

Mazatlan, Mexico: Just the facts

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We were in [Mazatlan, Mexico](#) recently for their 17th Fiesta Amigos, an annual event that invites travel agents, writers and bloggers to visit and experience what they have to offer. On a Monday through Friday visit, I learned a great deal about the city of Mazatlan and have shared much of it here. Mingled in with a number of posts were all the numbers and facts about Mazatlan which I have for you right here today. Actually, this is in

response to Jack R's question: *"Enough already with the glowing reports about Mazatlan, can I get just the facts about the place?"* You got it Jack. Here we go:

LOCATION

Located on Mexico's Pacific Coast at the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains, Mazatlán is Mexico's second largest coastal city with nearly 600,000 inhabitants. Visitors enjoy an authentic mix of culture and history within a modern destination. The city's two main areas include the revitalized Old Mazatlán historic district and Zona Dorada (Golden Zone), the main shopping, dining and entertainment corridor. Both areas are connected by a seven-mile coastal road that borders golden-sand beaches.

CLIMATE

Mazatlán enjoys temperate, tropical weather year-round. With temperatures ranging from the mid-60s to mid-90s, Mazatlán is an ideal destination any time of year.

HISTORY

Mazatlán, meaning "land of the deer," derived its name from the Nahuatl Tribes for the herds that once migrated along the countryside. It is often referred to as the "Pearl of the Pacific," settled by the Spanish in 1531, making it one of the oldest ports in the Americas. Mazatlán gained prominence due to the nearby gold and silver mines of Rosario, Copala and Panuco. By the early 1600s, gold and silver shipments from the nearby mines poured through Mazatlán's harbor. Frequent pirate attacks stifled early development. Pirates were gone by 1800, but legends of buried treasures in the caves along the coast still circulate.



By the 1840s, American settlers were flowing through Mazatlán on their way to the gold fields of California. At the end of the 19th century, Mazatlán was becoming a thriving new world seaport. The rich culture found in Mazatlán today can be attributed to a mix of each migrant, native Indian and foreigner. After being discovered by Hollywood in the 1940s, Mazatlán became known as the first '[Mexican Riviera](#)' resort. This once small fishing village has evolved into one of Mexico's major seaport cities and tourist resorts.

LODGING

One of the largest destinations on Mexico's Pacific Coast, Mazatlán boasts more than 150 hotel and condominium properties. Accommodations are available to fit all interests and budgets, from charming beachside cottages and haciendas to private ocean villas and luxury resorts with spas, championship golf courses, award-winning restaurants, high-tech fitness centers, lively bars and more. For detailed hotel information and a full listing of Mazatlán Hotel Association members, visit www.gomazatlan.com.

DINING/ENTERTAINMENT

Mazatlán's vibrant culinary scene caters to a wide range of palates and travel budgets. In this seaside destination, acclaimed local chefs fuse bold flavors and fresh seafood straight from the [Pacific Ocean](#). Mazatlán's most popular dish is plump shrimp caught just offshore. Fishermen are found every morning selling their catches of the day in outdoor markets along the Malecón oceanfront boardwalk, or in beachside palapa huts. Mazatlán also boasts rich regional cuisine that features pork, lamb and beef prepared with local ingredients and spices.

Other culinary offerings include Spanish, Seafood, Chinese, Barbeque, Italian, Japanese, Continental and authentic Mexican. The luxurious Golden Zone district offers gourmet cuisine and ocean views at premier restaurants, while residents and visitors dine al fresco at charming sidewalk cafés in Old Mazatlán. There are also a few U.S. based fast-food outlets and chain restaurants, including Domino's Pizza, Subway, Dairy Queen, [McDonald's](#) and Burger King.

Entertainment venues range from contemporary clubs, bars and lounges to hotel fiestas. The most popular establishments in the region include: Bora Bora, Valentino's, Heaven, Señor Frog's, Dolche, La Tertulia, El Cielo, Vintage Café Pacífico, Lorna, Wings Army, Mil Amores, La Mona, Beli Pub, Bichos Bar, Canucks, Zumbawa, Joe's Oyster Bar and Kelly's Bar. Mexican Fiesta shows are available twice weekly at El Cid Castilla and Playa Mazatlan Hotels.



SPORTS

Mazatlán is known worldwide as a premier sports-fishing destination, with the country's largest sports-fishing fleet. The coastal waters here teem with Pacific sailfish, marlin, yellowfin tuna, wahoo, and dorado. Fishing expeditions can be booked from several sport-fishing operations with more than five-dozen boats.

Golf enthusiasts discover first-class golf resorts. As host of several Canadian PGA tournaments, the renowned El Cid Golf and Country Club offers 27 holes of golf: an 18-hole championship course and the Marina Nine, a Lee Trevino design. The par-72 layout plays up to 6,880 yards. El Cid also holds two prestigious annual tournaments: the Tom Garcia spring tournament and El Cid Amateur tournament, which takes place in the fall(...).

BEACHES

The golden-sands of Mazatlán stretch for 16 miles along the Pacific coastline, making this one of Mexico's longest strips of beach. The most popular beachfronts are located in the Golden Zone, where the water is calm for swimming and watersports. They include: Playa Sabalo and Las Gaviotas, Playa Olas Altas, Playa Norte and Playa Los Cerritos. Several beach areas also produce strong waves ideal for surfing. At Playa Bruja, an international surfing tournament is held each year. Numerous surf shops and surf camps offer personalized lessons for beginners. Mazatlán is also known as a world-premier sports-fishing destination, with the country's largest sports-fishing fleet. The Marina Mazatlan project will

develop the marina with new high-rise luxury resorts, signature golf courses, a massive convention center, gourmet restaurants, world-class spas and nightlife.

SHOPPING

Local merchants bring the rich heritage of Mazatlán to life with a variety of handcrafts and artwork. In the Golden Zone, visitors find a wide variety of shops that offer carved wood figures, hand-woven baskets, pottery, jewelry, leather goods, blankets and metalwork. Travelers can also find authentic musical instruments, hand-painted ceramics and other local artwork in many of the city's shops and art galleries. At the Mercado Central, open-air stalls sell fresh produce, fish, meat and other goods. Popular Mazatlán shops include: Casa Maya, Centro Commercial Las Cabanas, Designer's Bazaar, Diamonds International, Evolution Book Store, Indio Gifts, Sea Shell City Museum and the Mazatlán Art Gallery. La Gran Plaza is a modern shopping mall with a wide variety of local and international retailers.

SIGHTS

Mazatlán is home to rich cultural offerings that include museum exhibits, art galleries, vibrant festivals, contemporary dance, jazz concerts, outdoor dining and unique neoclassical architecture.

In Old Mazatlan, visitors discover colorful heritage along charming cobblestone streets. Known as Centro Histórico, this 180-block area is home to 479 buildings designated as national historic landmarks. Popular destinations include the Museo de Arqueología, with its pre-Columbian relics; Plazuela Republica; the 19th century Teatro Angela Peralta, named for the famous opera singer; and the lively Plaza Machado, host to many cultural events, art exhibitions, open-air concerts, culinary fairs and other festivities.

Mazatlán's most famous annual event is the Carnaval celebration, dating back to 1898. Nearly 300,000 participants converge for an array of festivities celebration includes parades, firework displays, art, floral and musical events, street parties and gastronomic fairs. Residents also host the annual Mazatlan Cultural Festival – also known as “Mazfest” a celebration of the arts with cultural events that range from opera and rock concerts, ballet and drama to art and photography exhibits.



Other popular sights include:

- Cliff Divers of El Clavadista, featuring 45 foot dives into the ocean
- Mazatlán Lighthouse, the highest natural lighthouse in the world
- The malecón, a 10-Km Ocean Front promenade with lush garden and monuments
- Cathedral of Immaculate Conception, with tall spires and a baroque interior, is the world's only Roman Catholic church with the Star of David displayed in each of its 28 stained glass windows.

TRANSPORTATION

Plane: There are numerous airlines with direct non-stop service to Mazatlán including: Aeroméxico and Aeroméxico Connect, Alaska Airlines, Delta Airlines, Westjet, Continental Airlines, US Airlines, Frontier Airlines, Volaris, Sun Country Airlines, Aerocalafia and Viva Aerobús. American Airlines will begin daily non-stop service from Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport on June 9, 2011. Non-Stop flights from the US to Mazatlán include: Denver Los Angeles, Seattle, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, Minneapolis, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto, Winnipeg and Saskatoon.

Pulmonías—In addition to standard car rentals, buses and taxis, visitors can explore Mazatlán via the local “pulmonías”. These four-person open-air vehicles have become a symbol of the city.

EXCURSIONS

Mazatlán offers visitors an array of daily and nightly tours, which include:

Bird Watching – Nature enthusiasts find a variety of day and overnight bird walks on Isla de Pájaros (Bird Island) and the Sierra Madre mountains. Other options include kayak and boating excursions through mangrove lined coastal flats and offshore islands as well as overnight trips to San Blas, Copper Canyon and Durango. The region is home to endemic species such as the Black-throated Magpie Jay, Sinaloa Wren and Tufted Jay.

Sailing/Beach Trips: Day trips to the protected natural reserve of Isla de Venados (Deer Island) showcase pristine beach and crystal-clear waters. Options range from luxurious catamaran sails to kayaking tours and more. For scuba dives and snorkeling, tours are offered at Isla de Chivos (Goat Island). Ecoadventure can be found on Isla de la Pidiera (Stone Island), with jungle tours along mangrove estuaries.

Cultural Country Tours: Visitors discover authentic Mexico in colonial towns and villages in the Sierra Madre mountains, such as El Quelite, Copala, Concordia, La Noria and Cosalá, as well as the mining town of Rosario. Amidst panoramic views of beautiful valleys, travelers can explore 17th-century artwork, archeological museums, churches and historic sites dating back to the 1500s. Restaurants offer fine cuisine prepared with fresh ingredients and spices harvested in this region. At La Hacienda De Los Osuna, explore the 130-year-old Blue Agave tequila distillery and plantation before ziplining through the jungle treetops as part of the Huana Coa Canopy Adventure tour.



Cultural City Tours: The charming colonial district Old Mazatlan, also known as Centro Histórico, is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Bahia Canal on the other. Guided walking tours journey through the 180-block area, showcasing 479 buildings designated as national historic landmarks. Old Mazatlan is characterized by winding streets, fanciful balconies, iron railings, colorful 19th-century buildings, parks, lush foliage and sidewalk cafés, galleries and concert halls.

To read the original article visit <http://www.cruise-addicts.com/forums/f43/mazatlan-mexico-just-facts-179751/#post1545579>