



Puerto Vallarta Travel Checklist

A printable pre-trip checklist for first-time visitors to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

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How to use it: print it, save it to your phone, or use it as your pre-trip planning sheet. Entry rules can change by nationality and entry method, so always verify official immigration sources before you go.

Quick essentials

- ☐ Your passport is valid for the whole trip, and you checked whether your nationality requires a Mexican visa.
- ☐ Your Mexico visitor status is understood: FMM/FMMd for foreign visitors, with the allowed stay set by Mexican immigration.
- ☐ Your flights, hotel address, activity bookings and return/onward ticket are saved offline.
- ☐ Your arrival plan from Puerto Vallarta International Airport is ready: authorized taxi, transfer, rental car or ride-share plan.
- ☐ Your money plan is ready: pesos, backup card, bank ATM strategy and small bills for tips.
- ☐ Your beach kit is packed: reef-safe sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, swimsuit, sandals and dry bag.
- ☐ Your rainy-season plan is ready if traveling June-October: light rain layer, indoor options and flexible tours.
- ☐ You saved emergency numbers, insurance details and your country's consulate information.

6-8 weeks before you go

- ☐ Check whether your nationality needs a Mexican visa. Do not assume rules are the same for every passport.
- ☐ Confirm your passport is valid for the whole trip; check your airline's validity rules before booking.
- ☐ Understand the FMM/FMMd visitor record. If you fly into Mexico, your entry is usually handled digitally by immigration; if you enter by land, use the official INM FMM process and validate it at the border.
- ☐ Book lodging in the right area: Romantic Zone for walkability/nightlife, Marina for calm/airport access, Hotel Zone for resorts, Conchas Chinas for views, Nuevo Nayarit for quieter resort stays.
- ☐ Compare flights into Puerto Vallarta International Airport and check arrival time; late arrivals are easier with a pre-booked transfer.
- ☐ Buy travel insurance that includes medical care, delays, cancellations and activities you plan to do.
- ☐ Check seasonality: dry season is generally better for beach days, while summer/rainy season is greener, warmer and more humid.
- ☐ Reserve high-demand activities early: boat tours, Marietas Islands, whale watching in season, food tours and private transfers.

Foreign visitor note: An FMM is not a visa. It is the record that confirms your visitor status in Mexico. The exact process depends on whether you enter by air, land or sea. Use official INM/SRE sources, not paid look-alike websites.

3-4 weeks before you go

- ☐ Save digital and printed copies of passport, visa if required, flight confirmation, hotel address and travel insurance.
- ☐ Confirm your hotel check-in time and whether it offers airport pickup.
- ☐ Make a transportation plan: authorized airport taxi, private transfer, rental car or ride-share pickup plan outside the terminal area.
- ☐ Download offline maps for Puerto Vallarta, Romantic Zone, Marina Vallarta, Hotel Zone, Conchas Chinas and nearby towns.
- ☐ Set up international roaming, eSIM or a local SIM plan before arrival.
- ☐ Notify your bank or make sure your card works internationally; bring at least one backup card.
- ☐ Create a rough daily plan with one main activity per day so the trip does not feel rushed.
- ☐ Check cancellation policies for hotels, tours and transportation.

Area tip: Puerto Vallarta is very walkable in some zones, but beaches and day trips can be spread out. Plan transport before booking activities far from your hotel.

1 week before you go

- ☐ Check weather, ocean conditions and whether rain may affect boat tours or outdoor plans.
- ☐ Confirm all bookings: hotel, flights, airport transfer, tours, restaurants and spa reservations.
- ☐ Save your hotel address in Spanish and the nearest landmark for taxi drivers.
- ☐ Withdraw or prepare a small amount of pesos for tips, taxis, beach vendors and casual restaurants.
- ☐ Pack medications in original packaging and keep prescriptions or doctor's notes for important medicines.
- ☐ Download Google Translate Spanish, offline maps, airline app, bank app and any tour confirmation apps.
- ☐ Share your itinerary with someone at home, including hotel name and flight details.
- ☐ Check baggage rules for sunscreen, liquids, beach gear and souvenirs.

Weather tip: Tropical rain often comes in bursts, especially in summer. A light rain layer and flexible evening plans can save the day.

Packing checklist

- ☐ Passport, visa if required, FMM/FMMd proof or entry stamp information, flight details and hotel address.
- ☐ Swimsuits, breathable outfits, comfortable walking sandals, beach cover-up and one nicer outfit for dinner.
- ☐ Reef-safe sunscreen, after-sun lotion, sunglasses, hat and reusable water bottle.
- ☐ Waterproof phone pouch or dry bag for boat tours, beach days and sudden rain.
- ☐ Light rain jacket or compact umbrella if traveling during rainy season.
- ☐ Basic medicine kit: stomach medicine, pain reliever, motion sickness tablets, bandages and personal prescriptions.
- ☐ Chargers, power bank, eSIM/SIM tool, headphones and a small day bag.
- ☐ Copies of important documents stored offline and in cloud storage.

Beach tip: Bring less than you think to the sand. Leave passports, extra cards and valuables locked at your hotel when possible.

Arrival day in Puerto Vallarta

- ☐ At immigration, check the date or allowed stay written/stamped in your passport or digital entry record.
- ☐ Keep your passport and visitor record/entry stamp information safe for the entire trip.
- ☐ Use official airport transportation or your confirmed transfer; ignore aggressive sales pitches after baggage claim.
- ☐ Do not exchange all your cash at the airport unless necessary; bank ATMs usually offer better control and receipts.
- ☐ Message your hotel or host when you are on the way, especially for late arrivals.
- ☐ Buy water and basic snacks before settling in if you arrive late.
- ☐ Walk your immediate area in daylight if possible: pharmacy, convenience store, beach access and main taxi/ride-share pickup point.
- ☐ Take the first evening easy; save big tours for the next day.

Airport tip: The airport exit area can feel busy. Know your transport provider name, pickup point and price before you land.

During your trip

- ☐ Use pesos for small purchases, tips, beach vendors and local transportation.
- ☐ Keep an eye on ocean flags and lifeguard instructions before swimming.
- ☐ Stay hydrated; Puerto Vallarta can feel much hotter because of humidity.
- ☐ Book boat and adventure tours with reputable operators and confirm pickup location the night before.
- ☐ For day trips to Sayulita, San Pancho, Bucerias or Yelapa, leave early and confirm last return options.
- ☐ Be careful with valuables on the beach; bring only what you need.
- ☐ Use licensed taxis, verified ride-share pickups or arranged transfers at night.
- ☐ Respect wildlife, protected areas and local beach rules.

Money tip: Many places accept cards, but small businesses, taxis and beach vendors may prefer cash. Keep small bills separated from your main wallet.

Before you leave Mexico

- ☐ Confirm flight time, terminal details and recommended airport arrival time.
- ☐ Check whether you need to show your entry stamp, FMM/FMMd record or other visitor proof at departure.
- ☐ Use remaining pesos for tips, airport snacks or transportation, but keep enough for last-minute costs.
- ☐ Pack liquids, tequila, sauces and souvenirs according to airline and customs rules.
- ☐ Save receipts for higher-value purchases in case customs asks about them.
- ☐ Check your hotel room safe, outlets, drawers and bathroom before checkout.
- ☐ Leave extra time for traffic, especially from Nuevo Nayarit, Bucerias, Sayulita or Punta Mita.
- ☐ Keep your passport in your personal bag, not in checked luggage.

Emergency basics: In Mexico, 911 is the emergency number. Also save your insurer and your nearest consulate/embassy contact before the trip.

Official sources to check: INM FMM/FMMd, SRE/Mexican consulate visa rules, your airline entry-document guidance, and your country's travel advisory.