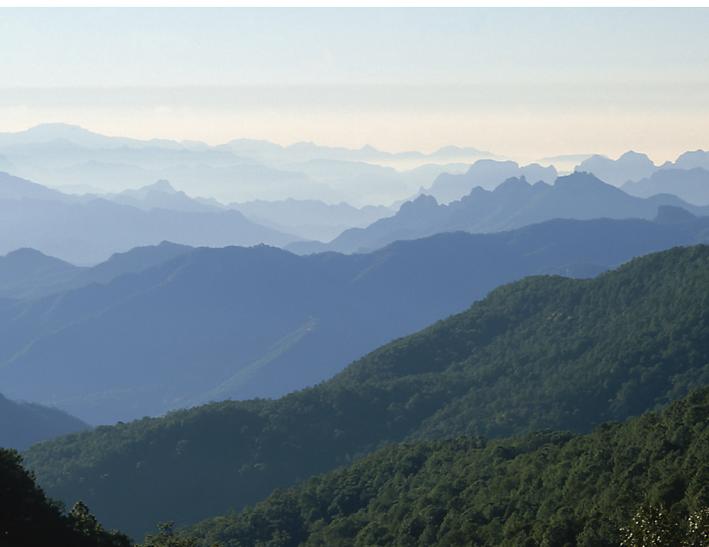


(Explore) MEXICO



STRIKING THE PERFECT BALANCE

Riviera Nayarit is in the heart of one of the world's largest bays on Mexico's Central Pacific Coast. Set just south of the Tropic of Cancer, this sunny destination is protected by tropical jungle and the Sierra Madre Mountains. Along its hundred miles of coastline, there are fishing villages, surfing havens, and charming colonial towns, with top-notch hotels, spas, marinas, and golf courses interspersed throughout.

Natural wonders abound in this thickly forested region, which is located only a few miles from Puerto Vallarta. Visitors can watch whales from a catamaran, swim with friendly seals, or snorkel near coral reefs. Thanks to nearby wildlife sanctuaries, the area also brims with exotic birdlife. It's one of the best bird-watching destinations in the world.



For boaters, **Marina Riviera Nayarit** is designed to be the best marina in the country, with almost four hundred slips. Those who prefer hiking to beachcombing can climb the nearby mountains, up to two thousand feet. Others can horseback ride through the jungle, or use mountain bikes to explore the trails. For avid golfers, Riviera Nayarit offers several courses surrounded by the serene beauty of the bay. **The Marina Vallarta Golf Club** is a par-71 eighteen-hole championship course, while **Flamingos Golf Club** and **The Four Seasons Resort**

Punta Mita both have eighteen holes at par 72.

Quiet villages are easy to come by here. Just south of Puerto Vallarta is **Quimixto**, accessible only by water taxi. This town is known for its tranquil waters, making it perfect for leisurely beachcombing, skin-diving, and snorkeling. Visitors can also rent a pony and venture inland to cool off under a soothing waterfall.

Only forty-five minutes north of the Puerto Vallarta airport is the picturesque village of **Sayulita**. Located on a sandy beach, this bohemian town is a great destination for kayaking, surfing, cycling and horseback riding, while its cobblestone streets and rustic air offer a taste of rural Mexico. Four miles north of Sayulita, **San Francisco** is also off the beaten tourist path, known for its stunning white sand beach, picturesque streets, and excellent restaurants.

Still farther north, the colonial town of **San Blas** and the resort enclave of **Punta Mita** boast countless beaches. This area is also the entry point into a vast wetlands system—a boat trip into the jungle estuary is not to be missed.

Riviera Nayarit's cultural history dates back thousands of years. The nearby island of **Mexcaltitán** is reputed to be the location of Aztlán, the legendary birthplace of the Aztecs. Archeological sites with hundreds of petroglyphs and vestiges of ancient villages are awaiting further study throughout the area. In all, the coastline of Riviera Nayarit has managed to maintain the delicate balance between comfort and culture, making it well worth a visit.