

Cruising to Costa Maya

Costa Maya

Costa Maya is a small cruise port located on Mexico's Yucatan peninsula near Belize. It is approximately 130 miles south of Cozumel and is famous for having the largest Mayan ruins and quaint fishing villages. The area has been inhabited for more than 6300 years and was once a trading hub for jade, salt, fabric, and shells. The local government is responsible for the transformation of Costa Maya into a tourist region after it was destroyed by Hurricane Dean in 2007. They renovated the airfield at Xcalak and rebuilt the port, making it suitable for cruise ships to dock and cruise ship tourists to disembark and enjoy the port and surrounding areas.

Costa Maya Port

Costa Maya is one of the most popular cruise ports and has emerged as a travel destination. The port has free amenities such as WiFi, swimming pools, and entertainment. It is surrounded by the Caribbean and the Mayan jungle and functions as an actual port. The port can accommodate three cruise ships at once and has three large pavilions, luxury shopping areas, saltwater pools, a beach club, and many restaurants and bars. Enjoy never-ending summer in Mahahual, a small village where the port is located, and discover all that Costa Maya area has to offer.

Private Beach Clubs

Beach Escape Club

Enjoy the sun, the beach or the pool, and unlimited drinks as you relax and gaze upon the sparkling ocean waters. This is the perfect way to enjoy the Mexican Caribbean Sea.

Maya Chan Beach

Pamper yourself at Maya Chan, an independent day resort that limits the number of guests who visit each day. Reserve a private cabana and enjoy a hammock and daybed as well as unlimited drinks and food.

Yaya Beach

Yaya Beach is located on the Malecon, near the hotel area in Mahahual. Relax at the beach bars on lounge chairs with umbrellas and enjoy unlimited drinks.

Pez Quadro Beach Club

Relax at this beach club which also includes a restaurant and bar, free WiFi, lounge chairs, bathrooms, and showers.

Mahahual Fishing Village

Mahahual is a five-minute cab ride or a short walk from the port. Discover old-world Mexico in this small town with scenic beaches, a main street, dirt roads, and lots of local shops and restaurants. Visit one of the restaurants for drinks and food, and receive an all-inclusive pass to the beach. The world's second largest coral reef, located about 100 yards from shore, helps keep the water clear, calm, and safe to swim in. Play beach volleyball, snorkel, or rent jet skis, kayaks, or paddle boards for a water adventure.

Mahahual Lighthouse

On your way into town, visit the Mahahual Lighthouse. It is completely solar-powered and 72-feet high. Take a souvenir photo with the Mahahual sign – along with the huge marlin sculpture.

Swimming Pool

Plunge into the giant swimming pool that is complementary to use for cruise ship passengers. Enjoy the lounge chairs and swim-up bars on your day in port.

Aviarius

Marvel at this unique aviary experience as you cross through habitats on hanging bridges above the port. Get up close with many tropical birds, including macaws and flamingos. Revel in the opportunity to feed the most spectacular and exotic species of birds in Mexico and the Caribbean.

Flamingos

Discover a small flamingo sanctuary among the bustle of the port. Several pink flamingos live on a small sandbar in the port among the tropical surroundings. Get a close up view and a great photo of these beautiful creatures.

Dining

There are plenty of restaurants to dine at in Costa Maya where you will enjoy fresh ingredients, the catch of the day, traditional dishes, and friendly staff. Savor the taste of Mexican culture with the Caribbean Sea in the background at some of these wonderful restaurants:

- Café Mexico
- Cantina Latina
- El Faro
- El Mero Mero
- El Pan Dulce
- Flavors of Mexico
- La Tortilleria

Water Sports

Snorkel

Dive into the Caribbean and explore the second largest coral barrier reef in the world. Encounter marine life like tropical fish and fascinating coral formations in the pristine waters with a professional Guide.

Power Snorkel

Pilot a water scooter out to the coral barrier reef and enjoy an exciting underwater adventure. An expert Guide will provide instructions and demonstrate how to use the power snorkel for a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Scuba Diving

Experience some of the best scuba diving in the world, whether you are a beginner or professional scuba diver. Encounter tropical fish, sea turtles, and barracudas. Beginners will take a safety course with no diving certification or experience necessary. Learn scuba basics and get comfortable with your gear before taking a guided dive on the nearby Meso-American barrier reef. Be amazed at the variety of marine life like stingrays, squid, and seahorses!

Scuba at Banco Chinchorro

Explore Banco Chinchorro off the coast of Mahahual. It is the largest coral atoll in the northern hemisphere. Tour a variety of shipwrecks, including a Dutch galleon with its cannons.

Snuba Diving

Plunge into snuba diving – a mix of snorkeling and scuba diving. Snuba diving uses an air tank that is connected to a small raft floating on the water above you. This is an interesting way to experience the mesmerizing marine life of Costa Maya.

Boating and Fishing

Catamaran

Cruise along the barrier reef onboard a motorized catamaran and uncover the hidden treasures of the Caribbean along the barrier reef.

Sailing

Sail along the barrier reef aboard a traditional catamaran and discover the captivating sights and marine life along the barrier reef.

Glass Bottom Boat

Encounter marine life without getting wet from your comfortable seat aboard a glass bottom boat. See what is underneath the water, like tropical fish and all types of sea life that live along the barrier reef.

Fly Fishing

Catch and release snapper, tarpon, and bonefish while fly fishing in some of the remote Costa Maya channels. A professional Guide will lead you to the best fly fishing locations so you can enjoy fishing success.

Seven Colors Lagoon

Relax or paddle through the Seven Colors Lagoon, located inside the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve. The Lagoon reflects vibrant shades of blue and is surrounded by thousands of acres of rain forest. Watch for birds at Isla de Los Pajaros and experience the Canal de Piratas, or the Channel of the Pirates. The channel connects the Hondo River with the Bacalar Lagoon and was historically the site of fearsome pirate battles.

Adventure:

ATV Jungle

Drive through the Mayan jungle on an ATV and discover hidden trails and off-road paths. Experience an exhilarating ride over uneven terrain with a knowledgeable Guide and friendly atmosphere.

Dune Buggy

Discover all that Costa Maya has to offer while exploring the coast and jungle on a custom-made Dune Buggy. An experienced Guide will provide a safety briefing then lead you into the jungle along sandy paths with a stop at the Fisherman's village. Watch for exotic birds and iguanas.

Jeep Willys Jungle Track

Venture into the breathtaking jungle on sandy paths in a custom-made Jeep. Explore the coastline and watch for exotic birds as you drive your jeep deep into the jungle.

Bike Tour

Get a close-up Costa Mayan experience as you explore by bicycle. Be amazed at the incredible views on the untouched coastline as you bike past a lighthouse and a small mangrove forest to the village of Mahahual. Cherish the local flavor of this charming fishing village.

Segway Rides

Experience a fun new way to see Costa Maya. Learn how to pilot a Segway with individual instruction from experienced staff. Ride along the coast for spectacular ocean views and glide into town to explore and shop.

Paddleboarding

Stand upright and paddle along the coast line on a paddleboard. Learn a few techniques from an experienced paddleboarder then test your balance and stamina while enjoying the marine life and coral you paddle over. Enjoy this fun, family-friendly activity and experience the sparkling waters of the Mexican Caribbean.

Jet Ski/Wave Runner

Zoom over the water on a jet ski or wave runner and explore the barrier reef. An experienced Guide will provide a brief safety lesson and provide a life jacket. You'll start your fast-paced adventure inside the reef until you are comfortable on your vehicle. Then, you will pilot your jet ski through the reef to open ocean where you can go full throttle and experiment with turns, jumps, and higher speeds. Enjoy this action-packed experience that you will never forget!

Flyboarding

Fly over the water with a jet pack attached to your boots! An expert Instructor will provide instructions and review safety procedures before taking you out to open water. Soar over the water like Superman and experiment with tricks and acrobatics. You won't want to miss this amazing experience!

Kayak

Paddle through the sparkling waters and mangrove-lined canals and discover Costa Maya by sea. Observe tropical fish and marine life while paddling along the coast in a kayak. Try a glass-bottom kayak and glide through the waters to view seagrass beds where sea turtles, baby reef fish, starfish, and sea urchins hide from predators. Be amazed by the marine life beneath you as you paddle over their world.

Lost Mayan Kingdom Water Park

Play hard and spike your adrenaline at the Lost Mayan Kingdom. Experience a fun-filled day of the largest water slides in Mexico, the Kukulcan zip coaster, natural water pools, and zip lines. If you're searching for an adrenaline boost, you'll find it here.

Nature and Wildlife:

Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve

Sian Ka'an was established in January 1986 and means "Origin of the Sky." The biosphere is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and contains tropical rainforests, mangroves, marshes, and a marine section. Over 379 bird species have been identified in the Reserve, and it is also home to many mammals, native bees, dragonflies, beetles, crustaceans, mosquitoes, and butterflies. The reef which intersects the marine area is comprised of 84 species of coral. Sian Ka'an promotes sustainable tourism which will minimize the environmental impact of tourism within the Reserve and is the largest protected area in the Mexican Caribbean. Take a Nature Tour into the lagoons of Boca Paila and Caapechen through the natural mangrove canals and lagoons and try to spot crocodiles and tropical birds. You will also see a Mayan temple along the way. The saltwater lagoons are world-famous among fly fishers. A Guide will take you to the best areas to catch fish like the barracuda, tarpon, and bonefish.

Dolphin Discovery

Swim, kiss, or boogie board with dolphins on this incredible opportunity to frolic with these frisky marine animals. Feel like a marine animal as you interact with these delightful dolphins!

Parque Nacional de Arrecifes

The Arrecifes de Xcalak Park is the southernmost location in Costa Maya, located just seven miles from Belize. It has one of the last unspoiled stretches of the Mexican Caribbean and is designated as a Mexican national reef park. It is also a departure point for scuba and snorkel tours. Explore the various eco-systems in the area, such as coastal lagoons, beaches, jungle, and coral reefs. Discover unique habitats for waterfowl such as great blue herons, ibis, and ospreys. The wetlands are also a breeding site for fish and crustaceans. Delight in this park and all of its natural wonders.

Cultural Tours

Chacchoben

Travel 45-minutes on an archeological expedition to the ruins of Chacchoben deep in the heart of the jungle. Hike around the site and learn about the city's temples, pyramids, and ancient walls from your experienced Guide. Learn about the mysterious Mayans and how the ruins were discovered in 1970 by local rubber farmers searching for rubber trees. Investigate the

archeological techniques used to excavate the structures and try to decipher the hieroglyphics at the base of a pyramid. Watch for howler monkeys, armadillos, spider monkeys, and toucans. Search for evidence of the nocturnal pumas and jaguars. The ruins are surrounded by lush vegetation and exotic wildlife which is believed to hide more ruins, as yet undiscovered.

Kohunlich Ruins

The Kohunlich Ruins are larger than Chacchoben, but an hour further from the port. This major archeological site has few crowds and is a Mayan ruin site which dates back to 200 B.C. Find temples, palaces, ball courts, and residential complexes. Stroll through beautiful gardens and discover the Temple of the Large Masks, some of which are eight-feet tall and depict Maya Kings or the Maya Sun God.

Dzibanche Ruins

Climb to the top of impressive temples as you explore and learn about daily life and ritual in the ceremonial center. Examine one of the best examples of Mayan architecture and urban organization. Recent excavations have found jade for ruling family members. Learn about daily life and the military might of the Mayan dynasty.

Bacalar Fort

Visit the Spanish Fortress at Bacalar, also known as Fuerte San Felipe Bacalar. The fortress is 90 minutes from the port and has historical significance. It was used by the Spaniards as a barrier against pirates and attacks by the natives. View the sparkling water and imposing cannons on the Fortress' ramparts.

Mayan Healing Rituals

Relax and refresh your energy while gazing upon the stunning views of the Caribbean. Find your inner self with this Mayan ritual that pampers and nurtures your body and spirit with purification, rejuvenation, rebirth, and harmony.

Mayan Temazcal Ceremony

Purify your mind and body inside a traditional Temazcal sweat lodge. Enjoy this spiritual and therapeutic experience and leave your worries behind.

Food & Drink

Mayan Cooking Classes

Learn traditional techniques for cooking the cuisine of the Yucatecan Mexican people. These hands-on cooking classes will teach you how to cook foods like tortillas, empanadas, flautas, pico de gallo, tamales, coconut bread, coconut helado, jicama salad, and more!

Mango Moonshining

Travel to the southernmost tip of Costa Maya and sample the local moonshine. Mango Moonshining is the first artisanal distillery and brewery in the area and you will savor the unique tastes of their products.

Tequila, Heart of Mexico

Taste the most classic of the Mexican spirits – Tequila! Learn about the production process and savor an exclusive tasting of Mexico’s best tequilas to experience all the various flavors and complex overtones.

Kakaw

Explore the history of chocolate and learn about the origins of cocoa. Learn how chocolate has become a cultural event. Enjoy this flavor adventure and savor the chocolate products.

Shopping:

Shop in the 70,000 square foot shopping plaza and discover all things Costa Maya – t-shirts, pottery, ornaments, silver, and other souvenirs. The shopping center also has drug stores and convenience shops to satisfy all your needs.

Weather

Enjoy the trade winds and a gentle tropical climate year-round in Costa Maya. Dry season is from December through May and high temperatures average in the low 80s. August and September are the warmest months of the year with a high temperature average in the upper 80s. Low temperatures seldom dip below the upper 60s.

Speak Like a Local

Feel like a local when you understand and speak the lingo. Following are some popular Mexican Spanish words and phrases to help you blend in.

¿Mande? – a polite way to ask “what?”

¿Bueno? – common telephone greeting

Ahorita – time-based expression conveying immediacy

¡Aguas! – “be careful”

Güey – “friend”

Comper – shortened version of con permiso meaning “excuse me”

¿Qué onda? – literally meaning “what a wave,” can be used as “what’s up?”

Chido / chilo / chingón – variations of “awesome” with chingón the best with chido and chilo the more socially acceptable versions.

Bien padre – “this is cool” (not temperature)

El mal del Puerco – the feeling of sleepiness after a large meal

¡Gracias! – “thank you,” but also as “no, thank you”

Costa Maya is an incredible port to visit. A vast array of activities awaits your arrival, from relaxing at the beach to exploring the second largest barrier reef in the world to ziplining through the jungle. Additionally, you can explore Mayan villages and interact with the Mayan culture. Truly, something for everyone!

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