (P)	(777) 391-5862	Xochitepec	18	72	74.6	6966	6564	5521	N/A	Y	$70	$110
El Paraiso Country Club (D)	*Pedro Guereca design.*	Xochitepec	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
8 NAYARIT												
Flamingos de Golf Club (SP) 25 KM 145 Carr. Fed. 200 Tepic-Puerto Vallarta	(329) 296-5006	Nuevo Vallarta	18	72	73.7	6982	N/A	N/A	Y	Y	$139	$139
Percy Clifford design. Thirty minutes from downtown Puerto Vallarta.												
Mayan Palace Nayar Golf (R) 33	(322) 226-4000	Nuevo Vallarta	18	71	73.7	6936	5692	4942	Y	Y	$140	$140
Lipp/Guereca/Nicklaus design.												
El Tigre, Paradise Village Country Club (SP) 13	(322) 297-0773	Nuevo Vallarta	18	72	71.7	6649	6271	5744	Y	N	$167	$167
Robert von Hagge design.												
Punta Mita Bahia (R) 21 Bahia de Banderas	(329) 291-6037	Punta Mita	18	72	N/A	7035	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jack Nicklaus design.												
Punta Mita Pacifico (R) 3 Bahia de Banderas	(329) 291-6037	Punta Mita	18	72	72.9	7014	6641	5037	Y	N	Guests	Only
Jack Nicklaus signature course. Famous for its 19th hole.												
Nayar Club Campestre (R)	(311) 218-0231 (311) 218-0236	Tepic	9	36	72.0	6420	6041	5545	Y	N	$30	$40
Miguel Perez Acosta design.												
10 NUEVO LEON												
Las Cruces Golf & Country Club (SP)	N/A	Apodaca	18	72	73	6970	6829	4901	Y	Y	$80	$110
Jack Nicklaus design.												
Club Refineria Cadereyta (P)		Cadereyta	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$40	$40
Tierra Dorada Club (P)		Cadereyta	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Las Misiones Country Club (P) 8 Apartado Postal No. 1398	(818) 450-0550	Cerrito Santiago	18	72	69.6	6751	5939	5214	N	Y	$150	$150
Robert von Hagge design.												
Club Campestre Monterrey (P) 12 Apartado Postal No. 1448	(818) 335-9726	Monterrey	18	72	70.4	6826	6489	5453	Y	Y	$160	$160
Bredemus/Hughes design												
Club de Golf Valle Alto (P) 27 Apartado Postal No. 1924	(818) 155-8400	Monterrey	18	72	70.9	6854	6579	5442	Y	Y	$160	$160
Club de Golf La Herradura A.C. (P) Carretera Nacional km. 266 Av. Portal del Huajuco	(818) 104-1040	Monterrey	18	72	72.1	6912	6382	5657	Y	Y	$80	$110
Robert von Hagge design.												
Hacienda El Mirador Club De Golf (P) Camino Al Mirador, KM 2 Col. Del Paseo Residencial	(818) 114-9467	Monterrey	9	70	63.7	4422	N/A	4036	N	Y	$30	$80
Surrounded by mountains, 10 minutes from downtown.												
Golf Parque Rio (P)		Monterrey	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$43	$43
Real del Desierto Golf Country Club (P)		Monterrey	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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25 OAXACA												
Club de Golf Tangolunda (R) Bahia de Tangolunda s/n	(958) 581-0059	Huatulco	18	72	N/A	6851	6366	5605	Y	Y	$60	$70
F.M. Schjetnan design, jungle setting, ocean front views of the Bay.												
Club De Golf Vista Hermosa A.C. (P)	(951) 547-1177	Oaxaca	9	68	67.4	5900	5218	4216	N	Y	$60	$60
24 PUEBLA												
Club Campestre El Cristo (P)	(244) 445-0295	Atlixco	18	71	68.6	6653	6082	5296	Y	Y	$75	$150
Club de Golf La Huerta (P)	(222) 247-9611	Cholula	9	62	58.5	6576	N/A	5320	N	Y	$40	$50
Club de Golf Las Fuentes (P)	(222) 224-0777	Puebla	9	68	63.6	5176	5015	4542	N	Y	$60	$70
Club Campestre de Marvillas (P)	(555) 683-9701	Puebla	9	70	70.6	6344	6112	5152	Y	N	$40	$40
Club Campestre de Puebla (P) Apartado Postal No. 598 Suc. "H"	(222) 228-2893	Puebla	18	72	69.6	6795	6529	5426	N	Y	$80	$160
La Vista Country Club & Golf A.C. (P) 25 Blvd. Atlixcayotl KM 4	(222) 284-1919	San Andres Cholula	18	72	73.9	7127	6595	5470	N	Y	$160	$260
Robert von Hagge design.												
Club de Golf Penafiel (P)		Tehuacan	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$40	$40
Tehuacan Golf Course (P)		Tehuacan	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$40	$40
17 QUERETARO												
Balvanera Polo & Country Club (P)	(442) 225-1661	Corregidora	18	72	71.8	6872	6183	5270	N	Y	$70	$100
Club de Golf Provincia Juriquilla (P) Apartado Postal No. 42	(442) 234-0141	Juriquilla	18	72	70.2	6541	6079	4713	Y	Y	$100	$150
Larry Hughes design.												
Club Campestre de Queretaro (P)	(442) 216-2030	Queretaro	18	72	69.1	6893	6397	5209	N	Y	$150	$250
Percy Clifford design.												
El Campanario Country Club (P)	(442) 220-6958	Queretaro	18	76	N/A	7922	7374	6828	Y	Y	$140	$190
Robert von Hagge design.												
Club Campestre San Gil (P) Apartado Postal No. 117	(427) 271-0275	San Juan del Rio	18	72	68.8	7083	6315	5441	Y	Y	$80	$100
Roy Dye design.												
Querenda Country Club (P)		San Juan del Rio	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club De Golf Tequisquiapan (P)	(414) 273-1332	Tequisquiapan	18	72	68.1	6754	6177	5622	Y	N	$175	$375
31 QUINTANA ROO												
Club de Golf Cancun - Pok-Ta-Pok (R) Blvd. Kukulcan KM. 7.5	(998) 883-1230	Cancun	18	72	72.9	7010	6055	5365	Y	Y	$140	$190
Robert Trent Jones, Jr. design, Mayan ruins on ocean.												
Club de Golf Hilton (R)	(998) 881-8016	Cancun	18	72	71.1	6734	6734	5209	Y	N	$145	$149
Gran Melia Golf Club Cancun (R)		Cancun	9	27	N/A	943	893	844	N	N	$18	$30
Riviera Cancun Golf & Resort (R) 18 Blvd. Kukulcan KM. 26	(998) 881-6000	Cancun	18	72	N/A	7060	6627	6292	Y	N	$230	$230
Jack Nicklaus Signature course.												
Moon Spa & Golf Course (R) 11 Carr. Chetomal, KM. 3.2	(998) 881-6000	Cancun	27	72	75.6	7196	7196	5243	Y	Y	$260	$260
Jack Nicklaus Signature course.												
Cozumel Country Club (P) 19 Carr Costera Norte KM. 6.5	(987) 872-9570	Cozumel	18	72	72.2	6734	5624	4881	Y	N	$149	$149
Jack Nicklaus design. Club Corp.												
Playacar Spa & Golf Course (R) 17 Paseo Xaman-Ha s/n	(984) 873-4990	Playa del Carmen	18	72	73.1	7202	6724	5768	Y	N	$190	$190
Robert von Hagge design. Outside play welcome.												
Iberostar Playa Paraiso Golf Club (R) 15 Carr. Chetumal-PTO Juarez, KM. 309	(984) 877-2800	Playa del Carmen	18	72	69.7	6133	5654	4680	Y	N	$190	$190
P.B. Dye design.												
Puerto Aventuras Resort Course (R) Carr, Chetumal-PTO Juarez, KM. 269.5	(984) 473-5109	Puerto Aventuras	9	36	N/A	3206	2936	2533	Y	Y	$79	$79
Thomas Leman design.												
Playa Mujeres Golf Club (R) 8 Bonampak S/N	(998) 887-7322	Punta Sam	36	72	74.5	7218	5854	5195	Y	N	$253	$253
Greg Norman design.												
El Camaleón at Mayakoba (R) 4 Carretera Federal Cancún-Playa KM. 298	(888) 252-5020	Riviera Maya	18	72	138	7024	6562	5078	Y	N	$253	$253
Host of PGA TOUR event - The Mayakoba Classic. Greg Norman Signature design.												
Mayan Palace El Manglar (R) Carretera Federal Cancún-Playa KM. 48	(984) 206-4043	Riviera Maya	18	54	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	Y	$190	$190
Jack Nicklaus design.												
13 SAN LUIS POTOSI												
Club Campestre de San Luis (P) Albino Garcia 1035, Fracc. Potosino del Golf	(444) 813-0608	San Luis Potosi	18	72	68.2	3339	3339	2875	N	N	$75	$100
Robert von Hagge design.												
La Loma Country Club (P) 10		San Luis Potosi	18	72	68.2	3339	3339	2875	N	N	$150	$150
Jack Nicklaus design. #1 Best's new course in 2008.												
Club de Golf Covadoga (P)		San Luis Potosi	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$30
5 SINALOA												
Las Iguanas Country Club (P)	(667) 714-2275	Culiacan	18	71	72.1	6534	6096	6242	Y	Y	$60	$60
Country Club de Culiacán (P)	(667) 714-2385	Culiacan	18	71	75.4	3031	2829	2464	N	Y	$60	$60
Country Club Los Mochis (P)	(668) 815-3646	Los Mochis	9	70	68.3	5699	5686	N/A	Y	Y	$30	$30
Club Campestre de Mazatlán A.C. (P)	(669) 980-1570	Mazatlán	9	72	69.0	6516	6241	5263	Y	Y	$40	$40
El Cid Golf & Country Club (R) Apartado Postal No. 813	(669) 913-5611	Mazatlán	27	72	N/A	6729	6480	5752	Y	Y	$80	$80
Lee Trevino re-design. Annual El Cid Pro-Am, open to guests.												
Estrella del Mar Golf Course (R) 27 KM 10 Camino a la isla de la Piedra	(669) 982-3300	Mazatlán	18	72	75	7045	5959	5458	Y	N	$110	$110
Robert Trent Jones Jr. design, great ocean front layout.												

DIRECTORY KEY
(R) = Resort Course **(P)** = Private Course **(SP)** = Semi-Private Course **(D)** = Daily Fee **(L)** = Low Season **(H)** = High Season
1 = TOP 30 Private Course ranking
1 = TOP 30 Resort Course ranking

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STATE	TELEPHONE	CITY	HOLES	PAR	RATING	CHAMP	MEN	WOMEN	CARTS	CADDIES	WKDAYS	WKEND
3 SONORA												
Club de Golf Canenea (P)		Canenea	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club De Golf De CD. Obregon (P)	(644) 418-0044	CD. Obregon	18	72	70.7	6588	6138	5373	N	Y	$50	$50
Campo de Golf Marina San Carlos (SP) Domicilio Conocido entre Loma Bonita y Solimar	(622) 226-1102	Guaymas	18 *Roy Dye design.*	72	68.7	5858	5439	5072	Y	N	$55	$65
Club Campestre de Hermosillo (P) Postal Naruarte No. 76-2	(621) 224-3095	Hermosillo	9 *Larry Hughes design.*	72	70.7	6234	N/A	N/A	N	Y	$50	$50
Club De Golf Los Lagos (P)	(662) 260-8860	Hermosillo	18	72	70.3	6830	6348	5367	Y	Y	$80	$80
Club de Golf Real de Las Palmas (P)		Hermosillo	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Club de Nogales (P)		Nogales	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grupo Mayan Peñinsula de Cortes (R) 24	(638) 383-0400	Puerto Peñasco	18 *Jack Nicklaus design.*	72	N/A	7100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$160	$160
The Links at Las Palomas (R) 29	(638) 108-1072	Puerto Peñasco	18 *Forest Richardson and Arthur Jack Snider design.*	72	72.0	6855	6480	N/A	Y	N	$110	$110
27 TABASCO												
Club Campestre Villahermosa (P)	(993) 316-5411	Villahermosa	9	72	76.0	2900	5600	4800	N	Y	$50	$95
14 TAMAULIPAS												
Club Lagunas de Miralta (P) Fracc. Lagunas de Miralta	(883) 224-1070	Altamira	18 *Joe Finger/Tom Lehman design.*	72	N/A	6845	6199	5078	Y	Y	$100	$120
Club Refineria FCO. I Madero (P) Av. Alvaro Obregon S/N	(833) 216-9682	Cuidad Madero	9	72	69.7	6200	5608	4662	N	Y	$50	$50
Club de Golf Riviera del Bravo (D) Rio Panuco y 15 de Septiembre	(867) 714-2334	Nuevo Laredo	18	71	N/A	6315	N/A	5735	Y	Y	$60	$60
Club Campestre Reynosa (P)	(899) 922-0948	Reynosa	18	72	71.1	6458	6050	4826	Y	N	$20	$20
Club Campestre El Saucito (SP) Carratera a Cd. Victoria Km. 12	(868) 822-9675	Matamoros	18	71	N/A	6529	6196	5089	Y	N/A	$120	$120
Club de Golf Mante (D)	(831) 232-7323	Tamaulipas	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$35	$35
Club Campestre Tampico (P)	(833) 229-0889	Tampico	18	70	70.0	6089	5955	5221	Y	Y	$100	$150
Club Campestre Victoria (P)	(834) 316-0618	Victoria	9	72	71.0	6250	N/A	N/A	N	Y	$30	$50
26 VERACRUZ												
Club de Golf La Villa Rica (P) Apartado Postal No. 1351	(229) 986-0890	Boca del Rio	9 *Percy Clifford design. Boasts the best greens in Veracruz.*	70	70.7	6213	5347	N/A	N	Y	$60	$90
Club Campestre Coatzacoalcos (P)		Coatzacoalcos	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$50	$50
Club Campestre Cordobes (P)	(271) 716-0144	Cordoba	9	72	71.6	6900	6621	5606	N	Y	$45	$55
Los Cocuyos Resort & Club Golf (P)		Huatusco	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$50	$50
Club de Golf Jalapa (P)	(228) 820-0188	Jalapa	9	72	70.8	6874	6540	5710	N	Y	$40	$40
Asociacion Deportivo Minatitlan (P)	(922) 225-0024	Minatitlan	9	72	70.1	6526	6442	5370	N	Y	$30	$30
Club de Golf Santa Gertudiis (P)		Orizaba	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$30
Tajin Club de Golf (P)		Poza Rica	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$30
Club Campestre Tuxpan (P)		Tuxpan	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$30	$30
30 YUCATAN												
Club de Golf Yucatan (P)	(999) 922-0053	Merida	18	72	78.5	6605	5844	5131	Y	Y	$140	$140
Yucatan Country Club (P) 15	(999) 800-4000	Merida	18 *Jack Nicklaus Signature design with first Nicklaus golf Academy in Latin America*	72	71.7	6616	6164	5183	Y	Y	$200	$300
9 ZACATECAS												
Club de Golf Fresnillo (P)	(492) 923-0341	Fresnillo	9	72	68.4	3092	3092	2737	Y	N	$35	$35
Club De Golf Zacatecas (P)	(492) 923-0291	Guadalupe	9	72	69.5	N/A	6172	5474	N	Y	$100	$100

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(949) 494-8561.

BEST'S NEW MEXICO COURSES

	Name of Golf Course	City	Type
1	YUCATAN COUNTRY CLUB	MERIDA	Private
1	FOUR SEASONS PUNTA MITA BAHIA	PUNTA DE MITA	Resort
2	EL RIO COUNTRY CLUB	GUADALAJARA	Private
2	PUERTO LOS CABOS	LOS CABOS	Resort
3	BOSQUE REAL COUNTRY CLUB	MEXICO CITY	Private
3	RIVIERA CANCUN	CANCUN	Resort
4	PARAISO COUNTRY CLUB	XOCHITEPEC, Morelos	Private
4	BOSQUE ALTOZONA	MORELIA, Michoacan	Resort
5	PARAISIO DEL MAR	LA PAZ	Resort

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México Tourism Board

sports *continues*

tennis

Nearly every resort has its own facilities or nearby access to courts. Check with individual properties in the destination sections of this Guide for details. Overall, the best tennis destination in Mexico is probably **Puerto Vallarta**, with Guadalajara a close second. Courts are readily available in **Ixtapa, Huatulco Mazatlán, Los Cabos, Manzanillo, Acapulco, Cozumel**, and **Cancún**.

hunting

Excellent bird and deer hunting is centered in two areas of Mexico:

- **Sinaloa, Sonora, Chihuahua** and **Tamaulipas** states in northwest Mexico
- The State of **Yucatán** (near Mérida).

mexico hunting specialists

The Hunting Company
Bird hunting and firearms importation.
Yucatán, Chihuahua, Veracruz
tel. 281-492-1140/ fax 281-492-1101

Big Bass & Club Exclusive
Tamulipas
1-888 FUN HUNT
www.lakeguerrero.com

The hunting season in most states runs from late October through the end of February. Seasons vary according to game. Regulations governing hunting licenses and firearm importation are quite strict. All foreign hunters must be accompanied by a licensed Mexican hunting guide. Sinaloa and Sonora have some excellent, professional hunting outfitters (see separate chapter on these States for details). Permit information can be obtained by contacting your nearest Mexican Consulate or MTC office. An extensive calendar of hunting seasons and permit information is also available through the Mexican government's Department of Flora and Fauna in Mexico City.

fishing

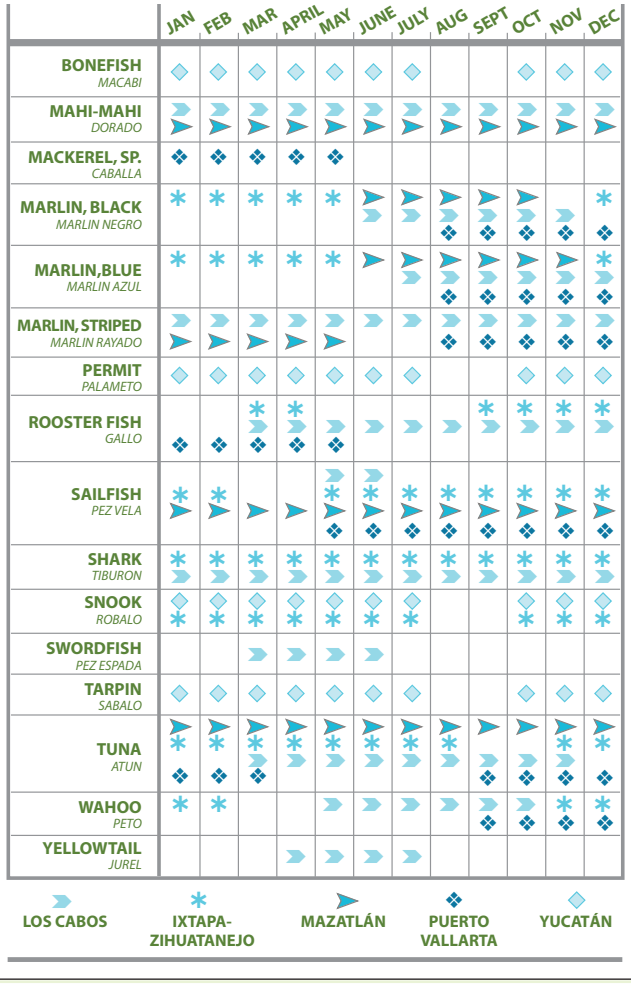
Mexico's salt water sport fishing is, in a word, superb. Seasons (as shown on the chart, next page) allow fishing vacations to be sold year 'round. Half-day/full-day fishing excursions normally include all necessary licenses.

FISHING PERMIT INFORMATION

- Your local MTB office
- U.S./Canadian tour operators specializing in fishing packages.
- Mexican Secretariat of Fisheries, San Diego
  2550 5th Ave, Ste 101 San Diego, CA 92103
  tel. (619) 233-6956 fax. (619) 233-0344.

The freshwater fishing in the states of Sonora (around Hermosillo), Tamaulipas (Texas border, Ciudad Victoria area), and Sinaloa (around El Fuerte, Culiacán, and Cosalá) for black and stripped bass is excellent. Several upland lakes and reservoirs offer lodge facilites and experienced guides (see courses for Sonora, Sinaloa, and Tamaulipas States for details).

fishing seasons



mexico fishing specialists

Baja Fishing Adventures
Loreto/La Paz/Los Cabos • 800-458-3688

Big Bass & Club Exclusive
Bass fishing in Lake Guerrero, Tamaulipas, 165 mi south of Texas border. 1-800-531-7509 • 1-888-FUN FISH

Fishabout
All Pacific beaches, Yucatán. Largemouth bass in El Fuerte, Sinaloa, Baja, and Yucatán. 1-800-409-2000 | www.fishabout.com

Fishing International
Fishing,Hunting. 1-800-950-4242 • 707-542-4242
www.fishinginternational.com

Frontiers International Travel
Yucatán • 1-800-245-1950 | www.frontierstravel.com

Specialist list continues…

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sports: fishing *continues*

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H & M Landing
Baja • 619-222-1144

Hidalgo Lodge
Sinaloa bass fishing and dove hunting
Tel. 626-683-9382/ fax 626-792-7322

Ixtapa Sportfishing Charters
West coast of Mexico. T. 570-688-9466 / F.570-688-9554
www.ixtapasportfishing.com

Rod and Reel Adventures
Fishing,Hunting,Safari,Trekking. 1-800-356-6982
541-349-0777 www.rodreeladventures.com

Solmar Sportfishing/Cabo Resort Reservations
Los Cabos • 1-800-344-3349 | www.solmar.com/sportfishing

That's The Ticket Tours/The Sporting Ticket
Los Cabos, Mazatlán • 1-800-648-8990

water sports

Mexico has an unmatched selection of seaside activities. With nearly 10,000 km of coastline and four distinct seas or oceans at its borders, Mexico truly has something for everyone when it comes to water sports.

Most destinations now feature the latest in water sports toys, including jet skis, "broncos", sail boats, and windsurfers, plus first-rate snorkeling and diving. Nearly every Mexican resort has a full-range of activities. Equipment is usually in first-rate condition, and can be rented either at your hotel or through a nearby water sports center.

DIVING

Mexico is blessed with some of the world's finest diving spots. (See individual destinations for dive shop recommendations.) Best diving is concentrated in two geographic areas:

The Sea of Cortés
From Loreto, La Paz, and around the cape to Los Cabos to the mainland resorts of Guaymas/San Carlos, this area features clear, placid waters, tremendous biodiversity, and some top-notch dive shops. Water surface temperatures here are coldest in February, March and April (low to mid 60's.) The remainder of the year temperatures range from the high 70's to mid 80's. Conditions and clarity can be excellent year-'round.

The Yucatán Peninsula's East Coast
Cozumel is world-famous for its incredible underwater clarity, rich sea life and outstanding facilities. In Cozumel, two former navy patrol ships were recently sunk offshore to serve as an artificial reef for marine life, as well as new sites for scuba divers and snorkelers. Cozumel welcomed some 200,000 scuba divers in 2005. Isla Mujeres (just off the Cancún coast) also ranks high. Surface temperatures here range from the high 70's to mid 80's year-round.

Pricing: The universal boat trip runs about $60US a day per person in Baja and Cancún (some outfits include lunch and/or refreshments) and about $45-50US per day in Cozumel.
Trips include dive boat, bilingual divemaster, tanks, weights
Additional items (per day):
Mask, fins, snorkel $5US
Regulator $5US
BC (buoyancy compensator) $5US
Wet suit $5US

Diver's Insurance: Diver's Alert Network offers insurance coverage (up to $125,000 US) for treatment of diving related accidents (including air ambulance evacuation, decompression chamber uses, medical care) for an annual premium of $35 US plus $29 annual membership fee. Phone 1-800-446-2671 for information.

SNORKELING

In addition to Baja and the Yucatán, keep these sites in mind for snorkeling:

Puerto Vallarta: head north into the neighboring state of Nayarit to Punta Mita or Guayabitos. Head south toward Mismaloya to Los Arcos.

Zihuatanejo: the area's calm bays offer good conditions, especially at Playa Las Gatas and Ixtapa Island.

Huatulco: fast becoming a snorkeler's paradise; 35 kms. of calm bays with lots to explore; best



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sports: water sports *continues*

water sports areas

AREA/STATE	Diving/ Snorkeling	Ocean Swimming	Wind-surfing	Jetskiing	Sea Kayaking
Loreto/Baja Calif. Sur	B	A	B		A
La Paz/Baja Calif. Sur	A	A	B		A
East Cape/Baja Calif. Sur	B	A*	A		
Los Cabos/Baja Calif. Sur	B	*	B	B	B
Guaymas-San Carlos/Sonora	A	A*	B	B	A
Mazatlán/Sinaloa	C	A*	B	B	B
Puerto Vallarta/Jalisco	C	A*	B	B	B
Manzanillo/Colima	C	A*	B	C	B
Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo/Guerrero	B	A*	B	C	B
Acapulco/Guerrero	C	A*	B	A	B
Huatulco/Oaxaca	C	A*	B	C	B
Cozumel/Quintana Roo	A	A*	B	B	B
Cancún/Quintana Roo	B	A*	B	A	B

A = World-Class; excellent facilities and conditions
B = Excellent/Very Good; high quality facilities and good conditions
C = Good/Fair; activity practiced, although facilities/conditions a bit limited
Blank = not available or little developed activity * Water conditions may be rough; caution advised

mexico dive specialists

Amigos del Mar (B) 800-344-3349
www.amigosdelmar.com
Baja Expeditions (B) 800-843-6967
Caradonna Caribbean
Tours, Inc. (C) 800-328-2288
GoGo Worldwide Vacations (X) 800-217-3085
Int'l Diving Expeditions (C) 800-480-3483
Island Dreams Tours (C) 800-346-6116
Maduro Dive Fanta-Seas (C) 800-327-6709
305-438-4222 | www.maduro.com
Neal Watson's Undersea
Adventures (C) 800-327-8150
954-462-3400 | www.nealwatson.com
PADI Travel Network (X) 800-729-7234
949-858-7234 | www.padi.com
Poseidon Venture Tours (X) 800-854-9334
Sand Dollar Tours (X) 800-397-2674
Scuba Travel Ventures (X) 800-298-9009
www.scubatravelventures.com
Scuba Voyages (C) 800-544-7631
909-371-1831 | www.scubavoyages.com
Sportours (X) 800-660-2754
Undersea Expeditions (B) 800-669-0310
858-270-2900 | www.underseax.com

Specialty: Baja (B), Cancún/Cozumel (C), both (X)

bays are La Entrega and Tangolunda.

swimming

The waters of the Yucatán Coast (Cancún, Riviera Maya, Cozumel), and the Sea of Cortés (Loreto, Guaymas, La Paz) offer the gentlest swimming conditions. Pacific Coast resorts offer either open ocean conditions (Mazatlán, Puerto Vallarta, Manzanillo, Ixtapa) or calm bay settings (Zihuatanejo, Acapulco, Huatulco).

what shall I do about...

safety

Crime rates in Mexico (particularly for assault) are significantly lower than what you may be used to back home. NOTE: Crime rates have risen significantly in Mexico City, a symptom of the country's faltering economy. It's a fact of life that tourists may sometimes be more likely targets in resort areas. Once again, common sense precautions should be taken. Remember to use your hotel's safety deposit box for valuables, and always lock your hotel room and car. Don't tempt fate by being careless with your belongings.

The Government's commitment to increased public safety includes several new initiatives:

Better Trained Police Force: State and federal officers will be evaluated and scrutinized. Pay raises will also be implemented, in addition to more professional training.

Improved Communications, Information, and Intelligence Systems: A new "060" nationwide emergency telephone system is being implemented, plus greater "community policing" initiatives, and efforts to combat inefficiency and corruption.

finding addresses & following directions

Most Mexican streets and addresses are not clearly marked. Maps are frequently of little help, since streets often carry different names or are spelled several different ways, and addresses are sometimes listed as "s/n" (*sin número*), meaning "without number", or *domicilio conocido*, meaning "everyone knows the address."

Veteran travelers make one observation about asking directions in Mexico: rather than say they don't know, Mexicans will usually offer guidance, whether or not they have a clue how to get to where you are actually headed!

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what shall I do about... *continues*

mexico city safety tips

- Be street smart; don't draw attention to yourself with flashy jewelry or by exposing large quantities of currency.
- Only board taxis at an established taxi stand -"Sitio" (pronounced "see-tee-oh"), rather than flagging taxis down on the street. When departing restaurants/clubs/museums, look for "Sitio" cabs, rather than those roaming the streets. You may phone 55-5271-9146 or 55-5271-9058 to have a cab dispatched by radio to your location.
- Stay in groups when walking through the city.
- Only use ATM's in well lit, high traffic areas.
- When leaving bus terminals, try to schedule trips that arrive/depart during daylight hours.
- Carry only those credit cards you plan to use during your stay.

Here are some common, universal terms for finding your way around.

Zócalo: the town square, generally distinguished by the city's most important cathedral and government buildings.
Malecón: loosely meaning the waterfront. A pedestrian promenade along a beach or harbor.
Mercado: the market, usually an open-air array of stalls and stands. Every city has at least one; bigger cities have several, each devoted to different products.
Plaza de Armas: same as a zócalo.
El Centro: loosely meaning "downtown," or the city's center.
Palapa: describes a thatched roof made of dried palm branches.

legal problems

The Napoleonic Code governs most Mexican law. If you are ever in a situation where you don't know the rules, simply behave with normal prudence, and don't try to get away with something you would not think of trying back home.

Laws may vary from state to state and judges, rather than juries, decide all cases. You may be held for only up to 78 hours without being charged with a crime. Recent legal reforms allow foreigners to present claims in Mexican courts with rights equal to those of Mexican citizens.

The Public Prosecutor's Federal Office (PROFECO), can be contacted to register complaints, tel. (55) 5588-3881 or (55) 5761-4496. Foreigners seeking legal assistance can call (Mexico City), tel. (55) 5761-4371.

finding a guide

In the main tourist centers, especially in the colonial cities, it is possible to have the service of tourist guides. There are different kinds of tourist guides: some give general information about the country; others offer information on a particular city; and in some places, such as archaeological areas, specialized guides offer their services.

Official guides must have proper official identification. It is advisable when contracting the service of a tour guide to follow these steps:

- Verify that the guide has an identification of the Tourism Department and that the accreditation is in the required language. (See State Tourism Offices Directory in "Before You Go" section.)
- Establish the conditions of the service beforehand, i.e. itinerary, duration, sites to be visited, means of transport, cost of service and payment conditions.

Tourist offices can give advice about tariffs and conditions of contracting guides. (See listing of offices in "Before You Go" section.)

persistent vendors

The tenaciousness of Mexican beach vendors is legendary. Some resorts have cordoned off areas in front of their property to allow sunbathers to relax in peace. And in some states (Guerrero to name one, home of Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo and Acapulco), beach vendors have vanished entirely.

Once you've shown even the slightest interest in a vendor's wares, be prepared for an onslaught of his *compadres* trying to entice you to buy from them as well. Remember, a stern but polite "No, gracias" will fend off even the most dogged sales attempts.

speaking spanish

Spanish is the official language of Mexico, although as high as 20% of the population speaks a native language, and may speak no Spanish at all! Basic English is widely understood, particularly in resort areas.

Mexican Spanish is loaded with hundreds of Indian words that are meaningless outside Mexico. Also, pronunciation differs from the high school Spanish you may have learned ("Castilian" Spanish).

Mexicans welcome even the most halted attempts to communicate in Spanish. They are truly flattered when visitors attempt to communicate in Spanish, and you shouldn't be afraid to plow ahead with even rudimentary skills. Your efforts will be appreciated.

Remember, by improving your knowledge of Spanish, you are also enhancing your understanding of the Mexican people and their culture and customs. Your travel experience will be greatly enriched.

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what shall I do about... *continues*

mexico area codes

When calling from the U.S. or Canada, first dial 011-52, followed by these area codes and local number.

Acapulco	744
Akumal	984
Aguascalientes	449
Campeche	981
Cancún	998
Careyes	315
Chihuahua	614
Colima	312
Cozumel	987
Cuernavaca	777
Culiacán	667
Durango	618
Guadalajara	33
Guanajuato	473
Guaymas-San Carlos	622
Hermosillo	662
Huatulco	958
Isla Mujeres	998
Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo	755
La Paz	612
Lake Chapala	376
Los Cabos	624
Los Mochis	668
Loreto	613
Manzanillo	314
Mazatlán	669
Mérida	999
Mexico City	55
Monterrey	81
Morelia	443
Oaxaca	951
Playa del Carmen	984
Puebla	222
Puerto Escondido	954
Puerto Peñasco	638
Puerto Vallarta	322
Querétaro	442
Salina Cruz	971
San Luis Potosí	444
San Miguel de Allende	415
Taxco	762
Tijuana	664
Toluca	722
Tuxtla-Gutiérrez	961
Uruapan	452
Veracruz	229
Villahermosa	993
Zacatecas	492

A complete listing of area codes can be viewed at www.telmex.com.mx

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telephone area codes

Mexico has converted its phone numbers to a uniform seven-digit format (previously numbers ranged from 5-7 digits). The exception is for the cities of Mexico City, Monterrey, and Guadalajara where all local numbers now contain eight digits, i.e. 5123-4567. See adjacent chart for specific area codes.

international telephone calls

In 1992 the Mexican government privatized its telephone industry, creating a privately-held corporation known as TELMEX. A major effort to modernize the country's telephone system is underway. Over 13,500 kilometers of fiber optic cable now connect nearly every long distance call. In 1997 Mexico deregulated its long distance and international telephone service. This development should boost service levels and lower tolls.

Nevertheless, remember that telephone calls (both domestic and international) are considerably more expensive than back home. A sizable tax is added to international calls, and most hotels add a hefty service charge for placing long distance calls. Ask your hotel operator about these charges before placing a call.

MONEY SAVING TIPS

- Don't make long-distance calls… You're on vacation!
- Bill the call to your international telephone calling card.
- If possible, use public telephones for long distance calling (only those marked TELMEX!!).
- Cell Phones: Be aware of what your cellular company provides and/or charges for calls into and out of Mexico before traveling.
- Purchase a "debit card" for local (within Mexico) calls. These cards are accepted at "LADATEL" public telephones that are easily found in most airports. Cards can be purchased at most airport shops, and allow you to make intra-Mexico or international calls without having to fumble for change. Rates to call home using a LADATEL Card run about 50¢US per minute within Mexico.



- Beware of exorbitant rates charged when using what appear to be public long distance phones that are commonly found around major resorts. Rates can exceed $8 per minute! Look for phones that are labeled TELMEX and dial one of the U.S. or Canadian carriers listed next page.

The big three U.S. long distance carriers and Mexico's own TELMEX offer toll-free calling assistance from Mexico. These numbers allow direct dialing without using the hotel operator or incurring excessive hotel service charges. These companies' operators can place international calls (billed to calling cards), collect calls, or credit card calls.

AT&T operator 001-800-462-4240
Sprint operator.....001-800-877-8000
M.C.I. operator.....001-800-674-7000
Bell Canada.....001-800-010-1990
AT&T Canada 001-800-123-0201
TELMEX 01-800-728-4647

Note: 800 numbers in the U.S. can be dialed from Mexico. Simply dial 001-880 plus the 7-digit number.

quick telephone operation

0	Local operator
010	Mexican information operator
020	Long distance operator
030	Time
040	Local information operator
060	Emergency response number (like "911")
090	International, English-speaking operator
01	Station to station direct dialing within Mexico (01 + local area code + number)
001	Station to station direct dialing to the U.S., Canada, Caribbean
00	International dialing to the rest of the world

Agents can acquire affordable prepaid domestic and long calling cards for resale to their Mexico customers.

What does TELMEX USA Tourism Opportunities offer?

- Reliable prepaid long distance phone service provided by Teléfonos de México (TELMEX), the largest phone company in Mexico.
- Sales discounts for your agency from 22% to 38% off purchase price.
- Competitive flat-rate pricing for phone calls, with absolutely NO surcharges or "gimmicks".
- Help Desk to assist with all your ordering and sales questions.
- Flexible options to suit you and your customers' needs.

You can contact TELMEX at 1-877-546-3269 for card sales information.

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what shall I do about... *continues*

timeshare sales people

Timeshare sales in Mexico are booming. In fact, Mexico is second only to the U.S. in total timeshare projects – 387. In 2000 120,000 weeks were sold.; total sales exceeded $800 million U.S.!

Timeshare sales people can be found in nearly every Mexican beach resort, though the greatest number of projects are found in Cancún and Puerto Vallarta.

According to the Mexican Attorney General's Office, fewer than 1,000 complaints are registered each year, out of sales of over 100,000 weeks sold. While this number is reasonably low, vacationers sometimes feel hustled by roaming sales people who seem to pop up everywhere.

Visitors are often offered attractive inducements (meals, transfers, free lodging, cash) to lure prospective buyers to attend a sales presentation. These offers are always made "without obligation." If you're the kind of person who can handle a couple of hours in the hands of a smooth salesperson, take advantage of these offers to see some fabulous resorts. *Remember, a deal that sounds too good to be true, probably is.* Investigate your options, do your arithmetic, and look for quality property management to ensure your investment's future.

Mexico's two most popular timeshare destinations (Cancún and Acapulco) have passed laws limiting the activities of timeshare salespeople. They may not roam streets, beaches, restaurants, and shopping areas in search of prospective clients. Contact can be made only from established office locations. Other destinations are looking at similar restrictions in the wake of complaints from visitors.

tipping (propinas)

- Restaurants: the usual 15% rule applies.
- Qualified Tour Guides: 10-15% of the tour cost.
- Hotel Bellman: $.75 per bag.
- Airport Porters: $.50 per bag.
- Chambermaid: 50¢ a day. It's suggested to tip for the entire stay on your first day (ensures extra-special service while you're there).
- Doorman: 50¢ for hailing a taxi.
- Washroom attendants: 25¢
- It is not customary to tip a restaurant maitre d', captain, sommelier, busboy, or taxi driver.

staying in touch with the news

Thanks to the advent of satellite communications and cable TV, you're never more that a step (or click) away from what's happening back home. Most resort properties offer in-room cable TV with an assortment of Mexican and U.S. stations. Many deluxe properties also offer in-room or lobby access to the Internet.

U.S. daily papers (*USA Today, New York Times, Miami Herald*) are readily available (at a premium price) in many resort areas.

everyday reminders

Remember the following important items whenever you travel to Mexico.....

- **Despite its proximity to the U.S. and the prevalence of U.S. cultural influences, Mexico is a foreign country.**
- **Behave like a guest, and you will be treated like one. Be gracious and tolerant... Mexicans are.**
- **Mexico isn't perfect, nor is it for everyone.**
- **Whenever possible, SPEAK SPANISH. Your hosts will love you for trying.**
- **Mexicans are friendly, gregarious people- get out and make some friends. Shake hands whenever possible- it's a great gesture of friendship and respect.**
- **Learn something about Mexico and its fascinating history before you go, and be sensitive to Mexico's 3,000-year-old culture.**
- **See more than just the beach resorts.**
- **Don't expect everything to be as it is back home–that's what makes visiting Mexico such a memorable experience.**
- **When the going gets tough or something goes wrong, behave like a guest, and you will be treated like one.**
- **Pack half the clothes you think you'll need and twice the money.**

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