

ISLA Cozumel

DESK REFERENCE



MEXICANCARIBBEAN.TRAVEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover photo courtesy of Heider Said Castillo Fernández

03	10 Things You Need To Know About Cozumel
04	Overview
05	History
06	Island Insights
08	Attractions + Activities
09	Archaeological Sites, Sports
10	Weddings, Shopping
11	Spa, Dining + Nightlife, Events
12	Hotel Maps
13	Hotel Directory
15	Calendar of Events
16	Map of Cozumel



mexicancaribbean.travel



[@visitcozumel](https://www.facebook.com/visitcozumel)



[@visitcozumel](https://twitter.com/visitcozumel)



[@mycozumel](https://www.instagram.com/mycozumel)



[@visitcozumel](https://www.youtube.com/visitcozumel)

Published September 2022 by



100 Lighting Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094 • dltamsales@ntmlc.com • Northstar Travel Group

DIRECTOR OF SALES, MEXICO AND LATIN AMERICA
María-Antonieta (Toni) Aguirre

WRITER
Lydia Gregory

QUINTANA ROO TOURISM BOARD
Andrea Chiri
Daniela Molinares
Pablo Aguilar

ART DIRECTOR
Chesney Willard

Although every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of information appearing within this supplement, we cannot be responsible for typographical errors, omissions or changes since this publication went to press.

Copyright © 2022. All rights reserved.

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COZUMEL

Quick: what do you know about Cozumel?

Chances are (unless you're a diver) you'll probably already know it's a fun stop on a Mexican Caribbean cruise that's near Cancun. And while it most definitely is one of the cruise world's preferred ports, there's a lot more to it:

- 1. Cozumel is the largest island in the Mexican Caribbean.** Located a short 35-minute ferry ride across from Playa del Carmen in the Riviera Maya, Cozumel is 48 km/30 miles long and 16 km/10 miles wide.
- 2. It's the world's most popular cruise port destination.** San Miguel, the island's main settlement, receives the bulk of the lively cruise crowd coming off of several ships a day. We recommend vacationers to visit in the mornings or the evenings when the town is quieter.
- 3. Cozumel is serious about sustainability.** Isla Cozumel is part of Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Reserve Programme and is justifiably proud of its five natural reserves, including a 46-hectare (114-acre) Cozumel Reefs National Park, part of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System, the second largest coral reef system in the world.
- 4. The diving and snorkeling are legendary.** Cozumel won its place in the gallery of diving greats thanks to the famed Jacques Cousteau in a documentary filmed there in 1961.
- 5. You'll literally find yourself in Heaven.** El Cielo (or "Heaven"), is a crystal-clear, pale-blue paradise with sugary-white sand that's dotted with starfish and is hands down one of the coolest snorkeling spots in the Caribbean.
- 6. Cozumel helped fuel the gum craze in the US.** The island's *zapote* trees provided the *chicle*, or gum, for the very first popular chewing gum, Chiclets, back in the late 19th century.
- 7. Its name is derived from the Mayan Kosom-Lumil (Kuzamil), or "land of the swallows."** Visitors will not only find plenty of these feathered friends flying about, but also their likeness (hint: keep an eye on the pavement).
- 8. Cozumel has something for every taste and budget.** There are over 70 places to stay on the island and they run the gamut, from super inexpensive rooms-with-a-fan to all-inclusive resorts to very exclusive villas on the beach.
- 9. It's ridiculously easy to find your way around.** The entire island has essentially two roads: the *carretera costera* (coastal road) that connects with the *carretera transversal* (cross road.) There's also a 20 km/12.4 mi Cycle Path that borders the Caribbean Sea.
- 10. Most of the island is a natural reserve.** Cozumel's hotels and resorts are all on the west side of the island, meaning the eastern shore offers endless stretches of virgin beach. The inland jungles are lush and thick.



THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE THE CHARM OF A MEXICAN BEACH TOWN

Surround it with the sparkling turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea and you have something truly incredible.

popular cruise port destination, welcoming millions of cruise ship guests every year—in high season (November through April) that means anywhere from 70,000 to 80,000 island guests a week stop into its town of San Miguel (pop. 80,000). Add in the day-trippers from the mainland who take the 35-minute ferry from Playa and it can get quite lively.

Sounds like it's a "been there, done that" kind of place, doesn't it?

However, the vast majority of visitors don't venture much past San Miguel and the closest beaches, either because they only have a small window of time or they simply don't know just how much there is to do, see, and explore both. That means uncrowded exploration to the island's archaeological sites, thick jungle, many virgin beaches, pristine freshwater sinkholes, turtle conservation camps, world-class dive sites, and much, much more for those who stay.

So, let's take a quick peek at the past and some basic island info, then we'll head in for the fun in the sun!

Welcome to Cozumel: a charming island with a Mexican heart, a Mayan soul, and one of the country's most lavish collections of amazing beaches. It also has its own international airport, not to mention easy access from the Cancun International Airport via ferry from Playa del Carmen (see below for more info). It's also, quite literally, Mexico's most visited destination.

To deconstruct the previous sentence, let's start by saying Cozumel is the world's most





IDEAL CLIENTS: ACTIVE TRAVELERS, NATURE AND ADVENTURE

Let's say you have clients who love Mexico and others who love the Caribbean. Why not introduce them to the best of both worlds all neatly wrapped up in one Cozumel island vacation?

Despite its reputation as a "diver's only" paradise (in fact, only 30% of its visitors are divers) or a busy, quick-stop cruise port, Cozumel has much to offer a wide variety of clients. If you have clients looking for unspoiled beaches, the authentic charm of a Mexican town,

unsurpassed watersports, and every amenity they can wish for, then Cozumel is an easy sell.

This is the place to go for destination weddings, honeymoons, family vacations, eco-exploration, and active vacations. For singles, there's a thriving and very active social scene, too. The ample range of accommodations fits every budget and there are family-friendly eco-parks, beach clubs, and restaurants a-plenty to please every taste and wallet.

HISTORY

Cozumel's rich history is rooted deep in the Mayan culture, which is still alive and well in the 21st century in its residents, its gastronomy, and its colorful traditions. The island is said to have been settled as early as 300 A.D., flourishing as a commercial port for the sea trade and as a ceremonial center. During the Classic and post-Classic periods, it was a sanctuary for women courting favors from Ixchel, Mayan goddess of fertility, love and the moon.

This background sets it apart from the newer resorts along Cancun and the Riviera Maya, which cropped up in the past few decades. In fact, by the time the Spaniards showed up in 1511, Cozumel's ancestors had built and abandoned some three-dozen archaeological sites scattered around the island. Hernán Cortés

himself arrived in 1519 on his way to conquering Mexico, and later still the island provided shelter for marauding pirates.

By the 19th century, Cozumel had become a top exporter of *chicle*, the main ingredient in the extraordinarily popular chewing gum sold in the U.S. and around the world. Then during WWII, the U.S. Air Force built a base on the is-

land to launch Allied aircraft on the hunt for German U-boats—that base eventually became the international airport.

Today, Cozumel is a haven for cruise ships, divers, families, honeymooners, eco-tourists, and travelers from Cancun looking for a more laid-back change of pace and beaches that are equally pristine but much less crowded.



CREDITS: COZUMEL PARKS

ISLAND INSIGHTS

Airport Info, Getting Around, Weather & More

AIRPORT: The Cozumel International Airport (CZM), located 3 km (less than two miles) northeast of San Miguel, has duty-free shops, restaurants, bars, and rental car/tour counters. Air Canada, American Airlines, Southwest, Sun Country, United Airlines and WestJet have nonstop flights to Cozumel from their respective hubs. Volaris, Viva Aerobus and Magnicharters fly from major cities in Mexico, while Aeromar flies from Merida to Cozumel.

GETTING AROUND: Clients can get around the island on fairly affordable taxis. The average fare from the northern hotel zone to San Miguel is about \$8 US and \$21 US from the southern hotel zone. However, you might want to recommend your clients rent a car (or open-air jeep) during their stay since cab fares add up quickly. Keep in mind many downtown streets are closed to

vehicular traffic, and parking spaces can be scarce.

Another fun way to get around is by bicycle, moped, or motorcycle (and yes, they have Harleys!), all of which are readily available for rental. Note: clients will need to have a valid driver's license to rent a moped and will need some sort of motorcycle endorsement on their driver's license equivalent to the motorcycle they're renting.

It's super easy to get around Cozumel, as the entire island basically has two roads: the *carretera costera* (coastal road) that connects to the *carretera transversal* (crossroad). The road technically begins just up the coast from the north hotel zone and the Cozumel Country Club, hugging the western shore past the airport and along the San Miguel seafront. It continues south past resorts, three cruise ship enclaves, and

numerous beach clubs.

At Punta Sur the road loops around the southern tip and continues northward as a simple two-lane road that runs parallel to the gorgeous windward coast. The road turns inland (moving west) at Mezcalitos, returning across the island to San Miguel at the island's midpoint via the *carretera transversal*. This road enters San Miguel as Avenida Benito Juárez.

FERRIES: Ferries to the mainland run 365 days a year, weather permitting. The ride takes about 35 minutes each way. All operate modern air-conditioned vessels.

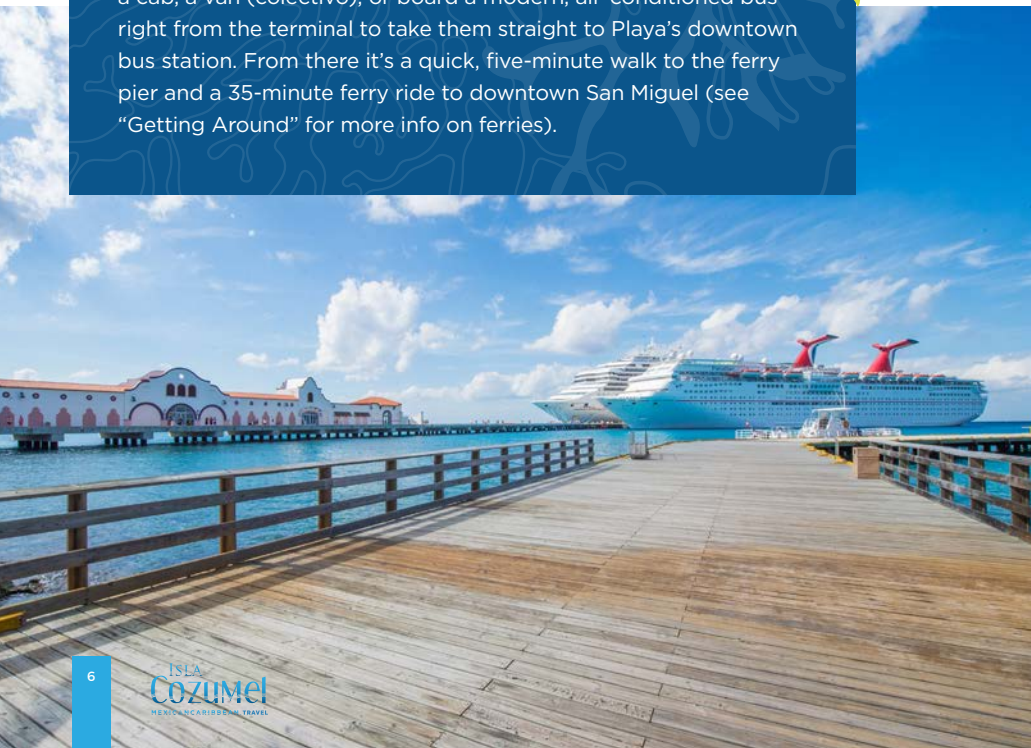
ULTRAMAR: www.ultramarferry.com/en
Ferries depart from the passenger ferry pier in downtown San Miguel to Playa del Carmen on the mainland. There are departures daily in each direction, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Recommend clients buy one-way tickets so they have flexibility in choosing their return departure time.

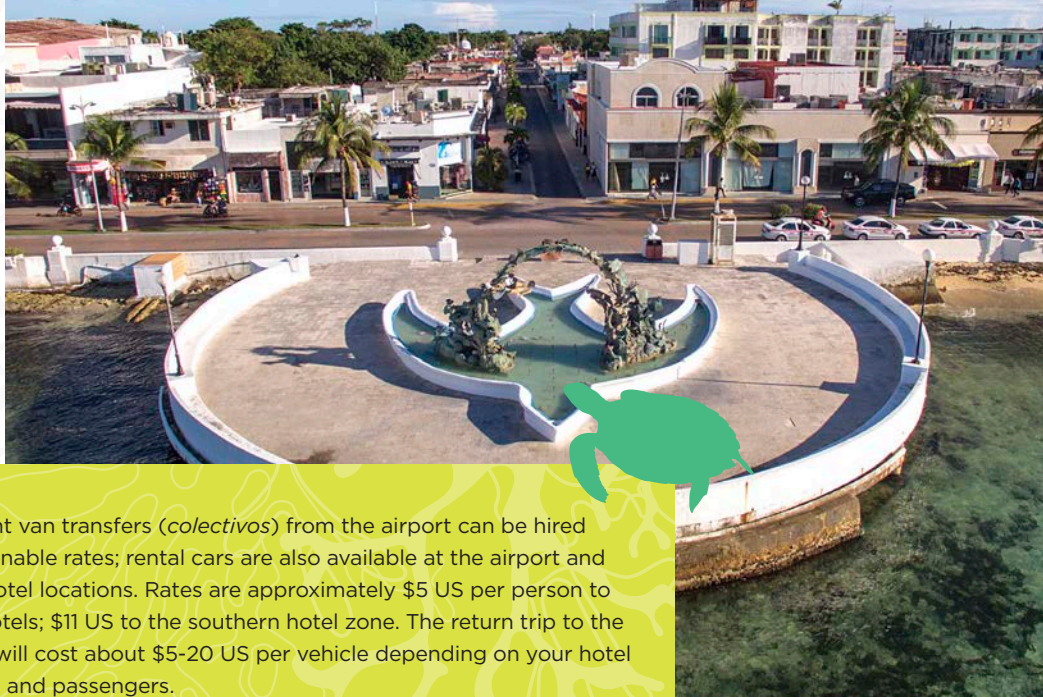
CLIMATE: The average daily air temperature in Cozumel is 80°F (26°C). In July and August, the highs range from the upper 80s (26°C) to the low 90s (32°C). In December and January, the daytime temperatures average in the mid-70s (21°C).

CRUISES: During any seven-day period an average of 18-20 different cruise ships dock at one of Cozumel's three cruise docks. The Punta Langosta Terminal is within walking distance to San Miguel's main square; the International Dock is

Many clients might need or prefer to arrive via the Cancun International Airport (CUN). Once there, they would need transportation south to Playa del Carmen to hop on the ferry to get to Isla Cozumel—an easy, affordable, two-hour adventure. They can hire a cab, a van (colectivo), or board a modern, air-conditioned bus right from the terminal to take them straight to Playa's downtown bus station. From there it's a quick, five-minute walk to the ferry pier and a 35-minute ferry ride to downtown San Miguel (see "Getting Around" for more info on ferries).



about 8 km/5 mi south of town; and the Puerta Maya Dock is just south of that. Companies weighing anchor at Cozumel include Royal Caribbean, MSC Cruises, Carnival Cruise Lines, Celebrity Cruises, Disney Cruise Line, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, Princess Cruises, Virgin Cruises, Viking Ocean Cruises. Find weekly cruise schedules on the Quintana Roo Port Administration site at <http://servicios.apiqroo.com.mx/programacion/#>



GET TO KNOW THE ISLAND

Rich in history, traditions, and natural beauty, Cozumel is a fantastic alternative to highly-developed Cancun and the lovely—but sprawling—reaches of Riviera Maya. Let's take a closer look at the five distinct areas that make up the island:

NORTH COAST: This is home to one of two main hotel zones with properties strung out all along the beachfront. There are a number of new condominiums around the area. The *carretera costera* (coastal road) begins up here—at its very northern end you can hop on a boat that will take you to the uninhabited Isla Pasión (Passion Island), a paradise that's only 30- to 45-minutes from San Miguel's downtown area with palm trees, lounge beds, buffet lunch, and beach games. Its proximity to town makes it a favorite for cruisetours and it's a fun place for families!

WEST COAST: The rest of the island's hotels continue down the *carretera costera* along some of the most popular beaches in Cozumel. This is also home to the Puerta Maya dock complex, a huge cruise center with 50 different shopping outlets, stand-alone crafts carts, dining options, and more. Further south is Chankanaab Beach Adventure Park and Punta Sur with its ecological reserve, which straddles the western and eastern shorelines.

EAST COAST: This is Cozumel's wilder side: as you follow the road from Punta Sur upwards until it bends back westward to San Miguel you'll find a number of beaches with clubs for daytime dining and drinks, but no other development thanks to its status as a natural protected area. Right where the road bends, stop at Mezcalitos and its "Last Frontier Bar"

Frequent van transfers (*colectivos*) from the airport can be hired at reasonable rates; rental cars are also available at the airport and many hotel locations. Rates are approximately \$5 US per person to most hotels; \$11 US to the southern hotel zone. The return trip to the airport will cost about \$5-20 US per vehicle depending on your hotel location and passengers.

for a cool beverage before taking the less-traveled dirt road that continues north along the eastern shore to some of the more remote beaches (sans amenities) and small archaeological sites. The end of that road takes you to the lighthouse and beaches at Punta Molas.

INTERIOR: Indiana Jones would feel quite at home in this wild, thorny jungle brush, which hides the majority of the Mayan archaeological sites. There's very little development here, and road and trail access are limited. Don't be put off, though: there are some great adventure tours that will take your clients exploring on horseback or ATV with stops for a swim in the clear, cool pools of the local *cenotes* (natural freshwater sinkholes).

SAN MIGUEL DE COZUMEL: The island's only town, San Miguel is a colorful, laid-back hangout with all the sought-after amenities to please cruise ship travelers, island vacationers, and day-trippers from the mainland, shot through with Mexican and Mayan traditions evident in its celebrations, food, and crafts. Note for overnight visitors: the Punta Langosta Terminal and its multiple cruise ship docks are just a short walk away and the ferry pier is just across the plaza. The town gets very busy in the middle of the day, when visitors from off-shore alight to browse the souvenir shops, cafés, jewelry stores, and arts and craft shops that fan out from downtown San Miguel.

Check out the *malecón* (seaside promenade) in the early mornings or early evenings and visit the town's sculptures and monuments as well as Benito Juárez Park, the pretty, seaside square with benches, shade trees, and a stone gazebo. The square is ringed by pedestrian-only walkways leading to shops, various restaurants, and a handful of colorfully painted clapboard houses, relics from Cozumel's past. On weekends it comes alive with music and dancing.

Don't miss the nearby Museum of Cozumel Island: housed in a former turn-of-the-century two-story hotel, it gives visitors an overview of the island's cultural and anthropological history. It's also Cozumel's cultural center: it's a fun place to catch artisan demos, live drama, and even a lesson in the Maya language. www.cozumelparks.com

If you make it to town early in the morning, head over to El Mercado, the island's traditional market on the corner of Rosado Salas and Avenida 25. There are lots of stalls selling food, including fresh-squeezed OJ, sweet grapefruit, or carrot juice to get your day started, and it's the perfect place for soaking in some island culture first-hand.

Keep an eye out for a series of urban murals scattered throughout the town, the result of a massive urban art project created by members of PangeaSeed, a nonprofit organization from Hawaii.



ATTRACTIONS + ACTIVITIES

It's no exaggeration to say Cozumel has something for anyone who loves a tropical vacation, from families with kids of all ages to couples and singles. Attractions include a dizzying array of things to do:

BEACH CLUBS + BEACHES

Cozumel is ringed with an incredible shoreline of white sand, turquoise water, and limestone coves. The most popular and more developed beaches can be found on the western coast, home to the hotels and the more sophisticated beach clubs.

For example, just north of the airport, **Playa Azul Restaurant & Beach Club** is popular with the locals for its bar and restaurant, South of town there's the **Playa Mia Grand Beach Park**, a big all-day destination beloved by the cruise crowd with every amenity and attraction imaginable, and the Money Bar Beach Club water sports center with paddle boards, bikes, and more, not to mention great shore snorkeling; close to Chankanaab National Park, the upscale **Playa Uvas Beach Club** offers packages and cushy lounge chairs, umbrellas, hammocks, beach toys, free WiFi, and more.

On the south shore, the resort-like **Mr. Sancho's Beach Club** even has horseback riding tours, showers, massages, and more (ask about the all-inclusive

day passes); and just at the entrance to Punta Sur Park, **Rastas & Freedom in Paradise Reggae Beach Bar's** vibe is as laid back as its hammocks.

Many beaches also have great amenities: the white-sand **Playa Palancar** offers snorkel boat trips, kayaks, paddle boarding, parachute tours, jet skis, showers, hammocks, great food and drink right on the sand, and more. **Chen Río**, on the other side of the island, is great for crystal-clear tide pools; we recommend lunch at **El Pescador**.

UNIQUE ATTRACTIONS

COZUMEL PEARL FARM: This family-owned and operated pearl farm is on

the north shore of the island and the only active pearl farm in the Caribbean. Only accessible by boat, this sustainable eco-attraction welcomes only a few guests per day. They also offer overnight experiences.

CHANKANAAB ADVENTURE BEACH PARK: Chankanaab Beach and Adventure Park is just 9 km (5.6 mi) from San Miguel and has a bevy of attractions for visitors, including a dolphin, manatee, and sea lion encounter program; a beautiful saltwater lagoon, unique in the world for its coral formations; scuba and snorkeling; an archaeological park; and more. Free guided tours.



If you're looking for a quieter getaway, you'll want to follow the *carretera costera* to the eastern side of the island. Apart from a handful of beach clubs, this side is largely untouched. Water here is a precious commodity and, in keeping with the island's deep interest in sustainability, drinking straws are not offered unless the visitor asks them. **Playa San Martín** is a three-mile strip of pristine, white-sand shoreline mid-way on the east side of the island.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES



Vestiges of the modern Mayans' ancestors can still be found in several sites scattered around the island, though many have been lost to development and the encroaching jungle.

SAN GERVASIO: The goddess Ixchel's main sanctuary, San Gervasio is also the largest, best-preserved and most popular archaeological site on the island. The site is made up of six architectural sets and isolated temples joined by ancient white roads called *sacbé*s. We suggest hiring one of the bilingual certified guides. Ad-

mission is \$26 USD for adults and \$18 USD for kids (4 to 12 years old).

EL CEDRAL: Tucked inland in the southern center of the island, this small archaeological site is made up of an arch with a room that still has remnants of the original paint and a small church next door. It's located off the *costera sur highway* near the small farming community of the same name.

EL CARACOL: Also dedicated to the moon goddess Ixchel, this site lies within the Punta Sur Eco Beach Park on the southern end of the island; it was thought to be a weather station for the Maya.

CASTILLO REAL: Located on the primitive road to Punta Molas on the remote northeastern coast of Cozumel, this large Mayan site has a spectacular panoramic view of the coastline and the water. It's a hike to get there, but worth it. Can also be reached by boat.

Admission is \$26 US (children under 3 are admitted free of charge; 4-12yrs \$18 US).

PUNTA SUR ECO BEACH PARK: This 100-hectare (247-acre) park on the island's southern tip is made for adventures of the eco kind, a simply stunning collection of landscape (mangrove jungle, dunes, lagoon, beach) teeming with bird life, turtles, marine life, the ever-present iguanas, and, yes, crocodiles. Snorkel in the calm waters of the Mesoamerican reef, explore, then rest in a hammock slung under a thatched roof palapa. There's a snack bar, craftworks store, and restaurant. Its accessible by car, but we recommend a specialized guide. www.cozumelparks.com

FARO CELARAIN (CELARAIN LIGHTHOUSE): The Faro houses a museum that takes you from the Maya navigators to the buccaneers and overlooks about 2 km (1.24 mi) of heavenly beach that's a sea turtle sanctuary that arrive every year to deposit their eggs.

LAGUNA COLOMBIA (COLOMBIA LAGOON): Located in the Punta Sur Eco Park, this is a state-protected refuge for the local flora and fauna on Cozumel's southern coast. There are several observation decks on the lagoon and plenty of wild-life to watch. We recommend a boat tour with a guide.

PUEBLO DE MAIZ: This has become one of the best attractions on the island. It is a journey back in time where you can live a Mayan experience. Enjoy taking part of the prehispanic history visiting a chewing gum camp to show you the process of gum extraction from the great tree of the "chicozapote". The tour continues in the temple of Ixchel to pray for the fertility of the earth. Once the offerings have been delivered the Xaman will purify the visitors to grant them access to the town of the People of the Corn, where you will be received with dances full of mysticism and a welcome ceremony.

There are several palapas offering experiences that date back to ancient times of the Maya culture, and each one will receive you with unique activities dedicated to the hallowed lord of the corn (Hunal-ye), to the deity of the honey bee (Xunan kab), the venerable lord of cocoa (Ek-chuah), to the sisal (Soskil), and to the art of amatecatl or feather art.

You will be able to share the inheritance of body painting, making your face or body a perfect canvas, or enjoy the process of preparing the chocolate in a metate, or make a rope with the sisal fiber.

KAOKAO CHOCOLATE FACTORY: At the Kaokao Chocolate Factory clients can participate in the bean-to-bar process, plus they'll get a look into the importance of the cacao seed for the Mayan Civilization. They'll also have a chance to taste test. Reservations are required. www.kaokaochocolatefactorytour.com

SPORTS

DIVING: In 1959, Cozumel so impacted the famed underwater researcher Jacques Cousteau that he put it on the map as one of the premier diving destinations on the Western Hemisphere. It's classified as one of the top five dive destinations in the Caribbean and it's among the top ten in the world when it comes to marine life, outstanding wall diving, and advanced diving. The island is also the drift-diving capital of the world thanks to its constant south to north water current.

The more than 40 dive sites that ring the island are part of the second largest barrier reef system in the world—the Meso-American Barrier Reef System—and its aquamarine water is warm year-round with up to 200 feet of visibility.

Divers will find limestone caves, tunnels, and trees of rare black coral that dot the more than 30 reefs that range in depth

FISHING: Fishing in Cozumel is excellent year-round: mahi-mahi, bonito, sword fish, barracuda, and wahoo, among others. Big game sport fisherman will want to visit from March to June for marlin and sailfish season, not to mention the yearly Rodeo de *Lanchas Mexicanas*, or Mexican Boat Rodeo, the largest rod and reel fishing tournament in the state of Quintana Roo held the second weekend in May.

Expert anglers and day fishermen can head out for fly fishing, deep sea fishing, or sport fishing, with most tours departing from the Puerto de Abrigo less than 10 minutes from San Miguel. Once the fish is caught, the crew can usually prepare it right on the beach!

WIND SPORTS: Windsurfing, sailing, and kite boarding fans love the steady breeze off the island's western shore. Your clients will find outfitters in nearly every resort ready to rent out what they need. Beach clubs at Playa San Francisco, Playa Mia, Playa Palancar, Mr. Sancho's, Sky Reef and Nachi Cocom also offer a wide range of water sports equipment.

Newbies to kite surfing will want to head to the beach at Isla Pasión (Passion Island islapasion.com.mx) at the north end of Cozumel. The more experienced should head for the open sea on the island's northernmost point off the Punta Molas lighthouse—the snorkeling is great here, too, and the jagged shoreline is a panoramic blast for joggers and bikers.

IRONMAN (NOVEMBER):

The Ironman World Championship is an event sponsored by the government of the island and the private sectors with prizes, open to top athletes from around the world to come swim 3.8 km, cycle 180 km and run the classic marathon of 42.2 km.

International competitors are drawn from five multisport competitions happening during the spring and fall. Registration is limited to 3,000 athletes. www.ironman.com/races



OTHER ACTIVITIES

ADVENTURES ON FOUR WHEELS: This island—particularly the thick jungle of the interior and the northeastern coastline—was made for off-road exploration by Jeep, ATVs, or Polaris Razor 4x4 off-road vehicles. Tours can combine land adventure with a cooling snorkel tour or an afternoon at a beach club.

ADVENTURES ON TWO WHEELS: Cozumel's waterfront is even more fun in a guided motorcycle tour! If your client has the correct license, they can even tour around the island on a Harley-Davidson®. Visit www.eaglerider.com/cozumel

ADVENTURES IN A SUB: Want to dive deep and stay dry? Atlantis Subs can go up to 100 feet below the water's surface for an unforgettable look at life in the crystalline waters of the Mexican Caribbean. Visit www.atlantissubmarines.travel

ADVENTURES OFF THE ISLAND, RIVIERA MAYA: Your clients will be only 35 minutes by ferry to Playa del Carmen and a whole world of possibilities in the famed Riviera Maya, including breathtaking eco-parks, hidden beaches, and secret cenotes and lagoons.

WEDDINGS

Cozumel has raised destination weddings to fine art. Skilled wedding planners and coordinators are on-hand to lower stress-levels, the value is unequalled, and honeymoons are in the bag.

Many hotels also offer easy-sell wedding and romance packages that include symbolic options such as Mayan-inspired or even underwater ceremonies—they're equally romantic and avoid tedious legal proceedings.

SHOPPING

There are plenty of places for your clients to give their credit cards a workout all along San Miguel's bustling *malecón*, or waterfront boulevard. This is a duty-free zone famous for its jewelry including Mexico's famous sterling silver, gold, precious and semi-precious stones, and brand-name watches.

Shoppers will find other quality Mexican and imported items for sale, including the Royal Village Shopping Center, a center for luxury branded goods. Hot tip: Cha'an Ka'an Cozumel Planetarium is located near Royal Village and is home to the first 3D full dome planetarium in Latin America. www.planetariodecozumel.org



SPAS

A visit to one of the island's many spa sanctuaries can be a very welcome addition to any stay. Options range from sumptuous resort spas to stand-alone spas, with many taking full advantage of the ocean breeze for beachfront sessions under a thatched *palapa*. Clients will find the menus can include anything from a simple relaxation massage or facial to alternative treatments such as acupuncture, bio-magnetism, hydro-massage, and any number of wellness techniques inspired by ancient Maya and Mexican traditions, including the *temazcal* ceremonial sweat lodge.

The yoga community in Cozumel has expanded quite a bit over the past few years. Visitors will find both indoor and outdoor yoga spaces that make the most of the views and offer several different yoga styles.

DINING + NIGHTLIFE

Cozumel has over 90 restaurants and cafés of every category ready to please your palate and your pocket. The laid-back island

vibe extends to its eateries, so expect casual, friendly service and, more often than not, meals are served with a side of ocean view.

Menus on Cozumel are surprisingly varied. Standouts include Yucatecan cuisine, with its unique blend of influences from Europe and Mexico, particularly that of the ancient Maya. A unique item on some menus is Lion Fish: this invasive species has no known predators in this part of the world and in order to control the populations, local chefs have found a delicious way to incorporate it into some of the traditional Yucatecan dishes.

Visitors can also enjoy everything from Japanese and Lebanese delicacies to Italian and French dishes. Familiar fast-food outlets and chains, including Hard Rock Café, Señor Frogs, Hooters, and Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville, will take care of any quick cravings.

Top dining recommendations include 10experiences (a unique Culinary Experience); Rolandi's (seafood, pastas and good wine list); Kondesa (Mexican, contemporary, tropical); La Cocay (Mediterranean and Mexican choices); La Inombrable (always tasty variety of choices, including prime beef); Guidos (pasta, seafood, salads and daily specials); La Mission (tropical gardens, with international cuisine and a Caribbean ambiance); Azul Madera (located in a restored classic Cozumeleño home, typical dishes of the region with modern global twist); El Palomar (waterfront restaurant, with island food menu), Sereno and Fernando Jr's (Lobster House).

After the sun goes down there are several hotspots for fun including Hemingway, The Thirsty Cougar, Capitan Mantarraya, Carlota, BAKKAN and Fat Tuesday to name but a few.

Some, like Mezcalitos and Coconuts Bar, are all about rustic cool right by the water's edge. Wanna dance? Check out Cocomama Tiki Room, Metropolitan Social Club, Tiki Tok, La Cagua María or Sr. Frogs.



EVENTS

CARNIVAL: Every year between February and March (dates vary) the island goes all out to celebrate Cozumel's Carnival, a vibrant fiesta that dates back to 1874. Technicolor parades dance down the oceanfront streets of San Miguel, dance competitions, and live music are everywhere, and the parties continue deep into the night. Be sure to make plans for your clients early as hotels fill up fast!

EL CEDRAL FESTIVAL: Officially called "La Feria de El Cedral", a festivity that celebrates the day of the "Santa Cruz" (Holy Cross). This is one of Cozumel's most important festivities. This event began as a small religious celebration to commemorate the 21 families of settlers who fled to Cozumel

in 1848 to escape the War of Castes, but has grown to incorporate handicraft exhibitions, traditional dances, food, bullfights, music and much more. The pageantry and partying are on every year by the end of April and beginning of May.

DÍA DE MUERTOS : Día de Muertos is a Mexican holiday that has a lot of history and tradition, and it is celebrated all over Mexico on November 1st and November 2nd. This holiday came up from ancient traditions among Mexican pre-Columbian cultures that used to honor life and death.

"El Día de Muertos" honors the memory of relatives or friends who have passed away, and it is a way to help them to support their spiritual journey.

It is believed that during this time of the year, the souls of the dead awaken and return to the living world to feast, party, drink, dance and play music with their loved ones.

Hanal Pixán is the Mayan celebration equivalent to Día de Muertos, which takes place for October 31 to November 2. If you want to experience this celebration as the ancient Mayans did, then head to Pueblo del Maíz, an interactive park located within the island.

DOWNTOWN MAP

BEACHFRONT MAP



HOTEL DIRECTORY - DOWNTOWN HOTELS

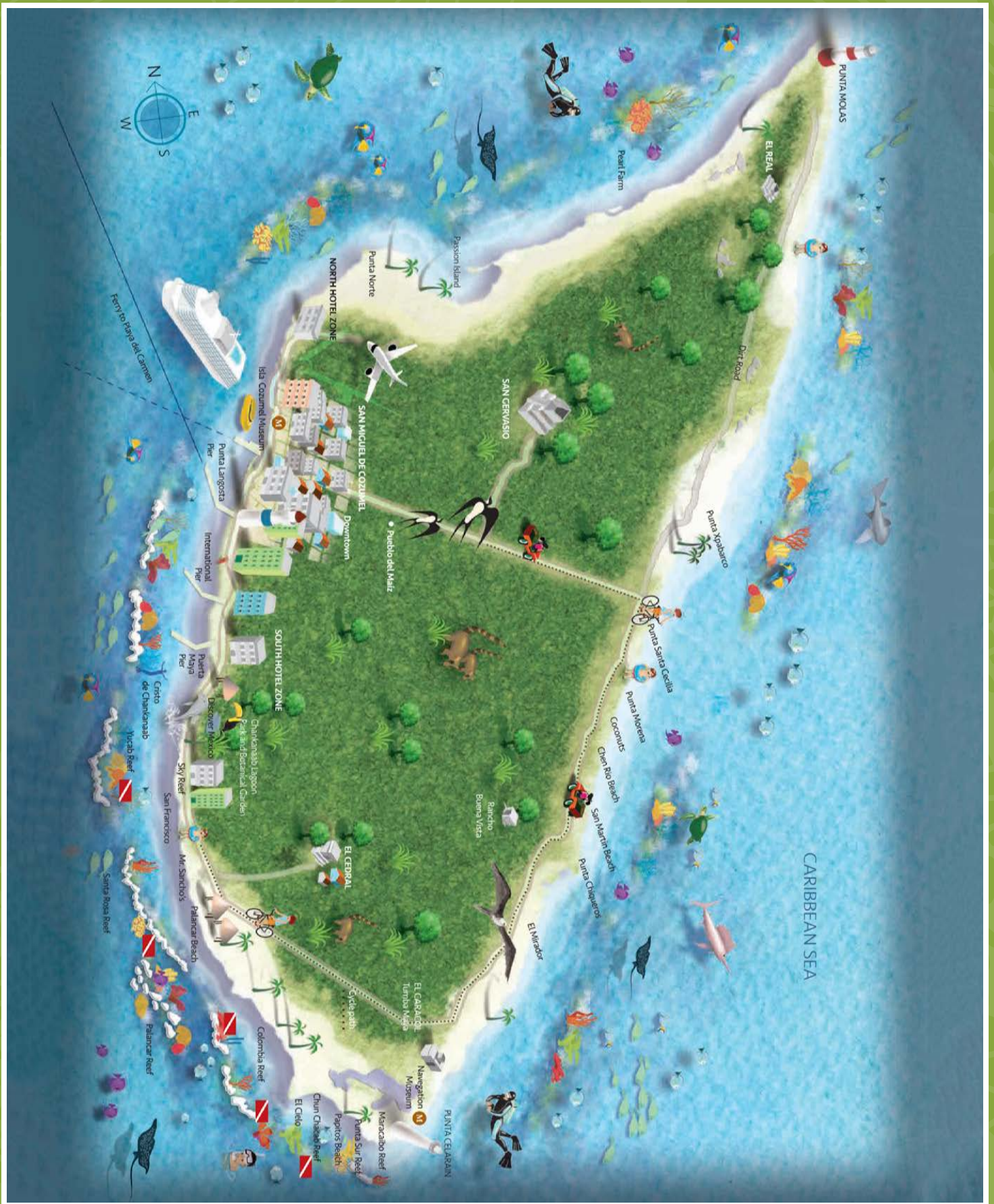
MAP LOCATION	NAME	CAT	ZONE	CONTACTS		UNITS	MEAL PLAN
1	AGUILAR	2*	Downtown	hotelaguilar.com	9878720307	32	European Plan
2	ALMARESTEL	2*	Downtown	facebook.com/hotelalmarestelczm	9878720822 / 9878761816	24	European Plan
3	ASFUR	1*	Downtown	asfurhotel@hotmail.com	9878691192	25	European Plan
4	BELLO CARIBE	1*	Downtown	bcaribe@prodigy.net.mx	9878726520 / 9875646215	22	European Plan
5	BLUE MAGIC HOSTEL	Hostel	Downtown	www.bluemagichostel.com	987-141-5646 Free USA & Canada 1-866-712-6161	4	European Plan
6	CARIBE	2*	Downtown	hotelcaribe.reservations@gmail.com	9878724283 / 9878720325	14	European Plan
7	COSTA BRAVA	3*	Downtown	hotelcostabravacozumel@gmail.com	9878721453 / 9878721290	22	European Plan
8	EL MARQUÉS	3*	Downtown	hotel_el_marques@hotmail.com	9878720677	39	European Plan
9	EL PIRATA	2*	Downtown	hotelpiratacozumel@hotmail.com	9878720051	27	European Plan
10	FLAMINGO	3*	Downtown	www.hotelflamingo.com	9878721264	18	European Plan
11	GRAND COZUMEL HOTEL & DIVING	1*	Downtown	www.grandcozumeldiving.com	9871162931	18	European Plan
12	HACIENDA SAN MIGUEL SUITES & HOTEL	3*	Downtown	www.haciendasanmiguel.com	9878721986	11	European Plan
13	HOSTELITO	1*	Downtown	www.hostelcozumel.com	9878698157	23	European Plan
14	ISLA ESMERALDA	1*	Downtown	www.hotelislaesmeralda.com	9878723255	20	European Plan
15	KARY	1*	Downtown	hotelkary@gmail.com	98787222011	18	European Plan
16	KINTA KAN COZUMEL	3*	Downtown	www.kintakan.com	9878692797	12	European Plan
17	LA CASONA REAL	2*	Downtown	www.casonarealcozumel.com	9878725471	14	European Plan
18	MARY CARMEN	2*	Downtown	www.hotelmarycarmen.com.mx	9878720581 / 9848762325	30	European Plan
19	PAL	3*	Downtown	facebook.com/HotelPalCozumel	9871185604	12	European Plan
20	PEPITA	1*	Downtown	www.hotelpepitacozumel.com	9878720098 / 987 87 612 54	30	European Plan
21	PLAZA COZUMEL	2*	Downtown	www.hotelplazacozumel.com	9878722722	53	European Plan
22	POSADA EDEM	1*	Downtown	www.hotelposadaedem.com.mx	9878721166 / 987-111-9327	16	European Plan
23	RIMON	1*	Downtown	facebook.com/HOTEL-RIMON-103553195684657	9871204578	30	European Plan
24	SAFARI INN	3*	Downtown	www.aquasafari.com	9878720101	12	European Plan
25	SAOLIMA	1*	Downtown	hotelsaolima.mxhotel.site/en	9878720421	20	European Plan
26	SUITES COLONIAL	3*	Downtown	www.suitescolonial.com	9878729090	28	European Plan
27	SUNSET	3*	Downtown		9878722928	12	European Plan
28	VILLAS COLIBRI	3*	Downtown	www.villascolibricozumel.com	9871411268	8	European Plan
29	VILLAS EL ENCANTO COZUMEL	3*	Downtown	www.villaselencantocozumel.com	9871133318 / 9871059657	10	European Plan
30	VILLA LAS ANCLAS	2*	Downtown	www.hotelvillalasanclas.com	9878725476	7	European Plan
31	VILLAS SEGOVIA	3*	Downtown	www.villasegovia.com	9878715140 9878719343	8	European Plan
32	XIKNAL COZUMEL	2*	Downtown	www.xiknalcozumel.com	445 106 4260	10	European Plan
33	ZUANAYOLI	2*	Downtown	yolicozumel@hotmail.com	9878720690 9871141796	20	European Plan

HOTEL DIRECTORY - BEACHFRONT HOTELS

MAP LOCATION	NAME	CAT	ZONE	CONTACTS		UNITS	MEAL PLAN
1	MELIÁ COZUMEL GOLF ALL INCLUSIVE	5*	Norte	www.melia.com	9878729870 / 9878720995	212	All Inclusive
2	EL COZUMELEÑO	5*	Norte	www.elcozumeleno.com	9878729530 / 9878729544	252	European Plan
3	THE WESTIN COZUMEL	5*	Norte	www.westincozumel.com	987-872-9370	152	European Plan
4	PLAYA AZUL GOLF & BEACH	4*	Norte	www.playa-azul.com	9878695160 / 9878695173	50	European Plan
5	HOTEL B UNIQUE	4*	Norte	www.hotelbcozumel.com	987-869-8518	45	European Plan
6	HOTEL B	4*	Norte	https://hotelbunique.com	987-869-8518	27	European Plan
7	CORAL PRINCESS GOLF & DIVE RESORT	4*	Norte	www.coralprincess.com	987-872-3200	142	European Plan
8	VENTANAS AL MAR		Este	www.ventanasalmarcozumel.com	984-267-2237	14	European Plan
9	PUERTO LIBRE	4*	Centro	www.puertolibrehotel.com	987-688-3000	26	European Plan
10	TROPICO 20°	Hostel	Centro	www.tropico20.com	987-872-3935	13	European Plan
11	SUITES BAHÍA	3*	Centro	www.suitesbahia.com	987-872-9090	27	European Plan
12	VISTA DEL MAR BOUTIQUE HOTEL	3*	Centro	www.hotelvistadelmar.com	987-872-0545	20	European Plan
13	CASA MEXICANA	4*	Centro	www.casamexicanacozumel.com	987-872-9090	88	European Plan
14	BARRACUDA	3*	Centro	www.hotelbarracuda.com	987-872-1243	40	European Plan
15	COZUMEL PALACE	5*	Sur	www.palaceresorts.com/cozumelpalace	9878729430 / 9878729431	175	All Inclusive
16	SCUBA CLUB COZUMEL	3*	Sur	www.scubaclubcozumel.com	987-872-1800	61	European Plan
17	COZUMEL & RESORT	4*	Sur	www.hotelcozumel.com.mx	9878729020 / 9878722154	181	All Inclusive
18	BLUE ANGEL	3*	Sur	www.blueangelresort.com	987-8720-819	22	European Plan
19	VILLABLANCA BEACH	3*	Sur	www.villablanca.net	987-872-0730	42	European Plan
20	VILLAS MAYALUUM	3*	Centro	www.villasmayaluum.com	9878720304 / 9878721586	33	European Plan
21	CASA DEL MAR	4*	Sur	www.casadelmarcozumel.com	9878721900 / 9878721855	106	European Plan
22	GRAND PARK ROYAL	5*	Sur	www.parkroyalcozumel.mx	987-8720-700	348	All Inclusive
23	EL CID LA CEIBA	5*	Sur	www.elcid.com/cozumel	9878720844 / 9878724243	76	European Plan
24	PRESIDENTE INTERCONTINENTAL	5*	Sur	www.presidenteiccozumel.com	987-872-9500	220	All Inclusive
25	THE LANDMARK RESORT OF COZUMEL	5*	Sur	www.thelandmarkresortofcozumel.com	987-869-5130	26	European Plan
26	FIESTA AMERICANA COZUMEL ALL INCLUSIVE DIVE RESORTS	5*	Sur	www.fiestamericana.com	9878729600 / 9878722680	102	All Inclusive
27	THE EXPLOREAN COZUMEL ALL INCLUSIVE	5*	Sur	www.explorean.com/cozumel_en.html	9878729600 / 9878722680	56	All Inclusive
28	SUNSCAPE SABOR	4*	Sur	www.sunscaperesorts.com/sabor	018005467445	218	All Inclusive
29	SECRETS AURA	5*	Sur	www.secretsresorts.com/aura-cozumel	018005467446	266	All Inclusive
30	ALLEGRO COZUMEL	4*	Sur	www.occidentalhotels.com	9878729770 / 9878729741	301	All Inclusive
31	OCCIDENTAL	5*	Sur	www.occidentalhotels.com	987-872-9730	251	All Inclusive
32	IBEROSTAR COZUMEL	5*	Sur	www.iberostar.com/hoteles/cozumel	9878729900 / 9878729906	306	All Inclusive

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	EVENT DESCRIPTION
FEBRUARY- MARCH	CARNAVAL DE COZUMEL	"One of the island's main events. This tradition has 150 years of history and is held around February every year, although the exact dates vary. In the weeks before the main events there is also an exciting program of ""pre-Carnival"", warm-up events that include the presentation and election of Carnival Kings and Queens, with performances and live music from top singers and groups. The Carnival includes dazzling technicolor processions along Cozumel's downtown oceanfront, where locals and visitors line to see the dancing performers and to catch some gifts that are thrown, like necklaces of plastic beads. After the oceanfront extravaganza, the music keeps playing and parties continue well into the night. Then, on the Wednesday after Fat Tuesday, the closing ceremony is held with the traditional burning of Juan Carnaval."
APRIL- MAY	FERIA DEL CEDRAL (THE DAY OF THE HOLY CROSS)	The Feria del Cedral is held every year during the end of April and beginning of May to celebrate the day of the "Santa Cruz" (Holy Cross). This festivity dates back to 1848, being one of Cozumel's most important festivities, and is held to honor the safe passage of the 21 founding families who fled the mainland to Cozumel in 1848 during La Guerra de Castas (The Caste War). At the fair, both residents and visitors can enjoy the many food stands, games, dancing and crafts displays throughout this week-long festival.
MAY	COZUMEL FISHING TOURNAMENT	Cozumel celebrates its annual sport fishing tournament, bringing together anglers from Mexico and around the world to fish for Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Wahoo, Dorado, Tuna, Barracuda and other game fish.
MAY	SACRED MAYAN JOURNEY	The Sacred Maya Journey seeks to recreate part of the ancient history of the Mayan Culture through a sacred ritual the Mayas performed every year to worship their Goddess Ixchel. The ceremony would begin a few days earlier at the commercial center "Polé" (now Xcaret), where different products were sold to be offered to the goddess. After different dances, ceremonies and purification rituals the Mayans would begin paddling their canoes towards Cozumel to worship the goddess and obtain her blessings for the whole community. Today you have the opportunity to go back in time and witness this wonderful ancient tradition.
JULY	PILGRIMAGE TO IXCHEL (CAMINATA A IXCHEL)	Pilgrimage to Ixchel (Mayan goddess of love, the moon, fertility and wisdom) is a cultural event that seeks to spread the pre-Hispanic cultural richness along the inhabitants, as well as recover and revive activities that were representative of the island in the past and that are part of its identity.
AUGUST	OCEANMAN COZUMEL	The first and only international open water swimming championship designed by swimmers for swimmers. It presents the opportunity for professional and amateur swimmers to fulfill a personal challenge in unique landscapes.
AUG-OCT	SEARCH AND RESCUE WORKSHOP	This eco-educational experience takes place at Faro Celarain Eco Park at 5:00 p.m. You will be able to watch how baby turtles emerge from their nests and go out to the ocean. The cost is US \$40 for adults and US \$30 for children.
SEPTEMBER 15	DÍA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA (MEXICO'S INDEPENDENCE DAY)	A nationwide festival celebrating Mexican Independence Day. On September 15 local residents and visitors congregate around the City Hall to participate in the traditional "grito," or cry for independence. Led by the Mayor of Cozumel from the balcony at City Hall, the cry "Viva Mexico" is made. Following the "grito" is an impressive fireworks display and other festivities including traditional foods as well as musical and folkloric dance performances.
SEPTEMBER	IRONMAN 70.3 COZUMEL	Cozumel is not only a beach-goer's paradise, it's also a seasoned IRONMAN host. 70.3 series, consists of a number of qualifying competitions in different countries, culminating in the World Championship, with the most accumulated athletes score in qualifying events. Distances: Swim: 1.9 km, Bike:90.1 km Run: 21.1 km.
OCTOBER	ASTRI COZUMEL (TRIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIP)	The Island of Cozumel offers the best swimming in the world thanks to the turquoise and warm waters of the Caribbean Sea. On October 6, Cozumel will receive competitors for the Serial Premium FMTRI, competition which consists of: *Sprint Triathlon: 750 m swimming - 20 km cycling - 5 km race. *Olympic Triathlon: 1.5 km swimming - 40 km cycling - 10 km race.
OCTOBER	BIRDING FESTIVAL	Through educational, scientific, artistic, recreational and cultural activities, bird lovers can participate in the promotion of conservation and environmental awareness, the balance of ecosystems and their relationship with humans.
OCTOBER	BIKERFEST	Bikers from all the country roam the island of Cozumel with their flashy motorcycles; visitors can also enjoy tours, motorcycle exhibitions and live music.
OCTOBER- NOVEMBER	DÍA DE MUERTOS / HANAL PIXÁN	"Día de Muertos" is a Mexican holiday that has a lot of history and tradition, and it is celebrated all over Mexico on November 1st and November 2nd. This holiday came up from ancient traditions among Mexican pre-Columbian cultures that used to honor life and death. "El Día de Muertos" honors the memory of relatives or friends who have passed away, and it is a way to help them to support their spiritual journey. It is believed that during this time of the year, the souls of the dead awaken and return to the living world to feast, party, drink, dance and play music with their loved ones. Hanal Pixán is the Mayan celebration equivalent to Día de Muertos, which takes place for October 31 to November 2. If you want to experience this celebration as the ancient Mayans did, then head to Pueblo del Maíz, an interactive park located within the island."
NOVEMBER	GFNY COZUMEL	The Gran Fondo will take you all the way around the island, as you enjoy the spectacular views of this Mayan paradise. There are two distances to choose from, either the Gran Fondo 100 miles or the Medio Fondo 50 miles, which stretch along the tempting turquoise ocean, as you push yourself through the island's challenging winds.
NOVEMBER	IRONMAN COZUMEL	Ironman is the most demanding triathlon test in the world. The athletes that participate are expected to cover 2.4 miles swimming, 112 miles on a bicycle and 26.2 miles running. All three courses must be finished within 17 hours.
DEC -FEB	EAGLE RAY SQUADRONS	The young Spotted Eagle Ray females start to promenade in December and stay until the end of February. As many as 20 rays swim by the reef wall at about 80' feet deep



ISLA
Cozumel

MEX:ICAN CAR:IBBEAN
MEX:ICAN CAR:IBBEAN.TRAVEL