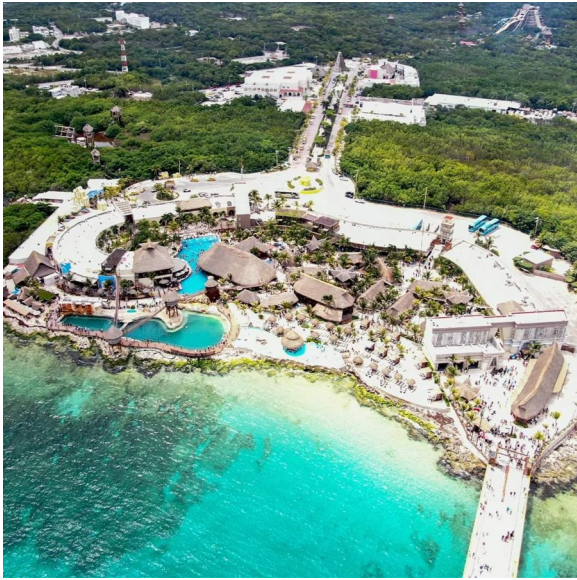


MX Costa Maya Cruise Port Guide

Your Complete Guide to Beaches, Ancient Mayan Ruins & the Mexican Caribbean



Costa Maya is one of the fastest-growing cruise destinations in the Western Caribbean and a favorite stop on many itineraries sailing from Florida, Texas, and New Orleans. Located along Mexico's Caribbean coastline in the state of Quintana Roo, Costa Maya offers a perfect blend of beautiful beaches, fascinating Mayan history, vibrant marine life, and a relaxed atmosphere.

Unlike larger resort cities, Costa Maya retains the feel of a small coastal community, making it an excellent destination for travelers who want to experience authentic Caribbean Mexico.

Whether you're exploring ancient ruins, snorkeling the world's second-largest barrier reef, or relaxing with a cold drink along the beach in Mahahual, Costa Maya has something for everyone.



Where Do Cruise Ships Dock?



Cruise ships dock at the purpose-built **Costa Maya Cruise Port**, one of the most impressive cruise terminals in the Caribbean.

The port itself is a destination and includes:

- Large swimming pool
- Swim-up bar
- Restaurants
- Shopping village
- Duty-free stores
- Local artisan shops
- Live entertainment
- Bird aviary
- Flamingos
- Visitor information
- Taxi stand
- Excursion meeting areas

Many guests enjoy spending time in the port before or after an excursion.



Explore the Cruise Port

Unlike many ports, Costa Maya's terminal is designed as an attraction.

You'll find:

- Colorful plazas
- Mexican architecture
- Handcrafted souvenirs
- Local tequila tastings
- Chocolate shops
- Cafés
- Live music
- Photo opportunities

If you only have a few hours ashore, you can easily enjoy a relaxing day without leaving the port.

★ Top Shore Excursions

🏛️ Chacchoben Mayan Ruins



The most popular excursion in Costa Maya.

Located about **one hour** from the cruise port, Chacchoben was once an important Mayan ceremonial city hidden beneath dense jungle.

Highlights include:

- Ancient pyramids
- Temple plazas
- Jungle wildlife
- Rich Mayan history
- Excellent photography

It's one of the best-preserved archaeological sites in the region.

🏛️ Kohunlich Mayan Ruins

A longer excursion featuring one of the Yucatán Peninsula's most impressive archaeological sites.

Known for:

- Temple of the Masks
- Massive pyramids
- Fewer crowds
- Dense rainforest

Ideal for history enthusiasts.

Mahahual Beach



Just a short taxi ride from the cruise port.

Features include:

- White sand
- Calm Caribbean water
- Beach clubs
- Restaurants
- Shopping
- Massage services
- Snorkeling

Mahahual's colorful boardwalk is one of the highlights of Costa Maya.

Snorkeling the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef



Costa Maya sits along the **Mesoamerican Barrier Reef**, the **second-largest barrier reef in the world**, stretching over 600 miles from Mexico to Honduras.

Expect:

- Coral gardens
- Sea turtles
- Tropical fish
- Eagle rays
- Crystal-clear water

This is one of the premier snorkeling regions in the Caribbean.

Dolphin Encounter

Family-friendly excursions allow visitors to interact with dolphins through educational programs and in-water experiences.

Fishing & Boat Excursions

Popular options include:

- Reef fishing
 - Coastal cruises
 - Private boat charters
 - Sunset sails (on select itineraries)
-

Best Beaches

Mahahual Beach

The island's most popular beach.

Ideal for:

- Swimming
 - Families
 - Relaxation
 - Beach clubs
-

Maya Chan Beach Club



One of the highest-rated private beach clubs in the Caribbean.

Known for:

- Limited daily guests
- Personalized service
- Unlimited food and drinks
- Kayaks
- Paddleboards
- Relaxing atmosphere

Advance reservations are strongly recommended, as it often sells out on cruise days.

Hayhu Beach Club

A quieter option featuring beautiful beaches and fewer crowds.

Perfect for travelers looking to escape the busy port area.

Shopping

Costa Maya offers excellent shopping opportunities.

Popular purchases include:

- Mexican vanilla
 - Handmade pottery
 - Silver jewelry
 - Leather goods
 - Tequila
 - Local hot sauces
 - Mayan crafts
 - Colorful textiles
-



What to Eat

Don't leave Costa Maya without trying:

- Fresh fish tacos
- Shrimp ceviche
- Cochinita Pibil
- Guacamole
- Churros
- Elote (Mexican street corn)
- Fresh tropical fruit
- Authentic margaritas

Popular restaurants include:

- Nohoch Kay
- Tropicante
- Ibiza Sunset
- Fernando's 100%
- Maya Chan (for guests)



Hidden Gems

If you've visited Costa Maya before, consider exploring:

- Banco Chinchorro Biosphere Reserve
- Seven Color Lagoon (Bacalar)
- Uchben Kah Ecopark
- Local fishing villages
- Lesser-known beach clubs

The spectacular **Bacalar Lagoon**, often called the "**Lake of Seven Colors**," is one of Mexico's most beautiful natural attractions, though longer excursions may not fit every cruise schedule.



Weather Throughout the Year

Costa Maya enjoys warm tropical weather year-round.

Winter (December – February)

- Highs: 79–84°F (26–29°C)
- Lower humidity
- Excellent sightseeing weather

Spring (March – May)

- Highs: **82–88°F (28–31°C)**
- Warm and sunny

Summer (June – August)

- Highs: **88–93°F (31–34°C)**
- Hot and humid
- Afternoon showers possible

Fall (September – November)

- Highs: **84–89°F (29–32°C)**
- Warm ocean temperatures
- Fewer visitors

Trade winds help make even the warmer months comfortable.

Hurricane Season

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from:

June 1 – November 30

Peak activity usually occurs during:

- August
- September
- October

Cruise lines closely monitor tropical weather and adjust itineraries if necessary.

Travel insurance is always recommended.

Getting Around

Transportation options include:

- Taxi
- Cruise excursions
- Beach shuttles
- Rental golf carts (in Mahahual)

Mahahual is approximately **10–15 minutes** from the cruise port.

Most archaeological sites require approximately **one hour** of travel.



What to Pack

Bring:

- ✓ Comfortable walking shoes
 - ✓ Swimsuit
 - ✓ Reef-safe sunscreen
 - ✓ Sunglasses
 - ✓ Hat
 - ✓ Water shoes
 - ✓ Waterproof phone pouch
 - ✓ Small cash for local vendors and tips
 - ✓ Reusable water bottle
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Premium Travel Group Tip

Costa Maya offers something for every type of traveler. If this is your first visit, it's hard to beat **Chacchoben Mayan Ruins** for an unforgettable cultural experience. If relaxation is your goal, head to **Mahahual** or reserve a day at **Maya Chan Beach Club**, one of the highest-rated beach clubs in the Caribbean.

Don't overlook the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, either. Many visitors don't realize they're snorkeling along the second-largest barrier reef system on Earth.



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Why Visit Costa Maya?

Costa Maya offers the perfect balance of history, relaxation, and adventure. From exploring ancient Mayan cities hidden in the jungle to snorkeling one of the world's largest coral reef systems or simply enjoying a laid-back afternoon in Mahahual, Costa Maya captures the spirit of the Mexican Caribbean without the crowds of larger resort destinations. It's easy to understand why this once little-known port has become a favorite stop for so many cruisers.

Joe's Logbook

Costa Maya is one of those ports that keeps getting better every time I visit. The cruise port itself has grown into an attraction, but don't let that keep you from venturing beyond the gates. Whether you're standing atop ancient Mayan ruins, relaxing with your feet in the sand at Mahahual, or snorkeling along the incredible Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, you'll quickly discover that Costa Maya has much more to offer than many first-time visitors expect.