



# CASA PARAISO PUERTO VALLARTA

## COME AND DISCOVER PUERTO VALLARTA

Puerto Vallarta is located on the west coast of Mexico, just to the east of the Bay of Banderas, the largest Bay in Mexico. The city spans 1,300 square kilometers with approximately 350,000 inhabitants. Its tropical climate allows for about 300 sunny days per year, with an average temperature of 28° C (82° F)

With so much to offer, Puerto Vallarta's sure to meet your individual desires. Find yourself strolling back in time as you wander down the streets of the historic area of town, or the village of San Sebastian or follow your own steps to the rhythms of the Mariachi. Not to mention Puerto Vallarta's pristine white sand beaches! Take some time to just lie on the beach, as Puerto Vallarta is the ideal location for glorious, sun-soaked relaxation.

Your eyes can feast on beautiful textiles as well as original works of art from local artists. Your mouth will water with anticipation for the authentic Mexican cuisine, while chefs from around the world serve up delicacies in renowned international restaurants.

# THE GORGEOUS BEACHES OF PUERTO VALLARTA

## Playa Los Muertos

Playa Los Muertos is a very popular beach on the south side of Old Town. It is the center of daytime activity as well as being a favorite for sunsets. Where tourists and locals effortlessly mix, it is a gathering place for all ages and boasts some of the best restaurants in town, several with gorgeous palapas situated right on the sand. The hub or water activities, Playa Los Muertos also offers rental equipment for water sports such as wave running, parasailing and fishing charters.

**Directions:** Walk about a block down the hill to the Mismaloya/Conchas Chinas highway. This is the main northbound thoroughfare into Old Town which will take you to the Malecon boardwalk and main plaza/Cathedral. Across this road is a shortcut down to Basilio Badillo street, also known as Restaurant Row. Next to the Coldwell Banker sign is a stairway down to Constitution street, continue 2 blocks and turn left on Basilio Badillo and towards the ocean. From this intersection you are 3 short blocks to Los Muertos Beach and the Olas Altas area/Romantic Zone. The staff will help give you walking directions once at the villa.

## Playa Conchas Chinas

On the southern outskirts of the town is Playa Conchas Chinas, a long coastline of beautiful sandy beaches set in small coves separated by volcanic reefs. This paradise is great for swimming as well as snorkeling. However, beware of strong currents and high tides in Conchas Chinas; the rocks are sharp and may have sea urchins.

**Directions:** You can access the beach if you are dining at the beachfront restaurant Lindo Mar. Other public accesses to Conchas Chinas beach are found at the first entrance to lower Conchas Chinas below Casa Pedro, at the second entrance to Lower Concha Chinas below Sagitario street and at the cut off before Hotel Conchas Chinas, another downhill street that ends at the ocean, all on the Mismaloya highway.

## Mismaloya Beach

Mismaloya Beach is located about 10 km south of Old Town. Mismaloya is the main launching point for fishing and snorkeling inside the bay. Mismaloya is an authentic Mexican jungle village and popular beach with locals featuring rustic palapa restaurants. It has also been the site of many Hollywood movies including "The Predator and "Night of the Iguana, the notorious movie starring Richard Burton that put Vallarta on the map in the early 1960's.

**Directions:** You can take the Boca/Mismaloya bus or taxi to the entrance of La Jolla de Mismaloya hotel, walk towards the ocean down the path that runs between the hotel and the river all the way to the beach.

## Los Arcos Islands

Los Arcos Islands National Marine Park is a huge rock formation and Vallarta's most well known geological landmark, located at the mouth of Mismaloya cove. An excellent spot for snorkeling with large reefs made of volcanic rock, it is like swimming in an aquarium. There you can find one of Mismaloya's most reliable diving company Mismaloya Divers, owned by two brothers, Chato and Chipol. They can take you snorkeling, diving, fishing or just out for a leisurely cruise on their boat.

## FABULOUS CUISINE FOR WINING AND DINING

Puerto Vallarta has become one of the country's top gastronomical centers outside of Mexico City. If you were thinking enchiladas and burritos, think again. Vallarta boasts a wide range of fabulous restaurants - from world-class gourmet to casual tropical. Below is a list of our favorites, also included in various local magazines at the villa.

### La Palapa

One of the top restaurants in Vallarta boasting elegant tropical gourmet. Dine under a huge beachfront palapa with torches in the sand and live Latin jazz as a backdrop. La Palapa is also one of the best spots to relax during the day on Los Muertos beach with beautiful lounge chairs and umbrellas. Waiters are at your service, providing food and drinks on linen tablecloths while you sunbathe and swim.

### El Dorado

Another favorite on Los Muertos beach, featuring great breakfast and lunch menus. El Dorado is one of the original palapa restaurants in town, made popular with its seasonal winter visitors.

### Lindo Mar

This beachfront restaurant in Conchas Chinas is famous for its Sunday brunch. It is a great way to start a day at the beach in Conchas Chinas!

### Las Palomas

This is a sunset/happy hour favorite as well as being great for people watching on the Malecon. In the evenings there is Marimba and Mariachi music to accompany the wide selection of traditional Mexican cuisine.

### Lox Xitomates

If you are looking for high-end Mexican cuisine with a chic ambience, this is it! Located in one of the trendiest restaurant areas of Old Town on Morelos street, artistic presentation and great attention to detail by staff is sure to make your experience magnificent.

### Vitae

This bistro style restaurant facing the oceanfront brick walkway/park offers a Mediterranean twist on veggies, salads, quiche and pastas. Not so hungry? They also feature "half dishes for a lower price.

## Dolce Vita

The Italian owned popular eatery has a prime location on the Malecon. Known for their brick oven pizza's and carpaccio, Dolce Vita is a great option for late dining, staying open until 2:00 am. They also feature live jazz music on Friday and Saturday nights.

## Barcelona Tapas

Casual ambience with one of the best views in Vallarta! Enjoy sharing a variety of Tapas, Spanish appetizers, while drinking fruit drenched Sangria. Only 3 blocks up the hill from the north end of the Malecon.

## Vista Grill

From the owners of La Palapa comes a new restaurant with a sophisticated ambience and an incredible view. Be sure to ask for the tableside preparation of Mexican Coffee.

## Café Maximiliano's

A charming sidewalk café on Olas Altas street specializing in Austrian cuisine with a Mexican twist. Great service, quaint desserts and espresso bar next door. What more could you want?

## Café des Artistes

Located on Guadalupe Sanchez downtown, the French nouveau cuisine is worth the experience for the fabulous atmosphere. Try the Constantini Bar for martinis and special coffees. Dining on the lush patio with the bistro menu is a divine experience. As well, ask about the Chef's Signature prix fix (fixed price) menu.

## The River Café

Gourmet cuisine with a Mexican flair. Located on the Isla Rio Cuale below the southbound bridge, the café is host to great live lounge music in relaxed riverside setting.

## Le Bristro

Also located on the Isla Rio Cuale below the northbound bridge, surrounded by elegant decor with a lively jazz ambience.

## De Santos

This lively, Mediterranean hot spot boasts minimalist/contemporary decor, attracting a hip crowd from Guadalajara. Not to be missed, especially its roof top terrace at adjoining nightclub, open after 11pm. It is located on Morelos street downtown.

## Azul 96

This is the latest hip nightclub for the Guadalajara set with a multi-level with rooftop lounge also located on Morelos street.

## Ztai

A new restaurant/club for the late night crowd, located next to De Santos. Its cuisine consists of appetizers, pizza and sushi, not to mention specialty martinis. A Zen-like atmosphere with a reflection pool and huge open-air courtyard, viewing 100-year-old trees set in the middle of the Malecon strip.

## Majahuitas

For a late night Mexican music venue, featuring a duo that specializes in classic romantic ballads or "boleros and "corridos. A Casual and inviting atmosphere, known for its authentic Mexican experience.

## Nikki Beach

Vallarta is the newest location for this high-end resort club based in Miami with locations in the Caribbean and French Riviera. This beach club located at the Westin Regina in the Marina has gigantic beds and overstuffed pillows. You can lounge next to the water and enjoy their signature Sunday champagne brunch.

## Café do Olla

Another local favorite with grilled Mexican specialties, located on Basilio Badillo Street near Los Muertos beach. Beware of long wait times in the winter.

## Vegetarian Planet

A vegetarian diner with delicious salads and main courses served buffet style, as featured in "Bon Appetit magazine. It is located one block north of the Cathedral of Guadalupe.

## Cilantro

A quiet, elegant little spot just 1 block off the Malacon. It offeres awesome choices of Margaritas, including a Margarita prepared with Cilantro! Great food!!

## Joe's Fish Shack

This lively, casual bar and restaurant offers great "fish and chips" and plenty of other seafood and Mexican dishes. Friendly staff . Within 5 minutes walking distance.

## Espresso Bar

One of our favorite places if you crave a good salad! Wonderful salad choices and the owner has fresh ingredients delivered every day. They are large enough to split with someone. Also good Italian food. Stop by regardless if you eat there or not since it is one of the few places where you can pick up the free weekly English language paper "Tribune", which will keep you tuned in to the local events, performances, shows etc. 5 minute walk from the casa.

# FABULOUS CUISINE FOR WINING AND DINING

## Shopping

There are a variety of wonderful boutiques, art galleries and jewelry stores in Puerto Vallarta. One of the most popular areas of Puerto Vallarta is Olas Altas street, a charming tourist area that runs parallel to Los Muertos beach. Its delightfully adorned with cafés, coffee shops, Internet centers, bookstores, beauty salons and resort clothing boutiques (5-10 minutes walk).

Two areas of town in particular that are great for shopping are Basilio Badillo Street, starting at Olas Altas near Los Muertos beach. There are several fabulous shops next to each other. Some of our favorites include: La Sirena, La Ponciana, Serafina and Jewelry (5 minutes walk).

In the downtown/Main Plaza/Malecon area, be sure to stop by these following stores: Queribines, Suneson Jewelry, Daniel Espinosa Jewelry and Casa del Tequila (10 minutes walk).

In Marina Vallarta, three shopping centers are highly recommended; Plaza Neptuno, Arte Primitivo and Nomada.

## Art Galleries

Puerto Vallarta is an extraordinarily cultural town and boasts an amazing amount of art galleries featuring countless talented artists. Every Wednesday evening from November to April the galleries located downtown host cocktail parties and art openings called "Art Walk". While we suggest you visit them all, given a limited time span, a few of our favorites are:

**Galeria Pacifico** - Aldama Street

**Galeria Uno** - Morelos Street

**Galeria Arte Latino Americano** - J. Ortiz Dominguez Street

**Galeria des Artistes** and **Corisca Gallery** - Leona Vicario Street

**Galeria Dante** - Basilio Badillo Street

## Bargaining

The fine art of bargaining is only for beach & street vendors or in the flea markets. The recommended system is to start at about 60% of the asking price and go from there. Boutiques & stores frown on bargaining, but will often accept diplomatic requests for discounts on cash purchases.

# THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PUERTO VALLARTA

## Quick Facts

### Location

Pacific coast of Mexico along Banderas Bay, Mexico's largest natural bay, in the northwest corner of the state of Jalisco.

### Airport

Located four miles from downtown, has over 450 weekly flights, ground transportation available.

### Currency

Pesos, money exchange houses located in the airport, on nearly every street corner and at banks throughout the city. Credit cards are widely accepted.

### Electricity

110 volt 60-current, same as the U.S.A., no adapters needed.

### Population

350,000 of which 6,500 are expatriates. 2 million visitors annually.

### Economy

Mainly tourist related. Agriculture, tobacco, cattle ranching and tequila production are also important financial resources.

### Local Time

Puerto Vallarta is in the Central Time Zone (the same as Texas), which is two hours ahead of California and one hour behind New York.

### Law

México is under Napoleonic Law - you are guilty until proven innocent!

### Restaurants

There are more than 250 in town!

## **Beaches**

Vallarta has been named the best beach in Latin America by Travel and Leisure Magazine Readers Survey, all 25 miles of it.

## **The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

It took 33 years to build from 1918 to 1955; the trademark crown was damaged in the 1995 earthquake and has now being repaired.

## **Wildlife**

Humpback whales winter in the Bay every year. Dolphins, giant mantas, sea turtles, and over 100 species of birds also live here.

## **Casa Kimberly**

Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton's love nest was built in 1963 for \$5,000 USD and sold years later for \$450,000.

## **What to Wear**

Mid December through mid March nights can be chilly and breezy. During the winter months, once the sun goes down and the wind starts to blow, you will want long sleeves or a light jacket. Pashminas and shawls work well and are easy to pack and carry around while walking.

Because we are in the tropics, our summer months are humid and hot. The sun is more intense at this latitude in the summer so it is best to stay in the shade or close to the water from 10 am - 6 pm. Light weight natural fabrics such as cotton are a must as well as sleeveless tops, skirts and shorts.

Rainy season runs from mid June thru mid October, with sporadic tropical storms taking place mostly in August and September. Rains usually start in the late afternoon or evening, so even during rainy season, the better portion of the day is sunny. It is best to avoid wearing white when strolling through town in rainy season!!

## Currency

Mexican currency is known as Pesos. US Dollars are accepted at most establishments. Exchange rates are usually best at the bank, slightly less than in the Money Exchanges, retailers and restaurants. Most of the major banks are located in the Old Town area within walking distance of the Main Plaza and Los Muertos Beach.

Bilingual, easy to use ATM's can be found outside all banks and in many grocery and convenience stores. You can access money directly from your bank account or credit card through the ATM's. Exchange rate is calculated the same as the bank. However, a normal service charge does apply depending on your bank. Most ATM's only allow withdrawals of \$300 US dollars per day.