



Quinta Maria
Cortez



Casa Tres
Vidas

PUERTO VALLARTA

By the time this is printed and gets to you, restaurants have opened and closed, stores have changed hands, etc. We would like this information to be as up to date as possible and would appreciate hearing from you on errors, omissions or experiences good or bad about the information provided.

History & Overview

When you think of the Mexican Riviera, with its palm-fringed beaches, luxuriant jungle vegetation and posh resorts, lots of places come to mind. But no resort better typifies the classic Mexican beach vacation than does Puerto Vallarta (Pwer-toe Vah-YAR-tah). From its sleepy, seaside village roots, it has grown into one of Mexico's most loved destinations.



Of all the Mexico's resorts, Puerto Vallarta comes closest to being all things to all visitors. It delivers round-the-clock activity (or blissful seclusion), sophisticated amenities and a romantic dream-like natural setting. It's considered the ideal vacation spot for the first-time Mexico visitor, while also boasting enough diversity of activities to keep people coming back over and over again.

As you arrive by plane, the town's romance and beauty begin to take hold: a blanket of lush tropical jungle surrounds the quaint colonial city and it climbs away from the blue Pacific, into the Sierra Madre mountains. Nestled on the shores of Bahía de Banderas (Mexico's largest natural bay), Vallarta traces its history back to the 1500's, when it was visited by Spanish explorers. It later became known as a respite for pirates plying the Pacific Coast.

It was not until 1851 that the area was first inhabited. By 1918 (the year it was officially made a municipality), the village was a modest fishing community of 1,500 residents. It was also a port for silver shipments from nearby Cuale Mines.

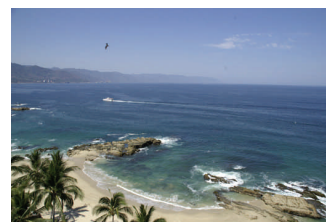
For the next 50 years, not much happened in the way of development. Then, in 1963, director John Huston came to film Tennessee Williams's "Night of the Iguana" and the rest is history. Liz Taylor and Richard Burton left their mark as well, giving Puerto Vallarta an international jet set reputation.

It is now a bustling town of 300,000 residents that attracts 2 million annual visitors. Despite its popularity and the recent flurry of new resort development, the city itself retains much of its "Old Mexico" flair. The city is graced with lovely architecture, cobblestone streets, a popular seafront boardwalk, and white stucco buildings (by city ordinance, all buildings are white), crowned by flower-covered balconies and red tile roofs. You can even see an occasional burro headed for market, clip-clopping along the city's streets.

Special points of interest:

- History of Puerto Vallarta
- Old Vallarta
- Transportation
- Sports
- Outdoor Activities
- Water Sports
- Beaches
- Day Trips
- Excursions
- Shopping
- Dining & nightlife

The area boasts over 8,000 units of lodging (plus several thousand timeshare units). It offers exclusive private villa hideaways, grand class resorts and beachfront inns. Lodging is concentrated in one of five zones. Each has its own advantages and personality. Visitors can be either in the heart of the action or tucked away in a remote tropical villa, depending on which of the zones is selected. It is important to make this choice carefully based upon vacation desires.



First is Vallarta Bay (north of the airport), an enclave of resorts and condos that stretch along the beach backed by a large marina. The area has experienced a wave of new all-inclusive hotel development. Just south of the airport is the 440-acre Marina complex, with its deluxe hotels, championship golf courses, and a world-class marina. Next comes the Hotel Zone, a parade of hotels, condos, shopping malls and apartments between the Marina and downtown. The resort's fourth zone is the Downtown area, with its diverse dining, shopping and typical Mexican atmosphere. And finally is the Southern Zone, a secluded, yet accessible, area sprinkled with hillside villas, deluxe hotel, tropical coves and fine beaches.

Outdoor recreation is limitless. Every imaginable water sport is available along Vallarta's miles of sandy shore. Its dining and nightlife are perhaps Mexico's best. A variety of settings, cuisines and prices (from fast food to ultra gourmet), plus over 250 dining choices ensure visitors dine in style. Shopping is some of Mexico's finest, thanks to a bevy of Mexican and international artists that make Vallarta their home. There are also several intriguing day trips, either by boat or on land. Visits to offshore islands, remote jungle coves, snorkeling cruises and inland eco-adventures are offered by a diverse assortment of professional tour operators. Golf is now taking center stage, with three new courses.

Throughout the resort, a distinct cultural flair from the State of Jalisco punctuates Vallarta's ambience. Hu-mar-form, "Fiesta cludes festival



Mariachi music blares and tequila flows from downtown bars, ichol Indians sell their distinctive ware in the city's colorful kets and charros (Mexico's ornately dressed rodeo riders) per-along with brightly costumed señoritas at Vallarta's excellent "Night" celebrations. An active calendar of annual events in-regattas, religious festivals, music festivals, film festival, food and the popular Sea Fest (held each November).

Following an explosion of growth in the 1980's, a great effort has been made to beautify the northern hotel zone and downtown areas. An attractively landscaped land highway leads from the airport into town. Similarly, the downtown area benefits from a highway bypass that diverts bus and truck traffic off of the city's bumpy cobblestone streets. Note: The city has been certified by the Secretary of Health to have one of Mexico's purest water supplies. A band of "Tourist Police" in spiffy white uniforms stroll downtown streets, assisting with questions and making streets more pedestrian friendly. Note: all phone/electrical cables are being put underground in the historic downtown area.



Puerto Vallarta could be crowned as Mexico's quintessential beach destination. Yet it's actually much more, thanks to the city's desire to re-cast its image as hip, cultured, and cosmopolitan.

Old Vallarta

Most of Puerto Vallarta’s sightseeing can be done downtown. The bustling and lively city is an irregular grid of narrow streets that slope upward away from the sea into the hillside. The seaside promenade “Malecon” serves as the city’s main landmark. It stretches about 3 km from the entrance to town to the mouth of the Cuale River.

Begin by strolling the city’s lovely Malecon. Vallarta’s broad waterfront promenade affords a wonderful walking tour of the city. The sidewalk begins near the Hotel Rosita and leads southward to the mouth of the Cuale River. The Malecon is lined with shops, balconied restaurants, open-air bistros and fast food outlets. Several interesting sculptures are along the way, including a giant bronze seahorse being ridden by a small boy. Rest along the way on white wrought iron benches, or duck into a café for a cool drink while overlooking the sea.

Along the way, detour inland a block to see the city’s small Central Square or “zocalo.” Benches and shade trees surround a pretty bandstand and the City Hall is on the plaza’s north side. Stop in for a look at Manuel Lepe’s whimsical mural of Puerto Vallarta’s angelical flying children. Dominating the square is the fanciful Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is the city’s most endearing landmark. It was built over a 33-year period, from 1918-1951. The steeple of this church is topped by an enormous replica of the crown worn by Carlota, empress of Mexico in the 1860’s. The exterior is decorated with angels holding hands and supporting the crown.



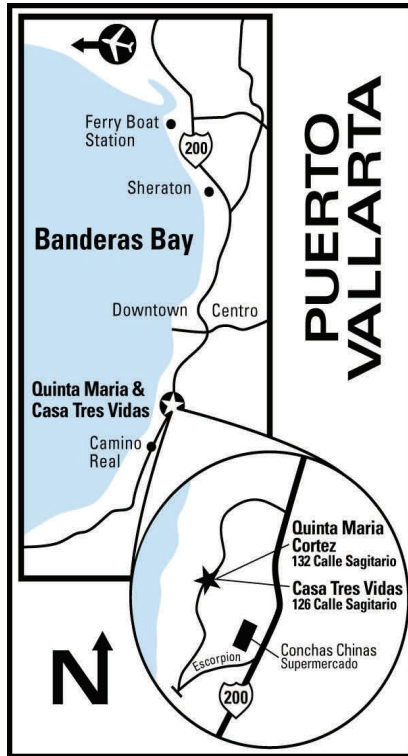
The Cuale River enters the bay just past the zocalo and bisects the city. Head inland along the park-like banks of the river to the Mercado Municipal. This is Vallarta’s largest craft market and a fun place to browse for gifts.

Two bridges cross the river near the Mercado and lead to the Cuale River Island. This elongated five-acre sandbar is an attraction in itself. Lush vegetation surrounds dozens of fine shops, restaurants and parks. There’s a children’s play area and small botanical garden. An archaeological museum features Indian weapons, artifacts and musical instruments from the nearby State of Nayarit and Colima.

Once across the Cuale River, head to the shoreline and Calle Olas Altas (Dubbed by promoters as the “Zona Romantica”). The street has been widened to allow ample space for sidewalks, open-air cafes, coffee houses, book stores and Cyber cafes. Basilio Badillo street has several trendy eateries. Avenida Vallarta now touts a half dozen fun clubs and bars, many with live rock, jazz and salsa music.



Transportation



Airport Name:
Gustavo Diaz Ordaz International Airport
Code: PVR

Location:
6.5 km North of Downtown

Facilities:
Typical of most Mexico airports, it is in the process of being expanded and remodeled. The terminal has polished marble floors, plenty of souvenir shopping, a bank, and ice cream parlor and a restaurant/bar. Excellent duty-free facilities.

From the Airport

After you clear customs by pushing the button and either get the Red or Green light you pass through the first set of doors into the “Time Share Room” turning to your left through the second set of doors. You will be heading east and at the far end of the Terminal there is a double “Taxi” booth — one yellow and one white. At last check, they had the same prices (see inset) QMC and Casa Tres Vidas are located in Zone II.

Getting Around

To get around Puerto Vallarta, taxis are readily available at all hours. Rates are extremely reasonable, usually 30 to 60 pesos (\$3 to \$6 USD) to anywhere in town. You can summons a taxi at QMC or CTV by touching the “Taxi” button on your phone. Or by dialing – 9 221-5368. The taxi is usually there in 3 to 5 minutes. Please take a card with you with the map of how to get back to QMC/CTV.

There is a great bus system in Puerto Vallarta, including a reliable tourist bus service that goes from Mismaloya in the south to the Marina entrance. Look for the blue and white signs along the main highway. Fare is about 6 pesos per ride. Vallarta has a new bus station located a short distance east of the airport. Use this station for all bus trips departing PV to other destinations in Mexico such as Guadalajara.

Approximate Taxi

Prices:

Share Ride

93 MEP/\$10 USD

per person

Private car

1-3 people

237 MEP/\$25 USD

Private Van

1-5 people

473 MEP/\$50 USD

Sports

Puerto Vallarta has every sport and water activity you'd expect to find in a world-class destination. It is generally considered the best tennis resort in Mexico and it is also noted for para-sailing. Golf is taking center stage.

Golf

Los Flamingos Country Club: This older course (6,492 yards) has been carved from the ever-encroaching jungle. This Perch Clifford designed course is a bit rough around the edges, but challenging for all skill levels. Located 13 km North of the airport in the neighboring State of Nayarit. Green fees are \$139.usd & \$89.usd after 2:00pm. There is also inexpensive shuttle service form town, beginning at the Sheraton Bougainvilleas and heading north. 18 hole, par 72, 73.7 rating, 6,492 yards. Carts/caddies are optional. Tel 329 296-5006

El Tigre, Paradise Village Country Club: in Nuevo Vallarta commissioned Robert Van Hagge to design a 18-hole course, which opened in late 2001. 18 hole, par 72, 71.7 rating, 6271 yards. Carts. Green Fees \$167.usd & \$110.usd after 2:00pm — Tel. 297-0773

Vista Vallarta Club de Golf and its two dynamic courses, Puerto Vallarta is destined to become a major golf destination. Unlike other notable golf offerings in Mexico, the terrain chosen for Vista Vallarta appears more appropriate for a Tarzan movie. The first course, a Jack Nicklaus signature design, opened in Spring 2001. Located on the properties highest elevations, golfers play across rolling, grassy hillsides, through dense forests of palms, giant ficus trees and across the natural creeks and arroyos in at least a dozen places. 18 holes, par 72, rating 72, 6,031 yards. Carts. Green Fees \$189.usd & \$129.usd for after 2:00pm—Tel. 290-0030

The Second course, a Signature Design by Tom Weiskopf also opened in 2001. In the dramatic contrast to the Nicklaus course, Weiskopf's course play through towering forests of palm and papaleo trees, across deep natural ravines and swift creeks characteristic of the property's lowest elevations. 18 hole, Par 72. rating 72, 5,861 yards. Carts. Green Fees \$189.usd & \$129.usd after 2:00pm—Tel. 290-0030

Marina Vallarta Country Club: Joe Finger designed this course as part of a \$400 million Marina Vallarta mega resort, just north of town. Fairways are dotted with lakes, ponds and lagoons (water comes into play on 11 holes). Lots of scenic tropical vegetation, play is open to the public with 18 holes, par 71, 6093 yards, Cart. (\$48 USD for Club Rental) www.marinavallartagolf.com Green Fess of \$129 and Special twilight rates after 2 pm of \$98 USD. Tel. 221-0545

Four Seasons Resort: a new Jack Nicklaus signature golf course is open at the Four Seasons Resort, Punta Mita. This spectacular course (the worlds only "19 hole" course) features a drive to a small island on the third hole and luxury club facilities that will set a new standard for golf in Mexico. 18 holes, par 72, rating 72.9, 6,641 yards. Carts. \$200 USD.

Mayan Palace: Nuevo Vallarta. 18 holes, Par 71, rating 73.7

Tennis

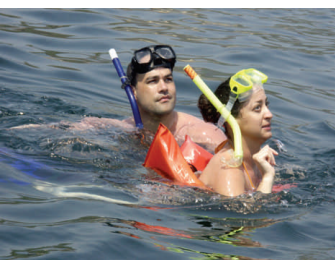
Clay courts are common. In addition to the dozens of courts at area resorts, Puerto Vallarta has several tennis centers:

- Conto del Sol, \$100.mep / \$10.usd per hour. Tel. 224-0123

Outdoor Activities

DIVING & SNORKELING

Diving in Vallarta offers a spectacular assortment of under water reef and rock formations plus giant mantas, dolphin sightings seasonal whales and sea turtles. For the best experience, go beyond the standard Los Arcos excursion to Islas Marietas, or further to El Moro. The Quimixto coves and Caletas also offer good diving. Water conditions are generally best during the winter months.



South of town is Los Arcos, a natural preserve with clear water. Best diving is around the gigantic rock archway from which the area derives its name. To the north of town (81 km) is Punta Mita, considered one of the area's best diving and surfing spots. Islas Marietas offer ideal conditions as well.

Water Sports

Banderas Bay is a natural haven for water sports of every variety. Since the water is generally quite calm, sailing, windsurfing and parasailing are exceptionally good.

Sea Life Park is located near the entrance to Nuevo Vallarta. This water park features the tallest water slide in Mexico along with eight other slides geared for all ages. There is a children's area with smaller slides and water games plus a dolphin and sea lion show included in the admission. They also offer Dolphin Swim Adventure & Dolphin Encounter along with Sea Lion Discovery, Café, shopping, locker rooms and showers. Open daily 10 am— 6 pm. Tel. 322 226-9200 — www.sealifeparkvallarta.com

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Local operator Bike-Mex (founded 1989) offers excursions to the Sierra Madre foothills and surrounding areas for bikers of all levels. Both overnight and day trips are operated, all with bilingual guides and top-of-the-line 21-speed bikes.

CANOPY TOURS DE LOS VERANOS

This unique and exciting tour gives visitors a bird's eye view of indigenous plants and other jungle life as they ride zip lines from treetop to treetop through the jungle.

With more than 2 miles of cable in a series of 15 zip lines. After the tour, plan to refresh yourself in the river, a geological wonder full of enormous granite boulders, freshwater pools and sandy beaches. They also offer Lunch at Pancho's last resort with its diverse menu of Seafood to Typical Mexican dishes. Transportation provided from their office next to the Pemex station. \$70.US

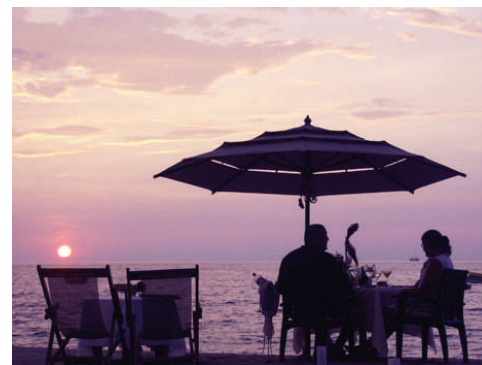


DEEP SEA FISHING

Puerto Vallarta has never aggressively promoted itself as a world-class sport-fishing destination. Nevertheless, its deep waters provide an excellent haul for sailfish, Marlin and smaller game fish. October through February is the best time for sailfish and black or blue marlin. Smaller game fish such as wahoo, tuna dorado and roosterfish are caught year round, with May-October being the better months. Fishing charters leave from the north end of the Malecon and from the Marina Vallarta docks. Prices range from \$250-\$1500 USD per day for a full-day charter.

Beaches

Puerto Vallarta has three distinct beach zones and nearly forty different beaches. The area's beaches are typically of golden colored sand and water of a deep blue color. Note that during the rainy season – June to September – several rivers empty into the bay and cloud the sea.



North of Town



To the north in neighboring Nayarit State, the beaches of Banderas Bay stretch out uninterrupted toward Punta Mita. Surf is good at Punta del Burro and Punta de Mita. Tranquil seaside villages can be found at Bucerias and Paraiso Escondito.

Playa de Oro and the Marina are where most of the area's newer resort development has occurred. This is a wide sandy beach, broken up by several jetties; some areas are a little rocky: lots of activity, water sports and people watching. Niki Beach opened in 2004 at the Westin Hotel. It is a fun hip beach club with good facilities and music.

In Town



Playa de los Muertos stretches along the city's palm-lined waterfront; lots of action with vendors, sunbathers and seaside restaurants. Some of our favorites are: El Dorado, La Palapa, Blue Chairs, Beach Café (Green Chairs). This is a fun beach to spend the afternoon and is just a 10 to 15 minute walk from QMC/CTV.

South of Town



As you leave the city heading south the coast becomes a series of coves and bays, backed by jungle-clad, rugged hills ideal for swimming and relaxation. Since few rivers enter the ocean here, the sand is whiter and cleaner. The setting is quiet and serene.

Mismaloya Beach: a pretty cove that is now the home to a major resort development. The area's once dilapidated movie set (from the 1963 film "Night of the Iguana") was recently restored and opened as a restaurant. There are two beachside restaurants and some good shoreline for snorkeling.

Boca de Tomatlan: a jungle-fringed beach and bay; boats can be rented here for visits to Yelapa, Quimixto and Las Animas beaches.

DAY TRIPS



Horseback Tours

Head inland on an escorted horseback tour. The four-hour trip includes picturesque rural villages, spectacular scenery and local wildlife. A stop is made for lunch and swimming. Local riding outfitters also offer private and group rides into Vallarta's lush coastal mountains. Rancho El Charro 224-0114, Rancho Ojo de Agua 224-0607, Viva Tours 224-0410

San Sebastian

Head inland to San Sebastian, one of the oldest mining towns in Mexico, dating back to 1545. Today it is a living museum of how villagers lived and worked in the remote mountain village. Daily flights aboard a 14-seat Cessna Turboprop take visitors on the 10-minute hop to the town and a 4-hour guided exploration meeting local residents and stopping for lunch at the Paradero San Sebastian. Cost is \$125 USD per person. Call Air Adventures, tel. 22109657, or visit Vallarta Adventures at www.vallarta-adventures.com

Boca de Tomatlan

Heading South just past Playa Mismaloya is a small village at the mouth of this jungle river. Large palapa restaurants and freshwater pools for wading. Water taxis depart here, traveling to Las Animas, Quimixto and Yelapa.

Chico's Paradise, El Eden, Nogalito & Chinos' Paradise

Head South toward Mismaloya, then inland a few miles to one of three tropical parks. These day-use areas each feature riverside dining (open only for lunch) and swimming between gigantic boulders, surrounded by small pools and waterfalls. The newest, El Nogalito, is closer to town up the Boca Negra River and offers a beautifully kept hiking trail as well.

Guadalajara

Head to the state's colorful and historic capital for a day of Mexico's best shopping, plus historic sight-seeing, fine dining and a taste of one of Mexico's grandest colonial cities. Contact Marina Tours, Tel 221-1885 for tour information.

Ecological Tours

Banderas Bay and the surrounding Sierra Vallejo mountains are home to exotic ecosystems with bountiful wildlife and lush vegetation. Local operator Xplora Aventours, Tel. 221-1401, operates both water and inland day trips. Visit them at Sierra Madre Store along the Malecon or contact any local travel agency for listing of trips.

Here's a sampling:

- Several journeys venture into nearby Nayarit State. Sierra Madre Expeditions, tel. 221-0657, operates open-air Mercedes Benz vehicles into the heat of the surrounding jungle mountains. Another option is to contact Costa Azul Adventure Resort, located in nearby San Pancho, Nayarit at, tel. 275-0099. They host day visitors for kayak tours, jungle tours, mountain biking and hiking.
- Open-Air Expeditions, tel. 222-3310, offers low-impact eco-tours of hiking and kayaking with specially trained guides including marine biologists.
- ATV Jungle Treks – "The Adventure" offers 4 wheel ATV and Dune buggies adventures through rivers, Mexican villages and the surrounding mountains. Tel. 223-0392
- Dolphin Adventure, run by the same world-class trainer who initiated the dolphin swim at Xcaret near Cancun, now offers interactive dolphin options in Nuevo Vallarta. The 2-phase program begins with a taped education program on dolphins (\$65 USD) or actually swim with them (\$150 USD). This is an extremely well run and popular program that fills up quickly. Advance reservations are recommended. Tel. 221-0657 or try www.vallarta-adventures.com
- Learn about Nature at Puerto Vallarta's Sea Turtle Preservation Camps. Watch baby turtles on their maiden voyage out to sea.
- In the winter months, humpback whales migrate to Puerto Vallarta. Great whale watching opportunities. Ocean Friendly Tours offers whale watching and Nature photography with the proceeds benefiting the Whale Discovery Research Program. Tel. 225-3774 www.oceanfriendly.com

Vallarta has lots to see and do, particularly for those willing to venture away from the area's alluring beaches and pools. Note: Two local publications provide up-to-date reviews of the local entertainment scene. Get a copy of PV Tribune or Vallarta Lifestyles magazine upon arrival.

Excursions

Boat Trips

Banderas Bay is home to some of Mexico's prettiest coves and inlets. In fact, it is the third largest bay in the Americas, spanning some 13 miles at its mouth with nearly 50 miles of shoreline. A half dozen secluded beaches are found far south of town. The can only be reached by boat, all of which depart from either the marina north of town, the downtown pier at Playa Los Muertos, from Playa Mismaloya and Boca Tomatlan. Located approximately 30 minutes south of PV. Check for details and schedules. Operators include Princes Cruises, Tel. 224-4777, Vallarta Adventure, Tel. 221-0657, and Bora Bora, Tel. 224-3680.

Here are the five most popular destinations, listed from South to North:

Yelapa

Several boats leave each morning heading south along the coast (2 hours each way) to this classic Bohemian, seaside cove. The palm-lined crescent cove is pure paradise. The nearby village has a South Seas atmosphere. Several beachfront restaurants serve fresh seafood and cold beer. Have your picture taken with an iguana before hiking inland to a 150-foot waterfall surrounded by jungle. About a third of the winter population is made up of American and Canadian snowbirds. Modest overnight accommodations are available.

Caletas

Las Caletas is an unspoiled cove and the former site of film great John Huston's private home. Tall palms, white sandy beach and calm, clear waters are now the backdrop for excursions offered only by Vallarta Adventures (who holds an exclusive lease to the property). By day there's kayaking, snorkeling, diving, spa services and lunch. By night dine by the light of candles and tiki torches before being entertained by a show of Aztec dance. Tel. 221-0657

Quimixto

Another deserted tropical paradise and truly authentic Mexican village by the bay is Quimixto. On horseback head to the nearby waterfall and natural swimming pool. Quimixto (pronounced Key-meesh-toh) has good diving. Dive outings can be arranged by Chico's Dive Shop, tel. 222-1895

Playa Las Animas

A little closer to Vallarta, though still only accessible by water, Las Animas Beach is a bit more civilized. The enormous Bora Bora Tri-maran, one of the largest sailing ships ever built, makes a daily trip to this beach. Independent travelers can take a water taxi departing from Los Muertos pier each morning at 10:30 am, returning at 4 pm. Cost is \$15 USD roundtrip. It also departs from the beach at Mismaloya at an hourly cost of \$13 USD.

Marietas Islands

Located at the northern edge of Banderas Bay, this cluster of two main islands plus rock outcroppings are visited via a fun-filled, full-day boat excursion. The islands are now a nature sanctuary (with over 40 native and migratory bird species, including blue footed boobies), while the surrounding waters are replete with marine life (giant manta rays, turtles, plus whale watching Nov-April) great for snorkeling! Contact Vallarta Adventures, Tel. 221-0657

There are also several sunset cruises around the Bay plus a buccaneer pirate ship cruise, hot air balloon rides;

Puerto Vallarta Hot Air Balloon Rides, Tel. 223-2002

Elegant dinner cruises Aleggrecruises, Tel. 223-0206

Snorkeling/diving cruises Kon Tiki Sailing and Snorkeling Cruises Tel. 221-0565

SHOPPING

For fine works of art, exquisite folk art, jewelry, designer and casual clothing, no resort in Mexico can beat Puerto Vallarta. The area has become a mecca of sorts for Mexican and foreign artists, many of whom can be seen at work in studios and workshops along the city's bustling streets. There are more than 40 Galleries. Most shops are open from 10 am until 9 pm, closing from 2-4 pm.

Main Shopping Areas

- The Cuale River (Rio Cuale) Island – Lots of interesting boutiques and shops including the Vallarta Cultural Center, and an excellent place to get acquainted with Vallarta’s eclectic fine arts scene. Most stay open until 11:00 pm. Complimentary art workshops given most Saturdays.
- Along the Malecon – Dozens of Chic boutiques and souvenir shops line the waterfront walkway.
- Marina Terminal – An outdoor flea market selling folk art, T-shirts and souvenirs shops at the dock where the cruise ships anchor.
- Downtown – Along Juarez and Morelos Streets you’ll find a wide range of shops with high quality goods and plenty of authentic Mexican atmosphere. This area is better than ever with lots of new shops.
- Beach Vendors – The shopping come to you! Every imaginable item is peddled by an army of vendors that work the beaches in town and to the north. Expect to bargain for best prices.
- Shopping Malls – Several shopping centers dot the area. Some are “American-style” while others have walkways, colonial architecture, fountains and outdoor cafes. Try the Plaza Malecon on the north end of town, Plaza Marina near the airport, Plaza Neptuno at the Marina Vallarta, Villas Vallarta across from the Continental Plaza Vallarta and the Plaza Caracol with its huge “Gigante” supermarket (both north of town).
- Marina Vallarta Malecon – High quality artisan works, stylish boutiques and cafes border the walkway surrounding the exclusive marina.
- Mercado Municipal – Don’t miss Puerto Vallarta’s fine craft market along the banks of the Cuale River “Rio Cuale.” This indoor/outdoor market is a maze of stalls and shops with a good selection of clothing, leather goods and several good food stands on the second floor. Bargaining is expected at most Mercado stalls.



RESORT WEAR & CLOTHING

Casa Josefa: designer hand-woven caftans, dresses. Embroidered and appliquéd shirts and blouses. Juarez 533

Katy: beautiful native clothing from all around Mexico. Rio Cuale Island.

Originales Yolanda: hand embroidered hand made clothing for men, women and children. Juarez & Itubide.

Sucesos: easy-care all-cotton clothing for women; unusual accessories and hand-painted fabrics. Libertad & Hidalgo

Tangas: the latest in women’s swim suits. Morelos & Abasolo

Unicornio: boutique featuring jewelry, cotton dresses and designer gems. Morelos 170

Serafina “Janinnes’ Boutique: one of Marcela Garcia Alegria’s shops offering a great variety of clothing.

JEWELRY

Astrid Jewelers: Finely crafted gold and silver jewelry in 14k and 18k. Sierra Hotel, Plaza Iguana, Marina Vallarta.

Joyas Finas Suneson: gorgeous display of unusual top-of-the-line silver jewelry, enamel and sculptures. Morelos 593.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Alfareria Tlaquepaque: stoneware, pottery and glassware from the Guadalajara area. 1100 Mexico Ave

Casa de Artesanias Jalisciense: outstanding outlet with a wide selection of crafts from the State of Jalisco. Juarez 250.

Galeria de Arte Huichol: native beaded tapestries from nearby Nayarit. Corona 164

Galeria Vallarta: impressive collection of handicrafts plus sculpture, paintings and lithos by Mexican artists. Juarez 263 www.galeriavallarta.com

Galeria Indigena: fine Talavera tile, Oaxacan woodcarvings and jewelry.

Mundo de Azulejos: wall-to-wall handmade and hand-painted tiles, sinks, plates, etc. The only Talavera tile factory in Puerto Vallarta

Querubines: Guatemalan fabrics, pewter and fine quality items. Juarez & Galeana.

La Reja: fine handicrafts and hand-blown glass items. Juarez 501

Sierra Madre: Mexico's version of The Nature Company. Ecologically-themed gifts, clothing and artwork. Malecon.

Talavera, Etc.: ceramic dinnerware, tiles and murals from Puebla; handmade jewelry.

Banderas Bay Trading Company: This shop features fine antiques and one-of-a-kind decorative objects for the home., including contemporary furniture, antique wooden doors, religious-themed items, original art, beeswax candles, textiles, glassware and pewter. Cardenas 263 (near Ignacio L. Vallarta) Tel 223-4352

Lucy's CuCu Cabana and Zoo: Owners Lucy and Gil Givens have assembled an exceptionally entertaining, eclectic and memorable collection of Mexican folk art most of which is animal-themed. Basilio Badillo 295

Puerto Azul: Set in a space that actually has a former pig-roasting oven, it features a whimsical and eclectic selection of art and home accessories, much of it created by the owner and artist Lee Chapman (aka Lencho) Constitucion 325 just off Basilio Badillo. Tel. 222-8647

Safari Accents: Flickering candles glowing in colored-glass holders welcome you to their highly original shop overflowing with creative gifts, one of a kind furnishings and reproductions of paintings by Frida Kalo and Botero. Olas Altas 224 Tel. 223-2660

Ponciana: One of Marcela Garcia Alegria's shops offering Hand-woven Table Linens, antique furniture & Paintings, Talavera pottery, Etcetera. Tel. 222-2988

FINE ART

"Art Walk" is held each week on Wednesdays from 6:00pm to 10:00pm during the Season (Jan. to April) and is a fun way to see some of the great Art in Vallarta and meet other locals and tourists. Brochure/Maps are available in the QMC/CTV office. See www.vallartaartwalk.com

Arte de las Americas: this gallery features works from Mexico's most celebrated artists and emerging artist. Maria Vallarta. Malecon.

Galeria Pacifico: fine selection of contemporary bronze and wood sculpture plus works from Latin America's and Vallarta's top artists. Galleria Pacifico also offers seasonal tours (Nov-Mar) of local artists homes for \$20 USD. Aldama 180; Tel. 222-1982. www.galeriapacifico.net

Galeria Rosa Blanca: very fine art gallery. Works by leading local artists and those from Mexico City.

Galeria Uno: an excellent selection of art from throughout Mexico, including originals by Mexican and foreign artists. Morelos 561. Tel. 222-0908

Olinala: the most magical shop in Vallarta, offering fine lacquered boxes from Muchoacan and an incredible selection of masks from all over Mexico, plus Mexican Indian art. Lazaro Cardenas 274.

Sergio Bustamante: magical and mesmerizing life-size animals done in bronze, ceramic and paper mache. Paseo Diaz Ordaz 542 & 716, also at Juarez 275.

Corsica: Among the newest and best of Vallarta's galleries it features an exquisite collection of sculptures, installations and paintings from world-renown contemporary artists from Mexico. There are three locations within a few blocks: Guadalupe Sanchez 735, Leona Vicario 230 and Pipila 268. Tel 223-1821 or 222-9260 www.galeriacorsica.com

Galeria AL (Arte Latinoamericano) : This gallery showcases contemporary works created by young, primarily Latin American artists as well as Vallarta's favorite Marta Gilbert. Josefa Ortiz Dominguez 155 Tel. 222-4406

Galleria Dante: This gallery-in-a-villa showcases contemporary art as well as sculptors and classical reproductions of Italian, Greek and Art Deco bronzes. Basilio Badillo 269 Tel. 222-2477 www.galleriadante.com

Galeria des Artistes: This stunning gallery features contemporary painters and sculptors from throughout Mexico. Leona Vicario 248 Tel. 223-0006

Galeria Corona: Fine art in all its unique styles and forms. Corona 164, Tel. 222-4210 www.galeria-corona.com

DINING AND NIGHT LIFE

There are no dull nights nor mediocre meals in Puerto Vallarta. The resort has dozens of excellent cafes, bistros, and dinner houses. In fact there are now over 250 eateries. There is a wide range of bars – from wild to wonderfully serene, and nonstop nightlife.

Fine Dining

- Café des Artists**
Fine French cuisine; possibly the city's finest gourmet dining experience
- De Santos**
Upscale dining; hippest rooftop bar
- Kaiser Maximiliano**
German and seafood; streetside dining
- La Palapa**
On the ocean of Los Muertos; gourmet dining—www.lapalapav.com—222-5225
- Le Bistro**
Riverside gourmet dining
- Trios**
Mediterranean Food Cooked with Love, locals choice for European inspired cuisine—www.triopv.com—222-2196
- Xitomates**
Mexican Yucatan Style; slick; chic
- Vista Grill**
Gourmet overlooking downtown & Cathedral, same owner as La Palapa —www.vistagrill.com—222-3570

Night Life

- Andale**
Great for lunch or before dinner drinks with the locals
- La Bodeguita de Medio**
Authentic Cuban restaurant and bar with strolling musicians
- Carlos O'Brians**
The classic Mexican gringo bar; a must see; wild!
- Sr. Frogs**
Carlos Anderson chain outlet set in large warehouse
- The Zoo**
Papier mache animals add to lively dance club atmosphere

Other Dining Options

- Archies Wok**
Fine Chinese cuisine originally by the late John Houston's chef
- La Pizetta**
Locals favorite for thin crust pizza and Italian food
- Red Cabbage**
Authentic Mole; eclectic atmosphere
- Daquari Dicks**
Lobster Tacos; directly on ocean; great Sunday brunch
- Vitea**
Oceanfront Bistro, Trio's other eatery on the Malecon; outdoor dining great food, European Riviera Cuisine—www.viteapv.com—222-8703
- El Dorado**
Locals favorite for Sunday lunch on the beach
- Los Pibes**
Beef and lots of it....

Mexican Dining

- Las Cazuelas**
Homestyle cooking in charming atmosphere
- Fajita Republic**
Fajitas served in a festive mango garden
- Café de Olla**
Long lines; inexpensive food; giant margaritas