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Magical MEXICO

Capture the culture of Mexico by hosting your group at one of these unique venues

BY DANIELLE LEBRECK

The country of Mexico is vast, full of diverse culture. From the tropical Caribbean coast to the bustling and ever-expanding capital city to the renowned beach resorts bordering the Pacific, there are many unique venues that can help groups capture the magic of Mexico while getting some business done in style.

Following are a host of unique venues—including new entrants to the scene and reliable standbys—to keep on your radar for your next Mexico program.

Mexico City

The populous capital of Mexico is bursting with culture, from Aztec temples to baroque-style cathedrals and many museums and hotels. This rich hotbed of experiences makes the city prime for meetings and con-

ventions, and it has the venues to match.

Among some of its most unique is the St. Regis Mexico City, which sits near the Historic Centre, Roma-Condesa art district, and the Polanco fashion district. The 31-story, 189-room property towers over the busy metropolis, and caters to both leisure and business travelers with its access to attractions; Remède Spa (exclusive to the St. Regis brand); and luxury meeting space, which includes the 7,670-square-foot,



ST. REGIS MEXICO CITY

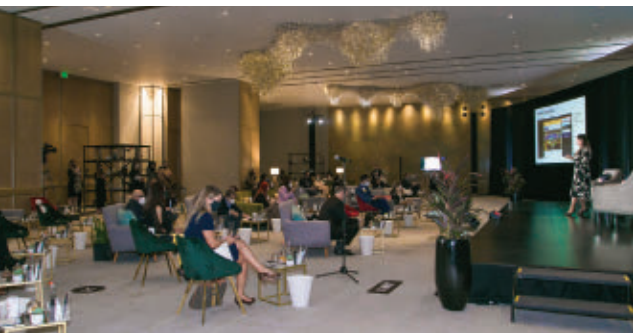


ST. REGIS MEXICO CITY

modular Astor Ballroom, the 2,000-square-foot Diamond Ballroom and four large breakout rooms.

“The St. Regis Mexico City is a premier location for travelers looking to explore Mexico City, amid the most alluring landmarks, galleries, restaurants and museums,” said Diana Plazas, chief sales and marketing officer for Marriott International, Caribbean and Latin America. “All ballrooms for meetings and events offer great light, high ceilings and exquisite décor by renowned firm Yabu Pushelberg.”

Plaza said that at the hotel, groups can enjoy unique culinary offerings and wellness programs, including cooking classes, mixology sessions, power breaks with breathing and yoga exercises and more.



CONNECT WITH CONFIDENCE EVENT AT ST. REGIS MEXICO CITY

In addition, St. Regis Mexico City recently hosted the first Connect With Confidence hybrid event in June that brought together 35 in-person attendees and more than 80 virtual participants. Connect With Confidence by Marriott is a new digital platform for hosts, organizers and attendees to plan and execute meetings.

“Meeting planners gave extremely positive feedback on Marriott’s innovative solutions to create this new way of meeting and the impactful experience that was created for both in-person and virtual attendees,” Plaza said. “Planners felt that the environment provided was safe and that this meeting enhanced their confidence in bringing back meetings. We heard many comments on the seamless technology and reimaged food and beverage offerings.”

Plazas also noted that the property is seeing a significant uptick in group booking toward the end of the year and hopes that the first of this type of event in Mexico helped ease planner concerns around the complexities of planning programs during the pandemic.

Outside of the meeting room, St. Regis Mexico City just launched a program to help guests explore the rich culture Mexico City offers. Dubbed “48 Hours in Mexico City,” guests can consult with the hotel’s Clefs d’Or concierge to receive a personalized itinerary to explore some of the city’s nearby dining, landmarks and cultural institutions, such as the iconic National Museum of Anthropology.

“With so much to see and experience, we designed this new offering to afford guests a curated selection to discover the best aspects of our famed city’s rich history and burgeoning cultural renaissance in just 48 hours, the ideal leisure visit or prelude to a business trip,” said Thomas Jecklin, director general at the hotel.

Outside of the St. Regis, Mexico City offers a portfolio of luxury Marriott properties that can help attendees get a sense of place, including the Sheraton Mexico City Maria Isabel Hotel, JW Marriott Hotel Mexico City, The Westin Santa Fe and the forthcoming new Ritz-Carlton opening this fall.

Guadalajara

Famous for tequila and mariachi, Western Mexico’s Guadalajara is also catered toward group business, home to Mexico’s largest convention center, Expo Guadalajara. The venue’s capacity is 60,000 and has 57 meeting rooms and 90,000 square feet of exhibition space.

Expo Guadalajara is also the only Mexican venue with its own foundation, Expo Guadalajara Foundation. The foundation has a CSR promotion program and provides its event clients with an orientation to assist them with carrying out sustainable practices. The venue is also outfitted with solar panels.

Conventions, tradeshow and networking events continually rotate through the



EXPO GUADALAJARA

EXPO GUADALAJARA

convention center, including the world’s second-largest book fair held at Expo Guadalajara every year. To combat COVID-19, Expo Guadalajara received the GBAC STAR accreditation; invested \$1.2 million in equipment and installment like hand-washing stations, hand sanitizer dispensers and disinfection tunnels in the entrance of the building; and has onsite medical services at the venue, creating an isolation area for suspected cases to whom rapid tests are applied and, if test results are positive, helps transfer to COVID-19 clinics.

Puerto Vallarta

The resort town of Puerto Vallarta on Mexico’s Pacific coast is known for its beautiful beaches and is a popular choice for group incentive trips or corporate meetings with some sunny flair. Exploring the beach scene, while also enjoying exclusivity, is possible at Las Caletas—a beach hideaway in Puerto Vallarta that is only accessible by boat. Vallarta Adventures is the sole tour operator to Las Caletas, promising a consistent experience.

“The docks are designed specifically for our fleet, meaning that we can ensure that there will not be anybody but those traveling with Vallarta Adventures at Las Caletas. The size and diversity of our fleet and capacities means that we can offer



VALLARTA BOTANICAL GARDENS, PUERTO VALLARTA

private boats for groups of almost any size,” explained Gareth Price, commercial director for Vallarta Adventures.

Vallarta Adventures can help organize private dining experiences and shows for groups of any size up to 900 people. Price recommended that groups put a Rhythms of the Night show on their Puerto Vallarta bucket list, which takes place in Las Caletas Monday through Saturday each week.

“The show is presented on a stage in a natural amphitheater in the middle of the jungle, which in itself is a huge highlight, but for groups, especially incentive groups that need to present something, have some