

CANCUN

SPRING & SUMMER GUIDE 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play
in Cancun this spring and summer

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INTRODUCTION



TripAdvisor, the most trusted source for where to eat, sleep and play in thousands of destinations around the world, has collected the best insider tips from its 50 million monthly visitors to produce a unique series of travel guides. In addition to the best hotels, restaurants and attractions for every type of traveler, you'll get great advice about what to pack, how to get around and where to find the best views. Be sure to check out the guides at www.tripadvisor.com.



You'll find reviews for more than 555,000 hotels, 200,000 vacation rentals, 175,000 attractions and 780,000 restaurants on TripAdvisor.com. Learn from other travelers what to expect before you make your plans.



PACKING TIPS

1. Don't forget your **passport**—even for travel from the United States. It's required for all air and sea border crossings.
2. "In addition to several bathing suits, bring a few **cover-ups** so you can go to the buffet to eat."—TripAdvisor Member
3. "Although they aren't the most beautiful things, I wear the **cargo pants with the zip-off legs**. Just before I land, I zip the leg part off and I am ready for the hot weather without having to wait in line to change."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Inside CANCUN

"Location, location, location" was as important back in the time of Mexico's Maya civilization as it is today—and the ruins scattered throughout the Yucatan Peninsula tell us the ancient Mayans knew a great location when they saw one. But they didn't last and the area faded into memory until Cancun—once a sliver of sand off the coast of the Yucatan peninsula—was carefully developed throughout the 1960s and early 1970s and was opened to tourism in 1974. Advertised as a tropical paradise, Cancun soon attracted tourists from Canada, the U.S. and Europe. Today, this clean, somewhat cosmopolitan city is known for its gorgeous beaches, nonstop nightlife, outdoor adventures, spas and air-conditioned malls. In October of 2005, Hurricane Wilma made landfall on Cancun as a category 4 hurricane, causing millions of dollars of damage to homes and businesses. However, thanks to an exhaustive public campaign and vigorous restoration efforts, much of the tourist industry has recovered. Rebuilding is ongoing, but most of Cancun's hotels and major attractions are up and running again.

Top VIEWS



CANCUN'S BEST VIEWS

"One of the highest points in Cancun, the view from **Playa Delfines** is truly memorable."—TripAdvisor Member, Edmonton, Alberta

Playa Delfines, North of Funta Nizuc at Km. 18 of Zona Hotelera

"Enjoy a fabulous Caribbean sunset while you cruise the bay and see Cancun at night. **The Cancun Queen Dinner Cruise** is the only Mississippi River-style riverboat in Mexico."—TripAdvisor Member

Cancun Queen Dinner Cruise, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 15.2, 998 848 8327

The **Scenic Tower** at Xcaret rises more than 250 feet into the air. The rotating structure's 360-degree panorama of land, sea and sky offers a "fantastic view - I didn't realize the extent of the jungle until then."—TripAdvisor Member, Melton, England

Scenic Tower, Xcaret, Km. 282, Chetumal - Puerto Juarez Hwy., Solidaridad, 998 883 0470

Where to PLAY

TOP 10 Attractions

1. Exotic Rides Mexico, Carretera Cancun Aeropuerto, Km. 7.5, Col. Residencial Campestre Autodromo, 998 882 0558
2. Coba Ruins, Riviera Maya
3. Playa Delfines, Zona Hotelera
4. Riviera Cancun Golf, Km. 26, Blvd. Kukulcan, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 6080
5. Ultramar, Zona Hotelera, 998 109 9607
6. Delphinus, Dreams Cancun Hotel, Km. 9.5, Zona Hotelera, 998 206 3304
7. Barco Pirates Night, Km. 4, Blvd. Kukulcan, Muelle de Playa Langosta, 998 831 488
8. El Meco Ruins, North of Cancun
9. El Rey Ruins (Zona Arqueologica El Rey), Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 17
10. Interactive Aquarium (Acuario Interactivo), Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 12.5, 998 883 0411



FAMILIES

"We've been to Cancun five times and always go at least twice to **Parque Nizuc**. On our first day we either swim with the dolphins or the sea lions. The entrance into the park is included in the price of the program you choose. After your chosen activity, you've got the rest of the day to go on the slides or the lazy river."—TripAdvisor Member

Wet'n'Wild/Parque Nizuc, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 25, Zona Hotelera, 998 193 2000

Ahoy, mateys! Take the kids to the **Captain Hook** floating pirate show. "The children were taken off for their own entertainment by the pirates, and the adults were left on the top deck to enjoy theirs. Our daughter returned with plenty of treasure and a huge smile on her face."—TripAdvisor Member, Wirral, U.K.

Captain Hook, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 4.5, 998 849 4451

"There is a lot to see at **Xcaret**. I spent a lot of time in the greenhouses, looking at baby sea turtles, getting acquainted with sea creatures at the aquarium and taking in the butterflies. The Mexico Spectacular show alone is worth the price of admission."—TripAdvisor Member, Canada

Xcaret Cancun Eco Park, Chetumal - Puerto Juarez Hwy., Km. 282, Solidaridad, 998 251 6560



ROMANCE

"**Playa Delfines**: Peaceful sunbathing and breathtaking views. However, it also offers dangerous swimming conditions in the strong surf and sometimes treacherous currents. There are some stone benches for sitting and contemplating the sea."—TripAdvisor Member

Playa Delfines, North of Funta Nizuc at Km. 18 of Zona Hotelera

"We had a wonderful 80-minute couples' massage at the **Spa at The Royal Sands**. They have the best body treatments in Cancun. The decor is so relaxing. The rooms are very clean and inviting. We truly enjoyed it."—TripAdvisor Member, St Louis, Mo.

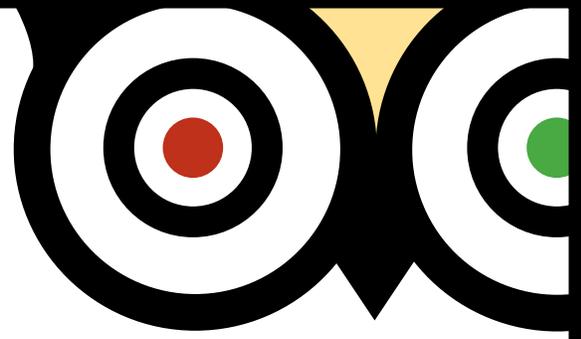
Spa at The Royal Sands, Blvd. Kukulcan, No. 32 Seccion A, 998 881 0100

"You hear the ocean during your massage."

"We used the spa at **El Dorado Seaside**—the moonlight couples massage was wonderful. You hear the ocean during your massage."—TripAdvisor Member, Kansas

El Dorado Seaside, Km. 95, Carretera Cancun, 984 875 1910

Where to **PLAY**



BUDGET

Shop in air-conditioned comfort at **Plaza Kukulcan** shopping mall and enjoy “bargains and quality better than the flea markets!”—TripAdvisor Member, Indianapolis, Ind.

Plaza Kukulcan, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 13, Zona Hotelera

Walking the beach and swimming are free. **Playa Las Perlas** is a beautiful beach with some of the safest waters in the region for swimming. “The protected waters of this small beach make it popular with locals.”—TripAdvisor Member

Playa Las Perlas, Center of Zona Hotelera

“Visit the fishing village **Puerto Morelos**. It is a quaint, true Mexican fishing village. The church is beautiful and it is a great way to get a true taste of the community.”—TripAdvisor Member

Puerto Morelos, 20 minutes south of Cancun



ADVENTURE

“**Dady-O** is not to be missed! It has laser light shows, special effects, wild parties, bikini and swimsuit contests, themed parties, acrobats and much, much more. And, as soon as anything is running low, the waiter is over with another!”—TripAdvisor Member, Manchester, U.K.

Dady-O Night Club, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 9.5, 998 883 3333

“There isn’t a better surf teacher in Cancun than **Gnarly’s Surf School**. They have over 40 years experience with the sport and it shows from the minute you start. Talk about a life-changing experience!”—TripAdvisor Member, Brantford, Ontario

Gnarly’s Surf School, Km. 9.5, Blvd. Kukulcan, 707 849 6750

“**Selvatica Canopy Expedition** was an excellent adventure. It was so fun doing the zip line into the cenote and jumping off the cliff into it. The water was absolutely wonderful. The whole adventure really made you feel like a kid again.”—TripAdvisor Member, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Selvatica Canopy Expedition and Adventure Tour, 998 898 4312

TripAdvisor members have posted more than 10 million traveler photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It’s almost like being there!



EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

At **The Little Mexican Cooking School**, “we really enjoyed hearing about the relationship of food to Mexican culture.”—TripAdvisor Member, Pickering, Ontario

The Little Mexican Cooking School, Calle Andres, Puerto Morelos, 998 251 8060

“You’ll find wonderful examples of Mayan ruins at **El Rey Ruins (Las Ruinas del Rey)** without going on a long trip to Tulum or other sites.” There is also “an abundance of iguanas who act as guardians of the site.”—TripAdvisor Member, Louisville, Ky.

El Rey Ruins (Las Ruinas del Rey), Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 17, Zona Hotelera

“...an abundance of iguanas”

“We spent a nice hour or so looking at the fish and sea creatures at the **Interactive Aquarium**—stroking the shark and the ray was quite a thrill. Finally plucked up the courage to pay the extra to feed the sharks. Fantastic experience! Being so close to these beautiful but potentially dangerous creatures was simply amazing.”—TripAdvisor Member, Brussels, Belgium

Interactive Aquarium (Acuario Interactivo), La Isla Shopping Village, Boulevard Kukulcan Km. 12.5, 998 883 0411



RELAXATION

Playa Marlin is a “sunbather’s delight. Well-known for its incredible, expansive views and peaceful sunbathing. Keep an eye on the warning flags, however, as the currents can be dangerous.”—TripAdvisor Member

Playa Marlin, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 13, Zona Hotelera

The Jack Nicklaus-designed “**Moon Palace Golf Course** is very pricey but perfect. Go for a twilight tee time.”—TripAdvisor Member, Texas

Moon Palace Golf Course, Carretera Cancun-Chetumal, Km. 340, 998 881 6000

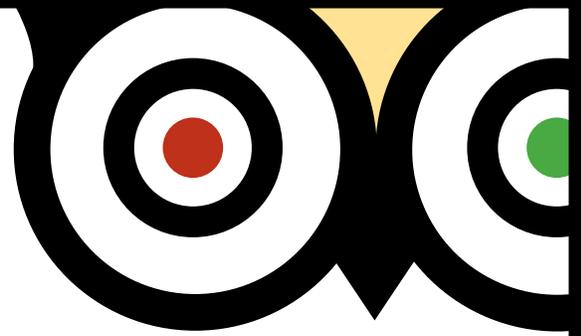
“...extraordinary tranquility.”

Escape busy Cancun for peaceful **Holbox Island**. “It has no paved roads and is best explored by foot. You’ll find brightly painted homes, beaches filled with shells and extraordinary tranquility.”—TripAdvisor Member, Needham, Mass.

Holbox Island, northwest of Cancun

What's the **TOUR**

How to Get Around



Entertainment Plus is a “great company for your private airport transfers, discounted tours both group and private and the famous 2-for-1 dining card.”—TripAdvisor Member

Entertainment Plus, 998 914 0290

“**Cancun Valet:** Excellent company offering airport transfers, discount tours, grocery delivery and rental of baby accessories and more. Best idea for phoning home—rent a cell phone from them.”—TripAdvisor Member

Cancun Valet, 998 848 3634

“**Buses** run around the clock. If you miss one, don't worry. Another will be along within minutes. When you pay for your ride, you'll be given a small paper ticket. Hang on to it—many times, there is a discount at local shops.”—TripAdvisor Member

WHERE to eat

“Casual restaurants, of course, have a casual dress code. But, despite the tropical climate, people do tend to dress up a little more at the nicer restaurants.”—TripAdvisor Member

FAMILIES

“Located in what is now known as ‘Luxury Avenue,’ **Ruth's Chris** is world famous for its tremendous service and world-class steaks.”—TripAdvisor Member

Ruth's Chris Steak House, Kukulcan Plaza, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 13, 998 885 3301

“**Habaneros** is a very small restaurant across from the Flamingo Plaza. They only have a few items on their menu, but the food is excellent. My husband loved the tostadas and our boys loved the tacos.”—TripAdvisor Member, Minneapolis, Minn.

Habaneros, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 11.5, Zona Hotelera, 998 883 1243

“**Fish Fritanga** is VERY kid friendly! There's a play structure on the sand beside the tables. It was great for them to play on before the food was ready. And, as for the food - fantastic!”—TripAdvisor Member, Ottawa, Ontario

El Fish Fritanga, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 12.5, 998 840 6216

“...the restaurant for any occasion.”

ROMANCE

“**Terraneo** is the restaurant for any occasion—for a romantic dinner in front of the lagoon, for a glass of wine accompanied with delicious tapas or just to enjoy a beer with pleasant live music at the bar.”—TripAdvisor Member

Terraneo, Km. 13.5, Zona Hotelera, 998 885 2746

“From the soft jazz flowing through the elegant champagne bar, to the food that was as delicious as it was pleasing to the eye, dinner at the **Club Grill** was one of our most memorable meals. DO NOT forget the Grand Marnier Soufflé, no matter how stuffed you are.”—TripAdvisor Member, Carmel, Calif.

The Club Grill, Ritz-Carlton Cancun, Retorno del Rey 36, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 0808

“**Puerto Madero** is absolutely fabulous! The food, the service and the restaurant are positively amazing. Try to go just before sundown and sit on the patio. The view is beautiful!”—TripAdvisor Member

Puerto Madero, Boulevard Kukulcan, Km. 14, Marina Barracuda, 998 885 2829

WHERE to eat



BUDGET



“**Color De Verano** is a coffee shop with a great atmosphere and delicious brownies and coffee. They also let us use their internet for free.”—TripAdvisor Member, Long Beach, Calif.

Color De Verano, Av. López Mateos, Lote 23, Mza. 1, 998 877 1264

Restaurants in Cancun can be expensive, but at **Rolandi's**, it won't cost a mint for “a bottle of Malbec and mounds of pasta and garlic bread and salad. Happy days!” Check the website for coupons.—TripAdvisor Member, Cancun

Rolandi's Pizzeria, Av. Coba 12, 998 884 4047

“Cheap but yummy Mexican food in the heart of the party center. **Taco Factory** is excellent for those after club munchies.”—TripAdvisor Member, Cancun

Taco Factory, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 9.5, Lote 3, Plaza Party Center, 998 883 1651

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HEALTH-CONSCIOUS



“**La Habichuela** is like a little oasis in the middle of downtown Cancun. The decor includes fountains and Maya artwork. They have a beautiful garden with white ironwork tables and chairs, as well as fairy lights strung from the trees. VERY Romantic.”—TripAdvisor Member, Cancun

La Habichuela, Margaritas 25, 998 884 3158

“**Restaurante Natura** has excellent natural food. I loved the quesadillas and the fruit juices are the best that exist in Cancun or maybe all over Mexico!”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

Restaurante Natura, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 9.5, Zona Hotelera, 998 883 0585

“We always eat at **100% Natural**, near Plaza Caracol Mall. It is really great and has lots of vegan, vegetarian and non-vegetarian choices. And the tables inside the restaurant are all nonsmoking, which is great.”—TripAdvisor Member, New Jersey

100% Natural, Avenida Yaxchilán s/n, Centro, 998 884 0102

“...great ambiance and strolling mariachis.”

HIDDEN GEMS



“**Pik Nik** was a great find—excellent drinks, delicious food and AMAZINGLY friendly and gracious staff. We ended up whiling away the evening there and had an awesome time.”—TripAdvisor Member

Pik Nik, Avenida Tulpanes, 998 147 7049

Eat with the locals at **La Parilla**, “an excellent restaurant downtown. Mexican flair, great ambiance and strolling mariachis.”—TripAdvisor Member, Cancun

La Parilla, Av. Yaxchilan 51, 998 287 8119

“**La Palapa Belga** is truly is a delight. And for the price, quality, value, service and especially the unique atmosphere, it's the best deal in the Hotel Zone.”—TripAdvisor Member, Cancun

La Palapa Belga, Calle Quetzal No. 13, Zona Hotelera, 998 883 5454

SPECIAL EVENTS



Semana Santa, the Holy Week, is one of the most important holidays in Mexico. The local festivities and observances culminate on Easter Sunday. (March 30 - April 8)

Holy Week (Semana Santa), Various locations, 998 881 9000 (Tourist Info Line)

Since 1966, the **Regata Del Sol al Sol** has been a highlight of the summer season in Cancun. The historic yacht race features the Regata Amigos, a post-race sail around the Isla Mujeres for the island children. (April 26 - May 4)

Regata Del Sol al Sol, Isla Mujeres, <http://regatadelsolalsol.org>

Sportfishing enthusiasts won't want to miss the **Puerto Morelos Fishing Tournament**, an annual event with over 100 boats competing, as well as basketball, football and swimming contests. (May 25 - 27)

Puerto Morelos Fishing Tournament, Puerto Morelos, 998 871 0473

Join in the festivities as the people of **Isla Mujeres** celebrate the founding of the island with cultural displays, music, dancing and more. (August 17)

Isla Mujeres Anniversary, Isla Mujeres, 998 881 9000 (Tourist Info Line)

Food, crafts, music, dance and plenty of tequila are just some of what you'll experience during the **Independence Day** celebrations across Cancun. (September 15)

Independence Day, Various locations, 998 881 9000 (Tourist Info Line)

Where to STAY



FAMILIES

“You are pampered from the time you set foot in the door until you are getting into your transportation to leave. The **Royal Islander** complex has many activities for the whole family, but I was most impressed with the children’s activities.”—TripAdvisor Member, Minnesota

Royal Islander, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 17, Lote 51 Zona Hotelera, 998 881 0100

“We highly recommend **Royal Sands** to anyone except people looking for a crazy party time....It’s a family place or couples place with an outstanding staff, great service and wonderful layout.”—TripAdvisor Member, Prince George, Va.

Royal Sands, Blvd. Kukulcan No. 32 Seccion A, Segunda Etapa, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 0100

“My kids loved the **Westin Lagunamar**, and didn’t want to leave! The location is fantastic, and very close to shops and several multi-priced dining options. The staff were all fantastic and the room rate was great value for money.”—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

Westin Lagunamar Ocean Resort, Km. 12.5, Blvd. Kukulcan, Zona Hotelera, 998 891 4200

Have questions about Cancun? Get insider advice from local experts in our forums. The majority of questions are answered within 24 hours.



ROMANCE

Fiesta Americana is “a beautiful hotel that is, in my jaded NYC opinion, very much a 5-star hotel.”—TripAdvisor Member, New York, N.Y.

Fiesta Americana Grand Coral Beach Cancun, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km 9.5, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 3200

Spend an “unforgettable vacation” at **Riu Palace Las Americas**. “The hotel was beautiful. We had a sea view room. The service was excellent; the staff, friendly and always ready to help.”—TripAdvisor Member, Rimavska Sobota, Slovakia

Riu Palace Las Americas, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 8.5, Manzana 50, Lote 4, Zona Hotelera, 998 891 4300

Sun Palace “is the most amazing hotel! Five-star luxury at its best. The room is huge, with a Jacuzzi and larger balcony, all with views of the ocean.”—TripAdvisor Member, Dublin, Ireland

Sun Palace, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km 20.5, 998 891 4100

BUDGET

Salvia Condos “was in prime location. It was a block or two away from Coco Bongos, Bull Dogs, Senor Frog’s, EVERYTHING! My friends and I couldn’t ask for more in the location.”—TripAdvisor Member, San Diego, Calif.

Salvia Condos, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 9, Zona Hotelera, 998 848 3849

“This was my third, and not my last time staying at the **Rey**. This environmentally sensitive hotel is the real thing. For a wonderful rate, you’re near bars, a great park, shopping centers and the local market. The room is clean, and the staff will cater to your every whim.”—TripAdvisor Member, Montgomery, Ala.

Hotel El Rey del Caribe, Av. Uxmal 24, 998 884 2028

Suites Gaby Hotel is “a great place for a great price! Very, very clean room, LCD TV, comfy bed, nice shower. The staff were extremely nice and helpful. The location is just 3 minutes from the bus station and 20 from the airport.”—TripAdvisor Member, Montreal, Quebec

Suites Gaby Hotel, Av. Sunyaxche Lote 46 y 47, 998 887 8037

LUXURY

CasaMagna Marriott “is very beautiful and classy. It has all the amenities you want in a great hotel. Yes, the beach and the water lived up to all the hype. The water is aqua like you see in the postcards—it’s that clear and beautiful!”—TripAdvisor Member, Louisville, Ky.

CasaMagna Marriott Cancun Resort, Blvd. Kukulcan, Retorno Chac L-41, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 2000

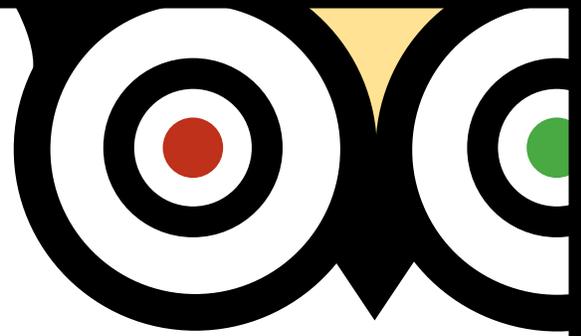
“There are not enough superlatives to explain how wonderful our stay was at the **Ritz Cancun**. We stayed at the hotel right after it reopened in October. We were a bit travel weary. The Ritz arranged travel from the airport for us, and immediately, all our travel woes were gone!”—TripAdvisor Member, Boston, Mass.

Ritz-Carlton Cancun, Retorno del Rey 36, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 0808

JW Marriott Cancun Resort and Spa, a Travelers’ Choice winner for “Best Luxury,” is back to form. “Wonderful, everything you could want in a hotel. The atmosphere is charming. The food was wonderful. The staff are great and helpful; the pools are beautiful. We went for our 20th anniversary and it was a trip to remember.”—TripAdvisor Member, Texas

JW Marriott Cancun Resort and Spa, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km. 14.5, 998 848 9600

Where to **STAY**



HIDDEN GEMS

“**Casa BlatHa** was probably the best hotel experience I have ever had: a beautiful building in a remote part of the island and very nice rooms with a balcony where you can put up a hammock and have a fantastic view with absolute silence in the evenings.”—
TripAdvisor Member, Moscow, Russia

Casa BlatHa, Caguama 1, Esquina Calle Charral, Holbox Island, 984 137 6721

“**Le Blanc Spa Resort** is Le Best. Overall it's really a gem. The staff, service, location, rooms, view, oceanfront, the food... Now we're concerned we'll never go anywhere else!”—TripAdvisor Member, New Hampshire

Le Blanc Spa Resort, Blvd. Kukulcan, Km.10, Zona Hotelera, 998 881 4740

“Looking for a tranquil vacation without the hustle and bustle of the all-inclusives, where tourists are few, locals are extremely friendly, food is great, and where you can walk alone for miles on the beach? Then **Casa Maya** is the place for you.”—
TripAdvisor Member, Calgary, Alberta

La Casa Maya de José Lima, Isla Holbox, 998 892 4144

“The best hotel experience I have ever had.”

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