

# RIVIERA MAYA

## TRAVEL GUIDE





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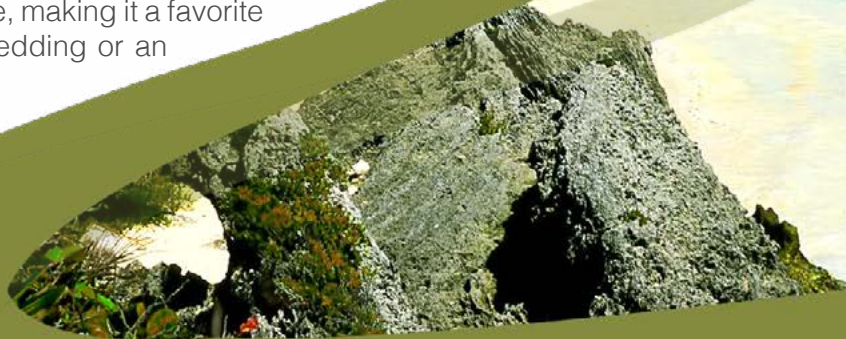
# RIVIERA MAYA

*Paradise is Forever*

Riviera Maya offers wonderful beaches, turquoise waters and fine white sand, archeological sites, picturesque little towns, recreation centers, freshwater lagoons, underwater caves and cenotes, as well as ecological, and food and lodging options ranging from rustic cabins to gleaming condos, five-star hotels, and all inclusive accommodation.

Here you can be seduced by an exquisite culinary tour, experiencing the regional cuisine prepared with the inherited Mayan recipes. About the nightlife, Riviera Maya has an exciting and cosmopolitan options with a wide variety of bars and nightclubs along the beach.

It is an ideal setting for romance, making it a favorite of those who want a beach wedding or an unforgettable honeymoon.



## WEATHER

The climate is tropical with near 250 days a year of warm sun while the average temperature is 75-77°F (24°-25°C) approximately. The coastal waters have an average temperature between 78°-84°F (26°-29°C)



## RIVIERA MAYA IS A DIVERSITY OF PLACES

Riviera Maya is a coastal strip that stretches more than 120 km (81 mi). Starts at Punta Brava at the end of Puerto Morelos to Punta Herrero, south of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve. Playa del Carmen is a must seen destination in the heart of Riviera Maya. North of Playa del Carmen are Playa Paraíso, Playa Secreto, Punta Maroma, Punta Bete and Mayakobá. And south of this famous downtown are several eco parks like Xcaret, Xenses, Xplor and Xel-Há, among others; as well as some small coastal towns like Puerto Aventuras, Akumal and Tulum; Boho Chic Beaches like: Paamul, Kantenah and Xpu-Há; and the fabulous Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve.



An aerial photograph of a large, ancient Mayan pyramid, likely at the Tulum site, rising from a dense, lush green jungle. The pyramid's stone structure is visible, showing some weathering and steps. The surrounding forest is thick and vibrant green.

## RIVIERA MAYA IS CULTURE AND ANCIENT ROOTS

The Riviera Maya was an important commercial and religious center of the ancient Mayas, vestiges of this culture are found in Cobá with the tallest pyramids in the Yucatan Peninsula, Muyil surrounded by crystal clear water mangrove-lined channels, and the walled city of Tulum overlooking the Caribbean Sea. Modern Mayans still manage to integrate their old beliefs and traditions in their day-to-day lives. You can visit a local Mayan village and learn more about the ancestral cuisine, as well as the traditional clothing, architecture and language.

*TIP: Learn some basic conversational Mayan Language phrases: Bix Anikech, means Hello, how are you?, In Yakumech, means I love you, Wi-jeem, means I'm hungry, Bet uts means please, Nib'oolal, means thank you.*

## RIVIERA MAYA TAKES CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Riviera Maya is deeply committed to protecting and preserving the spectacular environmental beauty and delicate eco-system of the destination with sustainable tourism, and eco-friendly actions. There have been notable successes in the region in protecting the coral reefs, the jungle and the crystal clear waters of the cenotes. It is also important to protect the turtles when they are nesting and help the baby turtles to get to the sea.

## RIVIERA MAYA IS NATURE

There are more than 700 km (430 mi) of flooded cave passages within the limits of the Riviera Maya, including the two longest underwater cave systems in the world of Sac Actun and Ox Bel Ha. In this area, the cavern diving is a magical experience and a real challenge.

The Riviera Maya is home to the second largest barrier reef in the world, the Mesoamerican Reef, also known as the Great Mayan Reef. This ecosystem host a wide diversity of species of fish, corals, molluscs, sponges, marine worms and crustaceans.

South of Tulum is Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, a 1.3 million acre nature reserve where you can kayak your way through the wetlands or float through the mangroves in translucent water, watching the wildlife, including the exotic and endemic species.

## RIVIERA MAYA IS ADVENTURE, FUN AND RELAX

The Riviera Maya is home to a wide range of fun eco-parks with a wide variety of exciting activities for everyone. Get an amazing day enjoying a great bike ride in the middle of the Maya Jungle or use zip lines, canopy bridges, and pathways to explain and show off the diversity of the jungle environment. There are also great places for snorkeling and scuba diving; the destination combines incredible natural beauty with exciting, adventurous activities.

The Riviera Maya has something for everyone. A wide variety of accommodation options are available, you can book luxury boutique hotels in downtown Playa del Carmen to rustic cabins in Tulum. There are also extensive all-inclusive resorts that will let you enjoy a perfect family vacation with fun kids' clubs and babysitting services. If you are planning a romantic getaway or a truly unique gourmet experience Riviera Maya has it all. The destination has more winners of five and four diamonds than anywhere else in North America.

In addition, most of the resorts are located near an impressive collection of marinas, championship golf courses, shopping centers, animal sanctuaries and Mayan-inspired theme parks.





# 10 THINGS YOU MUST DO WHEN YOU VISIT THE RIVIERA MAYA

**1.** Climb 120 steps to top of Nohoch Mul Pyramid at Coba and enjoy the breathtaking view of the mayan jungle, the lagoons, the cenotes and the sacbes (white mayan roads).

**2.** Glide through the sky in zip-lines where you will fly over the jungle and splash into a cenote.

**3.** Rappel into a cenote and swim in the clear fresh waters surrounded by a magical atmosphere.

**4.** Travel through the Mayan jungle, enjoy your private Photo Safari and capture the wildlife in magnificent natural settings home of hundreds of colorful birds.

**5.** Visit a nesting beach, from May to November, it is fascinating that female turtles come to lay their eggs in the exact same spot they were born. And from July to October, once the eggs hatch, you can see the baby turtles starting their journey to the ocean.

**6.** Swim, snorkel or rest in the only archaeological site located by the sea...Tulum.

**7.** Get into the Mexican culture and traditions and enjoy a great adventure in Xcaret.

**8.** Snorkel in the largest natural aquarium in the world Xel-Ha.

**9.** Get in touch with one of the greatest biodiversity in the world on the Biosphere Reserve of Sian Ka'an, a World Heritage Site.

**10.** Spend a memorable evening at Cirque Du Soleil, an award-winning magical theater with gourmet 3-course dinner experience.





# HOW TO TRAVEL TO THE RIVIERA MAYA?

## BY AIRPLANE:

The Cancun International Airport is the main gate of entrance to Riviera Maya, and it is served by all major international airlines with direct or non-stop service from many places around the world. It is located just 40 minutes away from Playa del Carmen and 120 minutes from Tulum.

From the airport, there are several transportation services like shuttles and taxis providing convenient and safe airport transfers to any location in the Riviera Maya. However, this will need to be pre-arranged with your private transfer company, or inside the airport at a taxi stand.

If you arrive at the Cozumel International Airport, a taxi can take you to the port, where you will board a modern ferry that connects the island with the mainland. Ferries leave the pier in Cozumel every hour, and it takes just over 30 minutes to cross to Riviera Maya. The prices are very reasonable and you can buy the tickets online or at the ticket office. The ferry arrives in Playa del Carmen very close to the famous Fifth Avenue, right in the heart of the Riviera Maya!

There is one more option, the Playa del Carmen airport, a small airstrip located in the center of town with local flights to nearby Cancun, Cozumel, Chichen Itza, Tulum, Mahaua, Holbox, among others.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Shuttles, limousines and VIP

**Transportation:** The airport has recently added a new search engine that helps you to check all available fares and book online transportation to all hotels in the region. Visit [www.cancun-airport.com/transportation.htm](http://www.cancun-airport.com/transportation.htm) or call 800-317-1921 for more details.

**Car rental:** Cancun Airport is the largest car rental location in the area with most of the major car rental companies located within the grounds of the airport. If you are planning on renting a car in Cancun, make sure that you booked your rental ahead of time, *we always recommend Avis.*

**Bus:** Once you passed thru the baggage carousel and Customs you will find the "ADO" stand, this company offers first class service from the Cancun International Airport to Playa del Carmen. There are periodic rides from 8:30 hrs. to 23:50 hrs. The trip from the airport to Playa del Carmen takes about 50 minutes. There are also "regular" bus services on Highway 307, however, consider that this is a second class bus and it makes many stops along the way.

**Taxis:** The maximum amount of passengers allowed in a cab is four. The rates are established and you can hire the service at a taxi stand inside the airport. The hotel valet parking service can call a taxi and we advise you to check the cost before boarding the vehicle.



# DISTANCE TABLE

Km.	Cancún	Puerto Juárez	Punta Sam	Puerto Morelos	Playa del Carmen	Xcaret	Puerto Aventuras	Akumal	Xel - Há	Tulum	Coba	Chetumal	Chichén Itzá	Mérida	Uxmal	Isla Mujeres	Cozumel
Cancún	0	5	12	38	68	76	89	104	114	131	175	379	197	303	382	25	114
Puerto Juárez	5	0	17	43	73	81	94	109	119	136	180	384	202	308	387	30	119
Puerto Sam	12	7	0	50	80	88	101	116	126	143	187	394	209	315	394	20	126
Puerto Morelos	38	41	43	0	35	43	56	72	81	98	142	350	213	313	392	55	81
Playa del Carmen	68	71	77	35	0	10	23	39	48	65	109	317	181	288	367	85	48
Xcaret	76	79	85	43	10	0	17	33	43	59	104	312	190	296	375	94	38
Paamul	82	87	94	46	14	9	9	23	40	49	93	300	228	335	415	92	24
Puerto Aventuras	87	92	99	51	19	14	0	18	35	44	88	295	233	340	420	97	37
Kantenah	96	101	108	60	28	23	9	9	26	35	79	286	242	349	429	106	46
Yalkú	98	103	110	62	30	25	11	7	24	33	77	284	244	351	431	108	48
Akumal	105	110	117	69	37	32	18	0	17	26	70	277	251	358	438	115	55
Chemuyil	109	114	121	73	41	36	22	4	13	22	66	273	255	362	442	119	59
Xcace	119	124	131	83	51	46	32	14	3	12	56	263	265	372	452	129	69
Xel - Há	122	127	134	87	54	49	35	17	0	9	53	260	268	375	455	132	72
Tulum	131	136	143	95	63	58	44	26	9	0	44	251	277	384	464	141	81
Coba	173	178	185	137	105	100	86	68	51	42	0	207	319	426	506	183	123
Carrillo Puerto	176	181	188	140	108	103	89	71	54	45	84	206	322	429	509	186	126
Chetumal	382	387	394	346	314	309	295	277	260	251	293	0	528	635	715	382	352
Chichén Itzá	178	183	190	182	214	220	264	282	299	308	350	564	0	107	187	188	250
Mérida	315	320	327	329	351	357	371	389	406	415	457	671	107	0	80	295	357
Uxmal	395	400	407	409	431	437	451	469	486	495	537	751	187	80	0	375	437
Isla Mujeres	20	15	22	60	85	93	106	121	131	147	173	396	224	330	409	0	116
Isla Contoy	50	55	62	86	118	124	137	158	172	181	223	432	181	280	360	70	164
Isla Holbox	150	62	54	101	133	138	152	170	187	196	280	447	243	350	430	60	118
Cozumel	72	77	84	30	18	23	37	55	72	81	123	232	250	357	437	58	0

## WEATHER CONDITIONS

Month	Ene	Feb	Mar	Abr	May	Jun	Jul	Ago	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dic	Annual
Average Temperature (°C)	23	24	25	26	27	27	27	27	27	26	24	23	26
Average High Temperature (°C)	29	30	31	24	33	33	33	33	32	31	30	29	31
Average Low Temperature (°C)	17	17	18	20	21	22	22	22	22	21	19	18	20
Average Precipitation (mm)	67	50	31	28	76	156	106	130	163	165	135	80	1,256
Daylength (hours)	11.4	11.9	12.4	13	13.5	13.8	13.6	13.2	12.6	12	11.5	11.3	12.5

Source: Weatherbase





# HISTORY



During the Classic Period (300-1000 AD) and the Post-Classic Period (1000-1550 AD) the Mayans built several cities in this region, some of them consolidated as important commercial and religious centers such as: Chunchucmil, now known as Mucil; Coba, built next to a large lagoon; Tulum, the only Mayan city built by the sea; Polé, —now a heavenly touristic destination— an important Pre-Hispanic commercial port; Xamanhá, today Playa del Carmen, one of the first settlements found by the Spanish conquistadors on their arrival to Mexico in the 16th century; and Xel-ha, known as the first European settlement of the Yucatan Peninsula.

In the next three centuries most of the colonial period, when the Spanish rule in Mexico, the jungle, the pirates, their difficult access and the fierce resistance of the Mayans dissuaded the European incursion into the area. In the twentieth century, because of the abundance of the Chicle in the Mayan rainforest, the region became one of the largest producer of gum, the original raw material for chewing gum.

It was not until the decade of the 1980's that the region known as the Cancún-Tulum corridor gained in popularity. The tourist infrastructure of the area began improving in the early 1990's and has been growing rapidly. The "Riviera Maya" brand was born in 1997, and its 120 km (86 mi) of scenic Caribbean coastline have not looked back since!



# RIVIERA MAYA

## MAP



### SYMBOLS

Colonial Architecture  
Archeological Site

Airport  
Gas Station

Lighthouse  
Golf  
Ferry







## RIVIERA MAYA FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

### Playa del Secreto & Playa Paraíso

Playa el Secreto is a wide strip of white sand with crystalline Caribbean waters considered one of the most beautiful beaches in the Riviera Maya. The road to Playa del Secreto passes through spectacular mangroves, a unique habitat for various birds and tropical wildlife. In this heavenly place you can swim, snorkel, long walks and gathering shells.

Playa Paraíso, is an spectacular white sandy paradise with turquoise blue waters, coconut tree plantations and an extraordinary coral reef just 54 yd. (50m) from the beach, one of the most recommended places to enjoy the tranquility and beauty of the Caribbean Sea. Along the extensive corridor of 3 miles (5 km) wide that separates Playa Paraiso and Playa del Secreto, you can find countless crabs and hopefully even a turtle spawning. There are several luxury all-inclusive resorts and two incredible golf courses.

### Punta Maroma & Punta Bete

Punta Maroma is a beautiful and quiet white sand beach, rated by Travel Channel as one of the 10 most beautiful beaches in the world. Its crystal clear waters are fed from an underground river that creates a unique ecosystem in the area. It has a small marina where you can rent tours to enjoy

a wide variety of activities. A string of resorts has taken advantage of its enviable position.

Across the river is Punta Bete, is another excellent option for sun and sea seekers with the striking contrast of turquoise sea, green palms and white sand. This is a good place for camping, snorkeling and enjoy unique adventures like dolphin encounters, a camel ride, or surf the waves at high speed in a wave runner. In addition to its beautiful scenery, you can visit a small archaeological ruin on the beach.

### Mayakobá

Located on over 500 acres of mangrove forest and jungle, this place contains a combination of deluxe hotels (AAA Five Diamond properties), residences, and an 18-hole Greg Norman designed golf course, along with a beautiful Caribbean beachfront. Access is restricted to hotel guests and club members.



for those wanting an relaxed and fun atmosphere.

## Playa del Carmen

With almost 10 miles (15 km) of beach stretching along the Caribbean coastline, Playa del Carmen has become a tourist development, but it has kept the essence of a warm small town feeling that offers smaller lodgings with personalized service. The ancient Maya used the beaches of Xaman Ha, Playa's Mayan name meaning "waters of the north" as a launching point for Maya women to honor the Goddess Ixchel on Cozumel Island. This annual spiritual pilgrimage was necessary in the eyes of the Maya for a healthy pregnancy and childbirth. In order to prepare their visit to Kuzamil (today, Cozumel) the pilgrims fasted for several days, prayed and took steam baths to purify their body and soul.

Playa del Carmen has something for everyone. It is blessed with miles of unspoiled beaches, dozens of beach clubs and bars that allow you to enjoy the Caribbean coast to the fullest.

Quinta Avenida ("Fifth Avenue") is Playa del Carmen main drag, over twenty city blocks, and provides an abundance of options for dining and shopping. Here you can find everything from diamonds to colorful crafts. There are modern and unique shopping centers such as Calle Corazón and Quinta Alegría with establishments where you will find the wide range of collections from all the national/international brands. In Calle Corazón, you can also visit L'Aquarium with over 10,000 different animals from more than 200 species and a representation of a magical natural limestone sinkhole (cenote).

There are plenty of great places up to the end of the Fifth Avenue, known as the "New Quinta", with more restaurants, nightclubs and bars ideal

Playa del Carmen is known for its fabulous nightlife and sets itself up as one of the best destinations for going out. There's a little something for almost everyone, from the mariachis to country music, from trendy bars to nightclubs for fun-filled night of dancing and live music.

If you want to know more about the most iconic Mexican artist, Frida Kahlo, you can visit the new museum that integrates technologies to connect the public with Frida through sensory experiences, interactive displays, projections and other multimedia instrument. This museum has been able to combine technology with art.

Bike riding is a fun way to explore Playa del Carmen. 10th Ave has a bike path of 4 km for bikers and tricyclos, it runs parallel to the famous 5th Avenue and there are two trails that connect two commercial corridors: Centro Maya and Plaza Las Américas. If you're feeling more adventurous, there is a new bike path on the highway from the second entrance/exit into Playacar heading south to Xcaret and Xplor adventure parks.

Playa Del Carmen, offers a wide selection of lodging options, there is definitely something for everyone. There are small budget hostels and boutique hotels, some with ocean views and others a few blocks from the beach.

## Playacar

South of the main dock is Playacar, a self-contained resort boasting luxury hotels, condos, and an 18-hole golf course design by the famous Scottish golf course architect Robert von Hagge. It is the ideal place for walks, jogging or cycling among Mayan relics, small temples and cenotes.





# PLAYA DEL CARMEN MAP







and sailing.  
Just in front of  
a small island you  
can find the most exclusive  
jewelry & rug store on the Riviera Maya,  
as well as some stores with clothing, crafts and all kinds  
of souvenirs.

## Puerto Aventuras

With white sand beaches and three beautiful bays, Fátima, Chan Yu Yum y Chac Hal Al, offers numerous attractions. Facing the beach, in the middle of the bay, is an island that serves as a nocturnal sanctuary for thousands of birds.

It is master-planned to preserve the natural beauty. Puerto has water channels, a quay and a "malecon". There is also a beach club, spa, hotels, condos, dolphin facility, tennis club, a picturesque shopping arcade and an 18-hole golf course, designed by the renowned PGA player Thomas Lehman in 1991.

The marina in Puerto Aventuras offers full-service repair and boarding operation, private shops, and from here you can rent boats for deep-sea fishing or simply to cruise the Caribbean Sea's tranquil waters; there are regatta races at the Marina during the months of May and June.

It is another ideal place for diving, snorkeling, fishing,

## PUERTO AVENTURAS MAP







## Xpu-Há

Xpu-Há is a beautiful stretch of white powdery sand and limestone inlets. There are important resorts in this area and a restaurant.

Just south of Xpu-Há is Kantenáh, a long palm-lined beach. This is a great place to snorkel. Here you can relax in a hammock under a palapa. The water here is usually calm and is one of the best places where you can go snorkeling. There are some all-inclusive resorts in the area.

## Akumal

Akumal means “Place of the Turtles” in Mayan, since this stretch of coast is a nesting ground for thousands of turtles every year, and you can get to see huge turtles swimming quite close to shore.

Silky white sand submerges into offshore reefs, a real paradise for swimming, snorkeling, fishing and especially for scuba diving, since it has been a favorite dive destination for decades.

The natural beauty of Akumal has attracted visitors even before there were roads leading to this primitive paradise; some of the first visitors came from Cozumel and arrived by boat.

The modern history of Akumal begins when its' founder Don Pablo

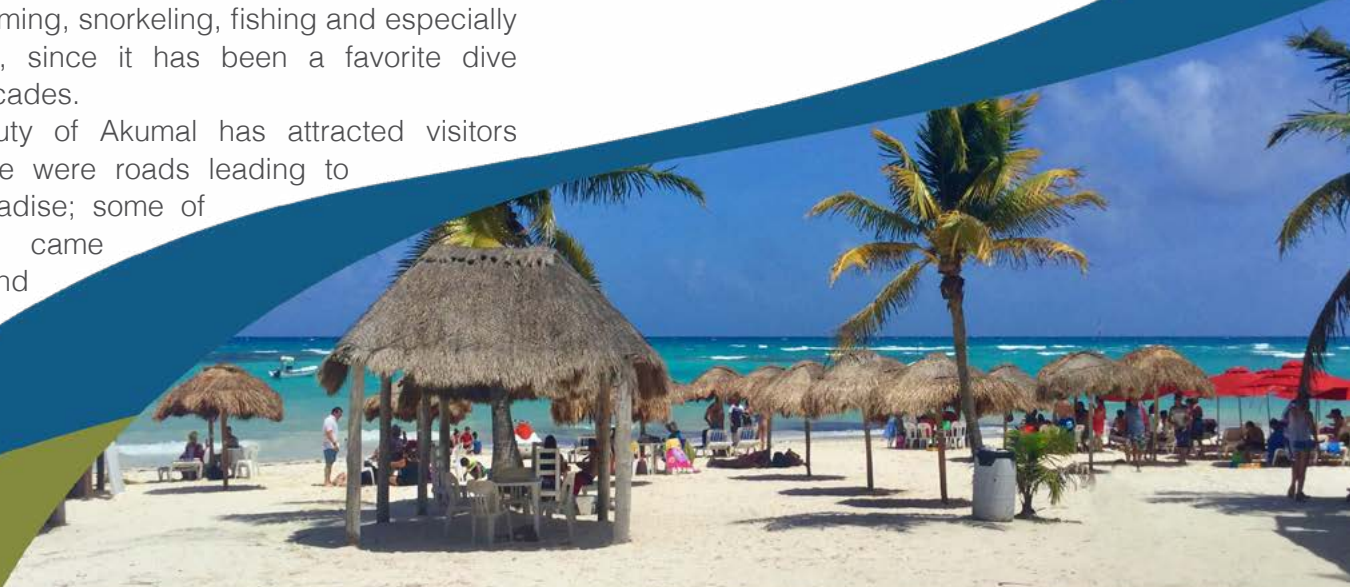
Bush Romero, a Mexican adventurer and business man, founded a city and along with other divers formed CEDAM (Club of Exploration and Water Sports of Mexico), an internationally acclaimed society dedicated to community service and ecological preservation. Beside, Akumal has another organization concerned with the protection of the environment, Centro Ecológico Akumal (Ecological Center in Akumal). It has been working to study the coastal and marine ecosystems and their biodiversity, including of course the turtles.

Akumal Bay is known for its crystal clear waters sheltered by an offshore reef and the fresh waters of its caves and underground rivers. Akumal offers a very close-knit expat community who has been coming here for years and they all are strongly committed to the environment.

There are shops, art galleries and crafts on sale to take home a unique souvenir.

The destination offers several restaurants, bars and comfortable accommodation, from cozy inns and villas to modern condominiums and excellent hotels. The Riviera Maya Golf Club is located south of Akumal.

Other attractions of the region:







## AKUMAL MAP

### Yal-kú Lagoon

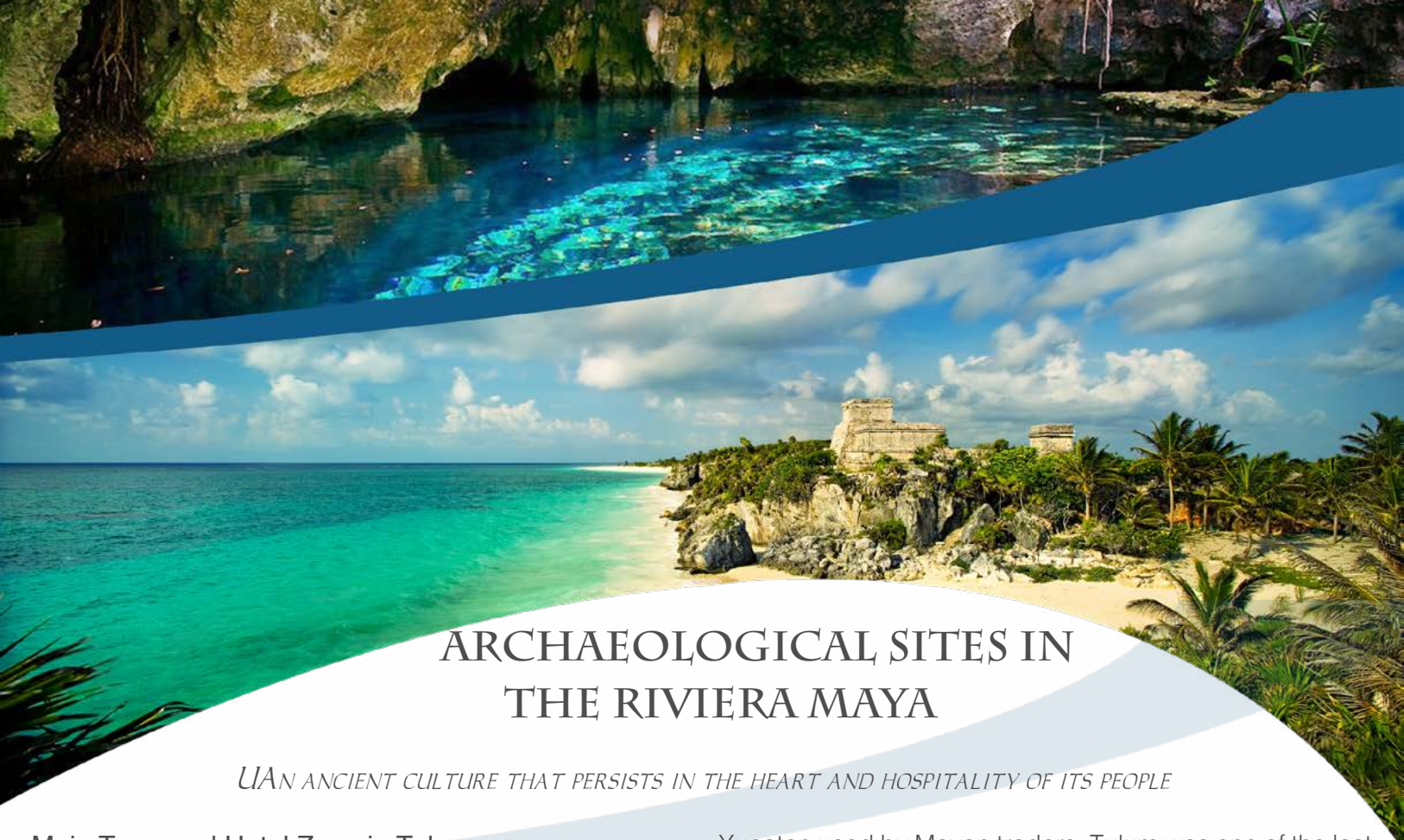
It is a hidden, yet enchanting place to dive and enjoy the crystal clear water. Once in the water, you are immediately met by hundreds of colorful fish. Submerged rock formations create a fascinating underwater terrain and the ideal habitat for the exotic marine creatures, which you can see perfectly while snorkeling or diving. There are composting toilets and snorkel gear and a snorkel vest can be rented on site. Bird watchers will be delighted in the area, which is abundant with various tropical species, among which are: herons, cranes, pelicans, gulls and egrets. It is a magical place with the typical Caribbean atmosphere.

### Bahía de la Media Luna (Half Moon Bay)

An idyllic arc of white sand with villas, private homes, beachfront restaurants, and small hotels, here you can snorkel and dive among turtles all year long.







## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE RIVIERA MAYA

*LIAN ANCIENT CULTURE THAT PERSISTS IN THE HEART AND HOSPITALITY OF ITS PEOPLE*

### Main Town and Hotel Zone in Tulum

Tulum offers a series of bohemian hotels located from the south of the archeological site to the entrance of Sian Ka'an Natural Reserve. These hotels blend into the natural surroundings and even use solar energy systems. They give a unique experience of peace and tranquility; in fact many of them have the services of meditation, yoga, temazcal, and massages. You can also explore the best places around Tulum, there are a variety of incredible experiences, such as tours to the jungle and nature reserves, or a tour full of history to the ancient Mayan ruins. This town is an eclectic mix of European and Mayan in the very best possible way. You may find Mayan huts, as well as sophisticated French restaurants. It's definitely an experience unlike any other!

Tulum is located within a National Park with an area of 664 ha. The park has a wide variety of environments such as mangroves, beaches and a large number of cenotes as: Maya Blue, Naharon, Temple of Doom, Tortuga, Vacaha, Grand Cenote, Abejas, Nohoch Kiin and Carwash, also known as Aktún-Há.

### Archaeological Site of Tulum

This is one of the most beautiful places in Mexico. Tulum was one of the ports scattered along the coast of the

Yucatan used by Mayan traders. Tulum was one of the last cities built and inhabited by the Mayan culture; the site was occupied until contact with the Spanish was made in the early 16th century

This site was formerly known by the name Zama, meaning City of Dawn because it faces the sunrise. It was a ceremonial center, but also an important trade hub. The name Tulum means "Wall" or "Palisade", and refers to the walls surrounding the site, but it was used in recent times when the place was in ruins.

The archeological site is composed of 70 structures, most of which date from the 12th to the 15th Centuries. Tulum was a walled fortress and is the only Mayan city built on the coast. Among the most important buildings are: El Castillo (The Castle), The Temple of the Descending God, and The Temple of the Frescoes, used as an observatory with interesting murals.

After exploring Mayan ruins, you can swim and relax on the beautiful white sand beach that lies at the foot of the archaeological site and visit the craft market.

There are several surreal cenotes surrounding Tulum. The archaeological site offers night tours with special lighting and audio guides that last about 45 minutes. Schedule: Every day from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

South to the ruins of Tulum there is a road that leads to the Sian Ka'an Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site!

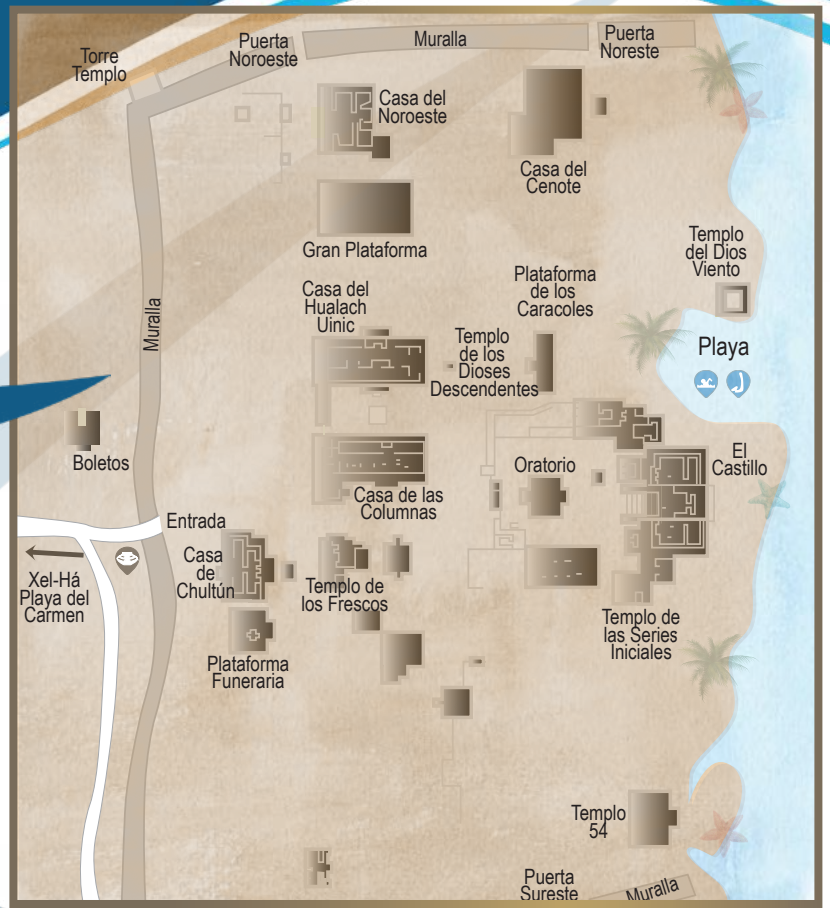


# TULUM MAP

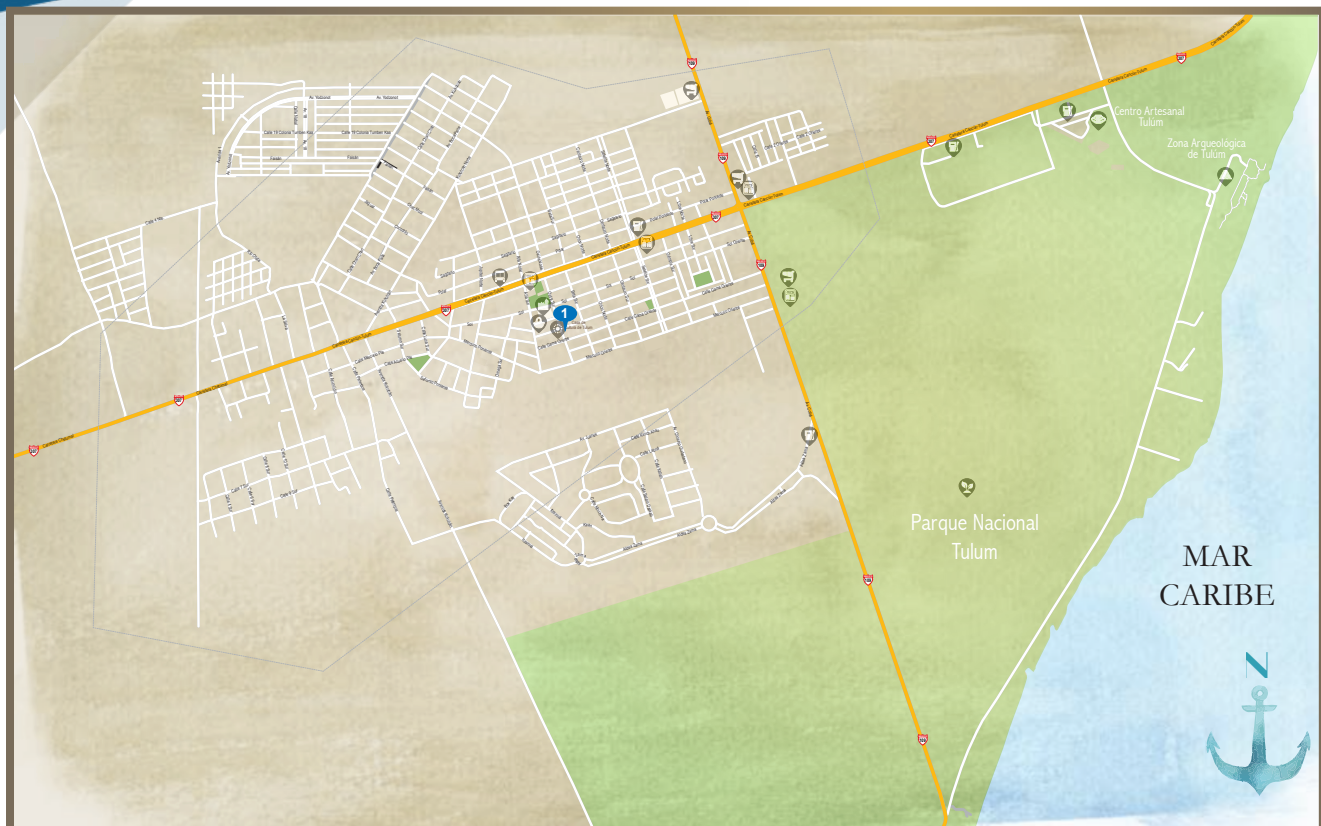
## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA

### SYMBOLS

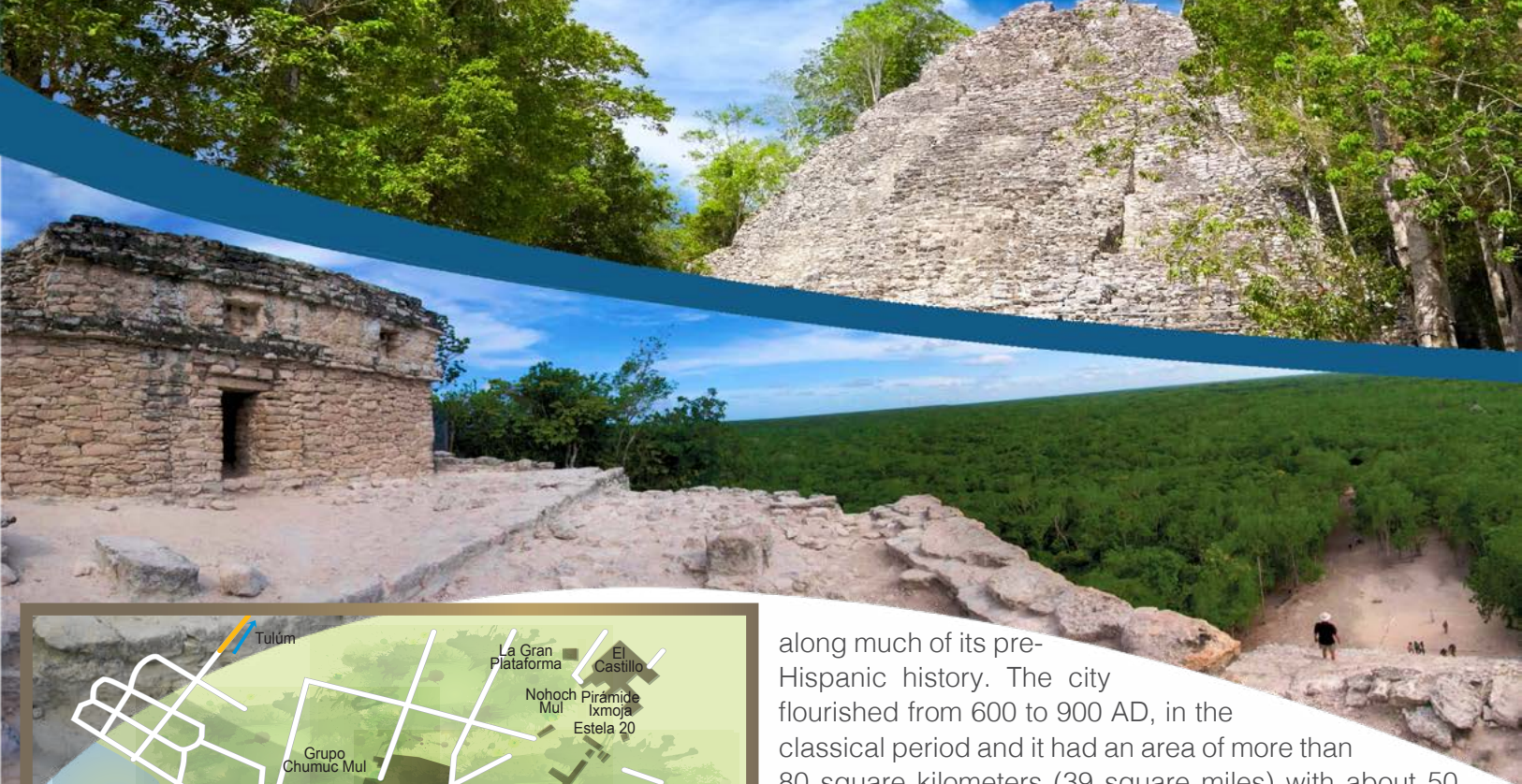
- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Gas Station        | Swimming            |
| Archeological Site | Natural Reserve     |
| Handcrafts         | Tourist Attractions |
| Convenience Store  | ATM                 |
| Market             | Bus Station         |
| Snorkeling         |                     |



## CITY







## Cobá

The name Cobá means “ash grey water”, since it lies between two lakes and, as with many other sites, the name was probably not its earlier designation. It has a network of 45 elevated stone and plaster roads radiate from the central site to various smaller sites near and far, known as sacbes. Archaeologists estimate that there are 6,500 structures in the area.

Much of the site is still unearthed, giving visitors an eerie “Indiana Jones” experience. It has more sacbe (wide limestone-paved ancient roads) than any site yet discovered.

No doubt this is the most important settlement of northeastern Yucatan Peninsula, only comparable in size and importance to Chichén Itzá, his rival and enemy

along much of its pre-Hispanic history. The city flourished from 600 to 900 AD, in the classical period and it had an area of more than 80 square kilometers (39 square miles) with about 50 thousand inhabitants.

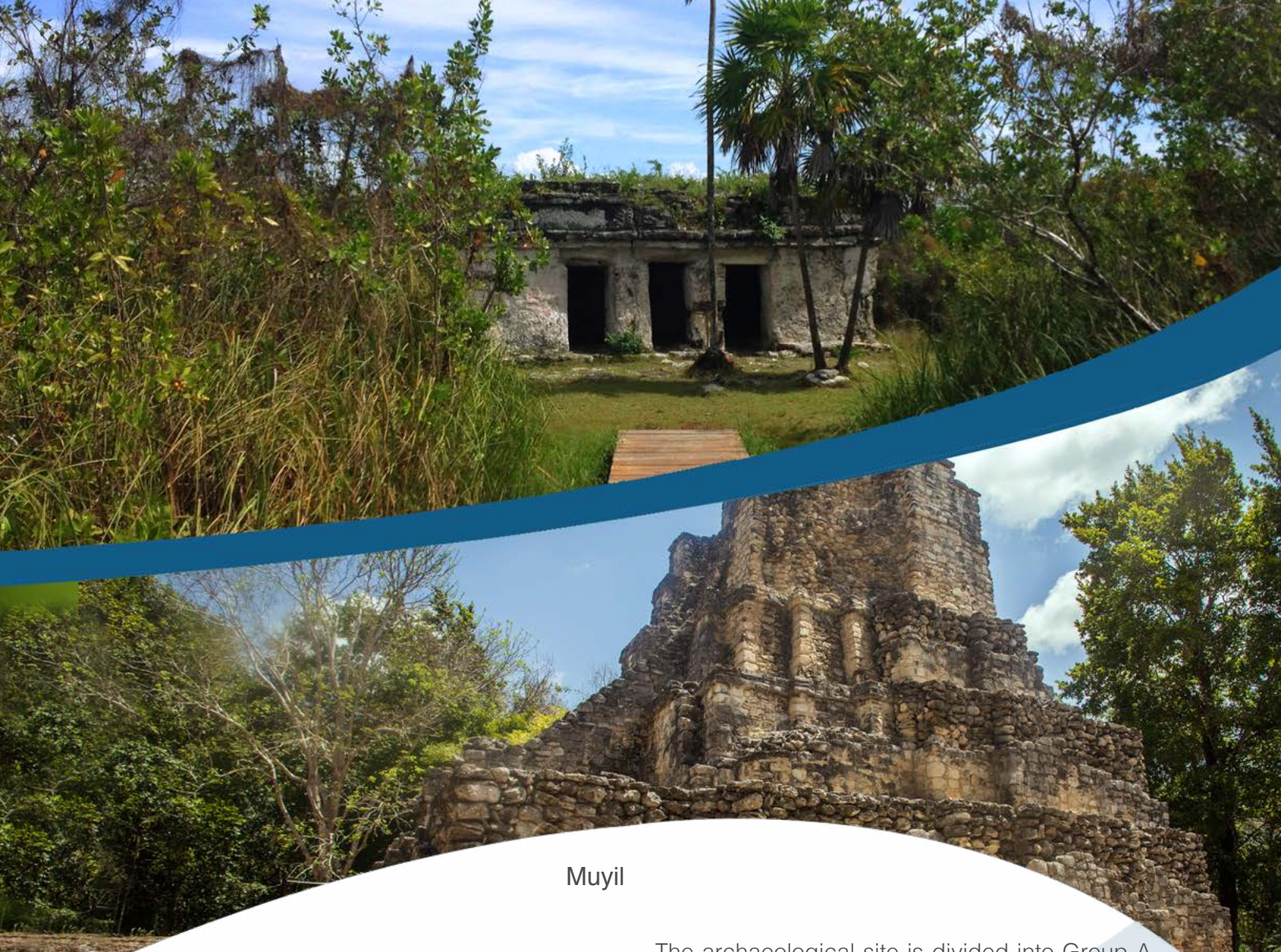
Among the most important groups are: Cobá, consisting of residential complexes, the most notably structure is known as “The Church”, a 25 meter high pyramid. The sacbé 9, the widest on the site, leads to the group of Macanxoc, a ceremonial complex where you can visit a collection of 8 carved stelae, altars and sanctuaries; Nohoch Mul with a 42 meters tall (138 feet) pyramid, the highest Mayan structure in the Yucatan peninsula, at the top of the pyramid there are fantastic views of jungle and surrounding lagoons. And the Group of Paintings, a large number of stelae (large stone slabs with drawings and glyphs that document major events and historical facts) protected by thatched roofs structures.

The buildings at Cobá are somewhat spread out, so you can rent inexpensive bicycle, there are even bikes for kids. They also have bicycle taxis for hire. The archaeological site includes a parking lot and the services of local guides located at the entrance of the site. Schedule: Daily from 8:00 to 18:00 hrs.

The small village of Cobá is colorful and has some small hotels, rustic palapas and restaurants offering typical dishes of the region. Some 8 miles north is Punta Laguna, a large inland lake famous for the abundance of spider monkeys of the area.

You can combine the tour to Cobá with the opportunity to discover and interact with local Mayan communities living in the deep inside the forest.





## Muyil

It is located deep in the jungle 25 kilometers (9.3 miles) south of Tulum on Highway 307, and the blue lagoon adds a new dimension to this Mayan ruins.

There is an observation tower to climb to get a good look over the treetops and enjoy a panoramic view of the lagoon and its connection to the Caribbean Sea. There is also a raised boardwalk that takes you through a marshy jungle littered with small cenotes.

This was one of the earliest and longest inhabited ancient Maya sites in the region. It dates from the late pre-classic era (300 aC-250 DC), and it was inhabited until the arrival of the Spaniards. Because of the proximity to Muyil lagoon the city is thought to have been an important stop in the Maya's maritime trade route along the coast.

Muyil is the most notable of the pre-Hispanic settlements of the Sian Ka'an Reserve. Here you can admire not only the ancient temples but also can enjoy a unique natural environment.

The archaeological site is divided into Group A and Group B. The first one is considerably extensive and it is conformed by religious and public buildings, platforms, vestiges of housing areas, and a 500-meter long sacbé, extended from the city to the mangrove swamp. In the Group B you will find pyramidal foundations and low platforms. The most notable structure is the remains of the 17-meter (56-foot) Castillo, with architectural features similar to those found in Petén. Also striking is the small building called Structure 7H3, a double temple with a small room, used for ceremonial purposes built over 750 years ago, and in the walls there is still evidence of stucco and wall paintings with colors like red, black and the characteristic Maya blue. Other important feature is the Temple 8 or Pink Palace, a rectangular building where you can still see evidence of the stucco the Mayans used to cover and decorate their buildings. Schedule: Every day from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.



# MAYAN ZONE

*"A WINDOW TO THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE MEXICAN CARIBBEAN"*

Located in the heart of the state of Quintana Roo, the Mayan zone is made up of communities dedicated to small-scale farming and inhabited by the descendants of the Mayans. The zone also includes Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Jose Maria Morelos, both have an important roll in the Caste War of Yucatan in 1847.

This region has a rich and unique cultural heritage, and has managed to preserve its established traditions, culture and identity throughout history.



## Felipe Carrillo Puerto

It is located about 69 km south of Tulum and more than 90% of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve is inside this municipality, including three important Maya ceremonial centers.

In addition to the traditions and culture you cannot miss:

## La Casa de la Cultura

The building dates from 1854 and belonged to General Venacio Puc, who plays an important roll in the War of the Castes. Later the place hosted the second government of the Noj Kaj Santa Cruz.

Nowadays, the building houses a cultural center that offers workshops, Mayan, dance and guitar lessons, among others; and it also has an exhibition room for all kind of art and is a venue for cultural events.

## Pila de los Azotes

It was built during 1864-1870 and was used to punish those who break the law and customs of the Mayan people. When a person was found guilty, he was conducted through the doors of the church, kneeling in front of the cross with the arms extended and received twelve lashes. Then the person had to pray seeking forgiveness. If the offender was a foreigner, he received the same punishment but not in the Church, in the Pile. Adultery was punished with fifty lashes and the aggrieved can poured orange juice into the wounds.

## Museo Chan Santa Cruz Balam Nah

The museum has five rooms and offers an exhibit of diverse objects found in the archaeological zones of the Mayan zone. It offers tour guide services. Schedule: Tuesday to Sunday from 9:00. to 15:00 hrs.



## Señor

Located just 18 miles (30 km) from Felipe Carrillo Puerto, it is an authentic Mayan community; the inhabitants are willing to open their hearts and homes to visitors. This is a way to learn about the daily life and social customs inherited from the ancient Mayas.

## Laguna Azul de Señor

The beautiful lagoon surrounded by lush jungle is only 7 km away from a little town known as “Señor”. The community offers tours to learn more about the local flora and fauna, especially about native medicinal plants. You can rent canoes and practice various water activities.

## Tihusco

This town full of culture and traditions is located less than an hour's drive away from



Felipe Carrillo Puerto. In the main plaza you can visit its monumental church and convent of the “Divino niño” (divine child). If you want to know more about the town history, you can visit the Museo de la Guerra de Castas (Museum of the Caste War in Yucatan) with an exhibit of paintings, sculptures, tools, archeological pieces and documents related to the indigenous movements against the Spanish conquerors.

## Ruta de las Iglesias (Route of the Churches)

This route follows the history of Franciscan evangelization during the colonial era. Despite the temples do not have elaborate ornamentation they worth visiting because you can find out about the formidable resistance faced by the Mayans to the conquerors. The route includes the temple of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Xcabil, the temple of the Virgen of Concepción in Huaymax, the church of San Pedro Apóstol in Sabay and the churches dedicated to San Francisco and the Virgin Mary in Sacalaca. This is a magical journey of discovering true Mayan communities.

## José María Morelos

Its history goes back to the pre-Hispanic era when it was inhabited by the indigenous Mayan in the territory of Cochua. Centuries later, many people from all over Mexico, arrived to set up chicle camps in the rainforest to extracted the sap of chicozapote; that is why there is a blend of Christian teachings with indigenous rituals and beliefs in the regional gastronomy and in the celebrations such as: Fiesta de los Reyes Magos (festival of the three Magic Kings), the Feria de la Primavera (Spring Fair) and the Celebración de las Tres Cruces (Celebration of the Three Crosses), during this celebration the people made pilgrimages to pray and plant a ceiba tree, generally considered the Maya tree of life.



# RIVIERA MAYA: HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME



## Cirque du Soleil

JOYÀ is the first and only resident show of Cirque du Soleil in the Riviera Maya. Follow the story of an alchemist and his granddaughter as they journey together to discover the secrets of life. JOYÀ combines culinary and performing arts in an intimate theater designed to engage the audience through the five senses. This is a thrilling, whimsical show in which joy, courage and friendship conquer all!

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

At Xcaret you will also find archaeological vestiges, since for the ancient Mayas, Xcaret (which they called Polé) was an important commercial and ceremonial center.

such as the Sea Turtle Protection Program and the Red Macaw Reproduction Program. The latter received the Guinness World Record in 2011, for the largest number of macaws born in the same facility in a lapse of twelve months.

During the year there are two special events that you can attend. In May the Sacred Mayan Journey takes place, which recreates the crossing of the Mayans in canoes to visit the oracle of the goddess Ixchel on Cozumel. And from October 31st to November 2nd, you can enjoy the Festival of Life and Death Traditions, which commemorate the Day of the Dead.

Schedule: Daily 8:30 to 10:30 hrs.

## Xcaret Park

Located just five minutes from Playa del Carmen, on the road to Tulum, you will find Xcaret. This natural place is the most emblematic park of the Riviera Maya and Mexico, and offers more than 50 attractions in the middle of the jungle, looking out to the Caribbean Sea, perfect for enjoying with family.

In this Majestic Paradise of Mexico, you can live the experience of swimming in Underground Rivers, relax in a cove, or swim in natural pools. Observe up close huge sea turtles, macaws and deer, or take walks in the jungle. Don't forget to visit the Coral Reef Aquarium, the Butterfly Pavilion and the Aviary.

The most beautiful cultural expressions of Mexico are found at Xcaret Park, such as the Ritual of the "Voladores" flying men, Mexican rodeo and pre-Hispanic dances. As the sun goes down, the Park shines with the Xcaret presentation, a trip through the history of Mexico with music and folklore, colorful costumes, and more than 300 artists on stage.

Other attractions are the replicas of a henequen hacienda and a traditional Mexican cemetery.

A ride in a speedboat, a walk on the seabed or swimming with dolphins is some of the optional extra cost activities that you can choose from at Xcaret.

The Park also has rest areas, hammocks, showers, bathrooms, lockers and more than 10 restaurants of various specialties.

Xcaret is EarthCheck certified for its sustainable programs,







## Xoximilco

Xoximilco Cancun offers an original Mexican-style option for those who want to celebrate at night with friends and family.

It is located 5 minutes from Cancun International Airport, at kilometer 338 of the Cancun-Chetumal highway.

At Xoximilco the party starts right away, with a traditional mini carnival, games, music and esquites, a delicious Mexican snack. There you will be received by your personal host, who will be accompanying you throughout your entire visit.

You then board your party barge adorned with colored lights to begin the tour through the jungle canals. During the trip, your host will recount legends and anecdotes from Mexico, and there will be unique games that will fill the atmosphere with laughter and fun.

In addition, on board the party barge you will delight with a delicious sampling dinner of varied typical Mexican dishes. To accompany your meal, we offer an open bar of beer, tequila, fresh flavored waters and soft drinks. And at the end, you can enjoy traditional desserts. There are also options for children and vegetarians.

There is a 10-minute stop to use the facilities, take pictures or just keep dancing. And at the end of the tour, you can buy souvenirs in the gift shop. To visit Xoximilco it is recommended to reserve in advance, since each barge has a maximum capacity of 20 people. Wear comfortable clothing (preferably pants or long skirt), and only use biodegradable insect repellent. The Park is recommended for children 5 and up. It is also recommended to purchase the transportation service, or go with a designated driver.

Schedule: Monday to Saturday. From September to March the first party barge leaves at 20:00 hrs and from April to August at 20:30 hrs.

Music is the special ingredient of the night. During the journey you'll approach different gondolas with live music from the mariachi, the "norteño" group and marimba, among others, to dance and sing along too.

## Xenotes Oasis Maya Tour

Xenotes Oasis Maya is a tour that takes you to experience the magic of four different types of cenotes, with a different activity in each one, with the comfort and security that characterizes the Experiencias Xcaret group.

The Xenotes Tour takes you to the heart of the Cenotes Route, located a few kilometers from Cancun, towards Playa del Carmen, at kilometer 22 of the Puerto Morelos-Leona Vicario highway.

There the Closed (or Cavern) Cenote awaits you, a jewel hidden underground. Discover it as you descend in Assisted Rappel to its beautiful turquoise waters.

The Ancient Cenote is an oasis that you can admire from the heights while sliding along a zip-line.

The Open Cenote is the perfect place to kayak and admire its walls full of vegetation and hanging gardens.

The underwater gardens of the Semi Open Cenote are a unique setting that you can see up close with the snorkeling activity.

The Xenotes Oasis Maya Tour is operated in small groups, and at all times you will be accompanied by a specialized guide, who will tell you interesting facts about the cenotes and the legends of the small guardians of the jungle that take care of them, the Aluxes.

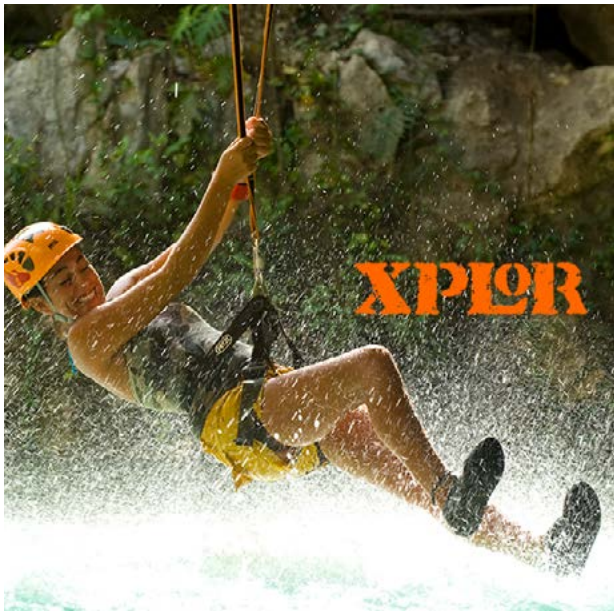
On the Tour there will be seasonal fruit, coffee, "champurrado" (a hot thick drink made of corn dough and chocolate), soft drinks, as well as a Glam Picnic for lunch in the middle of the jungle.

The minimum age to enjoy the Tour is 6 years. It is recommended to bring a change of dry clothes and avoid the use of cosmetics and perfumes, so as not to damage the ecosystem of the cenotes. Sunscreen and repellent should be biodegradable. The Tour includes the use of snorkeling equipment and two towels. Xenotes Oasis Maya operates from Monday to Saturday throughout the year, with pickup hours starting at 9:00 hrs. The Tour lasts approximately nine hours, including travel times.

For those who visit Cancun and the Riviera Maya, the cenotes are treasures of nature, and more than just getting to know them, you have to live them.







You can fly on the highest Zip-lines in the destination, the tallest at nearly 150 feet in the air! From there you have magnificent views of the jungle and the Caribbean Sea.

## Xplor Park

Located next to Xcaret and Xenses parks, the ideal place to live the adventure of the Riviera Maya is found, Xplor Park.

At Xplor you can fly on the highest Zip-lines in the destination, If you have never been on a zip-line, start with the flying hammock, which is not as high up, is very fun, and ends in a refreshing landing in the waters of a cenote.

Descend from the sky to the world beneath the Earth to get to know the Stalactite River, a wonderful scenario where you can swim in its crystalline waters while enjoying landscapes of caves, caverns, and even a surprise waterfall.

You can also tour another Subterranean River aboard a raft, paddling with special hand paddles, a unique activity to share as a couple or with friends.

The fun also extends into the jungle, where you can drive an Amphibious Vehicle through jungle trails, flooded caves, and over hanging bridges. Even the walks inside the Park are an experience, as you pass through caves full of stalactites and stalagmites formed millions of years ago. Meet up with your friends and family at the giant heart, the center of the Park and where all the fun begins.

There are two stations with fruit smoothies, coffee, hot chocolate, sweet bread and cookies to enjoy as many times as you want. In addition

there is a full buffet to satisfy your hunger after your adventure, and rest areas with hammocks and lounge chairs to relax. With your admission to Xplor, a locker for two is included, restrooms, showers and dressing rooms.

The Park is open Monday to Saturday from 9:00 to 5:00 hrs. and a minimum age of 5 years is recommended.

## Xplor Fuego

Here you will fly along on the only nighttime Zip-lines, with a view of the faintly lit jungle, until you pass through an arch of fire.

The paths of the jungle are lit with torches so you can tour them aboard Amphibious Vehicles, in a unique experience where you will hear the sounds of the jungle at sunset.

Come see the Lava River, where you can swim freely and safely while admiring incredible underground scenery. And take a ride on Volcanic Rafts, a unique attraction in which you can paddle with your own hands surrounded by the silence of the caves.

Whenever you want, visit the hot drink stations to enjoy a hot chocolate, a coffee or a "champurrado" (a hot thick drink made of corn dough and chocolate), accompanied by sweet bread and oatmeal cookies.

And for the perfect finish, enjoy an exquisite buffet with a specialty of BBQ ribs that satisfies even the hungriest adventurers! Don't worry, there are also options for vegetarians.

For those who wish to rest, there is a special area with hammocks and chairs located around a comfortable campfire, perfect for sharing your stories within the Park.

In addition, as part of your admission, you can make use of a locker for two people, showers, dressing rooms and restrooms.

All activities use modern and safe equipment, and the provided helmet is mandatory within the Park.

Xplor Fuego is recommended for visitors over 5 years old and is open from Monday to Saturday, from 5:30 to 23:00 hrs. For your convenience, choose the transportation service when you buy your admission.



Located next to Xcaret Park in the Riviera Maya is the only night park in the destination, Xplor Fuego. Starting at 5:30 p.m., the adventure is lived in the light of the moon and stars.





It is distinguished as being the only half-day park in the destination, with duration of 5 hours. It offers unique and extraordinary activities that will test each of your senses from the moment you arrive at the Park.

## Xenses Park

Xenses is the new park from Experiencias Xcaret, located by Xcaret in the Riviera Maya.

The Pinwheel is the central area of the Park, where you will find a very fun and original store, the snack area, restrooms and dressing rooms. From this place you can depart on multiple sensory activities and innovative routes through jungle and caves.

Among the attractions, you can enjoy the Xensatorium, a unique experience immersed in total darkness, where you'll tour various ecosystems using touch, hearing and smell.

In Riverlaxing you'll float on a salt river, and in Sludgerie you can play like a kid in a river of mud.

Feel the thrill of speed on the Slip waterslide and the fabulous Bird Flight zip-line, and enjoy the refreshing sensation of water at our Rain activity. The Town is an experience that will test your senses of sight and logic, where what you see is not what it seems.

In every corner of the Park you will find fantastic scenarios, for totally original photos.

The recommended minimum age is 5 years. Bring a towel, a change of dry clothes, and cash or credit card to buy original souvenirs or savor some snacks.

Xenses Park operates from Monday to Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. For those who purchase the transportation service, the following schedules are handled:

Schedule: Morning, arrival between 9:00 and 10:00 hrs. and departure between 14:00 and 15:00 hrs. Afternoon, arrival between 13:00 and 14:00 hrs. and departure between 18:00 and 19:00 hrs.

## Xel-Há Park

It is a Natural Wonder located about 30 miles from Playa del Carmen, and just a few minutes from Tulum.

Xel-Há Park is surrounded by jungle and is characterized by its large inlet, where three underground rivers join the sea. For its calm waters, it is a true paradise to snorkel and admire diverse species of fish, like snapper, bonefish, parrotfish, and sometimes even manta rays and sea turtles. Snorkeling equipment and lifeguards are already included in your admission, so you can enjoy unlimited and safe fun. You can also enjoy a relaxing trip down the river on an inner tube, between mangroves and beautiful natural landscapes.

Another way to get to know Xel-Há is through the jungle trails, on foot, by train or by bicycle. Along the way you will find fun attractions, such as rope challenges on the water, aquatic zip-lines and even the Cliff of Courage, where you can take a dip jumping from sixteen feet up. For the little ones, the Children's Playground has slides, hanging games, a waterslide and a special resting area with hammocks for parents.

Swimming with dolphins, walking on the seabed or snorkeling with diving technology are optional extra cost activities that you can experience during your visit.

If you arrive before 11:00 a.m. you can enjoy an exquisite continental breakfast, and from 12:30 p.m. on you can find delicious buffet meals, as well as unlimited refreshments and snacks for the rest of the day. There are also several souvenir shops throughout the park.

Schedule: Daily from 8:30 to 18:00 hrs.

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The Xichén Tours of Experiencias Xcaret are the most comfortable, safe and complete experiences to get to know Chichén Itzá and other important archaeological sites.

## Xichén Tours

The Xichén Tours of Experiencias Xcaret are the most comfortable, safe and complete experiences to get to know Chichén Itzá and other important archaeological sites.

All the tours include round trip transportation on comfortable buses, food, specialized bilingual guides and access to the archaeological sites that are visited.

Xichén Deluxe, is a tour to Chichén Itzá on a luxury bus with two bathrooms, gourmet breakfast and drinks on board. At the archaeological site we use a new radio guide system with headphones, so you don't miss anything the guide says. It includes a visit to the Magical Town of Valladolid, with a buffet lunch at the Casona de Valladolid Restaurant, and a visit to the Zací Cenote. Enjoy this Tour every day from Monday to Saturday.

Xichén Clásico, takes you to Chichén Itzá in comfortable transportation, with a guided tour to the archaeological site, and a visit with swim in the cenote IK'Kil, as well as lunch at the cenote restaurant (drinks not included). This Tour is available every day of the week.

Xel-Há – Tulum, combines the magnificence of the Caribbean-facing walled city of Tulum, with the Natural Wonder of Xel-Há Park. It includes unlimited snorkeling and various aquatic attractions. This Tour operates every

day of the year.

Xel-Há – Cobá, lets you explore the ancient Mayan capital of Cobá, and invites you to snorkel in the beautiful cove of Xel-Há, on the same day. This Tour is from Monday to Saturday.

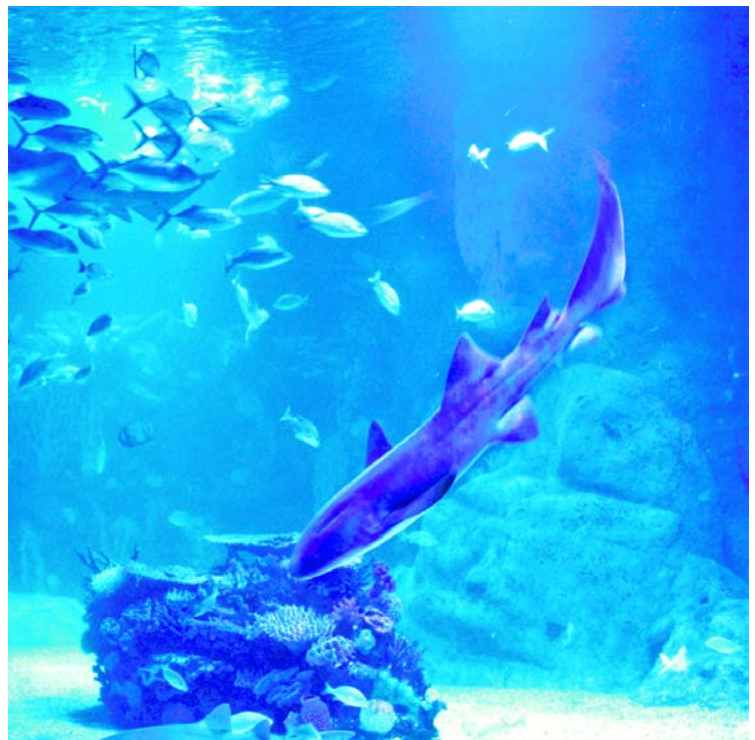
Xenses – Tulum, is a Tour where you can visit the best of nature and history that abounds at the archaeological site of Tulum, as well as the best place where you can connect with your senses, having a fun and fantastic day at Xenses Park.

## L'Aquarium

It is one of the best aquariums in Mexico and is located in the Calle Corazón shopping center in Playa del Carmen. It houses more than 10,000 animals of more than 200 underwater species distributed over 3 floors that contain 45 themed exhibitions offering diverse environments. For the non-diver or not quite convinced snorkeler, the aquarium provides a glimpse of what can be found under the sea. Beside it is wheelchair accessible, with elevators to all levels, bringing the reef to those who may not have the chance to snorkel or dive.

It promotes the care and conservation of endangered ecosystems. Opens daily, 11:00 to 21:00 hrs.

[www.blaulife.com.mx/](http://www.blaulife.com.mx/)







## Alltournative

Shortly, neighboring communities, adhered to the project potentializing the natural appeal of the forest, little valued until then, as well as the millenary inheritance of the Maya culture. It is thus committed to the Maya communities and with the responsible use of natural resources, we show to the world the historical and natural grandeur of our destiny through five extraordinary experiences:

**Maya Encounter:** cradle of our origin and where you will be able to visit the impressive archaeological site of Coba, crossing its old trails until arriving at the highest Maya temple of the region; delve into nature and meet a real Maya family in the community that keeps the secrets of their ancestors, as well as immerse yourself in ancient cenotes of crystal-clear waters and delight you with a typical lunch.

**Cenote Maya Native Park:** explore the majestic Cenote Maya with the largest dome in the Yucatan Peninsula. You can swim in this natural jewel and enjoy some adventure activities. Discover the Maya culture, visit an authentic Maya house, participate in an authentic blessing ceremony and enjoy traditional buffet prepared with organic vegetables from our own orchard.

**Emotions Native Park:** experience the emotion of driving an ATV vehicle through jungle trails. Enjoy pleasant walks immersed in a protected natural area to explore caves, fly above vegetation with zip lines, discover archaeological vestiges, learn about the lifestyle of the region's first inhabitants <Casa de los Sueños> and swim in a beautiful crystal-clear water cenote.

**Emotions Jungle Night:** true adventurers are the only ones ready to embrace nature in the dark. Our guided ATV's ride allows you to indulge your inner explorer and tune into all your senses to discover what lies beneath darkness. Follow

your tour guide walking through the jungle to discover beautiful caves and fly above vegetation with three impressive zip lines. According to Maya culture, light and darkness is only one; unveil the mystic Maya heritage by participating in a shaman's blessing ceremony in a torch lit night and in a relaxing temazcal session. Legends come to life by the bonfire.

**Jungle Maya Native Park:** discover Jungla Maya Native Park which is the main entrance into the amazing Sac-Actun system, the world's longest underground river, explored and recommended by National Snorkeler specialized cave divers. Snorkel surrounded by awesome rock formations. Ride through the jungle on our all-terrain vehicles. Rappel down into a cenote (sinkhole) and swim in a unique natural pool. Enjoy nature flying over the jungle on exciting zip-lines. Participate in a traditional Maya blessing ceremony.

**Snorkel Native Park:** get to know the incredible marine life by snorkeling in two different reefs of the National Park of Puerto Morelos, the second largest barrier reef in the world. Discover the underwater world inhabited by beautiful multicolored fish and spectacular reef formations. Learn about local biodiversity thanks to the explanations provided by our specialized guides. Rest in the charming and exclusive beach club while admiring the turquoise tones of the Caribbean Sea and enjoy a delicious traditional meal and open bar. Enjoy the best snorkel adventure in Riviera Maya!

In 1998, carrying out the first explorations, we arrived at Pac Chen, an isolated Maya community that was about to sign a timber agreement involving the logging of more than 2,500 hectares of forest. Convincing them that instead of deforesting, develop altogether ecotourism, began the great Adventure Alltournative.





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## Aktun-Chen

The park has an area of 988 acres of unexplored rainforest and three caves with a “cenote”. The main cave is now suitable for an easy walking tour, which has been enhanced with indirect lighting for a better view and enjoyment. The natural park offers a guided walk through 600-meter (0.4 mile) dry cave, and during the tour the guide gives an interesting explanation of the origin of the cave system in the Yucatan Peninsula. After the underground tour, you'll have a chance to swim and snorkel in the crystalline waters of the sacred cenote, a mystical experience. The National Geographic Society has included Aktun Chen on the list of the Top 10 Best and Most Impressive Underground Walkways in the World.

You can also fly over a kilometer (0.62 mile) through 10 zip lines and two suspension bridges; contemplate the lush tropical jungle. It features a restaurant. Schedule: Monday to Saturday from 9:00 to 16:30 hrs.

## Chikin-Há

An eco-park with three different cenotes, one open and the other two are semi-opened. Explore an extraordinary system of cenotes while swimming and snorkeling in their crystalline waters. You can also practice rappel and set out on flight over the jungle's foliage on an exciting zip-line. Take a bike journey through jungle paths or immerse yourself in a traditional Mayan ceremony, including the temazcal, a steam bath used by the Mayans and experience this soul and body purification.

Opens daily from 9:00 to 17:00 hrs.



## Kantun Chi

Its name means “yellow stone mouth” in Mayan. An ecopark where you can swim in wonderful fresh water cenotes and explore an underground cavern. You can also enjoy all the flora and fauna surrounding these magnificent caves and cenotes. Schedule: Daily from 9:00 to 17:00 hrs.

## Akumal Monkey Sanctuary

This is a great experience for the whole family, home for rescued and donated primates and other species. During the tour the guide will take you to the Mayan jungle to admire the surroundings that includes a beautiful cenote; on the way you can interact with spider monkeys, capuchin monkeys, lemurs and other animals such as goats, boas and macaws, among others. Opens daily 9:00 to 17:00 hrs.







## BIOSPHERE RESERVE SIAN KA'AN

This reserve is one of Mexico's largest protected areas with 1.6 million-acre of intricately linked marine, coastal and terrestrial ecosystems, along with 120 kilometers of marine area with a valuable part of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef and seagrass beds in the shallow bays. The diversity of life in Sian Ka'an is exceptional; it has tropical rainforest, mangroves, petenes, wetlands, savannah and sea. A geological, biological and cultural particularity are the "cenotes", deep natural sinkholes harboring fascinating life forms, many of them endemic.

It has been found over 850 vascular plants, including 120 woody species, 375 bird species and 115 species of mammals, 90 species of native bees, 47 species of dragonflies, 74 species of beetles, 276 species of crustaceans, 310 species of mosquitoes, 318 species of butterflies and 1,048 species of flora. With some 84-recorded species of reef-building coral the portion of the Mesoamerican Reef within the property is one of the richest in Mexico. Here it is easy to find shark, shad, parrotfish, butterfly fish, barracuda, grouper, and moray eels, among others. Its beaches are important breeding areas for green, loggerhead, hawksbill, and leatherback

turtles. The wetlands are the inhabitant of manatees and two species of endangered crocodiles.

Inside the Reserve are 23 Mayan sites and two fishing villages, Boca Paila and Punta Allen. This is the only sector of the Reserve that is open to a very limited tourist development, and there are private houses where you can feel in a secluded tropical paradise of crystal clear waters and gorgeous soft white sand beaches. Punta Allen is considered one of the best locations for fly-fishing in Mexico.

Kayak between the mangrove-filled channels and quiet lagoons of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere, an incredible journey into a pristine wetland filled with birds, and experience firsthand the incredible natural diversity of the Reserve. The diving and snorkeling are fabulous as well.

In 1987, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve was declared a World Heritage Site for its exceptional natural beauty and extraordinary biodiversity.



# WHAT TO DO IN THE RIVIERA MAYA

	Akumal	Akúñ Chen	Boca Paila / Punta Allen	Chikín Hā	Cobá	Kantun Chi	Playa del Carmen	Puerto Aventuras	Playas del Norte	San Ka'an	Tulum	Xcaret	Xel-Há	Xenotes Tour	Xenses	Xplor	Xplor Fuego	Zona Maya
CAMPING	✓		✓		✓					✓	✓							
SCUBA DIVING	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
CAVE DIVING	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓							
BUGGY TOUR							✓											
BIKING			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					✓
ATV's	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓							
STINGRAY ENCOUNTER												✓	✓					
GOLF							✓	✓	✓									
FLYBOARD							✓											
KAYAK	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓
KITESURF							✓		✓		✓							
RELEASING BABY SEA TURTLES	✓									✓								
SWIM IN A CENOTE	✓	✓		✓		✓					✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
SWIMMING WITH DOLPHINS							✓	✓			✓	✓	✓					
SWIMMING WITH SHARKS							✓	✓				✓						
BIRDWATCHING	✓		✓		✓					✓	✓	✓						
OFF ROAD	✓						✓											
PADDLE SURF	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
HORSEBACK RIDING							✓		✓		✓							
SKYDIVING							✓											
FISHING	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
FLY FISHING			✓							✓	✓							
UNDERGROUND RIVERS		✓										✓			✓	✓	✓	
SEA TREK												✓	✓					
HIKING		✓				✓						✓	✓		✓			✓
SNORKEL	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
SNUBA												✓	✓					
SPA	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					
SPEED BOAT												✓	✓					
TEMASCAL				✓			✓				✓	✓	✓					
ZIPLINE		✓		✓										✓	✓	✓	✓	
AMPHIBIOUS VEHICLE																✓	✓	
SAILING	✓																	
PARASAILING							✓		✓									
WINDSURF	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓							





## GOLF IN THE RIVIERA MAYA

*SURROUNDINGS DESIGNED BY THE GODS OF THE GAME  
BETWEEN JUNGLE, LAGOONS, CENOTES AND MAYAN RUINS.*

The topography of Riviera Maya offers a beautiful variety of settings for playing Golf. There are luxury hotels with top-level golf courses designed by J. Nicklaus, P. Dye, and G. Norman, among others. There is a golf course to suit every taste and skill level, with magnificent views of the surrounding scenery.

***Iberostar Playa Paraíso Golf Club.*** The latest creation of P.B. Dye. It is an 18-hole Par 72 course carved out of the ancient Mayan jungle. The course boasts dramatic vertical elevation changes, is one of the best golf destinations around the world.

***Vidanta Golf Riviera Maya.*** An 18-hole-Niklaus Design golf course. It features traps of radiant, white sand, lakes surrounded by natural rocks and the intense color of the greens. It is a garden of delights for golf lovers.

***El Camaleón Mayakoba.*** An 18-hole Par 72 golf course designed by Greg Norman. The course stretches from the jungle to the mangroves and on to the most beautiful ocean views, is the first

course in Mexico to be chosen by the PGA.

***Grand Coral Golf Riviera Maya.*** An 18-hole course Par 71 design by Nick Price. The stunning course provides a fun and challenging golf experience, but also preserves a vital habitat for local plant and animal life. The layout winds through dense jungle that opens to stunning views of the Caribbean Sea.

***Hard Rock Golf Club Riviera Maya.*** A 18-hole Par 72 golf course designed by Robert Von Hagge, is surrounded by a diversity of lakes, cenotes (sinkholes), archeological sites and exuberant vegetation, and considered to be one of the most challenging golf courses in the area.

***Puerto Aventuras Golf & Racquet Club.*** This beautiful 9-hole, par 36, was designed by Thomas Leman and is still one of the best-kept secrets in the Riviera Maya. The field is covered by a smooth carpet of Bermuda grass, surrounded by palm trees, bougainvillea, tropical trees, and lush foliage.

***Riviera Maya Golf Club.*** An 18-holes Par 72 + 9 holes Par 27 golf course design by Robert Trent Jones II. It is an extraordinary Golf Course. 90 hectares in the middle of the rainforest.


















## FISHING IN THE RIVIERA MAYA

The Riviera Maya fishing is renowned all over the world, and is on the list of the most amazing fishing destinations. The natural geology of this area works in the fisherman's favor, the waters are teeming with fish. The deep-water channel between the Yucatan Coast and Quintana Roo squeeze the Gulf Stream as it passes by on its journey northward. This "funnel" effect causes an upwelling and an abundance of fish.

In the Riviera Maya, anglers of all skill levels are able to enjoy fly fishing, deep sea fishing and light tackle fishing. The waters of the Riviera Maya are home to more than 35 large species of fish including Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Sailfish, Wahoo, Dorado (Mahi-Mahi), Tuna, Kingfish, Barracuda, Grouper, and Snapper, just to name the most popular among anglers.

Ascencion Bay and the lagoons in Boca Paila are some of the best places for sport fishing; there are hundreds of square miles of crystal clear flats where it's common to see

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
 AMBER JACK	**	**	**	**	*	*	*	**	**	**	**	**
 BARRACUDA	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
 BLACK FIN TUNA	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
 BLUE MARLIN	*	*	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
 BONITO	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
 DORADO	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*	*
 GROUPE	**	**	**	**	*	*	**	**	**	**	**	**
 KING FISH	**	**	**	**	*	*	*	**	**	**	**	**
 SAILFISH	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
 SNAPPER	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
 WHITE MARLIN	*	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*

\* LOW SEASON

\*\* MEDIUM

\*\*\* HIGH SEASON

bonefish, permit, tarpon, snook and jacks or barracuda in the same day, all year round.

Fly-fishing is practiced in the area of Punta Allen, Capechen Lagoon and San Miguel Lagoon. The high season goes from March to June.

You can hire deep-sea fishing charters from the hotels or in some marinas located in Playa del Carmen, Xpu-Ha, Kantenah, Akumal, Puerto Aventuras, and Tulum. The boats have all the fishing equipment and the captain and crew will help enhance your experience.







## THE UNDERWATER WORLD IN THE RIVIERA MAYA DIVING

*PRIVILEGE OF ADVENTURERS, DIVE IN CENOTES,  
CAVES AND REEFS*

### *REEF DIVING IN THE RIVIERA MAYA*

**Cerebros (Brains)**, properly named after the abundant brain corals in the area. This is a shallow dive that bottoms out at 35ft/12m in sand. There is almost no current and the visibility ranges from 40-70ft (15m – 20m). This is home to many lobsters, crabs, moray eels, and scorpionfish.

**Los Arcos (The arches)**, is the deepest dive out of Playa. It's a wall dive with the top of the wall starting at 75ft (24m) and bottoms out in sand at 110ft (33m). The site has two beautiful arches. The average visibility is around 100ft (30m). The depths along with the currents make this one of our most advanced dives.

**Pared Verde (Green Wall)**, spectacular coral formations full of marine life. The top of the wall starts at 75ft (24m) and bottoms out in sand at 100ft (30m). The current here is moderate and the average visibility is 100ft (30m). There is a chimney style swim thru towards the end of the dive. Here you can see turtles, stingrays, barracudas, and large moray eels.

**Moc-che Deep**, is a continuous wall dive that starts in 65ft (20m) and bottoms out in sand at 100ft (30m). There is a light to moderate current present with an average visibility of 100ft (30m). During the winter, bull sharks can sometimes be seen.

The Riviera Maya provides divers with a world of underwater options. With the second largest reef in the world along its coastline, is a one-of-a-kind experience. There are facilities, instructors and equipment rentals at Playa del Carmen, Xcaret, Paamul, Puerto Aventuras, Xpu-Há, Kantenah, Chemuyil, Xcacel and Akumal, known as a diver's paradise.

**Moc-Che Shallow**, is a winding reef that gently slopes down to sand. There are numerous coral formations. The top of the reef is in 25ft (8m) and bottoms out in sand at 40ft (14m). There is a light to moderate current with an average visibility of 70ft (20m). The highlight of the dive is a beautiful arch covered in coral, home to a large green moray eel.

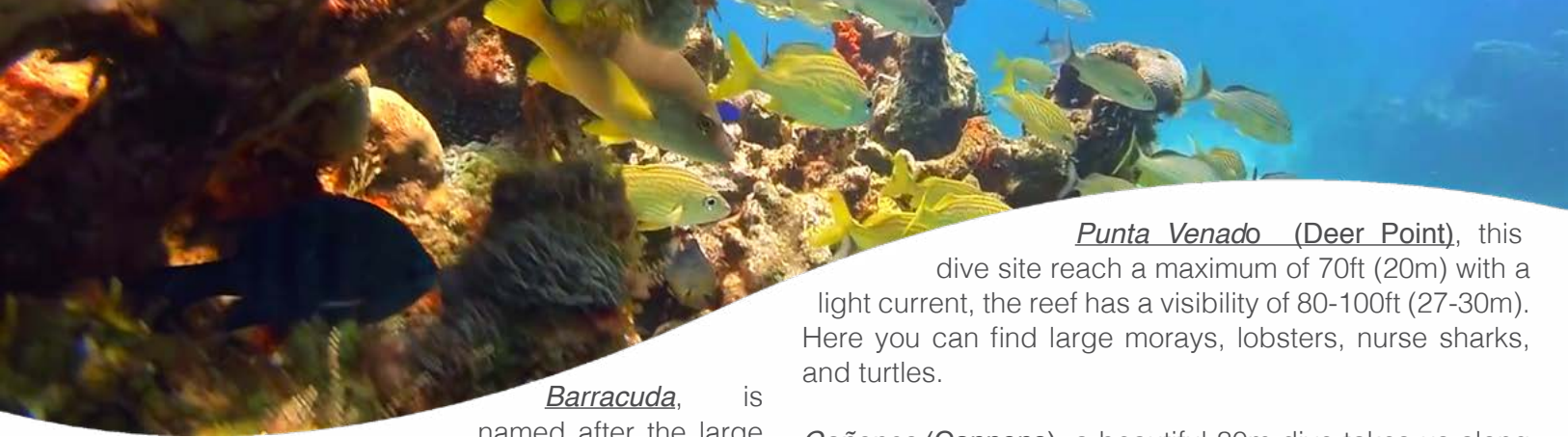
**Jardines (Gardens)**, this is a reef plenty of color and sea life. A shallow dive takes us to a maximum of 70ft (20m) with an average visibility of 70ft (20m). It is easy to spot moray eels, lobsters and in some months you can find nurse sharks. It is a good place for beginners.

**Chunzumbul**, is a garden like reef with a depth of 35ft (12m). There is little or no current with an average visibility of 70ft (20m). Here you can find small rays, arrow crabs, pipefish, flounders, schools of snappers, grunts, and porkfish. This is a nice place for beginners.

**Sábalos (Tarpon)**, a finger reef that has ledges and overhangs. The depths range from 20-50ft (6m-14m) and the average visibility is around 70ft (20m). There can be moderate to strong currents here. Sometimes a large school of tarpon and large rays can be seen towards the end of the dive.







**Barracuda**, is named after the large barracudas that can be seen in this reef. This site is a set of finger reefs with lots of ledges and overhangs to explore. There is moderate to strong current here with visibility around 70ft (20m). The depths range from 20-50ft (6m-14m). There are large schools of fish around all the ledges as well as large morays, lobsters, king crabs, pipefish and seahorses.

**Tortuga (Turtles)**, is a gently sloping reef where you can find Hawksbills, Loggerheads, and Green sea turtles feeding. The reef starts in 60ft (18m) and fade out into sand at 120ft (40m). There is always a light to moderate current and the average visibility is 100ft (30m). Some of the sightings here include, bull and hammerhead sharks, manta and spotted eagle rays, and in some rare cases whale sharks.

**Mama Viña**, you will find a shrimp boat intentionally sunk covered with reef; due to its depth 90ft (28m) and strong currents; this is a dive for experienced divers only. The scenery here is dramatic, and with an average of 100ft/30m visibility, makes for great underwater photography.

**Islote**, is a slope dive with fantastic visibility ranging from 100-130ft (30-40m). There is a light current, a good place for underwater photography. The top of the slop is in 70ft (20m) and slopes steeply to 110ft (33m). The reef is home to lobsters, turtles, large king crabs, nurse sharks, large stingrays, and a huge school of horse-eyed jacks. In summer, sailfish and marlin

can be seen here.



**Punta Venado (Deer Point)**, this dive site reach a maximum of 70ft (20m) with a light current, the reef has a visibility of 80-100ft (27-30m). Here you can find large morays, lobsters, nurse sharks, and turtles.

**Cañones (Cannons)**, a beautiful 30m dive takes us along amazing coral canyons with rich marine life.

**Meros (Groupers)**, the depths range from 49-82ft (15-25m), it is a great place to find large groupers and often boasts schools of jacks and colorful fish.

**Cuevitas (Small Caves)**, this dive site is full of swim-trough's and overhangs covered with colorful corals; a shallow dive takes us to a maximum of 15m is perfect for beginners, turtles and large barracudas are often seen here.

**Escuelitas**, 2 large patches of coral surrounded by schools of tropical fish, not reaching a depth beyond 10m with good visibility, another excellent choice for beginners.

**El Dorado**, deep canyons of this dive site reach a maximum of 38m, but is generally dived to 30m; home to a wide variety of corals and sponges; you can see barracudas, rays, large moray eels and nurse sharks.

**Cuernos de Alce (Deer Antlers)**, boasts a large number of huge antler shaped corals, the habitat of many schools of fish; this dive site reach a maximum of 75ft (25m).

**Sirenis**, this dive site reach up to 58m; during the winter you can see hammerhead sharks, although the current tends to be strong, you can also make dive between 91-111ft (28-34m). Here you can expect to see very large schools of barracudas and turtles.

**Bublemaker**, here even the little ones can join in on the diving fun; from eight years of age your kids can enjoy, under the supervision of an instructor, a dive to a maximum of 2 meters surrounded by colorful fish and a amazing reef.





## DIVING IN A CENOTE

The Riviera Maya is known for the best cenotes-cavern diving in the world. There are more than 100 cenotes, 52 of which have been identified as sufficient for diving and snorkeling. Diving conditions in caves are ideal with crystal clear freshwater, pleasant warm temperature year-round (77°F), relative shallow depths (25ft-40 ft.), no current, super visibility and caverns beautifully decorated by stalactites, stalagmites, columns and amazing coral and seashell's fossils.

Some caves have open entrance like: Angelita, Pit, or Garden of Eden Ponderosa, Car Wash or Aktun-Ha, and Skull or Temple of Doom; some others like Chak Mool, Dream Gate, Dos Ojos and Tajmahal have room entrance.

Diving between stalactites and eslagamites where visibility is as clear as the air is to immerse yourself in what the Mayans considered the entrance to the mythical underworld.

## SHARK DIVING

Shark diving has recently grown in popularity worldwide, and Playa del Carmen the best bull shark feed in the Americas. From November until end of February, you can dive with bull shark. On this dive you will be standing on a sandy bottom while the dive master feed these amazing animals. These sharks gets a maximum size of 11,5ft (3,5m) and a maximum weight of 440lb (200 kg), are not shy and they swim among divers. This is a unique, enlightening, amazing, and exhilarating experience.



## SNORKEL

Most of the beaches in the Riviera Maya are excellent for snorkeling. Among the best places are: Punta Bete, Xcalacoco, Playa del Carmen, Xcaret, Paamul, Puerto Aventuras, Xpu-Ha, Kantenah, Akumal, Chemuyil Xcacel and Xel-Ha with its interconnected underground rivers. Other options include Boca Paila and Punta Allen. You can also snorkeling in a Cenote, and enjoy crystal clear waters.

## REEFS AND CENOTES TO DIVE







# WEDDINGS AND ROMANCE

With year-round nice weather, lush tropical jungles and the beautiful Caribbean beaches, Riviera Maya has been recognized as one of the most romantic destination.

Celebrate the wedding of your dreams in one of the most beautiful place in the world, either in the beach or in luxury venues with creative cuisine inspired in the Mexican traditions or international fusion.

You can have a Maya Wedding in an ancestral environment like a cenote with mystical moments. A Maya Shaman (spiritual leader) will bless the bride and the groom surrounded by the scent of copal incense, candle lights and flowers.

There are many options, you can stay in a honeymoon suite at a luxury boutique resort, retreat to a hidden intimate bungalow, rent a wonderful room in a all-inclusive resort, even get a private butler. You can also relax and rejuvenate with a special couple spa treatment in one of the many spas of the area, or just indulged in a private sunset cruise.

Tulum is “the place” for a romantic getaway. You can stay in a comfortable hotel room in a boutique hotel or in a candle-lit rustic cabin with a thatched roof. The sunrise in this place is one of the most beautiful along the coast.

During the day there are many options to have fun along the Riviera Maya.

You can visit the nearby Mayan archaeological sites, enjoy the many activities offer in the ecological parks like ziplining above the jungle, cave spelunking, swimming in a fresh water cenote, swimming with the dolphins or with the sharks, or even swimming alongside with whale sharks.

And for the night, Playa del Carmen offers a vibrant scene with live music, many places to dance and theatrical performances.





# WELLNESS

## *HOLISTIC EXPERIENCES WITH ANCIENT HEALING THERAPIES*

The world's luxury destination spas are the ultimate in stress-free vacationing, and the Riviera Maya offer the best facilities in the country. In several locations you can find the best of the best in Spa services, both in treatments and in idyllic settings.

Imagine receiving a therapeutic and relaxing massage while listening to the sound of the waves, or immerse yourself in the ambiance of a unique sauna and allow the aromatic fragrances transport you into universe of distress.

Many focus on holistic wellness with the practice of yoga & meditation or simply pampered yourself with a range of beauty treatments designed to relax and revitalize.

Riviera Maya offers wonderful clean and modern facilities in an alluring environment, as well as highly trained and certified professionals. Many of the treatments are based on techniques that combine ancient Mayan healing rituals with the latest advances in aromatherapy, hydrotherapy and physiotherapy.

Featured treatments include relaxing massages, the latest in aromatherapy, crystal therapy (Crystal Healing), hydrotherapy, reflexology, and physiotherapy all performed with traditional organic methods, or the exotic 'Hamam Bath'. Of course there is the unique experience of Temazcal, a ritualistic treatment that weaves together ancient traditions to leave an overall feeling of cleanliness, calm and inner peace.

Riviera Maya also provides high quality and safe cosmetic procedures, including botox, Mesolift, and High-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) for body sculpting, among other treatments.



## DINING IN THE RIVIERA MAYA

In The Riviera Maya destination cuisine is mostly seafood based, but there is also a region's distinctive cuisine, a delightful combination of Spanish and Mayan heritage. The traditional cuisine of the Yucatan Peninsula uses a variety of spices, sweet chili, seeds, oregano, achiote, red onion, bitter orange, lime, and xcatic chile.

This premium destination with a cosmopolitan flair has an ever-evolving cuisine as talented chefs use fresh local ingredients and innovative culinary creations to present their signature dishes to the critics and connoisseur of food and drinks. Riviera Maya offers a diverse and attractive dining experience.

If you consider yourself a big foodie or a gourmand, you will find a wide range of culinary choices to suit every taste! There is a wide variety of award-winning restaurants that offer exquisite fusion food or that serve food from every corner of the world: Italian, Argentine, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Cuban, French ...

In Riviera Maya the whole family will enjoy the dining experience and sample all types of cuisine.

### *THE CULINARY ART OF MAYAN CUISINE*

The regional dishes have a clear Mayan influence; even some of them are still prepared as they were in the pre-Hispanic era. This food is a great addition to any travel experience, you may try: papadzules (tortillas rolled around a filling of hard-boiled eggs and topped with a sauce made of pumpkin seeds and tomato); cochinita pibil (marinated suckling pig wrapped in spices and banana leaves, cooked in a barbecue pit); huevos motuleños (fried eggs served on tortillas with refried black beans and a tomato-based sauce); Dzotobichay, tamales with Greens, Pumpkin Seeds and Egg; sopa de lima, a broth-like soup made from chicken stock and lima (citrus fruit similar to lime), filled with chunks of chicken and fried tortilla; and the pescado tikinxic, fish prepared with sour orange, peppers, tomatoes, red onions, and spices grilled over charcoal, and wrapped in banana leaf. The habanero sauce is always available to accompany any dish, but you have to be careful since it is one of the most intensely spicy species of chili peppers.

You can try the Xtabentun, the traditional Mayan beverage, an anise liqueur made from anise seed, and fermented honey.







**RIVIERA MAYA**  
Paradise is Forever