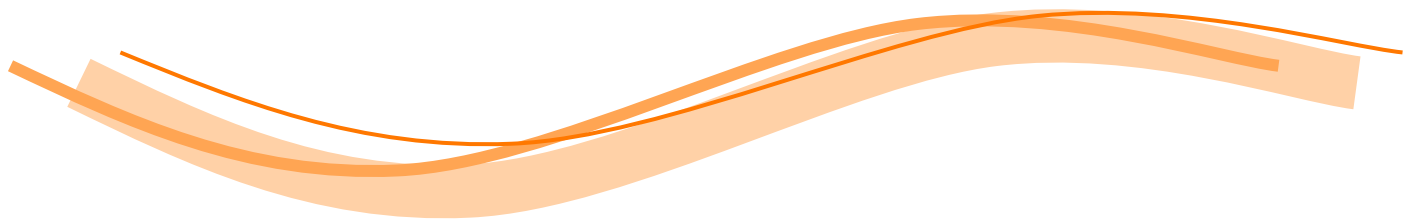




**RIVIERA NAYARIT &
PUERTO VALLARTA
with TRANSAT**





These Travel Notes are arranged in three sections:

- 1. Puerto Vallarta**
- 2. Riviera Nayarit**
- 3. Transat in Vallarta-Nayarit**

<p>PUERTO VALLARTA</p>	<p>Puerto Vallarta has stunning ocean views and sunsets, magnificent golf courses and lush jungle countryside. It also has fabulous shopping and dining, culture and nightlife.</p> <p>Despite being a top Mexican holiday destination, the resort town of Puerto Vallarta has preserved the rich culture and traditional architecture of its downtown core. Stroll along the Malecón (Sea Wall), wander inside one of the city's magnificent art galleries or visit a museum. Or laze on one of Puerto Vallarta's magnificent beaches. The sunset is at its most dazzling along The Malecón, which comes to life at sundown.</p> <p>Just 15 minutes north of downtown Puerto Vallarta, Marina Vallarta is Mexico's most sophisticated marina complex with moorings for over five hundred boats, one and a half miles of beachfront, aqua sports and dive facilities offering PADI certified training – plus an excellent 18-hole golf course. Marina Vallarta can accommodate yachts of all sizes and it is popular with boaters from all over the world thanks to the depth and shelter offered by the calm Bay of Banderas. The beautifully landscaped Marina Malecon is filled with excellent shops, art galleries and restaurants.</p> <p>Nature lovers have the chance to swim with the dolphins, and between December and April it is possible to see Humpback Whales in the Bahia de Banderas. You can take off road adventures into the Sierra Madre mountains, ride mules, zip line across valleys and rappel down waterfalls – or take a canopy tree top adventure. Take to the water in everything from a Spanish style galleon to a speedboat and explore secluded beaches and coves. Or visit traditional fishing villages or the 17th Century mining town of San Sebastian.</p> <p>Transat Holidays offer direct flights and a range of excursions to help you make the most of the beautiful environment, nature and soft adventure opportunities in Puerto Vallarta.</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>Puerto Vallarta is on the Pacific coast of Mexico about half way between the US and Mexico's southern border. It is located in the state of Jalisco just south of Puerto Vallarta International Airport. Key attractions include a rich cultural tradition with pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian history; and abundant and exotic species of protected wildlife, including</p>

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	sea turtles, humpback whales and tropical birds.
Geography	The city is built around the beautiful Bahía de Banderas on Mexico's Pacific coast.
Name	Puerto Vallarta is named after Ignacio Vallarta, a former governor of Jalisco. In Spanish, Puerto Vallarta is often shortened to "Vallarta", while English speakers call the city P.V. for short. In 1524 a large battle between Hernán Cortés and an army of 10,000 to 20,000 Indians resulted in Cortés taking control of much of the Ameca valley. The valley and the bay was then named Banderas (flags) after the colorful standards carried by the natives.
Population	Puerto Vallarta has a population of approximately 270,000.
Language	Spanish – but English is widely spoken in the coastal resort towns.
Currency	The Mexican Pesos – although the US Dollar is also widely accepted too. Currently (November 2015) \$1 Cdn = 12.4 Mexican Pesos.
Tipping	The average tip for service is 10-15% and one or two dollars per suitcase carried. Always check your bill first as tips may already be included.
Government	Democracy
Documentation	Passports are required but no Visa is necessary for Canadians.
Time zone	In Puerto Vallarta, the time zone is Central, just one hour behind EST.
Health	There are no special health problems here and the hospital facilities are excellent.
Safety tips	Despite the lurid media stories of security issues in Mexico, Puerto Vallarta is as safe as any resort city and car break-ins are just about the only frequent crime here.

CLIMATE	
General climate	<p>One of the chief considerations in planning a vacation is the weather, and it is the weather that makes Puerto Vallarta is an excellent choice for anyone trying to escape the cold of a northern winter, or the heat of a southern summer. On the same latitude as Hawaii, Puerto Vallarta enjoys a mild tropical climate with an average temperature of a comfortable 25 °C. Those who find themselves snowbound in the winter months will find an escape here for a tropical vacation just the thing to break up those long winter nights.</p> <p>Summer can be a bit warm for some, with average highs in the 30's, but the rainy season comes in June and lasts until November, bringing with it afternoon showers and relief from the summer heat. Occasional thunderstorms roll through in late summer providing an evening's entertainment without interfering with daytime activities.</p> <p>If you are looking for the right climate for outdoor activities like golf, deep sea fishing, sailing, or just sitting on the beach, Puerto Vallarta has what you're looking for.</p>

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Today's weather	30 Centigrade and sunny as at 28 th November 2015
Best time to visit	In the winter months, Puerto Vallarta has the perfect antidote to northern snows and cold temperatures!

GETTING AROUND	
Getting There	Puerto Vallarta International Airport (PVR) is the nearest commercial air service to the city and is just a 10kms cab ride from downtown. Transat Holidays flies Air Transat direct from Toronto and Montreal to Puerto Vallarta. Flight time is 4.75 hours.
Cities	Puerto Vallarta Set against a backdrop of rippling mountains and the sweeping Bahía de Banderas on the Pacific Coast, Puerto Vallarta is one of Mexico's most visually striking cities. The big draw here is the outdoors - whether you want to cool off in a waterfall, scuba dive with manta rays off Islas Marietas or enjoy a sunset stroll along the Malecón promenade. This sophisticated resort city has boutique shopping, happening nightlife and some of Mexico's best dining, yet retains its small-town charm with its tangle of cobbled streets scattered with traditional adobe houses.
Distances	Puerto Vallarta is 840 kms from Mexico City and 1150 kms to Acapulco
Ferries	Water taxis to Yelapa, Las Animas, and Quimixto leave at 10:30 and 11am from the pier at Los Muertos Beach (south of downtown), on Rodolfo Rodríguez next to the Hotel Marsol. Another water taxi departs around 11:30am from the beachside pier at the northern edge of the malecón. A round-trip ticket to Yelapa (the farthest point, which takes about 45 minutes each way) costs \$22. Return trips usually depart between 3 and 5pm, but confirm the pickup time with your water taxi captain. Other water taxis depart from Boca de Tomatlán, about 30 minutes south of town by public bus. These water taxis are the better option if you want more flexible departure and return times from the southern beaches. Generally, they leave on the hour for the southern shore destinations, or more frequently if there is traffic. Prices run about \$15 round-trip, with rates clearly posted on a sign on the beach. A private water taxi costs \$60 to \$120, depending on your destination, and allows you to choose your own return time. They'll take up to eight people for that price, so often people band together at the beach to hire one.
Car Rental	Rental cars are readily available at the airport, through travel agencies, and through the most popular international car rental services.
Buses	City buses in Puerto Vallarta, easy to navigate and inexpensive, will serve just about all your transportation needs. They run from the airport through the Hotel Zone along Morelos Street (1 block inland from the malecón), across the Río Cuale, and inland on Vallarta, looping back

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	through the downtown hotel and restaurant districts on Insurgentes and several other downtown streets.
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ACCOMMODATION TYPES	From a quaint "Posada" hotel on a forgotten beach, to the ultra-modern family travel oriented resorts, Puerto Vallarta has the kind of accommodations and services that will send you home refreshed and rejuvenated.
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LIFESTYLES	
Kids	<p>The extensive beaches and great resorts with children's facilities make this a very suitable destination for children. I vacationed here with my kids when they were 12 months and 6 years old – a perfect time for them.</p> <p>Dolphin encounters: Vallarta Adventures have a special program tailor-made for kids aged 4 to 8 years so that they can interact and get closer to dolphins than they ever dreamed possible.</p>
Teens	<p>With jeep excursions into the mountains, canopy tours, surfing and all kinds of activities at the many resorts, there's plenty to keep old kids happy in this region too.</p> <p>Sea Lion Encounters: Sea lions are one of the ocean's most fascinating creatures - and snorkeling with them adds another element of excitement and adventure to your day of fun-in-the-sun at Las Caletas, where on the Vallarta Adventures trip you'll also enjoy a superb buffet lunch, beverages, parrot encounters, nature walks, Paella cooking lessons, guided kayak tours, and lots of fun!</p>
Romance	Pamper yourself in the glow of a romantic Mexican sunset on a luxury yacht. There is nothing more peaceful and romantic than sailing across Banderas Bay as the crimson sun dips into the deep blue waters of the Pacific.
Honeymoons & Weddings	Many of the larger resorts in Puerto Vallarta will organize destination weddings – see the Transat website or brochure for more details.
Zoomers	Many Canadian Zoomers have holiday homes here. The beautiful sunsets over the Pacific, great climate year round and the excellent value of the region are all appealing.

UNIQUES	
Surprising	<p>San Sebastian</p> <p>It feels like a million miles away from the bright lights of Puerto Vallarta...Nestled at the top of the spectacular Sierra Madre mountains is colonial, historical San Sebastián del Oeste. This remote village has retained the charm of colonial Mexico while offering an impressive array of modern amenities and expansive views. There is little to do in San</p>

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	<p>Sebastian but relax and mingle with the locals. The fresh mountain air revitalizes, while the sunsets over the mountains provide a soothing alternative to the downtown lights of Vallarta. The altitude of the village requires a sweater if not a scarf and hat in winter- seriously.</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>From the discoveries of the first settlements here and with the arrival of its first settlers, the Azatlan (from Durango), with the passage of time developed their own culture to which they gave the name Banderas. The chroniclers from this period called the valley Xiutla; which means “where all the small plants grow.”</p> <p>Around 1525, the Spaniards began to call it Banderas Valley, bringing with them four banners and an image of the Holy Virgin Mary. It was not an easy co-existence and there were many skirmishes. During one confrontation between the indigenous and the Spanish, the Spanish realized they were outnumbered by the enemy, and a Spanish friar went down on his knees in surrender. The story goes that the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, that was directly behind the friar, threw out beams of light and became covered in a radiant light. The Spaniards believed this a miracle while the indigenous became frightened and submitted themselves before the Spanish, led by the nephew of Herman Cortes, the famous Francisco Cortes de Buenaventura.</p> <p>After the Spanish conquest, Vallarta began a process of rediscovering itself, but it wasn’t until after Mexican independence that it became a township on December 2, 1851 and renamed Las Peñas de Santa Maria Guadalupe for the patron virgin by Don Guadalupe Sanchez Torres.</p> <p>Like most seaside city at the time, a port was a necessity in order to transport the silver that came from the mines of what is known today as San Sebastian and Mascota, thereby reducing its name to Puerto Las Peñas.</p> <p>Thanks to the activities in the port, and its quick growth, in May 1918 a municipality was formed and named after the Governor of Jalisco, at the time, Ignacio L. Vallarta, hence Puerto Vallarta. At the end of the 1930’s and beginnings of the ‘40’s Vallarta began to exploit its marine wealth, principally through shark fishing, which brought a great deal of economic growth. In the 50’s, the port celebrated its history by hosting the event of its 100th anniversary.</p> <p>In 1968, Vallarta was elevated from a municipality to a city by decree of the State Congress. From this point forward Vallarta grew not only economically but culturally, becoming the most important tourism city in the state of Jalisco.</p> <p>With its wealth of natural and cultural riches, from the Sierra Madre mountains, through its rivers, traversing mountains, walking on the sand to the turquoise ocean waves, Puerto Vallarta invites you to breathe in</p>

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	its ambience, taste its textures, feel the warmth of its people, watch the jumping of whales, listen to the murmur of dolphins, watch eagles in flight, listen to the heartbeat of a city that daily reinvents itself without losing its essence. This is the treasure of the pacific discovered centuries ago by the ancient Azatlan tribe.
Books	Lonely Planet's Mexico is the bible for travellers to anywhere in this country.
1000 Places to See Before You Die	El Dia de los Muertos – Mexicans remember and celebrate their departed in this festival which normally takes place at the start of November.
Must Sees	Marietas Islands: You can also hire a panga (small motorized boat) at Playa Anclote from the fisherman's cooperative on the beach. Ask the captain to take you to the Marietas Islands just offshore. These uninhabited islands are a great place for bird-watching, diving, snorkeling, or just exploring. Blue-footed booby birds (found only here and in the Galapagos) dawdle along the islands' rocky coast, and giant mantas, sea turtles, and colorful tropical fish swim among the coral cliffs. The islands are honeycombed with caves and hidden beaches - including the stunning Playa de Amor (Beach of Love) that only appears at low tide. You enter a shallow passageway to access this semicircular stretch of sand. A cave 12m below the surface has an air pocket in which divers can remove their regulators and have an underwater conversation. Humpback whales congregate around these islands during the winter months, and pangas can be rented for a do-it-yourself whale-watching excursion. Trips cost about \$35 per hour. You can also visit these islands aboard one of the numerous day cruises that depart from the cruise-ship terminal in Puerto Vallarta.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES	
Golf	<p>There are currently eight major golf courses in the region. Among the high profile names associated with the development of championship golf here are: Jack Nicklaus (2 courses in Punta Mita), Percy Clifford (Flamingos Golf Club), Robert Von Hagge (El Tigre, Nuevo Vallarta), Jim Lipe (Mayan Golf Resort Vallarta, currently under renovation). A course designed by Greg Norman is currently under development in Litibu.</p> <p>There are now two breathtaking Jack Nicklaus Signature courses at the Punta Mita Golf Club (tel. 329/291-6000), with the newest addition opening in October 2008. The original "Pacifico" course features 8 oceanfront holes and an ocean view from every hole. Its hallmark is the 3rd hole, the "Tail of the Whale," with a long drive to a green on a natural island - the only natural-island green in the Americas. It requires an amphibious cart to take you over when the tide is high, and there's an alternate hole for when the ocean or tides are not accommodating.</p>

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	<p>The second Jack Nicklaus Signature course, "Bahia," intertwines with the original course, and also affords stunning seaside holes; its finishing hole is adjacent to the new St. Regis Resort. The courses are open only to members or guests staying in the Punta Mita resorts, or to other golf club members with a letter of introduction from their pro. Greens fees are \$244 for 18 holes and \$156 for 9 holes, including cart, with (Calloway) club rentals for \$63. Lessons are also available.</p>
Fishing	<p>Puerto Vallarta is rapidly establishing itself as a major deep sea fishing destination, with world class catches of blue and black marlin, sailfish, yellow fin tuna and other species. Other season's feature wahoo and Dorado and coastal sport fishing. In addition to an extensive fishing fleet available for charter, the area hosts the International Marlin & Tuna Fishing Tournament each year in July.</p> <p>Fishing charters cost \$120 per person, for one to eight people; or select from other options where the price varies with the size of the boat; a boat can be rented for 8 hours for \$450.</p>
Surfing	<p>Sayulita: There are two main surf spots in Sayulita - the most popular is the break fronting the main beach in the village, which is a right longboard break. A faster, left break is found just north of the river mouth, in front of the campground. Surf instruction and board rentals are available at Lunazul Surf School (www.lunazulsurf.com) located at Marlin #4, where this street ends at the beachfront. The 90-minute surf lessons cost \$40 for individual instruction, or \$30 for group instruction. They also offer 2-day weekend clinics for \$80 or weeklong clinics for \$200. Included in all lessons is the use of a surfboard and rashguard. Board rentals through Lunazul are \$20 for the day, or \$150 for the week. Lunazul also has a surf shop, where you can purchase surf gear ranging from wax to boards.</p>
Hiking	<p>Hiking options range from gentle strolls along the Malecon in Puerto Vallarta to strenuous treks in the mountains of the Sierra Madre: take your pick!</p>
Horse Riding	<p>Travel agents and local ranches can arrange guided horseback rides. Rancho Palma Real, Carretera Vallarta, Tepic 4766, has an office 5 minutes north of the airport; the ranch is in Las Palmas, 40 minutes northeast of Puerto Vallarta. It is by far the nicest horseback riding tour in the area. The horses are in excellent condition, and you enjoy a tour of local farms on your way to the ranch. The price (\$60) includes breakfast and lunch.</p>
Canopy Tours	<p>A popular adventure activity is canopy tours. You glide from treetop to treetop, getting an up-close-and-personal look at a tropical rainforest canopy and the trails far below. Expert guides assist you to the special platforms, and you move from one to another using pulleys on horizontal traverse cables, while the guides explain the tropical flora surrounding you. They also offer assistance - and moral support - as</p>

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	<p>you rappel back down to the forest floor. Tours depart from the Vallarta Adventures offices in both Marina Vallarta and Nuevo Vallarta at 8am, returning at 2pm. The price (\$79 for adults, \$69 for children 8-12) includes the tour, unlimited nonalcoholic beverages, and light snacks. Their Outdoor Adventure combines a ride on the canopy line with a day of adventure activities. You'll learn wilderness survival techniques while hiking through the Sierra Madre foothills, splashing through streams, rappelling down waterfalls, then taking a 300m zip line over jungle landscape. The 6 1/2 hour tour costs \$95, for those who are physically fit, ages 12 and older.</p>
Diving	<p>The warm, crystal-clear waters of Banderas Bay and the Mexican Pacific are home to a vast array of sea life making Puerto Vallarta one of Mexico's top diving destinations. At Vallarta Adventure's PADI 5 star IDC Dive Center, professional diving instructors combine their expertise with the utmost personal attention in scuba lessons for every level of PADI Certification.</p> <p>You may snorkel or dive at Los Arcos, a company-owned site at Caletas Cove (where you'll dive in the company of sea lions), Quimixto Coves, the Marietas Islands, or the offshore La Corbeteña, Morro, and Chimo reefs. The company runs a full range of certification courses (up to Instructor). Chico's Dive Shop, Díaz Ordaz 772-5, near Carlos O'Brian's (www.chicos-diveshop.com), offers similar diving and snorkeling trips and is also a PADI five-star dive center. Chico's is open daily from 8am to 10pm, with branches at the Marriott, Las Palmas, Holiday Inn, Fiesta Americana, Krystal, San Marino, Villa del Palmar, Paradise Village, and Playa Los Arcos.</p>
CULTURE	<p>The area's cultural heritage encompasses four separate ethnic groups: Huicholes, Coras, Tepehuanos, and Mexicaneros. This heritage has led to a destination rich in traditional culinary traditions reflected in a wide variety of restaurants as well as popular cultural events and festivals, folklore and, of special importance to visitors, excellent shopping for traditional handicrafts and art.</p>
Arts	<p>Centuries of history are featured in expeditions to pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian cultural sites, mining towns, colonial San Blas and Mexcaltitlan. Visitors may join group tours or customize their own itineraries, with travel by air, land or boat. There are several traditional Huichol villages in the mountains and resort galleries display their colorful handicrafts, mostly animal figures made from beads pressed into wax.</p>
Films	<p>The Night of the Iguana (1963) - filmed on location at Mismaloya and other minor locations in the Puerto Vallarta area. The filming brought Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, Tennessee Williams, and Elizabeth Taylor (who was not in the film). The off-screen activities of</p>

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	Burton and Taylor were reported in the tabloids and tabloid newsreels of the day. After filming was completed, John Huston decided to build a home in the vicinity, he built a home on remote Las Caletas beach and a house in town. John Huston's children Angelica and Danny are founders and supporters of the Puerto Vallarta Film Festival.
Museums	The tiny Museo del Cuale (Tues-Sat 10am-2pm and 4-6pm; free admission) has a small but impressive permanent exhibit of pre-Columbian figurines.
Festivals	<p>There are festivals throughout the year in this region: here are a few:</p> <p>Flower and Garden Festival (last week of February) - A week of tours, classes, and workshops at the Vallarta Botanical Gardens. Dozens of plant, garden, flower, and local craft vendors feature their products and knowledge.</p> <p>Electro Beach Puerto Vallarta (42 day festival starting in the beginning of March) - An Electronic Dance Music (EDM) festival.</p> <p>May Festival (last week of May and first week of June) - commemorating the anniversary of the municipality. The festival features outdoor concerts, artistic expositions, sporting events and a parade.</p> <p>Día de Muertos - Day of the Dead (November 2nd) - A day of honouring the dead in full Mexican Tradition held at the Vallarta Botanical Gardens. Workshops on making catrina skeleton dolls and cempasúchil (<i>Tagetes erecta</i>) flower arrangements are followed by celebrations in the Garden of Memories and a bonfire dance.</p> <p>Los Posadas (December 20th) - An evening of candlelight caroling & processions to handmade nativities is hosted by the Vallarta Botanical Gardens. Poinsettias and native Mexican pines are also featured during the celebrations.</p> <p>Festival of the Virgin of Guadalupe December 1 to 12</p>

ATTRACTIONS	<p>Vallarta Adventures Vallarta Adventures offer trips that are safe learning experiences - designed for people who want to have fun exploring and enjoying all that nature has to offer. They focus on sharing the culture, wildlife, biodiversity and natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta. Website: http://www.vallarta-adventures.com Here are three of their tours to consider:</p> <p>Sierra Madre Expedition: This is the ideal way to get off the beaten path and explore the real Mexico. Visit the remote, traditional villages of the Mexican Outback and uncover the ecosystem and wildlife of the mountains and jungles of the Sierra Madre.</p>
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	<p>Swim with the Dolphins: Dolphins and humans have a natural affinity with one another, and this will be an unforgettable visit to the Dolphin Adventure Centre.</p> <p>Las Marietas Eco Discovery: There is a vast array of marine life living in the Mexican Pacific and on the shores of Banderas Bay. A trip to the Marietas Islands offers the chance to spot whales and dolphins, but the ocean is also home to a majestic giant manta rays, sea turtles and exotic tropical fish. This eco tour will also encounter bird life.</p>
<p>Beaches</p>	<p>There are many golden beaches in Vallarta: here's a few thoughts:</p> <p>Las Animas Las Animas is a beach distinguished by its golden sand. To the right of its division by a line of rocks is the tourist section, to the left is a much more private beach called El Caballito (Little Horse). Behind it stand imposing mountains and before it the Pacific, coloured a light blue due to its shallow depths, which make it perfect for swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving and kayaking. Or if you only want to relax here, you can sunbathe on any of the reclining chairs in front of its many restaurants after you have enjoyed a delicious meal of fresh seafood. There are several houses here for rent.</p> <p>Playa Camarones (Shrimp Beach) - Col. 5 de Diciembre (vicinity of Av. Paragua - Hotel Buenaventura. This is the northernmost public beach in the City of Puerto Vallarta proper. It is named after the shrimp fisherman that once landed their launches on the beach to unload their catch.</p> <p>Playa Olas Altas (High Waves Beach) - Col. Emilio Zapata - the beach extends from the Cuale River South to the fishing pier. In spite of the name, the waves offshore are not particularly high, and the beach is a popular place to swim, especially for locals and national tourists. The beach is lined with outdoor restaurants.</p>
<p>Wildlife</p>	<p>The Sierra Madre Occidental supports some of the richest biodiversity found anywhere in North America, boasting a wide range of wildlife species including white-tailed deer, jaguar, pumas, wild boars, ocelots, jaguarundi, coati mundi, skunks, badgers, coyotes, margays, rabbits, armadillos and iguanas.</p> <p>From mid-December to the end of March, Banderas Bay offers some of the world's most spectacular whale watching opportunities anywhere. And as Vallarta Adventures is the only tour company in the Banderas Bay area with a spotter plane, they can get you closer than you ever thought possible to witness these awesome creatures in action.</p> <p>Their light aircraft is in constant radio contact with each boat captain and reports sightings immediately from all over the bay.</p>

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	No matter which of their four exciting tours you choose, they all deliver an exhilarating and life changing insight into whales and their habitat.
Parks	Los Arcos National Marine Park This incredible marine park is situated between the Las Gemelas and Mismaloya beaches . Don't miss the opportunity to boat, snorkel or SCUBA dive through the deep tunnels, caves, colorful reefs and arches of these amazing islands, and to get to know the numerous forms of sea life and birds that make Los Arcos their home. These islands seem to float on the surface of some of the most profound waters of the Pacific . Their unforgettable image will be brought up in your memory whenever you think of Puerto Vallarta .
Ecotourism	A wide variety of activities ranging from whale watching, swimming with dolphins and adventures with seals to bird watching, excursions in the Sierra Madre mountains and canopy tours in subtropical jungles high above the ground. Throughout the year, there are also opportunities to participate in sea turtle protection programs.
Gardens	Vallarta Botanical Gardens are a popular showcase of orchids, agaves, cactus, palms, and other native plants. A restaurant and river swimming is also available to visitors. The gardens are located 23 km South of Puerto Vallarta on Highway 200. Buses for the Vallarta Botanical Gardens depart from the corner of Carranzas and Aguacate Streets in the Zona Romantica and are labeled as both "El Tuito" and "Botanical Gardens".
Historical Sites	Ixtapa Archeological Zone - north of the town of Ixtapa along the banks of the Ameca River there is an archeological site with remains going back several thousand years. The site comprises 29 mounds. The largest measures 40 meters in diameter and 8 meters in height. The site also includes the remains of ceremonial ball court. The original inhabitants of the site were vassals of the Aztatlán kingdom which was located in Western Jalisco between 900 and 1200 AD. The site is the oldest explored in Western Jalisco. The digs have uncovered a number of residential and ceremonial sites, a wealth of pottery (incense burners, bowls, amphora, etc.). Many of these objects are on display at the Rio Cuale Island Museum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	Day or night there is always time for shopping, an entertainment form of its own. You'll find treasures everywhere – one-of-a-kind hand-made items of pottery, jewelry, textiles, leather, silver, paintings and the list goes on....Naturally, you can treat yourself to brand name designer goods that may be calling your name as well. Either way, you are sure to take home as much as your heart desires.
Markets	Puerto Vallarta's municipal market is just north of the Río Cuale, where Libertad and A. Rodríguez meet. The mercado sells clothes,

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	<p>jewelry, serapes, shawls, leather accessories and suitcases, papier-mâché parrots, stuffed frogs and armadillos, and, of course, T-shirts. Be sure to comparison-shop, and definitely bargain before buying. The market is open daily from 9am to 7pm. Upstairs, a food market serves inexpensive Mexican meals - for more adventurous diners, it's probably the best value and most authentic dining experience in Vallarta.</p> <p>An outdoor market is along Río Cuale Island, between the two bridges. Stalls sell crafts, gifts, folk art, and clothing.</p>
Nightlife	<p>When the sun goes down the day is far from over - unless of course you want it to be. This diverse paradise is perfect for escaping from the world's crazy pace and just taking a moonlit stroll on the beach before settling in for a peaceful night's rest. Then again, you may find the local entertainment equally beneficial for the soul. Nightly entertainment at the all-inclusive resorts is rounded out with innumerable lounges and music as varied in style as their numbers. Sing along at a piano or karaoke bar, enjoy specialty after dinner drinks, a smooth hand-rolled cigar or head out to local seaside pubs and cantinas. And, of course, its famous river walk, clubs and cobblestone streets are within easy reach for an entertaining night to remember.</p>
Spas	<p>There are a number of spas in the area, principally in the major resort hotels, such as the Zen Set Spa at the Sunset Plaza Beach Resort</p>

CUISINE	
Food	<p>Puerto Vallarta offers many fine dining restaurants as well as intimate cafes and lively bars. Visitors enjoy the fresh seafood, authentic Mexican cuisine and top quality international restaurants. The most famous dish in the region is Huachinango Saradeado, marinated red snapper grilled over coals usually near the beach. The region holds an annual gastronomy festival that takes place in November.</p>
Wine	<p>Tequila is produced nearby and is a great buy here. In Mexico, tequila is often drunk straight. It is popular in some regions to drink fine tequila with a side of sangrita—a sweet, sour and spicy drink typically made from orange juice, grenadine (or tomato juice) and hot chilies. Equal-sized shots of tequila and sangrita are sipped alternately, without salt or lime.</p>
Restaurants	<p>An influx of top chefs from around the globe and November's gourmet festival have solidified Puerto Vallarta's fine dining reputation. Restaurants dish up everything from Modern European to Thai downtown, some with ocean-facing terraces. Everybody is talking about Trio's creative Mediterranean dishes and Thierry Blouet's imaginative menu at Café des Artistes. South of the river is great for fish, Mexican, and Asian food at the popular Archie's Wok. For gourmet sandwiches try Marina Vallarta and cheap tacos the Mercado Municipal. There are</p>

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	<p>over 500 restaurants in the area! Here's my favourite from my last visit there:</p> <p>Café des Artistes/Thierry Blouet Cocina del Autor</p> <p>The award-winning chef and owner, Thierry Blouet, is both a member of the French Academie Culinaire and a Maitre Cuisinier de France. The dining experience of the Café has evolved over the years into a trio of special places, including the upscale Bar Constantini lounge and the Thierry Blouet Cocina del Autor dining area. Together they're located in a restored house that resembles a castle. The Café's menu is a changing delight of French gourmet bistro fare, drawing on Chef Blouet's French training and incorporating regional specialty ingredients. Noteworthy entrees include sea bass filet served with a lentil, bacon, and coriander stew; and the renowned roasted duck glazed with honey, soy, ginger, and lime sauce, and served with a pumpkin risotto. At the Cocina de Autor, the atmosphere is sleek and stylish, and the fixed-priced tasting menu (prices depend on the number of plates you select, from three to five) offers a choice of the chef's most sumptuous creations. Choose any combination of starters, entrees, and desserts. After dining, you're invited to the cognac and cigar room, an exquisite blend of old adobe walls, flickering candles, and elegant leather chairs.</p> <p>www.cafedesartistes.com</p>
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MORE INFO	<p>Website: www.visitpuertovallarta.com Connect with Puerto Vallarta on facebook: https://www.facebook.com/puertovallarta Follow Puerto Vallarta on Twitter: https://twitter.com/PuertoVallarta</p>
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RIVIERA NAYARIT	<p>Vallarta-Nayarit, Mexico's Pacific paradise has endless choices and incredible value. This region is one of Mexico's most popular tourist destinations because of its great climate and incredible diversity. It's this boundless diversity that provides visitors with such a range of unique experiences - so many to describe that you have to LIVE IT TO BELIEVE IT.</p> <p>Vallarta-Nayarit stretches over 300 kms along pristine Pacific coast framed by the majestic Sierra Madre Mountains and just ten minutes north of accessible Puerto Vallarta International Airport. The region extends along the entire coast of the Pacific state of Nayarit - including the resorts of Nuevo Vallarta, the historic colonial town of San Blas, exclusive Punta Mita, picturesque fishing villages, long stretches of</p>
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serene beaches and spectacular Banderas Bay.

Famous for its glorious beaches you can also save a fortune as you discover the area's treasures - Vallarta-Nayarit offers countless affordable activities. The region attracts vacationers of all tastes and budgets with its wide range of accommodation including chic luxury resorts, eco-tourism boutique hotels, and quaint B&B inns.

This beautiful Mexican destination provides romantic resorts, spectacular beaches, superb cuisine and a special attention to all of the myriad details of organizing a wedding. Vallarta-Nayarit is ideal for a destination wedding or honeymoon because, in addition to beautiful wedding locations, there is so much to do for wedding guests and honeymooners.

There are currently six major golf courses in Vallarta-Nayarit, developed by high profile names such as Jack Nicklaus, Percy Clifford, Robert Von Hagge and Greg Norman. The area also offers many luxury spas. Boutiques span throughout the coast of Nayarit, offering crafts and popular souvenirs, fine jewelry and designer clothing from all over the world.

From charming beachfront restaurants in tiny fishing villages offering authentic Mexican seaside cuisine, to elegantly sophisticated gourmet restaurants with international chefs - the dining experience in Vallarta-Nayarit is a unique fusion of tradition, contemporary innovation and local products.

The main nightlife scene is focused on quaint and eclectic bars, pubs and cantinas as well as in the Resorts. Travelers looking to party all night long will surely also have a blast in neighboring Puerto Vallarta - famous for its high energy nightlife party scene at the Malecón/board walk or in the historic downtown of Puerto Vallarta.

Vallarta Adventures is Puerto Vallarta and Nuevo Vallarta's premier tour and activity operator. They offer a wide selection of adventure-based tours and excursions with things to do for people of all ages - from zip lines to swimming with dolphins, from whale watching to snorkeling, and from Jeep safaris in the Sierra Madre Mountains to an award winning dinner show. Vallarta Adventure's Dive Centre offers professional diving instructors and scuba lessons for every level of PADI Certification.

During the summer and fall months, travelers can visit Grupo Ecológico de la Costa Verde's marine turtle nursery, located in the San Francisco

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	<p>area of Vallarta-Nayarit. Turtle hatchlings are released just after sundown, and each Wednesday evening during the nesting season.</p> <p>La Tovar National Park and mangrove eco-region in San Blas is a paradise for bird enthusiasts with a concentration of migratory birds and over 250 species altogether. The Crocodile Reserve in El Manantial of La Camelota allows visitors to see baby crocodiles and huge full-grown crocodiles.</p> <p>Hundreds of Humpbacked whales visit Banderas Bay each year from November through April. Visitors can see these majestic giants who raise their calves in the protected waters of the Banderas Bay and Pacific coastline of Vallarta-Nayarit. Friendly wild dolphins inhabit these waters year-round and the ocean is also home to a plethora of majestic giant manta rays, sea turtles and exotic tropical fish.</p> <p>Vallarta-Nayarit offers both authentic cultural heritage and a dynamic contemporary art scene. Mexican handicraft artisans and many contemporary Mexican and international artists are drawn to the area. Visitors can find their artwork in galleries, boutiques and open air markets.</p> <p>The Huichol Indians of Vallarta-Nayarit are an indigenous ethnic group living high in the Sierra Madre Mountains who escaped both conquest by the Spaniards and being changed by Mexican culture. They are one of the last tribes of people in North America who still live as they did in pre-Columbian times, still maintaining their same rituals and beliefs.</p> <p>You can take a full day excursion into the Sierra Madre to experience the wonders of the Huichol Indian Culture. You'll stop at an authentic fishing village before climbing 3,000 feet into the majestic Sierra Madre Mountains. In the Nueva Valley the small Huichol Indian village has a population of just 130 natives! Visit their temple, learn about their culture and experience their costumes, music and dance. You will be allowed to take "priceless photographs" and purchase authentic beaded artwork and handicrafts.</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>Riviera Nayarit is on the Pacific coast of Mexico about half way between the US and Mexico's southern border. It is located in the state of Nayarit, just north of Puerto Vallarta International Airport. It extends from Nuevo Vallarta, Nayarit's most developed area, north to the border of the state of Sinaloa. Key attractions include the exclusive Punta Mita luxury resort and residential area; a rich cultural tradition with pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian history; and abundant and exotic species of protected wildlife, including sea turtles, humpback whales</p>

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	and tropical birds.
Geography	Nayarit is one of Mexico's 31 states and is located on the central west coast, bordering the Pacific Ocean. Nayarit is surrounded by the states of Sinaloa to the northwest, Durango to the north, Zacatecas to the northeast and Jalisco to the south with the Pacific Ocean bordering it to the west. Its capital is Tepic, which is located inland and south on the Tepic River. Nearby is the Sanganguey volcano and the crater lake.
Name	The Nayarit name means "Region whose people adore the god of battles".
Population	The State of Nayarit has a population of approximately 950,000.
Language	Spanish – but English is widely spoken in the coastal resort towns.
Currency	The Mexican Pesos – although the US Dollar is also widely accepted too. Currently (November 2015) \$1 Cdn = 12.4 Mexican Pesos.
Tippling	The average tip for service is 10-15% and one or two dollars per suitcase carried. Always check your bill first as tips may already be included.
Government	The United Mexican States are a federation whose government is representative, democratic and republican based on a presidential system. The President is Enrique Peña Nieto.
Documentation	Passports are required but no Visa is necessary for Canadians. Check for possible updates to requirements for children travelling to Mexico with adults other than their parents in 2013.
Time zone	Riviera Nayarit is on Mountain Time, two hours behind Montreal and Toronto. Note that just across the river in Puerto Vallarta, the time zone is Central, just one hour behind EST. Sayulita has also adopted Central time too.
Health	There are no special health problems here and the hospital facilities are excellent.
Safety tips	In contrast to the sometimes lurid media accounts of the drug war in Mexico, this region – in common with most of the tourist regions of the country – is safe for vacationers. Just take the normal precautions that you would in your own town or city.

CLIMATE	
General climate	One of the chief considerations in planning a vacation is the weather, and it is the weather that makes Riviera Nayarit an excellent choice for anyone trying to escape the cold of a northern winter, or the heat of a southern summer. On the same latitude as Hawaii, Riviera Nayarit enjoys a mild tropical climate with an average temperature of a comfortable 25 °C. Those who find themselves snowbound in the winter months will find an escape to Riviera Nayarit for a tropical vacation just the thing to break up those long winter nights. Summer in Riviera Nayarit can be a bit warm for some, with average highs in the 30's, but

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	<p>the rainy season comes in June and lasts until November, bringing with it afternoon showers and relief from the summer heat. Occasional thunderstorms roll through in late summer providing an evening's entertainment without interfering with daytime activities.</p> <p>If you are looking for the right climate for outdoor activities like golf, deep sea fishing, sailing, or just sitting on the beach, Riviera Nayarit has what you're looking for.</p>
Today's weather	30 Centigrade and sunny as at 28 th November 2016 on the Riviera Nayarit.
Best time to visit	In the winter months, Riviera Nayarit has the perfect antidote to northern snows and cold temperatures!

GETTING AROUND	
Getting There	<p>Puerto Vallarta International Airport (PVR) is the nearest commercial air service to Nayarit - only 10 minutes south of Nuevo Vallarta and 40 minutes from Punta Mita.</p> <p>Flight time from Toronto to Puerto Vallarta is 5 hours.</p> <p>Air Transat has frequent direct flights from both Montreal and Toronto.</p>
Towns & Cities	<p>Nuevo Vallarta – This was first major resort centre in the Riviera Nayarit and is just ten minutes north of the Puerto Vallarta airport, just across the state line...It features Resort Hotels, All-Inclusive vacation resorts, luxury spas, restaurant dining , an expansive beach on Banderas Bay, yacht club, marina, dolphin swim, golf courses, shopping malls and excursion activities centre.</p> <p>Bucerias - Minutes north of the heartbeat of Nuevo Vallarta, Bucerias straddles time... a town of cobblestone streets with charming shops, clubs and seaside restaurants overlooking its magnificent 4km long beach which is also 100 metres wide! This is an ideal place for enjoying the Pacific Ocean and activities such as snorkeling, banana rides, jet ski, ski boarding, surfing or simple strolls on the beach. Overall, Bucerias is the perfect setting for a Mexico beach vacation.</p> <p>Punta de Mita - Located at the northern tip of Banderas Bay, this peninsula is surrounded by white beaches and calm waters. The area is well known as home to the Four Seasons Hotel, its Jack Nicklaus golf course and a fabulous vantage point from which to view the three month long winter migration of the humpback whales. Distinguished by its specialty cuisine restaurants featuring local fish and fresh seafood, spectacular fine golden sand beaches, clear warm waters, colorful coral reefs and excellent sport fishing, Punta de Mita is a dream beach vacation destination.</p> <p>Lo de Marcos - This is a tranquil, relaxing seaside town that offers an</p>

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	<p>exclusive selection of beach front villas and rentals, as well as some smaller luxury hotels. There is an authentic Mexican atmosphere here. The beauty of the mountains, beach and sea is really spectacular. Water sports and horseback riding are popular, as are the variety of shops and restaurants serving fresh seafood and local specialties.</p> <p>San Blas - This coastal village is different from others in the Riviera Nayarit as it is an old city with a history of about 500 years. Several ruins and buildings still document at least the last 250 years of its history. Because of many small rivers and lagoons, a huge number of unique species populate the area. Miles of nearly virgin beaches make it the perfect choice for sea, sun, sand and ecotourism adventure, as well as seeking to explore some cultural, historical aspects of Mexico.</p>
Distances	The Riviera Nayarit stretches 300 kms from the state of Jalisco in the south to Sinaloa in the north.
Ferries	The muelle (cruise-ship pier), also called Terminal Marítima, is where excursion boats to Yelapa, Las Animas, Quimixto, and the Marietas Islands depart.
Car Rental	Rental cars are readily available at the airport, through travel agencies, and through the most popular U.S. car rental services.
Buses	City buses in nearby Puerto Vallarta, easy to navigate and inexpensive, will serve just about all your transportation needs. They run from the airport through the Hotel Zone along Morelos Street (1 block inland from the malecón), across the Río Cuale, and inland on Vallarta, looping back through the downtown hotel and restaurant districts on Insurgentes and several other downtown streets.

ACCOMMODATION TYPES	<p>From a quaint "Posada" hotel on a forgotten beach, to the ultra modern family travel oriented resorts in upscale Nuevo Vallarta and Flamingos, Riviera Nayarit has the kind of accommodations and services that will send you home refreshed and rejuvenated. If exclusive special category retreats are more your style, take a look at the elegant luxury embodied in the resorts of Punta Mita. I stayed in Riviera Nayarit: Dreams Villamagna Nuevo Vallarta.</p>
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LIFESTYLES	
Kids	<p>The extensive beaches and great resorts with children's facilities make this a very suitable destination for children. I vacationed here with my kids when they were 12 months and 6 years old – a perfect time for them.</p> <p>Dolphin encounters: Vallarta Adventures have a special program tailor-made for kids aged 4 to 8 years so that they can interact and get closer to dolphins than they ever dreamed possible.</p>

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<p>Teens</p>	<p>With jeep excursions into the mountains, canopy tours, surfing and all kinds of activities at the many resorts, there's plenty to keep old kids happy in this region too.</p> <p>Sea Lion Encounters: Sea lions are one of the ocean's most fascinating creatures - and snorkeling with them adds another element of excitement and adventure to your day of fun-in-the-sun at Las Caletas, where on the Vallarta Adventures trip you'll also enjoy a superb buffet lunch, beverages, parrot encounters, nature walks, Paella cooking lessons, guided kayak tours, and lots of fun!</p>
<p>Romance</p>	<p>There's a sense of fresh beginnings that saturates the pure and natural Riviera Nayarit, making it ripe for romance. Whether it's a luxurious wedding or a beachside honeymoon straight out of a Hollywood movie, stoking the flames of passion here is a simple venture.</p> <p>Pamper yourself in the glow of a romantic Mexican sunset on a luxury yacht. There is nothing more peaceful and romantic than sailing across Banderas Bay as the crimson sun dips into the deep blue waters of the Pacific.</p>
<p>Honeymoons & Weddings</p>	<p>Wedding packages may run from the bare basics to extravagant offerings that include reception dinners, room upgrades and his-and-hers massages. Many resorts in the Riviera Nayarit also provide onsite wedding coordinators to help special days go off without a hitch – including the featured resort Hard Rock Hotel in Nuevo Vallarta.</p>
<p>Seniors</p>	<p>Many Canadian Seniors have holiday homes here. The beautiful sunsets over the Pacific, great climate year round and the excellent value of the region are all appealing. The price of long stay vacations in the winter months is also very appealing.</p>

<p>UNIQUES</p>	<p>Riviera Nayarit won the Battle of the Destinations III in 2012, a competition organized by travel website Travelocity in order to select the Best Luxury Beach Destination in Mexico.</p>
<p>Surprising</p>	<p>Nayarit has an unusual combination of both tropical and temperate ecosystems. About 300 species of orchids can be found there.</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>Although humans may have settled in Nayarit as early as 5,000 B.C, the first known civilization in the region, the Cora, appeared sometime around 400 A.D. Concentrated on the Nayar plateau of the Sierra Madre Occidental, Cora society reached its apex about 1200 A.D.; many of their descendants continue to live in the area. The Cora relied on agriculture, and cultivated beans, corn and amaranth.</p> <p>From the 9th to the 12th century, other tribes migrated into the region, including the Tepehuano, Totorano and Huichole. Over the next 300 years they were driven back by tribes from the Indian civilizations of Xalisco. These tribes were members of the Chimalhuacán</p>

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	<p>Confederation.</p> <p>In 1523, Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés briefly visited Nayarit. He was followed five years later by Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán, infamous for his ruthlessness in overthrowing indigenous leaders. Beltrán de Guzmán conquered many villages in the region and founded the settlement of Espíritu Santo on the ruins of the indigenous city of Tepic. In 1531, Cortés returned and tried to take control of the area, but Beltrán de Guzmán appealed to the Spanish crown and was named governor of a province comprised of the territories he had conquered. Throughout most of the 16th and 17th centuries, Franciscan priests of the Roman Catholic Church sought to convert and pacify the Cora, who fiercely resisted Spanish occupation. Spanish control of the region was constantly threatened by indigenous revolts, such as the famous uprising led by Tenamactli in the 1540s. Rebels in the Nayar mountain range continued to harass the Spanish until they were finally conquered in 1722.</p> <p>Mexico began its march toward independence in 1810 under the leadership of Miguel Hidalgo. In Nayarit, a local priest named José María Mercado took up the cause, occupying the capital city of Tepic without a battle in November 1810. By December he had also captured the port of San Blas, but his success was fleeting. Within a year, royalist forces had recaptured most of Nayarit. Even so, the larger revolution eventually succeeded, and Nayarit became a part of independent Mexico in 1821.</p>
Books	Lonely Planet's Mexico is the bible for travellers to anywhere in this country.
1000 Places to See Before You Die	El Dia de los Muertos – Mexicans remember and celebrate their departed in this festival which normally takes place at the start of November each year.
Must Sees	<p>Marietas Islands</p> <p>It's every travelers dream to step into an adventure of discovering secret places, and trekking to the hidden beach of Las Marietas, located in Riviera Nayarit, is sure to surpass even the highest expectations. Visitors to the hidden beach will forever remember being transported to a mysterious escape filled with beauty, wildlife, and peaceful, private beaches.</p> <p>Only a short boat ride away from the coast, Las Marietas is a cluster of islands formed by volcanic activity and rumored to have once been a hideout to pirates and hunters. On the eastern most island, exploration minded travelers will discover a narrow tunnel ending with a rock arch which they must swim under to finally gain entry to a cave which then leads into the private cove.</p> <p>Coined Playa del Amor, or "Lover's Beach" by the locals, what makes this beach so impressive is the ring of rock that surrounds the open</p>

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	<p>cove, forming a natural oculus to the blue skies above. The beauty doesn't end there; this is also home to a vast array of wildlife, including over ninety species of birds. White-Capped Marine Swallows, Band-Tailed Swallows, the largest population in the Pacific Ocean of the curious Laughing Sea Gull, and the extremely rare Blue-Footed Booby are among the birds that will draw ecotourists and bird watchers alike. Having the greatest abundance in the Bay of Banderas, Las Marietas is home to 103 of the 159 registered species of reef fish. Lastly, massive Humpback Whales migrate to the Bay of Banderas from Mid-December through early April. A visit to the Marietas during these months is almost guaranteed to yield up close and personal encounters with families of Humpbacks as they play in the warm waters of the bay, launching out of the water, and producing massive splashes when they land. Surely, these islands are a rich, more easily accessible alternative to the myriad of wildlife that travelers seek from the Galapagos Islands.</p> <p>The beauty of these islands relies on the fact that they are carefully preserved and guarded. The islands, a UNESCO Biosphere reserve now protected by the Mexican government, are uninhabited by man. Take note that only certain companies and organizations, such as Punta Mita Expeditions, are authorized to visit the islands and that local law enforcement agencies patrol the islands by boat, making sure that all visitors are wearing approved wrist bands. Under these protections, visitors to the area can enjoy pristine guided boat, snorkeling, or scuba excursions and rest assured that the local wildlife are indeed safe in their natural environment.</p>
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<p>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>From the hotel developments in Nuevo Vallarta to the virgin beaches in the north, visitors can choose between dozens of activities: you can experience thrilling jungle adventures and enlightening nature excursions in unique and exotic locations, and an enticing variety of water activities on beaches that ranked first place in Mexico for certified clean beaches awarded by the federal government. The wide range of beaches that make up the Riviera Nayarit offers perfect environments for every possible water activity, from sailing and jet skis to snorkeling and diving.</p> <p>Surfers, for instance, will enjoy the waters off of Destiladeras beach, San Pancho, Lo de Marcos, and especially Sayulita, which is the site of an annual surfing competition each March.</p> <p>There is also a Riviera Nayarit Half Marathon each November that has a scenic course along the coast and through El Tigre Golf Course.</p>
<p>Golf</p>	<p>For those who love the links, few locations compare with the impressive golf courses in Riviera Nayarit. The area has become known as a premier golfing destination in Mexico and one of the preferred destinations for golfers from around the world. The secret to these</p>

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courses' success resides in the combination of magnificent surroundings including mountains, tropical forests and beaches, with the incredible design of masters such as Jack Nicklaus, Greg Norman, Robert Von Hagge & Baril, Jim Lipe and Percy Clifford. Riviera Nayarit has six world-class golf courses, each more surprising and challenging

EL NAYAR VIDANTA GOLF COURSE

Opened in 2001, this Jim Lipe design features a par of 71 and 7000 yards of challenging play. Located on the Grupo Vidanta property in Nuevo Vallarta, it provides impressive views of the Pacific Ocean, the Rio Ameca, and the surrounding Sierra Madre Mountains. Jim Lipe is Jack Nicklaus' head designer and this course reflects that heritage.

EL TIGRE GOLF COURSE

Opened in March of 2002, the El Tigre is one of the most challenging in the family of excellent golf courses in Riviera Nayarit. This course weighs in at 7,239 yards and par 72 and was created by designer Robert Von Hagge. An absolute must for golfer visiting Riviera Nayarit.

FLAMINGOS GOLF COURSE

Designed in 1970 by Percy Clifford (creator of some of Mexico's top courses) as a cornerstone of the Nuevo Vallarta & Flamingos resort development. The course today is fully mature and unlike any other in Riviera Nayarit making it one of the most popular due to its beautiful rolling hill terrain, lush tropical forest and natural lagoons and mangroves.

LITIBU GOLF COURSE

Designed by the legendary golf player Greg Norman, Litibu Golf Course opened in early 2010 hosting the International Canadian Golf Tour Tournament. The unique feature of this par 72, 7,022 yard course is that it was built over a surface of 68.48 hectares, where 7 holes are a "link" style, 8 others are surrounded by virgin jungles, and the last 3 are run along the Pacific Ocean.

PUNTA MITA PACIFICO GOLF COURSE

Punta Mita Pacifico course was opened in September of 1999 and plays out at par 72 and 7,014 yards of the most breathtaking golf course in Mexico (possibly in the world). A Jack Nicklaus Signature Course that offer extraordinary ocean views and world-play.

PUNTA MITA BAHIA GOLF COURSE

The newest addition to Punta Mita's golfing achievement; the Punta Mita Bahía Course, opened in late 2009 and is as stunning as its sister

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	course. Featuring six ocean holes and playing between 5,180 and 7,030 yards it's just one more stunning design by Jack Nicklaus.
Fishing	Riviera Nayarit is rapidly establishing itself as a major deep sea fishing destination, with world class catches of blue and black marlin, sailfish, yellow fin tuna and other species. Other season's feature wahoo and Dorado and coastal sport fishing. In addition to an extensive fishing fleet available for charter, Riviera Nayarit hosts the International Marlin & Tuna Fishing Tournament each year in July. Fishing charters cost around \$120 per person, for one to eight people; or select from other options where the price varies with the size of the boat; a boat can be rented for 8 hours for \$450.
Surfing	Sayulita: There are two main surf spots in Sayulita - the most popular is the break fronting the main beach in the village, which is a right longboard break. A faster, left break is found just north of the river mouth, in front of the campground. Surf instruction and board rentals are available at Lunazul Surf School (www.lunazulsurf.com) located at Marlin #4, where this street ends at the beachfront. The 90-minute surf lessons cost \$40 for individual instruction, or \$30 for group instruction. They also offer 2-day weekend clinics for \$80 or weeklong clinics for \$200. Included in all lessons is the use of a surfboard and rashguard. Board rentals through Lunazul are \$20 for the day, or \$150 for the week. Lunazul also has a surf shop, where you can purchase surf gear ranging from wax to boards.
Hiking	Hiking options in Riviera Nayarit range from gentle strolls along the many beaches to strenuous treks in the mountains of the Sierra Madre: take your pick!
Horse Riding	Travel agents and local ranches can arrange guided horseback rides. Rancho Palma Real, Carretera Vallarta, Tepic 4766 (tel. 322/222-0501), has an office 5 minutes north of the airport; the ranch is in Las Palmas, 40 minutes northeast of Puerto Vallarta. It is by far the nicest horseback riding tour in the area. The horses are in excellent condition, and you enjoy a tour of local farms on your way to the ranch. The price (\$60) includes breakfast and lunch.
Canopy Tours	A popular Riviera Nayarit adventure activity is canopy tours. You glide from treetop to treetop, getting an up-close-and-personal look at a tropical rainforest canopy and the trails far below. Expert guides assist you to the special platforms, and you move from one to another using pulleys on horizontal traverse cables, while the guides explain the tropical flora surrounding you. They also offer assistance - and moral support - as you rappel back down to the forest floor. Tours depart from the Vallarta Adventures offices in both Marina Vallarta and Nuevo Vallarta at 8am, returning at 2pm. The price (\$79 for adults, \$69 for children 8-12) includes the tour, unlimited nonalcoholic beverages, and light snacks. Their Outdoor Adventure combines a ride on the canopy

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	line with a day of adventure activities. You'll learn wilderness survival techniques while hiking through the Sierra Madre foothills, splashing through streams, rappelling down waterfalls, then taking a 300m zip line over jungle landscape. The 6 1/2 hour tour costs \$95, for those who are physically fit, ages 12 and older.
Yachting	There are four marinas that welcome visitors stopping by on yachts and each have boats available for fishing or leisurely excursions on the water: the Paradise Village Marina, the Nuevo Vallarta Marina, the San Blas Marina and the brand-new state-of-the-art Riviera Nayarit Marina at La Cruz de Huanacastle.
Diving	The warm, crystal-clear waters of Banderas Bay and the Mexican Pacific are home to a vast array of sea life making Puerto Vallarta one of Mexico's top diving destinations. At Vallarta Adventure's PADI 5 star IDC Dive Center, professional diving instructors combine their expertise with the utmost personal attention in scuba lessons for every level of PADI Certification. You may snorkel or dive at Los Arcos, a company owned site at Caletas Cove (where you'll dive in the company of sea lions), Quimixto Coves, the Marietas Islands, or the offshore La Corbeteña, Morro, and Chimo reefs. The company runs a full range of certification courses up to Instructor. Chico's Dive Shop , near Carlos O'Brian's offers similar diving and snorkeling trips and is also a PADI five-star dive centre. www.chicos-diveshop.com . Chico's is open daily from 8am to 10pm, with branches at the Marriott, Las Palmas, Holiday Inn, Fiesta Americana, Krystal, San Marino, Villa del Palmar, Paradise Village, and Playa Los Arcos.

CULTURE	The Riviera Nayarit's cultural influences make it a wonderful area in which to indulge in some other popular pastimes. Four ethnic groups survived the Spanish conquest and still exist in the Riviera Nayarit today: the Coras, Mexicaneros, Tepehuanos, and Huichol peoples. The most coveted regional finds in the Riviera Nayarit come from the Huichol. They create colourful glass beads and wooden handicrafts, including jewelry, animal figurines and paintings. Many of their creations are found just as easily in open-air markets as they are in high-end hotel boutiques. San Blas, the northernmost town in the Riviera Nayarit, was the first port in the entire Pacific Coast of Mexico, is also rich in the area's colonial history. Nowadays is known as much for its pristine beaches as for its bird-watching options.
Arts	Centuries of history are featured in expeditions to pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian cultural sites, mining towns, colonial San Blas and Mexcaltitlan. Visitors may join group tours or customize their own itineraries, with travel by air, land or boat. There are several traditional Huichol villages in the mountains and resort galleries display their colorful handicrafts, mostly animal figures made from beads pressed

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	into wax.
Films	The Night of the Iguana (1963) - filmed on location at Mismaloya and other minor locations in the Puerto Vallarta area. The filming brought Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, Tennessee Williams, and Elizabeth Taylor (who was not in the film). The off-screen activities of Burton and Taylor were reported in the tabloids and tabloid newsreels of the day. After filming was completed, John Huston decided to build a home in the vicinity, he built a home on remote Las Caletas beach and a house in town. John Huston's children Angelica and Danny are founders and supporters of the Puerto Vallarta Film Festival.
Museums	The most important museum in Tepic , the state capital, is the Regional Museum of Anthropology and History , which displays historical items. The Cuatro Pueblos Museum showcases the culture of the four main ethnic groups of Tepic: huicholes, coras, tepehuanos and mexicaneros. For artwork, go to the Amado Nervo Museum , which exhibits various personal items and the work of the famous Mexican poet, Amado Nervo.
Festivals	<p>There are festivals throughout the year in this region: here are a few coming up in the next couple of months-</p> <p>Gourmet Festival - November Every year better than the last, the Gourmet Festival includes the best restaurants in the Bay celebrating gastronomy. www.festivalgourmet.com</p> <p>Mexican Revolution Day, also Day of the Sports - November 20 National holiday celebrating the 1910 Revolution, and the Day of the Sports with parades.</p> <p>Lady of Guadalupe Festivities - December 1-12 Twelve days celebrating the lady of Guadalupe with processions and donned cars, each day with folkloric dances, pre Hispanic performers and military Bands. This takes place in Sayulita, Nayarit and Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco.</p> <p>Surf Classic in Sayulita - December An event which every year brings surfers from all over the world into Sayulita, Nayarit, one of the most important surf destinations. www.sayulitalife.com</p> <p>Joy Parade in the city of Tepic - December 16 Colorful parade of picturesque donned cars.</p> <p>Christmas - December 24-25</p>

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	<p>The Midnight Mass takes place on the 24th of December, followed by the great dinner and a presents exchange; this also takes place on the following day.</p>
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<p>ATTRACTIONS</p>	<p>Vallarta Adventures Vallarta Adventures is Puerto Vallarta and Nuevo Vallarta's premier tour and activity operator. They offer a wide selection of adventure-based tours and excursions with things to do for people of all ages - from zip lines to swimming with dolphins, from whale watching to snorkeling, and from Jeep safaris in the Sierra Madre Mountains to an award winning dinner show. Vallarta Adventure's Dive Centre offers professional diving instructors and scuba lessons for every level of PADI Certification. Vallarta Adventures offer trips that are safe learning experiences - designed for people who want to have fun exploring and enjoying all that nature has to offer. They focus on sharing the culture, wildlife, biodiversity and natural beauty of Puerto Vallarta. Website: http://www.vallarta-adventures.com</p> <p>Here are three of their tours to consider:</p> <p>Sierra Madre Expedition: This is the ideal way to get off the beaten path and explore the real Mexico. Visit the remote, traditional villages of the Mexican Outback and uncover the ecosystem and wildlife of the mountains and jungles of the Sierra Madre.</p> <p>Swim with the Dolphins: Dolphins and humans have a natural affinity with one another, and this will be an unforgettable visit to the Dolphin Adventure Centre.</p> <p>Las Marietas Eco Discovery: There is a vast array of marine life living in the Mexican Pacific and on the shores of Banderas Bay. A trip to the Marietas Islands offers the chance to spot whales and dolphins, but the ocean is also home to a majestic giant manta rays, sea turtles and exotic tropical fish. This eco tour will also encounter bird life.</p>
<p>Beaches</p>	<p>There are nearly 300km of beaches of exceptional natural beauty; here are a few suggestions:</p> <p>La Cruz de Huanacastle: This tranquil beach resort town is located on the northern side of Banderas Bay and has 5 distinct beach areas that stretch for over 7kms! It's most famous, known for the calm waters found there, is a fabulous beach called La Manzanilla. This town is the home of the new, largest marina in the region and its plans for a malecon that will offer vacationers everything from all-inclusive resorts and hotels to a full range of restaurants, bars and shops.</p>

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	<p>Rincon de Guayabitos: The bay and its surrounding majestic mountains are extraordinarily beautiful and invite vacationers to enjoy beach vacations with real Mexican ambience and culture. The magnificent beaches which offer different experiences are the main attraction of the area. The main beach in the center of the bay, Guayabitos, is also known as the world's biggest pool for its tranquil waters and scarce waves. Small hotels and rentals are available as is the traditional nearby market which offers fresh local foods, handicrafts, clothes and jewelry.</p> <p>Sayulita: This small picturesque surfer's Mecca is a seaside town like something out of a fairy tale and Hollywood movie at the same time. Full of contrasts from gourmet restaurants to beachside palapas and seaside stands, California ex-patriots, international surfers and local artisans combine with the incredible beach and blue Pacific Ocean to deliver an experience rich in colour, flavor and diversity.</p>
<p>Wildlife</p>	<p>The Sierra Madre Occidental supports some of the richest biodiversity found anywhere in North America, boasting a wide range of wildlife species including white-tailed deer, jaguar, pumas, wild boars, ocelots, jaguarundi, coati mundi, skunks, badgers, coyotes, margays, rabbits, armadillos and iguanas.</p> <p>From mid-December to the end of March, Banderas Bay offers some of the world's most spectacular whale watching opportunities anywhere. And as Vallarta Adventures is the only tour company in the Banderas Bay area with a spotter plane, they can get you closer than you ever thought possible to witness these awesome creatures in action. Their light aircraft is in constant radio contact with each boat captain and reports sightings immediately from all over the bay. No matter which of their four exciting tours you choose, they all deliver an exhilarating and life changing insight into whales and their habitat.</p>
<p>Parks</p>	<p>La Tovar National Park – A sanctuary for birds in a natural mangrove forest fed by the Pacific Ocean. Motor boats take you through the mangroves where you have the opportunity to see many of the native birds of the region, as well as crocodiles, swamp turtles, and other creatures. Continue up the estuary, where a freshwater spring changes the terrain and brings new varieties of flora and fauna.</p>
<p>Ecotourism</p>	<p>Riviera Nayarit is a nature lovers paradise. In summer and fall, visit Grupo Ecológico de la Costa Verde's marine turtle nursery and see Turtle hatchlings released.</p> <p>La Tovar National Park and mangrove eco-region in San Blas is a paradise for bird enthusiasts. See baby and huge full-grown crocodiles at The Crocodile Reserve in El Manantial of La Camelota.</p>

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	Hundreds of Humpbacked whales visit Banderas Bay each year from November through April . Friendly wild dolphins, giant manta rays, sea turtles and exotic tropical fish also inhabit these waters.
Historical Sites	San Sebastien: With its charming cobblestone plaza, elegant snow-white buildings, classic Porfirian bandstand, an 18th century church dedicated to San Sebastián and a wealth of 18th century Haciendas, you'll enjoy a privileged glimpse into colonial Mexico, untouched by time in this little known treasure. Originally settled in 1605, this secluded 17th century mining town reached its peak of prosperity in the 1700s, when over 30,000 people inhabited the area. Over the years, the town's population fluctuated wildly as gold and silver were mined intermittently between the 1600's and the 1930's.

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	Day or night there is always time for shopping, an entertainment form of its own. You'll find treasures everywhere – one-of-a-kind hand-made items of pottery, jewelry, textiles, leather, silver, paintings and the list goes on....You can treat yourself to brand name designer goods that may be calling your name as well. My top recommendation for a memento of your visit is to purchase a sample of Huichol art . Huichol Art dates back millennia. During spiritual rituals Shaman have visions which are then transcribed into carvings, yarn art, and have evolved into t-shirts, boxed note cards, framed art and downloadable animations. Each image has spiritual meaning. Huichol art is personal and captivating, with intricate designs, vibrant colours and sacred symbols. It is an expression of deeply held spiritual beliefs. In the Huichol culture, art and religion are inextricable. The shaman links the community with the spirit world, from where their creativity pours forth as a gift from their deified ancestors - to be given back as offerings to the gods.
Markets	Just across the state boundary, Puerto Vallarta's municipal market is just north of the Río Cuale, where Libertad and A. Rodríguez meet. The mercado sells clothes, jewelery, serapes, shawls, leather accessories and suitcases, papier-mâché parrots, stuffed frogs and armadillos, and, of course, T-shirts. Be sure to comparison-shop, and definitely bargain before buying. The market is open daily from 9am to 7pm. Upstairs, a food market serves inexpensive Mexican meals - for more adventurous diners, it's probably the best value and most authentic dining experience in Vallarta. An outdoor market is along Río Cuale Island, between the two bridges. Stalls sell crafts, gifts, folk art, and clothing.
Nightlife	The main nightlife scene is focused on quaint and eclectic bars, pubs and cantinas as well as the resorts. Travellers looking to party all night long will also have a blast in neighboring Puerto Vallarta - famous for its high energy nightlife party scene at the Malecón/board walk or in the

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	historic downtown of Puerto Vallarta.
Spas	Luxury resort spas of world class status such as The Spa at Grand Velas, the Remède Spa at St. Regis Resort and Residences, Playa del Sol, Apuane Spa at Four Seasons and The Villa del Palmar Tatewari Spa. Most of the luxury resorts also offer spa services and massage. I enjoyed a relaxing spa experience at the Dreams Villamagna Hotel in Nuevo Vallarta.
Casinos	Real casinos have yet to make it to Mexico, although the federal legislature has been debating the issue for some years.

CUISINE	
Food	The biggest and most pleasant surprise of my last visit to the region was the quality and variety of the cuisine available here. Riviera Nayarit offers many fine dining restaurants as well as intimate cafes and lively bars. Visitors enjoy the fresh seafood, authentic Mexican cuisine and top quality international restaurants. The most famous dish in the region is Huachinango Saradeado , marinated red snapper grilled over coals usually near the beach. The region holds an annual gastronomy festival that takes place in November.
Drink	Tequila is produced in Nayarit and is a great buy here. In Mexico, tequila is often drunk straight. It is popular in some regions to drink fine tequila with a side of sangrita—a sweet, sour and spicy drink typically made from orange juice, grenadine (or tomato juice) and hot chilies. Equal-sized shots of tequila and sangrita are sipped alternately, without salt or lime.
Restaurants	There are approximately 500 restaurants in the Vallarta area. Every flavour, style, nationality and ambiance is available with a wide range of pricing. The following are a few select samples of the wide variety of choices available. Nuevo Vallarta Angelo's Specialty: Italian cuisine and steaks Website: www.angelospv.com Address: Paradise Plaza L-J2, 3, 4, Nuevo Vallarta Telephone: (322) 297-6130 Il Pescatore at The Paradise Village Resort, Nuevo Vallarta Specialty: Italian cuisine/seafood dishes Address: Paradise Village Resort, Paseo de los Cocoteros # 1 local 16 int 7, Nuevo Vallarta, Nayarit, 63731

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Telephone: (322) 226-6770

La Portena

Specialty: Quality steaks like the “vacío” a tender Argentinian steak.

Also serves seafood, and home made pasta dishes

Address: Boulevard Nayarit, PTE 250, Nuevo Vallarta

Telephone: (322) 297-4950

Tino’s La Laguna

Specialty: Seafood

Website: www.tinosvallarta.com

Address: Km 1,2 on the 2nd entrance to Nuevo Vallarta

Telephone: (322) 297-0221

Bucerias

Adauto’s On The Beach

Specialty: Seafood (lobster, jumbo shrimps, red snapper, langoustines)

Address: Av. Del Pacifico # 11A, Bucerias, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 298 2790

El Chivero Restaurant & Bar

Specialty: Mexican cuisine - Seaside establishment offers breakfast, lunch and dinner

Address: Av. Pacifico No. 9, Centro Bucerias, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 29-806-12

Ecole de Cuisine LeFort

Specialty: French cuisine with and is reputed to have one of the largest wine cellars in the area

Website: www.lefort.com.mx

Address: Lázaro Cardenas No. 71-A, Bucerías, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 298.1532

Marks Bar & Grill

Specialty: Mediterranean with a touch of Asian-inspired flavors

Website: www.marksbucerias.com

Address: Lazaro Cardenas 56, Bucerias, Bahia de Banderas, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 298-0303

MezzoGiorno

Specialty: Italian cuisine - Beachfront restaurant and two bars.

Website: www.mezzogiorno.com.mx

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Address: Av. Del Pacifico 33, Bucerias, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone: (329) 298-0350

La Cruz de Huanacastle

Marina Riviera Nayarit
Specialty: International cuisine
Address: La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: 52 (329) 29-555-26

Sky Bar
Specialty: Bar with light snacks overlooking Banderas Bay
Address: La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: 52 (329) 29-555-26

Aki Samurai House
Specialty: Japanese – Restaurant has a third floor palapa offering unimpeded views of the bay
Address: Coral 156 Oriente, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: (329) 295-5880

Black Forest Restaurant
Specialty: German cuisine
Web Page: www.blackforestpv.com
Address: Marlin 16 La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Phone number: (329) 295-5203

Frascati Ristorante
Specialty: Italian and Mediterranean cuisine - The owner also owns a charming and sophisticated bed & breakfast in town called Villa Bella
Website: www.frascativallarta.com
Address: Av. Langosta No. 10, esq. Coral, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone: (329) 295 61 85

La Glorieta
Specialty: Seafood, Fish Tacos and chilaquiles
Address: Coral 26, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone/Cell: 044 (322) 278-3292

Philo's
Specialty: BBQ ribs and hamburgers
Address: Calle Delfin 15, La Cruz de Huanacastle
Telephone: (329) 295-5068

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Taco Stands - El Güero De Sinaloa
Address: Huachinango, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Specialty: Sinaloa style meat tacos and quesadillas

Rey Bombon
Specialty: Seafood
Address: Coral 31 esq. Delfin
Telephone:(329) 295-5204

Hikuri Cafe
Specialty: International/Mexican cuisine
Website: www.hikuri.com
Address: Coral 66, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone: 01 (329) 295-5071

Columba
Specialty: Seafood
Address: Marlin 14, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone: (329) 295-5055

Britannia Bar
Specialty: Drinks and bar snacks
Address: Coral 68, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit

Miramar
Specialty: Seafood (i.e. sarandeado fish Mexican style grilled fish; whole fish, marinated with lime & chilies then grilled over charcoal)
Address: La Manzanilla Beach, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit

Don Emerio
Specialty: Seafood
Address: La Manzanilla Beach, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit

Vista Hermosa
Specialty: Seafood
Address: La Manzanilla Beach, La Cruz de Huanacastle, Riviera Nayarit

Punta Mita

Sufi Restaurant

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Specialty: "Mediterranean" Fusion of Mexican and Mediterranean ingredients
Address: Inside the gates of Punta Mita, across from the St. Regis
Telephone: (329) 291-6990

Café des Artistes del Mar
Specialty: French/Mediterranean with emphasis on using fresh local seafood
Website: <http://cafedesartistes.com/delmar/index.htm>
Address: Av. Anclote Lote 5, Block 19 at The Hotel Des Artistes del Mar, Punta de Mita, Riviera Nayarit 63734
Telephone: +52 3292915145

Margarita's
Specialty: Seafood/Mexican
Address: El Anclote, Punta de Mita

Tino's
Specialty: Seafood/Mexican
Address: Punta de Mita
Telephone: (322) 224-55-84/ (322) 224-55-84

Sayulita

Don Pedro's
Specialty: Mediterranean style cuisine with Mexican/Californian influences
Website: www.donpedros.com
Address: Marlin 2, Sayulita
Telephone: 52 (329) 291 3090

Si Hay Olitos
Specialty: Mexican cuisine
Website: <http://www.sayulitalife.com/business/sihayolitas.htm>
Address: Just over the bridge on your left
Phone: 52-329-291-3203

Rollie's
Specialty: Mexican/Continental
Address: Av. Revolución, 2 blocks west of the main square, Sayulita, Riviera Nayarit
Telephone: (329) 291-3053

Sayulita Fish Tacos

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	<p>Specialty: Mexican (Signature dish is the Baja style fish tacos) Website: http://www.sayulitafishtaco.com Address: Calle Jose Mariscal, Sayulita, Riviera Nayarit Telephone:(329) 291-3271</p> <p>San Blas</p> <p>El Delfin Restaurant at the Hotel Garza Canela Specialty: French with Mexican influences and ingredients Website: www.garzacanela.com Address: Paredes #106 Sur, San Blas, Riviera Nayarit 63740 Telephone: (323) 285-0112</p> <p>San Francisco</p> <p>Mar Plata Specialty: Seafood and steak Address: Calle de Palmas 30, Col. Costa Azul, San Francisco, Riviera Nayarit Tel: 52-311-258-4425</p> <p>Café del Mar Specialty: International cuisine Address: Café del Mar, China no. 9, San Francisco, Riviera Nayarit Tel: 52-311-258-4251</p>
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<p>MORE INFO</p>	<p>Website: www.rivieranayarit.com Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/rivieranayarit.mex Twitter: www.twitter.com/riv_nayarit Pinterest: http://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/riviera-nayarit/ Travel Blog: http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog/tabid/400/EntryId/52/Riviera-Nayarit-Mexico.aspx</p>
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<p>TRANSAT AND VALLARTA NAYARIT</p>	<p>Transat is Canada’s leader in vacations to the sun and Europe. For nearly 30 years, Transat has been offering quality vacation packages and creating memorable vacation experiences in a wide variety of destinations. Transat offer complete packages including flights, airport transfers, in-destination representatives, excursions – and, of course, accommodation in all-inclusive resorts.</p> <p>Transat offer 42 hotels as part of their all-inclusive packages in Riviera</p>
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	<p>Nayarit. This provides a huge range of choice and ensures there are, for example, resorts suitable for families, single travelers, vacationers seeking an adults only escape and everything from budget conscious accommodation to high end luxury. To help you choose the right hotel for you, Transat has created “Collections” which group like hotels into categories such as family friendly or adults only.</p> <p>With Transat you get a complete vacation package that starts at the airport with your flight on the award winning airline Air Transat. And the tone of your flight matches your needs as a traveler. Families enjoy touches like free seat selection for kids, kids meals, pre-boarding and a Limo! Stroller service to the baggage claim to pick up your checked stroller and baggage. As part of your Luxury Collection vacation you are automatically upgraded to Option Plus service on the plane, bringing you included seat selection, extra baggage allowance, priority check-in, inflight perks such as wine and snacks and so much more!</p> <p>Ask your travel agent for the Transat Holidays Sun Collection 2015/2016 and Nolitours Sun 2015/2016 brochure and go to www.transatholidays.com and www.Nolitours.com</p>
<p>Transat Background</p>	<p>For nearly 30 years, Transat has been offering a large selection of vacation options in Europe, Florida and the South, as well as cruises sailing the seven seas. In addition to hundreds of south hotels available in the form of all-inclusive packages, Transat also offers a wide range of flights, packages, tours and à la carte holidays. Their packages are flexible and tailored to stays of varying lengths.</p> <p>Transat Tours Canada is the leader in Canada’s holiday travel industry. The group includes Transat Holidays, Nolitours, Tours Mont Royal, Transat Discoveries, Air Transat and many travel agencies across the country, including Marlin Travel. This integration enables Transat to offer vacationers the best possible service, from the airport all the way to their travel destination, where a team of more than 250 destination representatives offer onsite assistance on a 24/7 basis.</p> <p>Air Transat, the group’s airline, offers a vast selection of flights to nearly 60 destinations in 25 countries aboard its fleet of Airbus wide-body jets. Families benefit from numerous privileges, such as a dedicated check-in counter and Kids Club advantages. Upgrade to Club Class for a touch of luxury or choose Option Plus and obtain an additional baggage allowance of 10 kg, among other perks.</p>
<p>What Transat is All About</p>	<p>Transat offers quality vacation packages to a wide variety of destinations. Each season, the company presents a wide selection of quality products, in order to meet the diversified needs of Canadian</p>

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	<p>travellers. In keeping with their mission, their employees aim to exceed vacationers' expectations in order to maintain their position as a market leader. They see their role, ultimately, to turn holiday dreams into reality: making the vacation experience one of the most memorable ever.</p>
<p>Vacation Types</p>	<p>Transat has it all: packages, cruises, hotels, flights, tours, car rentals & train travel. With a choice of over 300 hotels located in more than 50 destinations and a complete line of itineraries offered in partnership with the most prestigious cruise lines, all products offered by Transat are subject to a rigorous standard review.</p>
<p>Transat Collections</p>	<p>Choosing the right resort for your vacation needs is all important and to help you select the right hotel Transat have created 6 different Collections: Luxury, Distinction, Adults, Family, Solo and Sun Savvy.</p> <p>What defines a Collection?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The vacation packages in a Collection match the type of experience you are looking for. Everything from the details of the Air Transat flights to the resort and its facilities suit the needs of a specific type of traveller. <p>Luxury Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designed to cater to your every whim, our prestigious Luxury Collection is the gold standard in upscale travel... with VIP inclusions for a dream vacation. - ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES INCLUDED IN YOUR PACKAGE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Free access to VIP LOUNGE at airports o Free upgrade to OPTION PLUS on board Air Transat o PRIVATE roundtrip transfers o UNLIMITED À LA CARTE GOURMET DINING o FREE WIFI in room and public area <p>An example of a Luxury Collection Resort in Vallarta-Nayarit is Marival Residences Luxury Resort, Nuevo Vallarta.</p> <p>Solo Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With this new collection Transat put together a group of resorts that people who like to travel alone will enjoy thanks to advantages such as a communal table for sharing meals and no single supplement. And the big news is – no Single Supplement! - Solo Collection Advantages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o NO SINGLE Supplement o COMMUNAL TABLE for sharing meals o Weekly HAPPY HOUR welcoming all Transat clients o Free ROOM SERVICE and Free WI-FI <p>An example here of the Solo Collection in Vallarta-Nayarit is Las</p>

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	<p>Palmas by the Sea.</p> <p>Sun Savvy Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transat think everyone should be able to enjoy the sun, and they pride themselves on providing you with the quality you want at the prices you love. Hence their new Sun Savvy Collection. An example in this destination is the Royal Decameron Complex <p>Adults Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 18+ crowd will have access to top of the line accommodations, unlimited à la carte dining and free WiFi. An adults-only resort recommended here is Secrets Vallarta Bay, Puerto Vallarta <p>Family Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Their Family Collection delivers a safe, exciting time for kids - and a relaxing holiday for parents. There are a variety of activities, facilities and promotions that suit the needs of different types of family. These range from resorts perfect for families with very young children to resorts perfect for teens and big families. And then there are also Transat's new Multigenerational and Single Parent categories. Vallarta-Nayarit is a great destination for those family and multi-generational trips. These resorts work well here for these groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grand Palladium Vallarta Resort and Spa - Dreams Villamagna Nuevo Vallarta <p>And lastly – there is the Distinction Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinction Collection offers exclusive perks that range from direct transfers, additional à la carte dinner reservations and complimentary WiFi access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinction inclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o DIRECT ROUNDTRIP TRANSFERS between the airport and the resort o ADDITIONAL guaranteed à la carte restaurant RESERVATIONS o FREE WIFI in the lobby o MINI-BAR restocked daily o UNLIMITED select international drinks o FREE in-room safe <p>You will also enjoy, for example, bottle of wine or local specialty in the room upon arrival, turn-down service plus lots more.</p>
<p>Awards</p>	<p>Agent's Choice Awards: For the fifth consecutive year, Transat Holidays was named Wholesaler of the Year by travel agents Air Transat was voted -#1 Leisure Airline in North America for three years in a row and 2nd in the World! They were also voted best Family</p>

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	Airline.
Current Brochures	Transat Holidays Sun 2015/16 and Nolitours Sun 2015/16 brochures are available at your local travel agent and cover vacations through to October 2016.
Air Transat's New Comfort Zone	With so many new comfort features, you're on vacation the minute you take your seat. Air Transat has given their fleet a full makeover. For a glimpse of what it looks like: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBse6WOCd70
Air Transat Kids Club	To ensure that your family vacations are fun and unforgettable from beginning to end, Air Transat has created Kids Club so that young passengers can really enjoy themselves whilst onboard an Air Transat flight. It is designed to make air travel a fun experience for young travellers (and for their parents!). Even before the doors of the plane are closed following boarding, every child receives a small bag containing all sorts of surprises and games. The more fun they have, the easier the flight. Furthermore, children who are members of Air Transat Kids Club enjoy certain exclusive privileges. Members of the Air Transat Kids Club will enjoy several benefits that the whole family can share. You can check in at a special "Air Transat Kids Club Members" counter. Thanks to these special counters located in major Canadian airports where Air Transat flies, checking-in is quicker than before. At check-in, special tags will be placed on your baggage; as a result, your baggage gets priority treatment.
Transat Club Class	Enjoy exclusive privileges such as complimentary seat selection, wider, more comfortable leather seats, a choice of gourmet meals and fine wines, priority check-in, baggage service and boarding. Club Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Club attendants • Attentive, personalized service • Exclusive, spacious Club cabin Drinks & Snacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome cocktails • Complimentary non-alcoholic drinks, snacks and bar service Club Privileges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased baggage allowance • 40 kg checked/15 kg carry-on • Exclusive, rapid check-in counter in most airports • Priority boarding • Practical travel items (on Europe flights) • Free headsets • Canadian newspapers Comfort & Refinement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider, more comfortable leather seats • More leg room

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complimentary Seat Selection: call 1-877-872-6728 • Choice of gourmet meals • Choice of wine and more
<p>Option Plus</p>	<p>This Economy class option includes many priority privileges and services including priority check-in, priority baggage handling, an extra 10kg baggage allowance and even champagne. Here's what you get:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance seat selection on roundtrip flights • Priority check-in at a dedicated counter • Priority baggage handling • Priority boarding • Complete Air Transat travel kit on flights to European destinations • Snacks from the On Board Bistro selection • Alcoholic beverages during drinks service 200ml bottle of champagne (Sun and Europe) • Supplementary baggage allowance up to 10 kg per flight segment • Wine or beer with the meal • Headsets <p>The cost is \$79-\$119 for southbound destinations and \$99-\$209 for European destinations as at November 2015.</p>
<p>Option Flex</p>	<p>Life doesn't always go exactly according to plan. When you book your dream vacation, you want to make sure you enjoy the ultimate level of flexibility should something unexpected happen. Option Flex with Transat gives you just that. Option Flex lets you:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - change your departure date, destination or hotel, up to 3 hours before departure - transfer your vacation package to a friend or family member, up to 7 days before departure - cancel your trip and get a full refund - and you won't be charged any additional fuel or currency surcharges once you've booked. <p>Benefit from these advantages for only \$49 + taxes at time of booking.</p>
<p>Transat and Sustainable Tourism</p>	<p>Transat recognizes the prime importance of the environment, host communities, cultural diversity, and their relationships with their employees, customers and partners. Tourism has become one of the world's leading industries. Society and communities reap the benefits, and, each year, hundreds of millions of travellers discover new countries and cultures. Transat is firmly committed to the responsible development of the tourism industry, and has adopted the following definition of sustainable tourism:</p> <p><i>"Sustainable tourism entails respect for nature, as well as for host communities and their values; it combines positive socio-economic benefits for local populations with an enriching experience for travellers."</i></p> <p>The issue of the environment, as far as Transat's own facilities are</p>

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	<p>concerned, is a clear and basic target. Their environment committees have implemented concrete initiatives with regard to recycling, conservation of resources, the disposal of obsolete electronic equipment, and raising employee awareness.</p> <p>Air Transat has begun developing an environmental management system that could lead to an ISO 14001 certification in the future. To find out more, consult the Transat and the Environment sections at their website: http://www.airtransat.ca/en/Info/the-environment-its-everyones-business.aspx?ExitID=69&ContentType=voyageur</p> <p>Eco-responsible certified hotels</p> <p>Transat urges its hotelier partners to excel in social and environmental responsibility, and formally recognizes the efforts of accommodations that commit to certification in this area. Certified establishments must maintain performance levels to continue using such labels. The indicators used vary depending on the certification scheme, but many certification organizations have begun aligning their benchmarks with the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria.</p> <p>To help you make an informed choice when you take your next vacation, Transat list six certifications for hotels and beaches. You can also find certified hotels by searching by destination.</p> <p>Certifications for hotels Biosphere Responsible Tourism Green Globe Green Key ISO 14001 Travelife</p> <p>Certification for beaches Blue Flag</p>
Gift Certificates	<p>Here's your chance to make a loved one's dream come true. With Transat gift certificates you can offer the beauty, excitement, and wonders of the world: the South with its heavenly beaches and endless sunshine, or just a rental car. Transat gift certificates are valid on all Air Transat, Nolitours, or Transat Holidays products in their brochures. They can be redeemed at a travel agent's office at the time of reservation. To order your gift certificates call 1-800-322-6649.</p>
Groups	<p>Group rates are available – as few as 10 adults make up a group. Talk to your travel agent to check the current details of Transat's group deals.</p>
Hurricane Policy	<p>Nolitours and Transat Holidays provide you with true peace of mind. Vacationers can travel secure in the knowledge that you will be protected should a hurricane affect your destination city in Florida, Mexico, the Caribbean or Central America. This Nolitours/Transat</p>

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	<p>Holidays policy covers reservations for departures between June 1 and November 30 each year and is likely to be renewed in 2016 – check the website. If the conditions stipulated in the policy are met, you may choose one of these four options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Travel at a later date2. Travel to another destination city3. Travel to the booked destination city4. Cancel with a full refund
Websites & Social Media	<p>Website: www.Transat.com Sun e-brochures: http://www.transatholidays.com/en/South/Electronic-Sun-brochures?ID=1656&type=gamme&tmpl=GEN Connect with Transat on facebook: https://www.facebook.com/AirTransatCanada?brand_redir=1 Follow Transat on Twitter: https://twitter.com/AirTransat See Transat on You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/user/AirTransatEng</p>

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