

HOTELS ABOVE PAR

DESTINATIONS

Puerto Vallarta Destination Guide



When someone mentions Puerto Vallarta, you might initially think of a pit stop on a cruise or a spring break trip you took in college. But the city, which is nestled in the valleys of the Sierra Madre mountains, offers so much more outside of the larger resorts and ports. From scuba diving to art galleries, Puerto Vallarta is rich in culture, and there is no shortage of things to do.

Where to Stay

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Casa Kimberly

Best known as the former residence of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, this regal nine-room boutique hotel is one of those places you just have to experience in person to understand. Though opulent, Casa Kimberly isn't luxurious for luxury's sake. The hotel's location, which is right in the heart of PV's Centro district, overlooks the Bahía de Banderas for the most epic sunset views.



Hacienda San Angel

Nestled in Puerto Vallarta's LGBTQ+-friendly neighborhood Zona Romántica, this 12-suite boutique property boasts three pools, including one on the rooftop. There's no shortage of the city's coolest restaurants and bars within walking distance, and even better? The hotel is dog-friendly, and your four-legged bestie can stay with you at no additional cost.

Where to Eat & Drink

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Street Tacos With Vallarta Food Tours

This isn't your average food tour. **Vallarta Food Tours' The Street Tour** is an exploration of some of the oldest street stands in the city, all still owned and run by their original families. The tour focuses on tacos, but they also take you to other street stands, including a churro stand that has been at the same corner for over 45 years. The tacos include everything from more familiar proteins like al pastor and shrimp to local favorites like *cabeza* (cow head) and crab.

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Icú

Icú's food is traditional Mexican with a modern twist and incorporates influences from around the world. They have both an à la carte and tasting menu (either five or nine courses), which can be paired with their abundant selection of Mexican beer, wine, and liquor, including the local delicacy *raicilla* (commonly known as the Vallartan mezcal).



Café des Artistes

Café des Artistes, Puerto Vallarta's premier fine dining destination, is a French restaurant that serves exclusively tasting menus inspired by Chef Thierry Blouet's theme of choice. The menus change often, so even if you revisit this PV staple, you likely won't have the same meal twice. The ambiance of the restaurant is 10/10, set in a magical jungle-like escape that is completely hidden from the street.

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El Tasting Room

PV's up-and-coming 5 de Diciembre neighborhood is a haven for digital nomads, so if you find yourself wandering around, be sure to stop by El Tasting Room. They have a generous happy hour menu and are experts at handcrafted cocktails, and the ambiance is moody and vibey without trying too hard. You can also replenish your stash at their built-in liquor store.

Where to Visit

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Centro Histórico

If you visit Puerto Vallarta during its high and shoulder seasons (October through June), be sure to take a walk — an **art walk**, that is. During art walk season, the galleries in the historic center of the city stay open late and host activations and events with live music, food, and drinks, and even have the artists come in to talk about their work. Two favorites are Only One Jewelry, which specializes in pieces made with gold and natural stone, and Unfinished, which highlights local Vallartan artists. While you're walking around the neighborhood, be sure to stop by the various interior design showrooms and pick up a unique souvenir for your home. Lavande Atelier D'Architecture not only showcases furniture and smalls but also has a café so you can enjoy a coffee while you shop.

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Jardines Botánicos de Vallarta

If you're interested in exploring the flora and fauna of Puerto Vallarta, look no further than this beautiful gem of protected land. The **Vallarta Botanical Garden** allows you to experience native plants and wildlife in their natural habitat. Wear your hiking boots if you want to take a walk on one of their many protected trails, and you can even bring your swimsuit to take a dip in the river.

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Parque Nacional Marino Los Arcos de Mismaloya

You can't go to Puerto Vallarta without getting on a boat and taking a dip in the bay, and there's no better place to do it than down the coast toward Los Arcos de Mismaloya. This stunning rock formation is perfect for both divers and snorkelers alike; rich in biodiversity and with epic views of the formations.

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Yelapa Beach

And, of course, for a relaxing day soaking up the sun, head to Yelapa Beach. It's a popular hotspot but doesn't normally get too crowded and has calm, peaceful waters so you can take an easy swim. Don't forget your sunscreen!

KRISTIN CORPUZ • JANUARY 11, 2024 • SHARE

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