

YOUR GUIDE TO EXPLORING PUERTO VALLARTA

Most major cruise lines such as Royal Caribbean, Norwegian, Holland America, Carnival, and Princess make the vibrant city of Puerto Vallarta a port of call. You may have come here once yourself on a cruise and wished to come back for longer than just a day in port. If now feels like the right time to plan that return trip, use this guide to help you arrange your vacation in this stunning resort town on Mexico's Pacific coast.

WHERE TO STAY IN PUERTO VALLARTA

WESTIN PUERTO VALLARTA RESORT & SPA

With so many direct flights from US cities, it is no wonder that Puerto Vallarta has become a popular destination for sun-seeking vacationers. Conveniently located less than five minutes from the airport, booking a stay at [The Westin Resort & Spa Puerto Vallarta](#) means you will be on the beach in no time.



Photo: Dana Freeman

Spread across 14 acres with two massive pools, tennis courts, and a 410-foot stretch of private beach, there are plenty of places to play or unwind at the resort. Guests can also use the hotel bicycles to ride around the property and nearby Marina Vallarta.



Photo: Dana Freeman

To help undo the impact of everyday stress and soothe away all of your aches and pains, book a treatment at the full-service spa, which includes massages, facials, body wraps, manicures, pedicures, and more. For head-to-toe pampering, upgrade your massage to enjoy it in one of the hotel's beachfront pergolas. Health-conscious travelers will also enjoy the selections from the Eat Well menus available at each of their [restaurants](#).



While all rooms come with the Westin's signature Heavenly® Beds, elevate your stay by a premium ocean-facing room that includes a private jacuzzi on the balcony. Additionally, the hotel provides complimentary on-property COVID testing for guests staying three nights or longer.



Photo: Dana Freeman

WHAT TO DO

If you were previously in Puerto Vallarta for the day on a cruise, you likely walked the city's most well-known attraction – the [Malecon](#). Perhaps you were able to wander around their most famous neighborhood, the Romantic Zone, as well. But the best way to get to really get to know a city is by eating your way through it with a local. You can do precisely that with [Vallarta Food Tours](#). If you are new to Puerto Vallarta, book their [Original Downtown Tour](#). You'll spend a few hours walking around town, popping into spots where only locals go to eat and drink. Many of these food stands you might not find on your own. Everything is delicious, from the street tacos to the tequila, chocolate, Cervezas, and coffee. You definitely won't go home hungry.



Photo: Dana Freeman

Worth a visit whether you are a horticultural lover or not, plan a visit to Puerto Vallarta's [Botanical Gardens](#), a tropical paradise located on the outskirts of town. This botanical oasis is filled with gorgeous flora and fauna, including some of the most stunning orchids found along their hiking paths. Don't miss breakfast (served until noon) or lunch at the [Hacienda de Oro](#), their on-site restaurant with an outdoor terrace overlooking the canopy.

WHERE TO EAT

You will have surely worked up an appetite wandering up and down the city's cobblestone streets, checking out the local galleries, shops, and cafes. While there are many excellent places to eat in Puerto Vallarta, these restaurants are among the best. You'll want to make a reservation at any of them to enjoy a special night out on the town.



Photo: Dana Freeman

[Restaurante Icó](#) – Serving innovative, contemporary cuisine in a cozy setting, Icó is the spot to go for food lovers. Go a-la-carte or try the chef-curated tasting menu.



Photo: Dana Freeman

[La Cappella](#) – Book a table at sunset in this romantic open-air restaurant overlooking the city and Banderas Bay. As the sun goes down over Puerto Vallarta’s famous 18th-century church, enjoy dining on contemporary Italian dishes while being serenaded by violinists.



Photo: Dana Freeman

[Cafe des Artistes](#) – For over 30 years, Cafe des Artistes have been serving Mexican-inspired French cuisine in their award-winning restaurant. Book a candle-lit table on a private terrace in the back of their stunning garden – a private jungle sanctuary in the middle of the city.