

Puerto Vallarta

Jalisco · Mexico

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Puerto Vallarta is a resort city on Banderas Bay on Mexico's Pacific coast. It combines beaches, a cobbled old town, a seafront boardwalk and mountains that reach the sea. Beyond the city, the coast has small bays that you reach only by boat.

It suits beach trips of four to seven nights. It also has a large, long-established LGBTQ+ scene in the Zona Romántica. The old town is walkable, and boats and buses reach the nearby coast.

When to visit

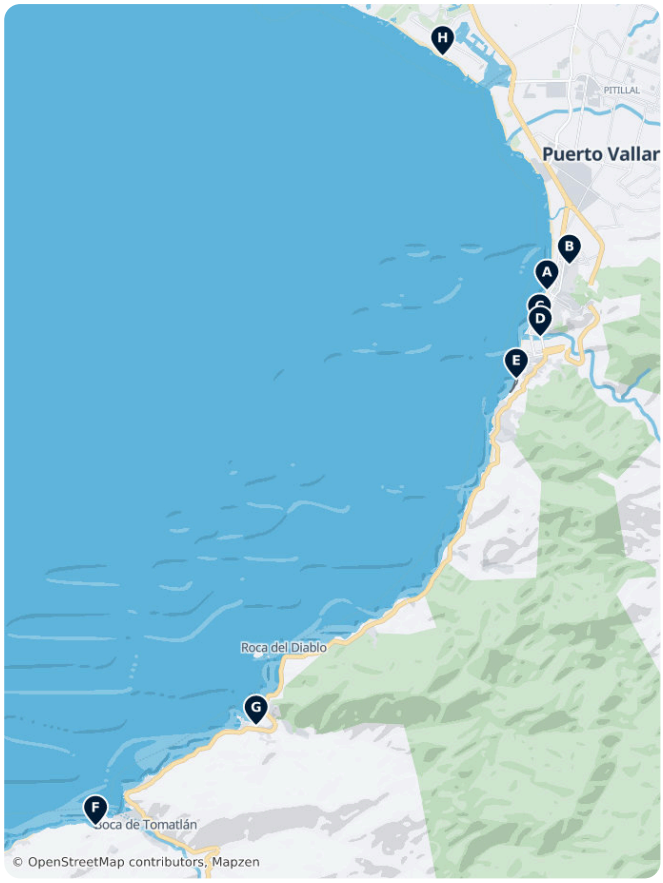
November to May is dry and sunny and is the best time. From December to March, humpback whales visit the bay, and boat tours are popular.

June to October is hot, humid and rainy. Storms are heavy in September and October. Hurricane season is from June to November.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for watersports	39° / 42° Feels like 48°	29° / 27°	21 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · Up to 30 days above 35°
February	Great Great for watersports	40° / 43° Feels like 48°	29° / 27°	22 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high) · Up to 28 days above 35°
March	Great Great for watersports	41° / 44° Feels like 49°	29° / 27°	28 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high) · Up to 31 days above 35°
April	Great Great for watersports	42° / 45° Feels like 51°	30° / 28°	26 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme) · Up to 30 days above 35°
May	Great Great for watersports	43° / 46° Feels like 54°	32° / 30°	26 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme) · Up to 31 days above 35°
June	Poor Poor for watersports	42° / 45° Feels like 56°	35° / 33°	20 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high) · Up to 30 days above 35°
July	Poor Poor for watersports	42° / 44° Feels like 57°	35° / 34°	29 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme) · Up to 31 days above 35°
August	Poor Poor for watersports	42° / 44° Feels like 57°	35° / 34°	30 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high) · Up to 31 days above 35°
September	Poor Poor for watersports	41° / 43° Feels like 56°	35° / 34°	29 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high) · Up to 30 days above 35°
October	Poor Poor for watersports	41° / 44° Feels like 56°	35° / 32°	21 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high) · Up to 31 days above 35°
November	Great Great for watersports	41° / 43° Feels like 53°	32° / 30°	23 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · Up to 30 days above 35°
December	Great Great for watersports	40° / 42° Feels like 49°	30° / 27°	21 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · Up to 31 days above 35°

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A The Malecon Boardwalk is the seafront boardwalk of the old town. It has sculptures, street performers and views of the bay at sunset.
- B Old Vallarta Center is the cobbled centre, with white houses, red-tile roofs and small shops.
- C Iglesia de Guadalupe is a church with a crown-shaped tower, the town's best-known landmark.
- D Isla Río Cuale is a river island with a market, small galleries and a footbridge.
- E Playa los Muertos is the main city beach at the south end. It has restaurants, loungers and a pier.
- F Playa Colomitos is a small cove south of the city that you reach by a short jungle path or boat.
- G Mismaloya is a village and beach on the coast south of the city, reached by road or boat.
- H Bahía de Banderas is the large bay itself, with whale watching in winter and boat trips year round.

Puerto Vallarta – Plan Your Trip

Turn the places from this guide into a real itinerary, with smart routing, time estimates, and everything you need for a perfect trip.

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What to experience

- Go whale watching in the bay between December and March.
- Watch the sunset from the boardwalk, then see the evening street performers.
- Take a water taxi to a beach with no road access.
- Join the weekly Art Walk in the old town, when galleries open late. It runs on one evening a week from autumn to spring.
- Snorkel or take a boat tour around the protected islands in the bay.

Day trips

- Boca de Tomatlán and Yelapa: by water taxi, about 45 minutes. Yelapa is a small village with a beach and a waterfall walk.
- Ⓐ Sayulita: about 1 hour north by bus. A surf village in Nayarit.
- Ⓑ Islas Marietas National Park: boat tours leave from the north side of the bay. The islands are a protected area for marine wildlife.
- San Sebastián del Oeste: about 2 hours by road. A mountain mining town with coffee and old streets.



Where to explore

- Sayulita for surf and a relaxed beach village.
- Islas Marietas National Park for a protected island group in the bay.
- Guadalajara for the state capital inland.

Getting there

- **By air**: Puerto Vallarta airport (PVR) is about 10 km north of the centre. There are direct flights from the US, Canada and Mexican cities. A taxi or shuttle takes 20 to 40 minutes.
- **By bus**: Coaches link Puerto Vallarta with Guadalajara (about 5 to 6 hours), Mexico City and Sayulita. The main bus station is north of the centre.
- **By cruise**: Cruise ships dock at the port near the marina.

Getting around

- **Local buses**: City buses are cheap and serve the hotel zone, the old town and the beaches. Pay with cash.
- **Taxi**: Taxis are common and have no meters. Agree the fare first.
- **Water taxis**: Boats from Los Muertos pier and Boca de Tomatlán reach beaches south of the city that have no road.
- **On foot**: The old town, boardwalk and Zona Romántica are walkable.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The old town, boardwalk and Zona Romántica are walkable. Hills and distances make buses useful elsewhere.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Hills and traffic make cycling less practical.

Food & drink

Try fresh seafood, fish tacos, ceviche and shrimp dishes. Tacos al pastor are found on many street corners.

Good eating clusters in the old town, in the Zona Romántica and around the Playa los Muertos area. Small taquerías away from the boardwalk are cheaper and often better. Beach restaurants south of the city are quiet and relaxed.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Cochinita Pibil
Slow-roasted, citrus- and achiote-marinated pork, a Yucatán specialty traditionally cooked in an underground pit.

DINNER

Mole
A complex sauce, often built from chiles, spices, and sometimes chocolate; mole poblano and Oaxaca's several moles are the best known versions.

Chiles en Nogada
A Puebla dish of stuffed poblano chiles topped with a walnut cream sauce and pomegranate seeds, in the colors of the Mexican flag.

Pozole
A hominy stew with pork or chicken, topped with shredded cabbage, radish, and chile, traditionally eaten on special occasions.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Tacos
Corn or flour tortillas filled with meat, fish, or vegetables, with endless regional and stall-to-stall variation.

Tamales
Corn dough filled with meat, cheese, or vegetables, wrapped in a corn husk or banana leaf and steamed.

Elote/Esquites · Elote / Esquites
Grilled or boiled corn on the cob (elote) or served off the cob in a cup (esquites), topped with mayonnaise, cheese, chile, and lime.

DRINKS

Mezcal
A smoky agave spirit from Oaxaca and several other states, distinct from tequila, traditionally sipped neat.

Tequila
An agave spirit from the region around the town of Tequila in Jalisco, Mexico's best-known export spirit.

Horchata
A sweet, cinnamon-spiced rice-based drink, popular as a non-alcoholic accompaniment to spicy food.

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Safety & health

Puerto Vallarta is a major tourist destination and generally safe in tourist areas. Take normal care at night.

- Watch out for time-share sellers near the airport and the boardwalk. You are not obliged to attend.
- Use licensed taxis and agree the fare first.
- Drink bottled or purified water.
- Strong waves and currents are common. Swim only where lifeguards are present.
- Time zone: Nayarit, north of the bay, is one hour behind Puerto Vallarta.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Mexico at a glance:

CURRENCY
MXN $

EMERGENCY
911

ELECTRICITY



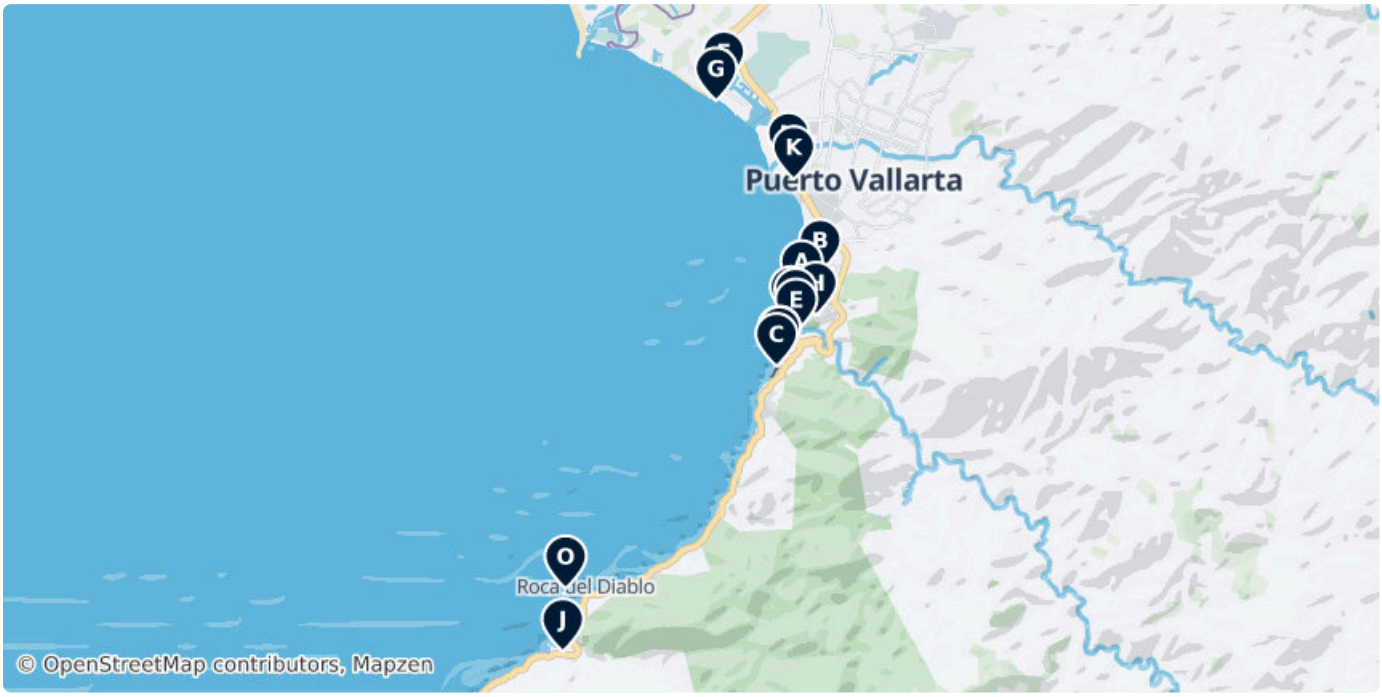
Type A / Type B
127 V · 60 Hz

LANGUAGES
Spanish

TAP WATER
Not safe to drink

Puerto Vallarta Unmissables

Puerto Vallarta spans the edge of Banderas Bay, anchored by the historic cobblestone streets of Old Vallarta and the iconic crown-topped Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The mile-long Malecón boardwalk features contemporary sculptures and open-air performances at Los Arcos Amphitheater. Natural highlights include the granite rock formations of Los Arcos National Park for snorkeling and the lush River Cuale Island. From the golden sands of Playa Los Muertos to the panoramic Cerro de la Cruz lookout, the city combines colonial heritage with diverse coastal landscapes.





A The Malecon Boardwalk

This long boardwalk with an amazing sea view is full of shops with souvenirs and restaurants. Evening walk is recommended.

85 Calle 31 de Octubre, Puerto Vallarta 48300, Mexico
(20.61475, -105.23327)



B Old Vallarta Center

A historical center of Puerto Vallarta, full of old houses with romantic atmosphere. It is a great place for walks.

1317 Calle Bolivia, Puerto Vallarta 48304, Mexico
(20.61965, -105.22868)

oldvallarta.com



C Beach of the Dead

Don't be afraid of the name. It's a beautiful and busy beach, perfect for hours of swimming and glorious sunbathing.

1 Calle Almendro, Puerto Vallarta 48399, Mexico (20.59779, -105.23953)



D Our Lady of Guadalupe Church

This church is dedicated to the local patron saint Virgin of Guadalupe. It has an amazing decoration inside.

363 Calle Hidalgo, Puerto Vallarta 48300, Mexico (20.60824, -105.23480)



E River Cuale Island

A magnificent island, one of the must-see places in Puerto Vallarta during your trip.

108 Avenida Insurgentes, Puerto Vallarta 48380, Mexico (20.60582, -105.23465)

F Marina Vallarta

This marina is full of shops and restaurants, it is a perfect place for an evening dinner. The view of bay full of ships is amazing.

Puerto Vallarta 48335, Mexico (20.66346, -105.25267)



G Banderas Bay

Bahía de Banderas is a bay on the Pacific Coast of Mexico, within the Mexican states of Jalisco and Nayarit.

Mexico (20.65961, -105.25460)



H La Cruz

Elevated lookout point offering panoramic 360-degree views of Banderas Bay, the downtown area, and the Sierra Madre Mountains. It is accessible via a steep climb and series of stairs from the city center.

(Unnamed Road), Puerto Vallarta 48304, Mexico (20.60974, -105.22967)



I Los Arcos Amphitheater

One of the symbols of the city that is an outdoor venue for various cultural performances such as drama, dance or music concerts.

120 Calle Zaragoza, Puerto Vallarta 48300, Mexico (20.60872, -105.23596)



J Mismaloya Village

Mismaloya is a small village, located on the coast of the Bahía de Banderas in the Mexican state of Jalisco.

Mexico (20.53137, -105.29272)

K La Leche

Fine-dining establishment known for its monochromatic, all-white interior design. The menu features creative Mexican fusion cuisine with dishes that change daily based on fresh, local ingredients.

Lateral Boulevard Francisco Medina Ascencio, Pitillal, 48300 Puerto Vallarta, JAL, Mexico (20.64134, -105.23523)

lalecherestaurant.com, +52 322 293 0901

L La Palapa

Long-standing beachfront restaurant established in 1957 on Los Muertos Beach. It serves a blend of Mexican and Asian flavors in a tropical setting under a traditional thatched palapa roof.

Púlpito, 48300 Puerto Vallarta, JAL, Mexico (20.59953, -105.23884)

M El Dorado

Beachfront restaurant specializing in high-end Mexican seafood and regional specialties. Located on Los Muertos Beach, it provides open-air dining with views of the iconic pier.

Púlpito, 48300 Puerto Vallarta, JAL, Mexico (20.59933, -105.23878)

N La Vaca Argentina

Argentinian-style steakhouse specializing in premium cuts of meat prepared on a traditional wood-fired grill. The menu includes classic South American sides and an extensive wine selection.

(20.64452, -105.23654)

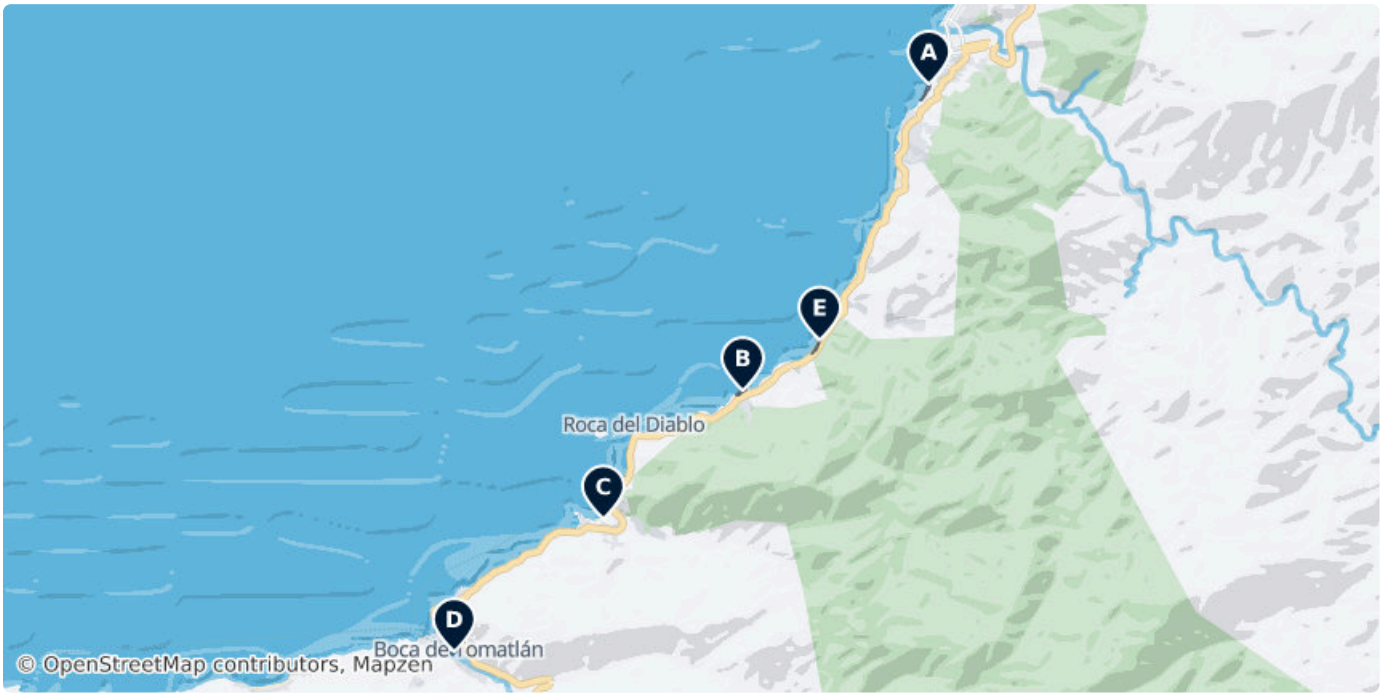
O Los Arcos National Park

A magical national park that you can admire from a boat or snorkeling.

Mexico (20.54601, -105.29202)

Best Beaches

Puerto Vallarta's coastline offers a diverse range of shorelines, from the bustling urban sands of Playa los Muertos to the secluded coves south of the city. Southern beaches like Mismaloya provide a dramatic jungle backdrop and served as the primary filming location for the 1964 film "The Night of the Iguana." Further south, Boca de Tomatlán acts as a fishing village and a gateway for water taxis and coastal hiking paths. For those seeking high environmental standards, Playa Palmares features Blue Flag certification and dedicated accessibility ramps.





A Beach of the Dead

Don't be afraid of the name. It's a beautiful and busy beach, perfect for hours of swimming and glorious sunbathing.

1 Calle Almendro, Puerto Vallarta 48399, Mexico (20.59779, -105.23953)

B Playa Esmerelda

Small, quiet cove south of the city known for its emerald-toned water and surrounding rock formations.

Mexico (20.55160, -105.26950)

C Playa Mismaloya

Set at the base of the Sierra Madre mountains, this bay gained fame as the 1963 filming site for "The Night of the Iguana."

(20.53224, -105.29198)

D Boca

Small fishing village and beach serving as a hub for water taxis and the starting point for the coastal hiking trail to Las Animas.

Mexico (20.51220, -105.31598)

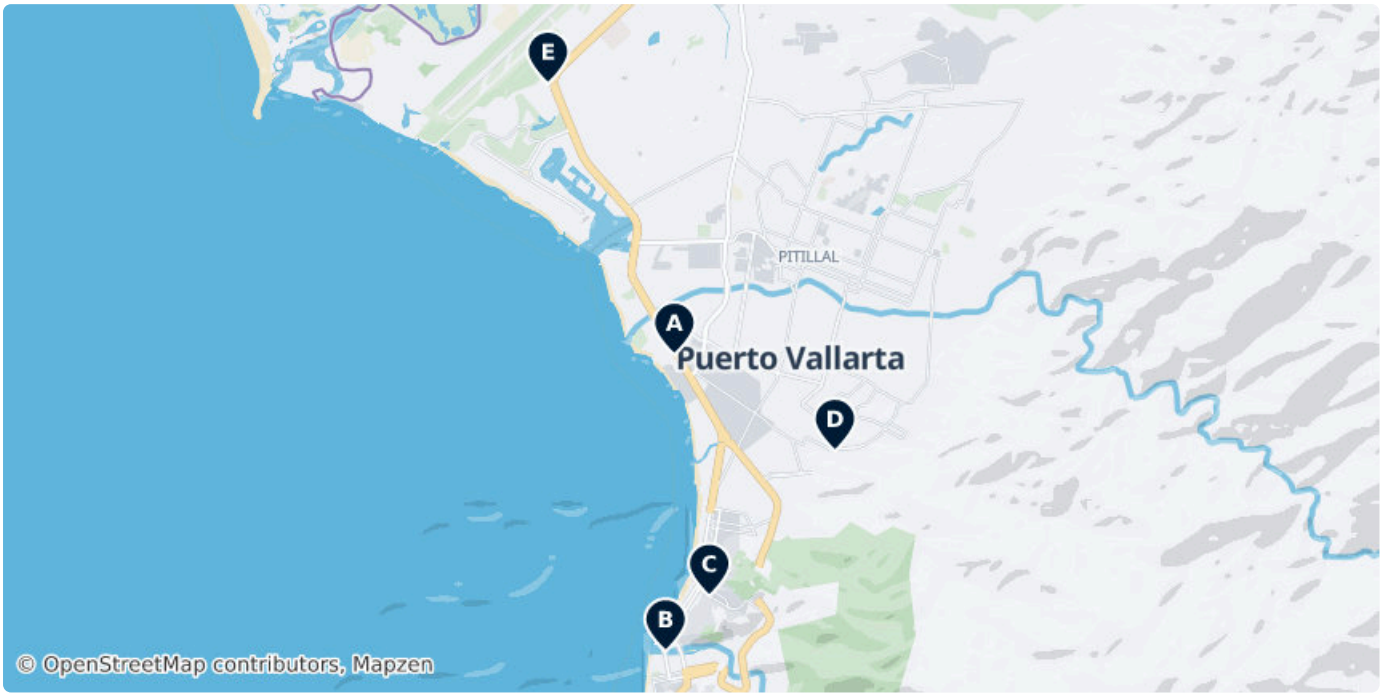
E Playa Palmares

A Blue Flag certified beach featuring wheelchair-accessible ramps, public restrooms, and clear, calm waters.

Carretera Manzanillo-Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
(20.55920, -105.25709)

Authentic Mexican Restaurants

This selection of Puerto Vallarta eateries showcases a range of culinary styles, from the high-concept, monochromatic interior of La Leche to the traditional regional recipes found at El Arrayan. The list includes riverside dining on the Cuale River and specialized seafood grills. These establishments highlight diverse Mexican cooking traditions, incorporating ingredients from Oaxaca and Yucatán alongside modern international fusion techniques and casual local dining staples.



A La Leche

A high-concept restaurant featuring a striking, all-white monochromatic interior. The menu focuses on creative Mexican-international fusion dishes that change frequently based on available local ingredients.

Lateral Boulevard Francisco Medina Ascencio, Pitillal, 48300 Puerto Vallarta, JAL, Mexico (20.64134, -105.23523)

lalecherestaurant.com, +52 322 293 0901



B River Cafe

Situated on the banks of the Cuale River, this establishment offers an open-air setting. The kitchen combines traditional Mexican flavors with international culinary techniques.

109 Calle Ignacio L. Vallarta, Puerto Vallarta 48380, Mexico (20.60572, -105.23636)

C El Arrayan

Traditional restaurant centered around an open-air courtyard. It specializes in authentic regional recipes from across Mexico, utilizing specialty ingredients from states such as Oaxaca, Yucatán, and Michoacán.

(20.61236, -105.23073)

wwe.elarrayan.com.mx, +52 322 222 7195

D Ensamble Seafood & Grill

A seafood and grill-focused restaurant offering a variety of fresh coastal dishes and grilled meats. The facility includes a dedicated smoking area and provides takeaway services.

(20.62979, -105.21459)

Mo–Su 20:00

ensamblepv.com, 322 225 86 04

E Toks

A casual Mexican dining chain offering a standardized menu of traditional breakfast, lunch, and dinner options. This location features wheelchair-accessible facilities.

(20.67388, -105.25146)

toks.com.mx

DATA SOURCES

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