





## PLACES OF INTEREST

Aztecs in 1520 Cortés ruled Mexico with an iron hand. Much of the Indian population was enslaved or died from diseases hitherto unknown in the Americas and introduced from Europe by the Spaniards.

The fertile lands around Oaxaca's central valley produced an abundant crop of fruit and vegetables, and with the coming of the Spanish, wheat and sugarcane were introduced. The small town of Huatulco grew into a vital port that supplied goods and produce to other regions along the Pacific coast. Huatulco became such an important town that in the late 1500s it attracted the attentions of the famous English pirates Thomas Cavendish and the notorious and much feared (by the Spanish at least) Sir Francis Drake.

Huatulco eventually faded into obscurity and morphed into a quiet coffee growing region and a sleepy little fishing community until 1984 when the country's national tourism office saw the potential of building a world class resort destination while at the same time protecting and preserving some of the most beautiful coastline in all of Mexico.

### HUATULCO AREA PLACES OF INTEREST

The bays and beaches in the area of Huatulco are collectively known as "Bahias de Huatulco". There are 9 bays with 36 beautiful beaches up and down this Pacific coastal region. Some of the beaches have amenities like cafes and water sports while other are secluded, some of which are even accessible only by boat. We have taken the opportunity to list just a few beaches starting near the town of Santa Cruz and continuing east along the coast. To be fair, there are a lot of great and mostly secluded beaches west of Santa Cruz such as Playas San Agustín and Cacaluta however we just can't list them all. There are also many other beaches, large and small, located in between those that we mention here.

**1 Playa Maguey** is a nice sandy beach about ¼ miles long. This is a fine spot for snorkeling and swimming and there are some beachside cafes for snacks and cold drinks.

**2 Playa La Entrega** means "the delivery". This beach is nice for snorkeling and swimming. There are many beachside cafes as well as bathroom facilities available for a small fee.

As a side note; it was here that General Vicente Guerrero (a national hero of Mexico) was delivered, after being betrayed and captured at sea, shortly after Mexico's war of independence from Spain.

**3 Playa Santa Cruz** is the most popular beach in the area. This beach is also good for snorkeling and swimming. There are numerous cafes as well as water sports rentals. Nearby there are additional restaurants and shops.

**4 Playa Tangolunda** is a ½ mile long. As a resort beach it has all the amenities. Most of the high end hotel resorts and an upscale residential area are located here.

**5 Playa Arena** and **Playa Punta Arena** are located on Conejos Bay. These beaches are good for swimming and snorkeling however the waves, depending on the season, can be powerful. If the waves are breaking, it is recommended that only strong and experienced swimmers and snorkelers enter the water here. The beach has cafes available for food and drink.

### Beyond Huatulco

The **Huatulco National Park** is one of Mexico's many natural jewels. Combining the protected waters of the numerous bays together with the nature reserve on shore, the park encompasses an area of nearly 30,000 acres. The park is an amazingly vibrant living laboratory of marine and animal life as well as home to thousands of species of plants, reptiles, birds and butterflies. The park's administration and staff have worked tirelessly to protect this spectacular environment while at the same time providing researchers, educators and visitors the opportunity to study or simply enjoy the wonders of this natural sanctuary.

**SHORE EXCURSIONS** To make the most of your visit to Huatulco and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For more information, please consult your Shore Excursion Brochure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take with you only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

**LOCAL CUSTOMS** Bargaining: Though prices in restaurants and stores are usually fixed, bargaining is often practiced in open markets and with street vendors.

Tipping: A tip of 15% or more is appropriate in restaurants. Check your bill, because a 10% service fee may already be added.

Local Cuisine: As a coastal town Huatulco is known for its variety of fresh seafood dishes. Some favorites include: Pacific lobster – usually served with lemon and butter or in a salad with greens. Tacos de pescado, are tacos made with lightly fried fish and corn tortillas, topped with a variety of condiments. The local bakeries are famous for their wonderful breads such as pan dulce, orejas and cochinitos. For those feeling adventurous... request a side dish of chapulines. They are often boiled, served with lemon juice and garlic and have a nutty crunch to them.

They are a traditional regional favorite and are said to be tasty and nutritious. We will keep the translation secret and only drop the hint that chapulines hop in the grass.

Drink Specialties: Mezcal compares favorably to tequila. The drink is made by distilling the juice of the hearts of the maguey plant that have been slow roasting for days in an earthen pit lined with red-hot stones and covered with leaves.

**SHOPPING** The old section of Santa María Huatulco and the communities of La Crucecita and Santa Cruz have some great shops. Some of the most popular items include leather goods, wonderfully designed silver jewelry, handmade carpets and arts and crafts.

**LOCAL CURRENCY** The peso (MXN) is Mexico's official currency. The symbol (\$) refers to pesos, not U.S. dollars, unless specifically noted. ATM's are usually available, especially in heavily trafficked tourist areas.

**POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES** The Post Office is located one mile from port on Santa Cruz Boulevard, in front of the gas station.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 0.800.288.2872 or 001.800.462.4240

MCI: 001.800.674.7000

**TRANSPORTATION** Car rentals are available and taxis are plentiful.

**TOURIST INFORMATION** The Tourist Bureau has a table at the head of the pier where maps and information are available.

### USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Yes - Si

No - No

Hello - ¡Hola!

Good Bye - Adiós

Please - Por favor

Thank-you - Gracias

You're welcome - De nada.