



TOP 10 EXPERIENCES

MEXICO

From the diverse culture to the beautiful beaches, Mexico has earned its title as one of the most visited countries around the world.

Because of the myriad of activities, vacationers of all kinds can enjoy themselves in Mexico. There are activities for adventurers, rich cultural meccas for those that thirst for knowledge and a connection to the past, cities that are teeming with family-friendly resorts, stunning beaches for visitors to soak up some sun and beautiful natural wonders you have to see to believe.

1

Cities to visit

Playa Del Carmen - Celebrated for its vibrant night life. Explorers will be thrilled with the nearby ancient ruins and snorkelling opportunities in underwater caverns.

Cabo San Lucas - A popular 'Spring Break' destination for American teens, it's a beautiful city with amazing beaches that can be enjoyed by all generations.

Cancun - Easily Mexico's most famous city, Cancun is more than just a party town. Mayan ruins are plentiful here, as well as family resorts that cater to a quieter clientele.

Puerto Vallarta - This city may have it all — stunning beaches, lots of shopping, a great nightlife, exciting activities such as ziplining, swimming with dolphins and parasailing, and a fabulous boardwalk.

2

Visit the Marieta Islands

Also known as the 'Mexican Galapagos', this stunning national park a few kilometres off the coast of Nayarit has beautiful waters, secret coves and hidden beaches. It's a real explorer's wonderland — tours offer glimpses of humpback whales, dolphins, rays and even octopi. The snorkelling is top-notch and swimmers will find themselves surrounded by a variety of colourful marine life.

3

Explore ancient cities

Ancient ruins abound in Mexico due to its diverse Native American culture. Visitors are often awestruck by sheer size and scale of these towering ancient grounds. Even remote areas like Tulum boast ancient ruins and in 2001, the epic Chichen Itza (Yucatan Peninsula) earned a spot on the newly redone Wonders of the World list. Other sites that are great to explore: Teotihuacan and the Temple of Quetzalcoatl (Valley of Mexico), El Tajin (Papantla) and the Chacchoben ruins.



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4

Swim in a giant sinkhole

Mexico has over 6,000 sinkholes, many of which are underground wonderlands filled with blue-green waters with waterfalls, stalactites, stalagmites and creeping vines. Quite a few towns offer sinkhole expeditions where you visit multiple sites in one day. The Yucatan Peninsula has the best sinkholes, since all of the rivers are underground and most of the land is limestone. The Ik Kil sinkhole is one of the most impressive and should not be missed — it's often called 'the world's most beautiful swimming hole'.

5

Visit Xcaret Park

This ecological amusement park located 6km south of Playa Del Carmen offers experiences you won't find anywhere else. The theme park allows you to swim in underground rivers, ride a dolphin, swim with sharks and get up close and personal with sting rays. For something more relaxed, you can enjoy floating over the crystalline waters or dive in for some snorkelling. The park also runs a number of cultural performance and activities, such as pre-hispanic dance shows and the Voladores De Papantla — a ritual performance that takes 'pole dancing' to (literally) new heights.

6

Isla Mujeres

If you'd like to be in a real-life postcard, visit the crystal blue waters and white sandy beaches of this small island off the coast of Cancun. The laid back atmosphere is complemented by eco-resort hotels and snorkelling and scuba diving on the surrounding coral reefs. At the island's southern tip, there's a lighthouse, a seas turtle sanctuary and the remains of a Mayan temple. There's also one of the most incredible sculpture museums you will ever visit — the Museo Subacuatico de Arte is located on Manchones Reef, at the depth of 8m underwater!

7

Foods to eat

Chilaquiles - Cut and fried tortillas mixed with salsa, eggs and chicken dolloped with cheese or cream. Usually paired with fried beans.

Molletes - Hunks of thick bread are covered with refried beans and copious amounts of a cheese, then grilled until the cheese is melted.

Tacos - A trip to Mexico wouldn't be complete without having some authentic tacos from a local street vendor. Look for *tacos al pastor* — these are filled with paper thin slices of pork and served with onions, lettuce, avocado, cheese or lime wedges.

Elotes - A common street snack, which is piping hot corn (served in a cup or on a stick) topped with mayo, spices, salt and lime.

8

Enjoy colorful Guanajuato

Vibrant Guanajuato is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a must-see for historical buffs. This picturesque small town in Central Mexico captivates visitors with its live mariachi bands, friendly locals and historical charm. Small boutique hotels provide an authentic Mexican experience and the locals are more than happy to share Mexico's history with tourists.

9

Hit the beach

Tourists flock to Mexico to sun themselves on the famous sandy shores. Puerto Vallarta's stunning beaches attract a younger crowd keen to party, while families love Cancun's smoother shores. Tulum's isolated beaches attract lower key visitors and surfers find themselves drawn to the alluring beaches of Mazatlan. For the adventurous, there are even nude beaches and resorts scattered about, such as the Hidden Beach Au Naturel Club near Cancun.

10

Marvel at beautiful waterfalls

Mexico has some stunning waterfalls, especially in the southern state of Chiapas. There is Agua Azul waterfalls, where river and waterfall collide and produce beautiful blue shades of water. Then there is Cascadas de Misol-Ha — this jungle waterfall has a 35m drop and was a filming location for the movie Predator. The Chiapas region is home to El Chiflon, a remote and mighty waterfall that cascades in multiple levels and is worth the trek to see. Another 'waterfall' you can't miss is Herve el Agua — the 'frozen waterfall' in San Lorenzo Albarradas that is formed by the heavy mineral content of the water that rushes down the cliffs.

