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7 Under-the-radar Beach Towns in Mexico — Including One With Thousands of Flamingos

These Mexico beach towns have all of the beauty and none of the crowds.

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PHOTO: PYROSKY/GETTY IMAGES

Funky, eclectic, naturally beautiful beach towns are the bread and butter of Mexico. The stunning beaches and laid-back villages that go with them are what put the country on the tourist map many moons ago. Over the years, travelers from all over the world have taken notice and flocked by the millions to destinations like Cancun, Puerto Vallarta, and Los Cabos — and for good reason.

These places have the best resorts, top-notch infrastructure, restaurants, activities, and plenty of things to do. But with so many offerings also come crowds, traffic, and higher prices.

Luckily for travelers who like to go a bit more off-book and discover lesser-charted territories, Mexico has hundreds of beach towns along its many, many coasts to discover. From the Sea of Cortez to the Pacific, the Gulf of Mexico to the Caribbean Sea, one thing Mexico will never fall short on is beautiful beach towns. So if you're looking for an undeveloped sliver of sand and a hammock all to yourself, here are some of the best under-the-radar beach towns in Mexico.

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/under-the-radar-beach-towns-in-mexico-8422129>

Barra de Navidad, Jalisco



PHOTO: WALTER BIBIKOW/GETTY IMAGES

Four hours south of Puerto Vallarta, Barra de Navidad has long been a local favorite for beach getaways. Where Puerto Vallarta has gotten too expensive or crowded in recent years, Barra de Navidad, shortened to "Barra" by locals, retains its small-town charm.

Barra is one of the last stops travelers will hit along [the Costalegre](#), or the stretch of coast between Puerto Vallarta and Jalisco. This largely protected coastline is known for its crashing surf, undeveloped beaches, and wild jungle. The remoteness of the Costalegre, and Barra by extension, is what makes it so special and has kept it relatively quiet over the years.

Barra is one of the bigger towns here in the string of small villages dotting the coast. It's often coupled with its neighbor, San Patricio (a.k.a. Melaque), another town known for its wide stretch of undeveloped beaches, beautiful sunsets, and oceanfront restaurants. Barra is a bit busier and has more residents and facilities than Melaque, but both are beloved alternatives to the built-up beach destinations to the north.

It's worth noting hotels in Barra and Melaque are limited, but you can find gorgeous Airbnbs or vacation rentals. The new [Four Seasons Resort Tamarindo](#) is about 30 minutes away.

How to Get There: Fly into Puerto Vallarta (PVR) and drive or take the bus. You can also fly into Manzanillo (ZLO), about an hour away.