



LYMEXICO  
DR. OMAR MORALES

## WELCOME TO PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO!

We hope your stay with us will be comfortable and enjoyable. We have put together this informational booklet to help acquaint you with our great town, and offer necessary information and ideas to enhance your time here.

Stretching around the sparkling blue Bahía de Banderas and backed by lush palm-covered mountains, Puerto Vallarta (or just 'Vallarta' to many) is one of Mexico's most enticing coastal destinations. Each year, millions come to laze on the dazzling sandy beaches, browse in the quirky shops, nosh in the stylish restaurants and wander the picturesque central streets and enticing Malecón. Activities aplenty include boat trips, horseback rides, diving trips and day trips to the interior while after sunset, Vallarta takes on a new identity with pumping nightlife along the Malecón. Puerto Vallarta is located on the Western Pacific coast of Mexico in the state of Jalisco, to the north of us is Nuevo Vallarta which is in the state of Nayarit.

Puerto Vallarta is a "young city" by Mexico standards. Puerto Vallarta was known as "Puerto Las Peñas" from 1851 until 1918 when it was designated as a municipality and received the official name of "Puerto Vallarta". This was the name chosen in honor of Don Ignacio L. Vallarta, a reputable representative of the State of Jalisco at the time. Puerto Vallarta is one of Mexico's top tourist destinations and the #1 choice for repeat visitors. You will find our city very safe and the people extremely friendly. Another reason people return time and time again is because of the diversity of the area, the ease of public transportation, and the wonderful restaurants and of course, the natural beauty that surrounds us.

### CULTURE

The beauty of Puerto Vallarta can be found in its original inhabitants who are open, friendly, and welcoming. They have received locals and foreigners with open arms for as long as one can remember. This has always been their greatest asset.

### TRADITION

Puerto Vallarta's heart beats in every rooftop, garden and street of this beautiful city that once was a mining town in the 19th Century called "Las Peñas." It emerged because miner people from the mountains need a port in the Bay of Banderas, where they could load and unload various products from their mining, agricultural, fishing and forestry activities.



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## BIODIVERSITY

Puerto Vallarta is one of the most exceptional places in Latin America due to its biodiversity. Explore its beautiful tropical vegetation which covers its mountains and shelters hundreds of species of birds, orchids, and wildlife such as the ocelot, the jaguar and the iguana. See how hunchback whales leap out of the water and dolphins playing around or travel out to sea to fish marlin, tuna and sea bass.

## FOOD

When people think of food in Mexico, they think of spicy and hot or Tex-Mex tacos and burritos. In reality, Mexico is much like the US and Canada where certain foods are popular in various regions, but Vallarta is pretty international when it comes to dining out. We have everything from traditional Mexican dishes like mole, enchiladas and pozole to loads of fresh seafood, hamburgers, Asian, French and Italian cuisine and a plethora of taco stands. Our grocery stores carry many familiar brands and a bounty of fresh produce.

In fact, if food is important to you when choosing a destination, you won't find a nicer place to visit than Puerto Vallarta, thanks to its large choice of cuisine which offers wonderful culinary experiences -- from simple and traditional food in outdoor cafes and local restaurants to innovating gourmet food in international restaurants.

## REPUTATION

Puerto Vallarta has received a large variety of awards in different categories. Among them, it was considered to be "The most romantic destination in Mexico." Due to the beauty of its different natural landscapes and its charms, Puerto Vallarta comes highly recommended for big occasions and sharing experiences with that special person from a delicious dinner celebrating romance to getting married and honeymoons.

## ART

Puerto Vallarta is a paradise in terms of culture and art. It's the home of artists and culture fans from around the world, who have been inspired by the mix of romance and the beauty of our town and people. The vibrant artistic scene is reflected in the large quantity of art galleries, public sculptures, and cultural festivals.



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## MONEY

Mexico's currency is the Mexican Peso. There are one hundred Mexican cents (centavos) to every peso. The symbol for the the Mexican Peso is \$. To distinguish this from the Dollar, you sometimes see it presented as MX\$ or the value with the letters "MN" after it, e.g. \$100 MN. The MN stands for Moneda Nacional, meaning National Currency. Mexican Bank notes are printed in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000 pesos. The most commonly seen and used are the 50, 100 and 200 peso notes. The Mexican Peso is a "free floating" currency in Foreign Exchange Markets and like other similar currencies, its value fluctuates daily. Before you arrive, you may want to see if your bank can order you Pesos. Check their exchange rate and any conversion fees as often times you will get a better exchange rate in Vallarta at an ATM machine. Also find out if your bank is affiliated with the local Network.

Please check out this website (Trip Advisor) for more ATM and banking information:

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g150768-c5116/Mexico:Atms.And.Credit.Cards.html>

Keep in mind this is the bank rate so it is better than what you will get from an ATM machine, a bank or a casa de cambio. You can assume it is about 5% to 8% less than the World Bank Rate.

If you prefer, you can exchange US Dollars at some banks but you may need to supply a copy of your passport as well as have your passport with you. This is due to a crack down on money laundering of US Dollars in Mexico (Canadian Dollars are exempt). As fewer banks are exchanging US Dollars, another option is exchanging at a Casa de Cambio. These are exchange houses around the city that exchange US Dollars for Pesos but at a lesser rate than a bank or via an ATM. Major grocery stores accept US Dollars (Not \$100 US bills, so bring smaller bills) and give change back in Pesos. Wal-Mart does not accept \$100 US bills; the only store that does accept them is Costco at a very good rate. We always advise everyone visiting to bring a credit card in case of an emergency and to call your credit card company before you leave to alert them of your trip dates to Mexico so they do not block your card.

## GETTING AROUND

Rental cars offer easy access to all of the main attractions throughout Puerto Vallarta. Rates can vary and driving through the city in a foreign country might be terrifying. If you're going to rent a car, book online before your arrival. And remember to always lock your valuables in the trunk out of plain sight. Also, keep in mind that you will need to purchase Mexican Liability insurance and you will need a credit card. Your car insurance from home will not cover you in Mexico in case of an accident nor will your credit card insurance cover it 100% or cover Mexican Liability insurance, which you must have. Driving rules are essentially the same as in



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the US and Canada. Please be aware we have many one-way streets in the downtown areas and some are not marked well. Most left turns on our main road (Francisco Medina Ascencio) is via the lateral lane on the right.

Getting around Vallarta is relatively easy and we have a great public transport system. To get you from point A to B, our city buses cost 7.5 Pesos (60 cents) and run regularly. Buses are marked Centro or Tunel. Centro buses run to, through and from Centro/Downtown. The Tunel bus runs through the tunnel behind downtown Vallarta and often to outlying areas. We have buses that also run outside of the city to areas such as Bucerias, Punta de Mita and Sayulita. They are a little more expensive but a bit more comfortable than city buses. None of our buses are air-conditioned.

Taxis are an excellent, easy and inexpensive way to get around the city -- you just need some street smart. Fare is charged by zone, not meter, so ask the driver for a rate sheet to keep track. Zone to zone fare is 50 pesos with most fares in the 80 pesos range. Rides from the airport are more expensive, sometimes around 120 pesos. Taxis wait outside of all hotels, hospital, most restaurant and all around Downtown. Purchase a map and consult it yourself, so that you can ensure you're getting where you need to go quickly and cheaply. Also, be sure to check the taxi's car number so you can locate the taxi in case you forget something.

Uber is now offered in Vallarta as well. Wait times are sometimes a bit longer than taxis, but cars have air conditioning and rates are generally cheaper than taxis.

## ICE AND WATER

Puerto Vallarta's tap water has been declared potable for over 15 years and while you can use it to brush your teeth and for cooking, we do recommend that you drink bottled water. Simply because your stomach is used to what you drink at home and may become a little upset from the tap water. Ice, available in all bars and restaurants is fine as we have ice companies that make purified ice and deliver it all over town. You can pick up a bag of ice at any Kiosko or OXXO convenience store.

## CLIMATE

Puerto Vallarta enjoys a near perfect climate from November to April with temperatures in the mid 70's to mid-80's and relatively low humidity. From May to mid/late April the humidity increases as does the temperatures. These months are known as the rainy season. The rains do not typically start until mid-June and end in October. While it is known as the "rainy season" it does not rain all day nor everyday. Typically, it will start clouding up in the late



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afternoon with a possible shower or spectacular thunderstorm. August and September tend to be our hottest and most humid months as well as the months with the most rainfall. Either way, Puerto Vallarta is beautiful any time of year and many people enjoy the summer months here while other who cannot tolerate humidity choose to visit us in the winter months. Unlike the East Coast/ Caribbean side of Mexico, Puerto Vallarta and the Bay of Banderas is virtually hurricane free. Our Sierra Madre Mountains that surround the bay protects us from imminent weather from the South and pushes the hurricanes out to sea.

## MAPS

Here are some great maps to get you acquainted with the area. This website is also a wealth of info. <http://vallartainfo.com/map.html> The maps are on the top left. The maps run from the North Bay down to the South. Your house is inland of the Hotel Zone. The street is Lago Superior (Lake Superior) and is a block and a half behind Costco. The name of the road from the main highway (Francisco Medina Ascencio) is called Ave. Fluvial. On the Hotel Zone map- you can click Move Up (top of page) to see where Amerimed Hospital is- across the highway from Plaza Marina. Here is a link to Google Map street view of the house. This is an old map/ photo so there have been many changes. There are lots of plants, gates and the houses are brightly painted. <http://goo.gl/maps/lhlm0>

## ACTIVITIES

The beautiful thing about Puerto Vallarta is that there is literally something for everyone. We have many tours available from Swimming with the Dolphins, Canopy/Zip Line tours, snorkeling and beach excursions to a Romantic Dinner and Show in Las Caletas. (Director John Huston's former home.) There are off road adventures that take you off the beaten path, horseback riding to ATV tours. If you want something less active, we can book you a massage, a mani/pedi or a tour to the north end of the Bay to Sayulita or beyond.

Our premier tour company is Vallarta Adventures, known for top quality tours. Check out their website at: [Vallartaadventures.com](http://Vallartaadventures.com) If you are interested in booking any tours or activities, please contact Brenda and she can explain them if you have and questions and reserve them for you.

## CONTACT INFO

We want you to enjoy your stay here in Puerto Vallarta. Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions. Our staff is very excited to meet you and make sure you are comfortable every step of the way.