

Tulum

Quintana Roo · Mexico

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Tulum is a beach town on the Caribbean coast of the Yucatán Peninsula. It has white sand, clear water and a Maya walled city built on a cliff above the sea. Inland, the jungle hides hundreds of cenotes, which are natural limestone swimming holes.

The town works well for a relaxed beach trip of three to five nights. Many visitors combine ruins, cenotes and beach days. The area is spread out, so plan how you will move between the beach road, the town and the sights.

When to visit

The dry season from December to April is the best time. Days are warm and sunny, and the sea is calm. It is also the busiest and most expensive period.

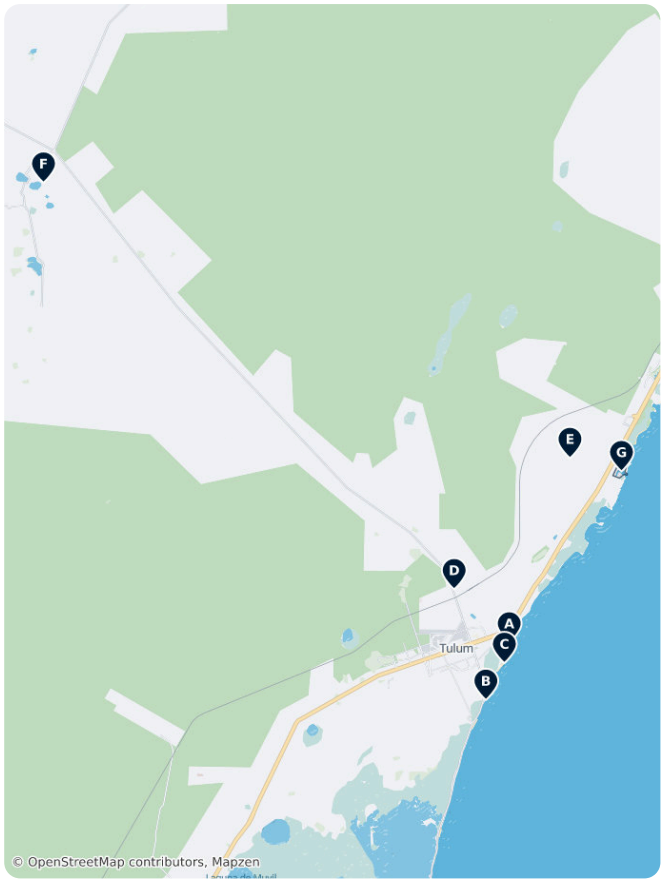
May to October is hot, humid and rainy. Hurricane season runs from June to November. Seaweed (sargassum) can cover the beaches from spring to autumn, so check conditions before you book.

Many visitors time a trip for the Day of the Dead on 1–2 November, when altars and events appear in the region.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 28°	22° / 18°	14 rainy days · Muggy, humid air
February	Good Good for watersports	27° / 28°	23° / 19°	Muggy, humid air
March	Great Great for watersports	28° / 29°	23° / 20°	Muggy, humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
April	Great Great for watersports	29° / 30°	25° / 21°	Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
May	Good Good for watersports	30° / 31°	26° / 23°	16 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
June	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	29° / 31°	26° / 24°	22 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	30° / 32° Feels like 33°	26° / 25°	20 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
August	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	30° / 32° Feels like 34°	26° / 25°	22 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 10 (Very high)
September	Poor Poor for wildlife watching	30° / 31° Feels like 33°	26° / 24°	25 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · UV 9 (Very high)
October	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	29° / 31°	25° / 22°	22 rainy days · Oppressive humidity
November	Good Good for wildlife watching	27° / 29°	23° / 20°	15 rainy days · Muggy, humid air
December	Good Good for sightseeing	27° / 28°	23° / 19°	15 rainy days · Muggy, humid air

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

Top sights



- A Zona Arqueológica de Tulum is a Maya port city on a sea cliff, built in the 13th to 15th centuries. Go when it opens to avoid heat and crowds. A path leads down to a small beach below the walls.
- B Playa de Tulum is the long public beach along the town's coast. Beach clubs and hotels line most of it, with public access points between them.
- C Playa Paraiso is a quieter beach near the ruins, with calm, shallow water.
- D Gran Cenote is a large cenote with clear water, turtles and caverns. It is a popular snorkelling stop close to town.
- E Cenote Dos Ojos is part of a huge underwater cave system. It is good for snorkelling and for certified cave divers.
- F Zona Arqueológica Cobá is a Maya site in the jungle with a tall pyramid. You can rent a bike or a pedicab to move between the groups of ruins.
- G Xel-Há is a large eco-park with an inlet, snorkelling and family activities. It suits a full day out.

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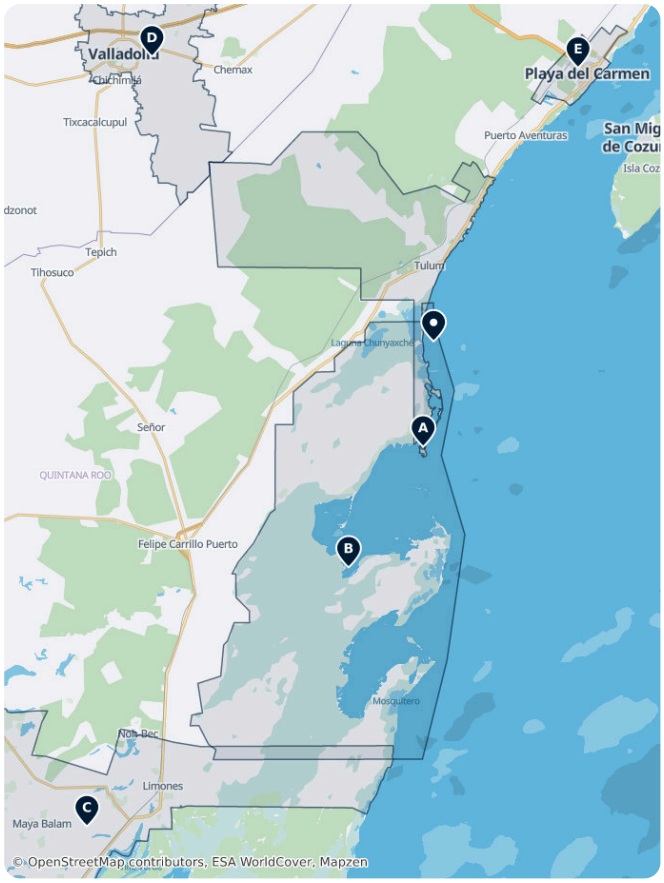
What to experience

- Watch the sunrise on the beach before the heat starts. The coast faces east.
- Snorkel with turtles in the bay at Akumal. Use reef-safe sunscreen and keep your distance from the animals.
- Join a boat tour through the lagoons and mangroves of Sian Ka'an.
- Try a temazcal, a traditional steam bath ritual, offered by several local guides.
- Swim in a cenote at Cenote Kaan Luum, a quiet lagoon with changing colours.

Day trips

Tulum is a good base for day trips by car or tour.

- A Punta Allen and B Sian Ka'an: about 1.5 to 2 hours by road on a rough track. A boat tour shows lagoons, mangroves and wildlife.
- Akumal: about 30 minutes by car. Snorkel in the bay where green turtles feed.
- C Bacalar: about 2.5 hours by car. A lake with blue water, good for a long day.
- Chichén Itzá: about 2 hours by car. It is the best-known Maya site in Mexico.
- D Valladolid: about 1.5 hours by car. A colonial town with cenotes and a quiet centre.
- E Playa del Carmen: about 1 hour by bus or car. Use it for shopping, nightlife or ferries to Cozumel.



Where to explore

Other places on this coast you can visit from Tulum:

- Playa del Carmen for restaurants, shops and the ferry to Cozumel.
- Cancún for the main international airport and big resorts.
- Bacalar for lake life in the south.
- Sian Ka'an for a protected coastal reserve.

Getting there

- **By air**: Tulum has its own airport (TQO), about 25 minutes from the town. Cancún airport (CUN) has far more flights. It is about 1.5 to 2 hours away by road.
- **By train**: The Tren Maya stops in Tulum. It links the town with Cancún and with Mérida and other cities in the region.
- **By bus**: ADO coaches run between Tulum, Cancún airport, Playa del Carmen and Mérida. The bus station is in the town centre.
- **Shared vans**: Colectivo vans run to Playa del Carmen along the highway. They are cheap and frequent.
- **Transfers**: Book a taxi or shuttle from the airport to your hotel in advance. Fares are set by zone.

Getting around

- **Taxi**: Taxis are the main way to reach the beach road and the hotel zone. There are no meters, so agree the fare before you start. Ride-hailing apps are often restricted in Tulum.
- **Bike**: Rent a bike to ride between the town and the beach. A bike path runs along part of the beach road.
- **Car**: A rental car makes cenotes and Cobá easy to reach. See the driving section.
- **Colectivos**: Shared vans run along the highway to nearby towns and cenotes.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The town centre is walkable. The beach road and the sights are spread out, so you need a bike, taxi or car.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

A bike path runs along part of the beach road. Heat and traffic make longer rides tiring.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Useful if you want to visit cenotes, Cobá and Sian Ka'an on your own schedule. Not needed if you stay in town and use taxis and bikes.
- **Parking**: Hotels and beach clubs usually have parking. In town, use paid lots.
- **Restrictions**: Police checkpoints on the highway are common. Keep your passport copy and rental papers with you. Speed bumps (topes) appear without warning.

Food & drink

Seafood and Yucatán dishes are the main local food. Try cochinita pibil, ceviche and fish tacos. Fresh juices are everywhere.

The town centre along Avenida Tulum has the best range at fair prices. The beach road has more expensive restaurants and beach clubs. Many places add a service charge, so check the bill before you tip.

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

Tulum is generally safe for visitors who use normal care. Petty theft happens on beaches and at cenote car parks, so do not leave bags unattended.

- Use only licensed taxis and agree the fare first.
- Drink bottled or purified water.
- Use strong sunscreen. Reef-safe, biodegradable sunscreen is required at most cenotes.
- Currents can be strong on some beaches. Follow the flag colours.
- Carry cash in small notes. Some small shops and taxis do not take cards.

History

The Maya built Tulum as a walled port town. It traded by sea and was active until the Spanish arrived in the 16th century. The wall, the temples and the watchtower still stand at Zona Arqueológica de Tulum.

Inland, Zona Arqueológica Cobá was a much larger Maya city. Its network of stone roads linked it to other cities. Tulum itself stayed a small fishing village until tourism grew in the late 20th century.

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

Tulum's Absolute Essentials

Tulum features a coastal Mayan archaeological site built primarily in the 14th century, alongside the inland jungle ruins of Coba. The region is home to the Sac Actun system, one of the world's longest underwater cave networks, accessible through Dos Ojos and Gran Cenote. Coastal highlights include the seven-kilometer Tulum Beach and the palm-lined Playa Paraiso. Natural lagoons like Xel-Há provide habitats for marine life and serve as both a theme park and an ancient Mayan port.





A Tulum Archaeological Zone

Walk through the impressive ruins of this seaside Mayan city. Most of it was built in the 14th century, however the buildings are still well...

Mexico (20.21479, -87.42912)

Mo–Su 08:00–17:00

mundomaya.travel/es/arqueologia/top-10/item/tulum.ht...



B Dos Ojos Cenote

Dos Ojos is part of a flooded cave system located north of Tulum, on the Caribbean coast of the Yucatán Peninsula, in the state of Quintana...

Cancun - Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico (20.32473, -87.39061)

cenotedosojos.com, +52 984 206 1976



C Gran Cenote

Sistema Sac Actun is an underwater cave system situated along the Caribbean coast of the Yucatán Peninsula with passages to the north and...

Mexico (20.24656, -87.46411)

Mo–Su 08:00–17:00

grancenote.com



D Coba

Coba is an ancient Maya city on the Yucatán Peninsula, located in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo.

Quintana Roo Nuevo Durango - Coba, Quintana Roo, Mexico (20.48879, -87.72479)

inah.gob.mx/es/zonas/515-zona-arque... , +52 983 837 2411



E Xel-Ha

Xelha is an archaeological site of the Maya civilization from pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, located on the eastern coastline of the Yucatán...

Carretera Chetumal-Puerto Juárez, Km. 240, Tulum, QR 77780, Mexico (20.31692, -87.35786)

xelha.com, +52 998 883 0524



F Tulum Beach

Seven kilometres long sandy beach never gets crowded - it's too vast for that. A perfect getaway.

Mexico (20.18063, -87.44396)

thebeach-tulum.com



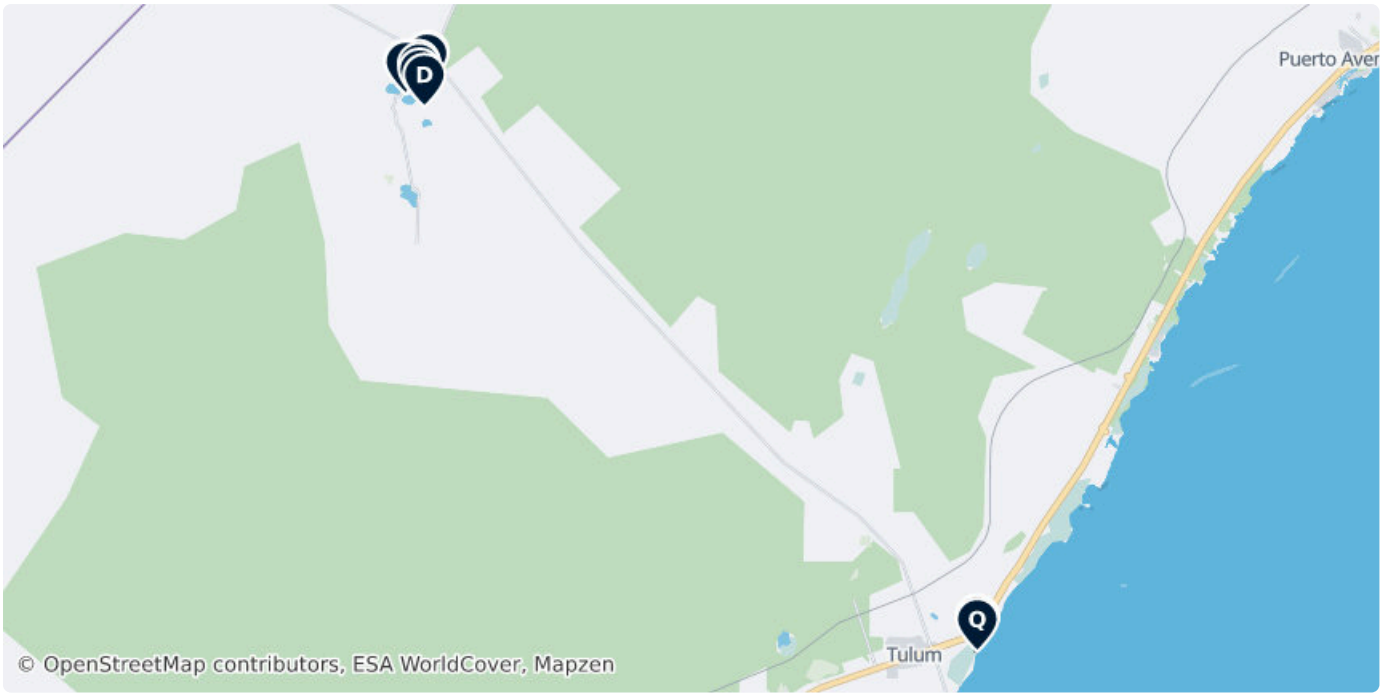
Playa Paraiso

A wide white-sand beach located south of the Tulum archaeological site. It features turquoise waters, beach clubs, and boat tours to the nearby Mesoamerican Barrier Reef for snorkeling.

Mexico (20.20264, -87.43221)

Mayan Ruins and Archaeological Sites

This collection features the prominent Mayan archaeological sites of Tulum and Coba. Tulum is a 14th-century fortified seaside city known for its well-preserved limestone structures overlooking the Caribbean. Coba, located deeper in the jungle, offers a vast network of stone causeways (sacbeob) and massive pyramids, including the 42-meter-tall Nohoch Mul. The sites showcase diverse architectural styles, intricate stone carvings known as stelae, and residential palaces belonging to the ancient Maya elite.





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inah.gob.mx/es/zonas/515-zona-arque... , +52 983 837 2411



C Nohoch Mul

The tallest pyramid in the Yucatán Peninsula, standing 42 meters high. It features 120 steep steps and served as a major ceremonial center in Coba.

Mexico (20.49465, -87.72027)



D Stela

An upright carved stone slab used by the Maya to commemorate historical events, dates, and the achievements of their rulers.

Mexico (20.48331, -87.72197)

E La Iglesia

Coba's second-tallest structure, this ancient pyramid overlooks Lake Macanxoc and features several well-preserved ceremonial altars at its base.

Mexico (20.48995, -87.73182)

F Conjunto de Las Pinturas

A complex named for the remnants of original Mayan murals found within its temple, showcasing colored pigments from the Postclassic period.

Mexico (20.49014, -87.72519)

G Estela 9

A carved stone monument in Coba depicting a ruler and containing hieroglyphic inscriptions detailing the city's political history.

Mexico (20.49028, -87.73232)

H Stela

A traditional Mayan stone monument featuring weathered reliefs of ancient figures and chronological inscriptions.

Mexico (20.49413, -87.72107)

I Estela 1

A significant stone monument in Coba featuring one of the longest hieroglyphic inscriptions found in the region, detailing ancient calendar dates.

Mexico (20.48594, -87.72446)

J Stela

An ancient stone pillar used for recording the lineage and ritual activities of the Mayan elite.

Mexico (20.49382, -87.72060)

K Estela 11

One of the numerous carved monuments in Coba used to mark significant time cycles and astronomical observations.

Mexico (20.48995, -87.73198)

L Acrópolis-Conjunto Cobá

A large architectural complex in Coba consisting of a series of elevated residential and administrative buildings used by the city's nobility.

Mexico (20.48969, -87.73185)

M Estela 26

A weathered stone stela located along the ancient causeways of Coba, featuring remnants of Mayan glyphs.

Mexico (20.49025, -87.72615)



N Plataforma

A low stone structure in Tulum typically used for ceremonies, dances, or as a base for smaller wooden buildings.

Mexico (20.21471, -87.42951)

O El Castillo

The most iconic structure in Tulum, this 7.5-meter pyramid served as a landmark for sailors navigating the offshore reef.

Mexico (20.21464, -87.42891)

P Oratory

A small ritual platform in Tulum used for religious offerings and ceremonial performances.

Mexico (20.21470, -87.42917)

Q Temple of the Sea

A small temple situated on the cliff's edge in Tulum, dedicated to maritime deities and coastal navigation.

Mexico (20.21319, -87.42929)

R Funerary Platform 13

A low stone platform in the Tulum complex that served as a site for elite burials and ancestral veneration.

Mexico (20.21453, -87.42965)

S The Palace

A large residential complex in Tulum featuring multiple rooms and benches, once inhabited by the city's high-ranking officials.

Mexico (20.21528, -87.42930)

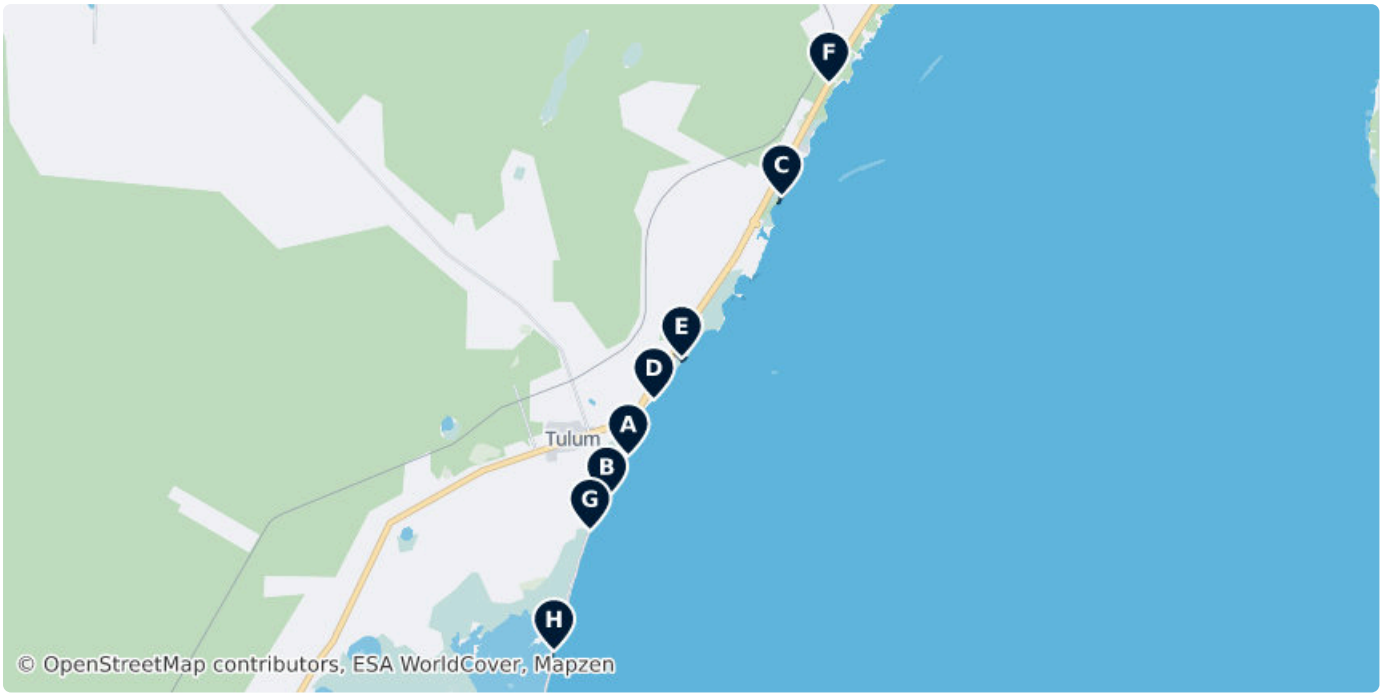
T House of the Columns

An L-shaped administrative building in Tulum notable for its series of columns that once supported a heavy flat roof.

Mexico (20.21494, -87.42943)

Beaches and Coastal Resorts

This selection spans the Tulum coastline, from the expansive sands near the Mayan ruins to the secluded turtle nesting grounds of Xcacel. The region is defined by white limestone sand and clear Caribbean waters. Highlights include Caleta Tankah, where freshwater cenotes meet the sea, and Akumal Bay, a protected area for green sea turtles. These sites offer a mix of undeveloped natural retreats and established wellness resorts along the Riviera Maya.





A Playa Paraiso

Wide sandy stretch located just south of the Tulum ruins, known for its iconic leaning palm tree and several beach clubs.

Mexico (20.20264, -87.43221)



B Tulum Beach

Seven kilometres long sandy beach never gets crowded - it's too vast for that. A perfect getaway.

Mexico (20.18063, -87.44396)

thebeach-tulum.com

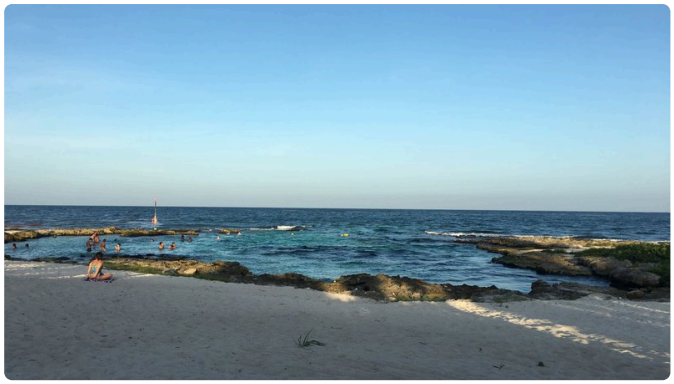


C Xcacel Beach

The still undeveloped beach is rather hard to get to - but totally worth it! An amazing, secluded retreat.

Mexico (20.33647, -87.34775)

travelyucatan.com/xcacel_mexico.php



D Caleta Tankah

A sheltered cove where freshwater from underground cenotes flows into the Caribbean Sea, creating a mix of cool and warm currents.

Carretera Federal 307, 77780 Tulum Quintana Roo (20.23168, -87.41810)

caletatankah.com, +52 998 151 9791

E Dreams Tulum Resort & spa

All-inclusive beachfront resort featuring Mexican colonial-style architecture and 44 acres of tropical gardens.

(20.25312, -87.40284)

F Akumal Bay Beach & Wellness Resort

Resort providing direct access to a protected marine area known for its resident green sea turtle population and coral reefs.

(Unnamed Road), 77776, Mexico (20.39462, -87.32165)

akumalbayresort.com, +52 984 8757500

G Coco Beach

A central section of the Tulum Hotel Zone featuring white sand and several established beach clubs.

(20.16400, -87.45324)

H Playa Akun

A quieter stretch of white sand beach located in the southern portion of the Tulum coastal strip.

Mexico (20.10177, -87.47308)

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