

# PORTS

## Galveston, Texas



**Language:** English  
**Currency:** U.S. Dollar (US\$)

Situated on the Gulf of Mexico, Galveston is a relaxed beach town with a rich history. Magnificent homes on Broadway, many now museums, recall Galveston's era of wealth and prosperity in the late 1800s, and The Strand entices visitors with its restaurants, bars, galleries, and stores housed in picturesque Victorian-era buildings. La King's Confectionery, a 1920s-style ice cream parlor and candy shop, also awaits. Pier 21 is a jumping-off point for boat excursions, dolphin-spotting cruises and the adrenaline-pumping Jet Boat Thrill Ride. At the Texas Seaport Museum, you might search for ancestors in its database, which contains the names of about 130,000 immigrants who entered the U.S. at Galveston from 1846 to 1948 or climb aboard its 1877 tall ship Elissa. Other top sites include the family-friendly amusement park at Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier and Moody Gardens, with aquarium and rainforest attractions, a private beach, ropes course and more.

## Costa Maya, Mexico



**Language:** Spanish  
**Currency:** Mexican Peso (MXN), U.S. Dollar (US\$)

Mysterious jungle ruins, pristine beaches and a magnificent coral reef are just some of the attributes of Costa Maya. This eastern slice of the Yucatan Peninsula coast includes Xcalax, a fishing village on a finger of land reaching out to Belize, and Mahahual, an oceanfront town with beach bars and palapas. The region's two biosphere reserves, Banco Chinchorro and Sian Ka'an, are home to turtles, crocodiles, jaguars and monkeys, and Banco Chinchorro is a popular dive site, thanks to a large coral atoll and several shipwrecks. Divers might spot rays, eels and, occasionally, tiger and hammerhead sharks. Shore excursions visit Mayan ruins like Dzibanche, a temple hidden deep in the jungle, and Kohunlich, a 21-acre city best known for its Temple of the Masks, a pyramid embellished with carved masks. Outings to Chacchoben, site of three excavated pyramids, sometimes end with a shared meal between guests and a Mayan family.

## Belize City, Belize



**Language:** English

**Currency:** Belize Dollar (BZD),  
U.S. Dollar (US\$)

The longest barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere fringes Belize, which makes snorkeling and scuba diving extremely popular here. Recreational pursuits are popular, ranging from inner-tube trips down a jungle river to zip-line tours amid the treetops of a rain forest. Other excursions departing from the Central American city visit Mayan ruins, wildlife preserves and botanical gardens. Or spend the day at a pristine beach or browsing the delights of Belize City, including its marketplace, cathedrals and restored colonial mansions.

## Cozumel, Mexico



**Language:** Spanish

**Currency:** Mexican Peso  
(MXN), U.S. Dollar (US\$)

Just off the coast of the Yucatan Peninsula sits Cozumel, a tropical oasis in the Caribbean Sea. The island often is considered one of the world's best snorkeling and scuba diving spots due to its clear, warm water, dazzling coral reef and an abundance of marine life. Popular Palancar Reef delights divers with its swim-through tunnels and caves, and beginners can encounter eels and rays at Paradise Reef. Additional shore excursions include Jet boat tours, fishing trips and expeditions that explore the island's cenotes and Mayan ruins by Jeep, horseback or electric bike. Tequila and salsa tastings embrace local culture, and Chankanaab Adventure Beach Park thrills with ziplines, glass-bottom kayaks and a crocodile exhibition.