



★ *Destination* GUIDE ★

Riviera Maya

LUXURY *Yacht* GROUP



## YUCATAN

- ① ISLA MUJERES
- ② CANCÚN
- ③ PUERTO MORELOS
- ④ PLAYA DEL CARMEN
- ⑤ COZUMEL
- ⑥ AKUMAL
- ⑦ TULUM
- ⑧ CHETUMAL

CANCUN ★

# CARIBBEAN YUCATAN

From the deck of your yacht peer overboard as the world's second largest reef slips beneath your hull. The shoreline is made of sugar white sand, and tangled green jungle embraces the descendants of a storied empire. The Riviera Maya is astonishingly diverse. The sport fishing is world-class, the diving is mesmerizing. The resorts are stunning and the spas sublime. The elevated roads of the ancient Mayan sites crisscross the landscape. Climb a pyramid, snorkel through submerged caves, swim in cenotes littered with the relics of ancient sacrifice. Yacht through the Mayan Riviera to explore the extreme, sample the exotic, and succumb to the indulgent.





## *Isla Mujeres*

The main attraction on this five-mile island gem is the leisurely pace of life. Have a massage at the water's edge, go for a dip, sip a fresh fruit concoction and meditate on the Cancun skyline. Calm surrounding waters are great for snorkeling, diving and water toys. The sport fishing, especially during the winter months, is legendary. Lightly travelled, flat roads, make exploring by bicycle or scooter an appealing excursion. Sort through the town's kitschy souvenir shops to find that outstanding piece of folk art or exquisite silver jewelry. Dive in the Cave of the Sleeping Sharks. Scientists blame their apparent narcosis on the unique composition of the water. Enter these perilous caverns only with an experienced guide.

Jason de Caires Taylor — [www.underwatersculpture.com/projects/mexico](http://www.underwatersculpture.com/projects/mexico)

Café Del Mar Beach Bar & Club — [www.privilegehotels.com/dining](http://www.privilegehotels.com/dining)

“ Jason de Caires Taylor created underwater sculptures off the shores of Cancún, Punta Nizuc, and Manchones Reef near Isla Mujeres. Over 500 life-sized statues, all in shallow water, are an amazing display for divers and snorkelers. The artificial habitat helps support natural reefs that have been damaged over the years.”

— Captain Bill Adams

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## *Cancún*

Experience 21st-century Mexican razzle-dazzle at Cancún's deluxe resorts, organized beaches, acclaimed restaurants and frenzied nightclubs. In just 40 years, shrewd development plans transformed an uninhabited spit of virgin white sand into the award-winning, world-renowned tourist destination of today. The spectrum of amusements includes everything from bullfights to cooking classes. At city center, the open-air Mercado Veintiocho is a wildly colorful mix of shops, stalls and regional food vendors selling lime soup, poc chuc and tamarind margaritas. Despite first-class golf courses, glamorous spas and chic bars dispensing flights of premium tequila, the real attraction is the glistening white sand and turquoise sea. Walk 14 miles along the beach. Splash in 80-degree water. Launch the Jet Skis, windsurfers, or kayaks to skim over the waves or cross Laguna Nichupté.

Les Cepages Restaurant — [www.lescepages.com.mx](http://www.lescepages.com.mx)

Ritz Carlton Cancún Restaurants & Spa — [www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/Cancun](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/Cancun)

“Here there's a beach for every preference. Playa Tortugas is prime for watersports action. Playa Langosta is child-friendly, with a designated swimming area. At Playa Gaviota Azul the waves pick up wind swell, so it's one of the few spots in Cancún where surfing is possible. Playa Punta Nizuc is secluded, clean, and often deserted.”

— Captain Pedro Álvares

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## *Puerto Morelos*

In this town, surrounded by eco-reserves, a more authentic Yucatan spirit pervades. Despite, or possibly because of the influx of expat artists, painters, poets and new-agers, residents of Puerto Morelos extoll the Mexican Maya and work to preserve cultural continuity. Down to earth rather than upscale, visitors can shop for local crafts, then experience a Mayan massage at the Ixchel Jungle Market & Spa. Learn to prepare traditional cuisine at the Little Mexican Cooking School, or wander about the astonishing 150-acre botanical garden, the largest in Mexico. Architecture fans shouldn't miss the bizarre cartoon castle at the corner of Niños Heroes and Morelos, a carved, curvy, leaning tree-house fantasy that has to be seen to be believed.

Rancho Bonanza Horseback Riding — [www.ranchobonanzacancun.com](http://www.ranchobonanzacancun.com)

Little Mexican Cooking School — [www.thelittlemexicancookingschool.com](http://www.thelittlemexicancookingschool.com)

Ixchel Jungle Market & Spa — [www.mayaecho.com/Ixchel\\_Jungle\\_Spa.html](http://www.mayaecho.com/Ixchel_Jungle_Spa.html)

“The Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System, also known as the Great Mayan Reef, is a marine region that runs 600 miles from Isla Contoy, off northern Yucatán, down to Belize, Guatemala and the Bay Islands of Honduras. Dive or snorkel with spectacular marine life through colorful coral formations. The National Park includes mangrove forests with exotic reptiles and birds.”

— Captain Pedro Álvares

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## *Playa del Carmen*

“Diving in cenotes is a wild thrill, and all you need is open water certification. These caves and wells lead into the underground river system of this limestone peninsula. The average depth is 35ft, great visibility, no current, and fresh water that’s always 77°F. There are lots of scuba sites and upwards of 300 miles of interconnected passageways and caves.”

— Captain Pete Campbell

This city is slated to become a regional cultural and economic stronghold. Playa hosts sophisticated performances, like the Riviera Maya Jazz Festival, which brings world renowned talent to the local stage. Luxury brands that are not already in place, including Louis Vuitton, Carolina Herrera, Paul & Shark, Hugo Boss and Christian Dior, are currently developing retail locations. Diversions along Avenida Cinco, the pedestrian-only main street, range from trinket vendors to trendy beach clubs. For the tequila curious, a rendezvous at the Hacienda Tequila shop and museum includes complimentary tastings of some 480 different types of tequila. Tequila connoisseurs can indulge at Freddy’s Tequila and Ceviche Bar. Pair the million dollar waterfront view with a shot of the world’s most expensive tequila, Clase Azul Ultra.

Riviera Maya Jazz Festival — [www.rivieramayajazzfestival.com/2014/en/location](http://www.rivieramayajazzfestival.com/2014/en/location)

Freddy’s Tequila and Ceviche bar — [www.belmond.com/maroma-resort-and-spa-riviera-maya](http://www.belmond.com/maroma-resort-and-spa-riviera-maya)

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“There are over 40 dive sites here, including the spooky remains of sunken Spanish galleons. Gentle drift dives are great for novices and experienced divers will find the conditions first-rate. Kids enjoy riding a certified U.S. Coast Guard submarine 100 feet below the sea’s surface for a perfect view of Cozumel’s world-famous coral reefs sans water.”

— Captain Bill Adams

## *Cozumel*

This famous island first captured the world’s amazement in the 1960s when Jacques Cousteau made a documentary introducing this phenomenal underwater world. Cozumel Reefs National Marine Park contains Chankanaab National Park, with the only inland coral reef in the world, which is home to over 60 species of fish. Yacht to the north end to photograph the solitary lighthouse, a beautiful sight best reached by boat. Cruise to Playa del Cielo on the island’s southern tip and see hundreds of starfish on the sea floor. Tee off at the Cozumel Country Club’s Jack Nicklaus-designed championship course, and follow with an indigenous herbal treatment at the InterContinental’s Mandara Spa. Have a nightcap on the sundeck. Embedded within the spectacular array of stars you can see the Milky Way.

The Reefs of Cozumel — [www.reefsofcozumel.com/pages/reefmap.html](http://www.reefsofcozumel.com/pages/reefmap.html)

Mandara Spa — [www.intercontinentalcozumel.com/english/spa](http://www.intercontinentalcozumel.com/english/spa)

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## *Akumal*

The town was officially founded in 1958 as a community for scuba divers by Pablo Bush Romero, a Mexican businessman, diver, writer, historian, and archaeologist spellbound by the region. The family still owns much of the town. Akumal Bay is home to many types of sea turtles, including the endangered Green Sea turtles that live in the reef-sheltered waters. Take your snorkeling gear and underwater camera, and walk across the road to Yal-ku lagoon for surf-free snorkeling. Cenote Santa Cruz is a fantastic cave swim that is off the beaten track. Akumal is also home to ONDARTE International Artist Residency. Collectors should visit the Ak Nah Galeria of Richard Mazzola, Boonil Naj Gallery of Sergio Gamboa, and Galeria Lamanai.

La Buena Vida Restaurant & Bar — [labuenaavidarestaurant.com](http://labuenaavidarestaurant.com)

Galeria Lamanai — [www.galerialamanai.mfbiz.com](http://www.galerialamanai.mfbiz.com)

Richard Mazzola — [www.mazzolagallery.com/Intro.htm](http://www.mazzolagallery.com/Intro.htm)

“Deep sea sport fishing is great, especially April through July, when the waters are teeming with mahi mahi, king fish, tuna, wahoo, sailfish, and white and blue marlin. Fly fishing is also popular, we catch bone fish, tarpon, snook and barracuda among others, and our chef turns the catch of the day into a culinary masterpiece.”

— Captain Kris Carson



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## *Tulum*

This compact archaeological site makes a powerful impression. High on the cliffs with views of the sea, beneath the “City of Dawn” the white sand beach stretches for miles. Visit early to avoid the heat and the crowds. The post-classic site is without hieroglyphics or the complex structures found at Coba and Chichen Itza. (Maya archeology enthusiasts should visit at least one of these other sites.) A large number of cenotes are located in the Tulum area that will captivate intrepid divers and explorers. The non-profit, LabnaHa, offers cave diving excursions and eco tours with zip lines and cenote swims. Visit the Sian Ka’an Biosphere, a World Heritage Site just south of Tulum, which occupies 1.3 million acres and includes 62 miles of coastline.

LabnaHa Eco Park — [www.labnaha.com/en/index\\_ecopark.html](http://www.labnaha.com/en/index_ecopark.html)

Unico Restaurant — [www.unicotulum.com](http://www.unicotulum.com)

La Zebra Beach Cantina — [www.lazebratulum.com/restaurant-bar](http://www.lazebratulum.com/restaurant-bar)

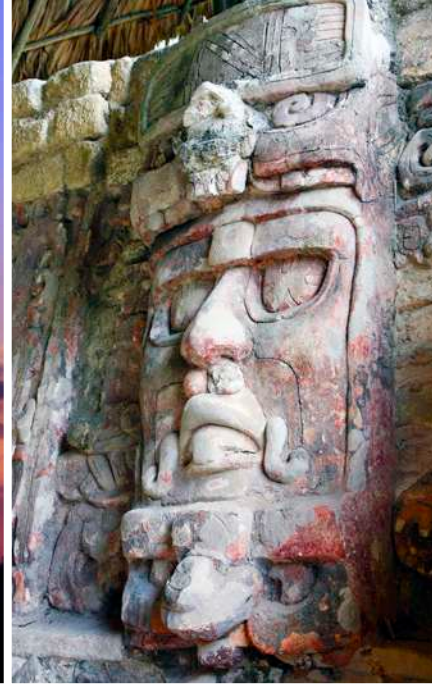
“For fans of kite boarding and windsurfing, Puerta del Cielo and Playa Paraiso are the best beaches in the area. For guests who enjoy lazing on the beach, Ziggy’s, Ak’iin and La Zebra are clubs with sun beds, specialty cocktails, and good Mexican food. For my downtime, I like relaxing under a palapa with a cucumber margarita.”

— Captain Pedro Álvares



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“Mayan sites are off the beaten path and partially excavated, which makes them feel even more mystical. The ruins are deep in tropical rainforest, thick with towering palms that keep you cool. Howler and spider monkeys swing in the trees. The jungle forest adds another magical dimension to the ruins. The scene delights nature lovers and photographers alike.”

— Captain Pete Campbell

## *Chetumal*

Few visitors venture as far south as Chetumal, on the border of Belize, an unusual city well worth exploring. Residents include many Afro-Caribbean and Middle Eastern immigrants, whose customs and traditions enliven local culture. There are Yucatecan, Mexican, and Lebanese restaurants, reggae, salsa, and calypso clubs, a “New Market”, an “Old Market”, and a downtown shopping district to explore. The Museum of Maya Culture has the most comprehensive Maya collection in the state. Live music and dance performances at the open air “Teatro Minerva” are delightful evening entertainment. Venture into the jungle to explore the fascinating archeological sites of Kohunlich, Dzibanché, and Kinichná, a trio dubbed the “Valley of the Masks”, a must for Maya archeology buffs.

The Museum of Maya Culture — [www.chetumal.com/museum/maya](http://www.chetumal.com/museum/maya)

Faro Wine Steak House — [www.elfarochetumal.com.mx](http://www.elfarochetumal.com.mx)

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## WESTERN CARIBBEAN:

### Regional Guide

**TIME ZONE:** UTC (GMT) -5 and UTC (GMT) -6; Yucatan, Cuba and Jamaica observe Daylight Saving Time.

**ECONOMY:** Tourism, Agriculture, Industry, Services, Banking

**DRESS CODE:** Dress is casual, proper attire should be worn in public areas. Bathing suits are appropriate only at the beach or pool.

**DRIVING:** When driving, you will be sharing the road with trucks, cattle, chickens and people. Police radar and sudden decreases in speed limits are speed traps. Vehicles are routinely searched at state borders. If stopped, do not photograph police, their vehicles, any military vehicles or establishments.

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES:** English, Spanish, Mayan, Creole

**OFFICIAL CURRENCIES:** Belize dollar, Cayman Islands dollar, Cuban peso, Honduras lempira, Jamaican dollar, Mexican peso

**REFRAIN FROM BUYING:** Anything made from tortoiseshell. The carey, or hawksbill turtles, from which most of it comes, are an endangered species, and it's illegal to bring tortoiseshell products into the United States and several other countries.

## When to visit:

Yachting is best in November and December or from March to May, for the lighter winds and flatter seas. Spring break creates unpleasant congestion. Summer has delightfully warm ocean temperatures but greater threat of storms. Peak fishing season runs from early March through early July when Sailfish and Marlin are migrating. September and October have the worst weather.

### CLIMATE DATA FOR RIVIERA MAYA

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
Average High °F	81	82	84	85	88	89	90	90	89	87	84	82	86
Average Low °F	68	69	70	73	75	77	77	76	76	74	72	69	73
Average Rainfall (in)	4.1	2	1.8	1.1	3.5	5.6	2.7	3.4	7.2	11.1	5	3.5	51

## Climate:

May through November is the rainy season with winds of 15 to 20 knots blowing from the easterly quadrant. The Caribbean Yucatan experiences a large number of tropical storms and hurricanes, which generally track north of Cancun or south of Punta Allen, missing the Riviera Maya. Cenote water temperatures are 77°F year round. Coastal waters range from 79°F to 84°F.

Most computers, cell phones, chargers, cameras and computer tablets automatically convert the voltage. If your device heats, cools, or has a motor, you may need a converter. These add weight to your luggage. Check with your crew about your converter needs.



ELECTRIC

### POWER GUIDE

COUNTRY	VOLTAGE	PLUG
Belize	110/220 V	U.S. 2-pin
Cayman Islands	120 V	U.S. 2-pin
Cuba	110/220 V	U.S. 2-pin
Honduras	110 V	U.S. 2-pin
Jamaica	110 V	U.S. 2-pin
Yucatan	110 V	U.S. 2-pin



### VISA INFORMATION

[www.projectvisa.com](http://www.projectvisa.com)





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Mexico in Technicolor...

