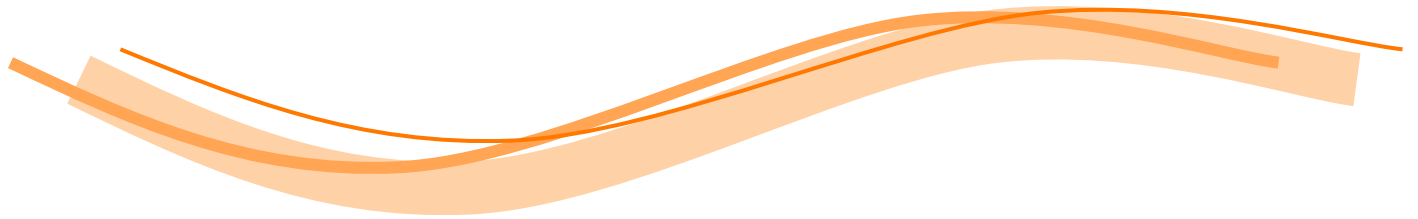




RIVIERA NAYARIT, MEXICO





RIVIERA NAYARIT

Riviera Nayarit, Mexico's Pacific paradise, offers endless choices and incredible value. Riviera 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 serene beaches and spectacular Banderas Bay.

Famous for its glorious beaches you can also save a fortune as you discover the area's treasures - Riviera 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 special attention to all of the myriad details of organizing a wedding. Riviera 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 Riviera Nayarit, developed by high profile names such as Jack Nicklaus, Percy Clifford, Robert Von Hagge - and including a newly opened Greg Norman course. 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 Riviera 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 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 historic downtown of Puerto Vallarta.

www.RivieraNayarit.com

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Location	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 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 (8 Dec 2012) \$1 Cdn = 13 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 newly elected 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.
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

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	<p>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 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	33 Centigrade and sunny as at 8 December 2012 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>Air Canada has frequent direct flights to Puerto Vallarta and easy connections across Canada to bring together larger groups of travelers www.aircanada.com .</p> <p>Other carriers that serve the destination, most with flights daily, include: Aero Mexico, Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Continental, Delta, Frontier, Mexicana, Transat, United Airlines, and US Airways.</p> <p>Charter flights are available from Canada with Transat, Sunquest, WestJet, Signature and Sunwing.</p>
Towns & Cities	<p>Nuevo Vallarta - The first major resort center in the Riviera Nayarit...ten minutes north of the Puerto Vallarta airport, just across the state line...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,</p>

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	<p>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 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	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

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	<p>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> <p>Check out our prize hotel on the Travel Show, the Marival Resort & Suites in Nuevo Vallarta – see details at the end of this section.</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. Cost: \$75 US</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	<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>
Honeymoons & Weddings	<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 Marival Resort & Suites in Nuevo Vallarta.</p>
Seniors	<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>

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UNIQUES	Riviera Nayarit has 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. Mexico's Pacific Treasure obtained the largest number of votes between August 7 and 13, 2012 in a landslide win. As part of the event, Travelocity's gnome is touring Riviera Nayarit between December 6 – 9, 2012 promoting the main attractions to its users via its website and through social media.
Surprising	Nayarit has an unusual combination of both tropical and temperate ecosystems. About 300 species of orchids can be found there.
History	<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 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 Tenamaxtli 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	Frommer's Mexico 2013 is the bible for travellers to Mexico.

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<p>1000 Places to See Before You Die</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Must Sees</p>	<p>Marietas Islands 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. 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. 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 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. 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 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</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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	<p>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.</p> <p>PUNTA MITA PACIFICO GOLF COURSE Punta Mita Pacífico 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.</p> <p>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 course. Featuring six ocean holes and playing between 5,180 and 7,030 yards it's just one more stunning design by Jack Nicklaus.</p>
Fishing	<p>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.</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 in Riviera Nayarit range from gentle strolls along the many beaches to strenuous treks in the mountains of the Sierra Madre: take your pick!</p>

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<p>Horse Riding</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Canopy Tours</p>	<p>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 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>
<p>Yachting</p>	<p>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. Banderas Bay Blast Sailing Regatta December 12 to 14, 2012</p>
<p>Diving</p>	<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. 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.</p>

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<p>CULTURE</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Arts</p>	<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>
<p>Films</p>	<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 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.</p>
<p>Museums</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Festivals</p>	<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>

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	<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 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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ATTRACTIONS	<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>
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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 nearly 300km of beaches of exceptional natural beauty; here are a few suggestions:</p> <p>La Cruz de Huanacaxtle: 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> <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.</p>

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	<p>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>
Parks	<p>La Tovara 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>
Ecotourism	<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. La Tovara 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. 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.</p>
Historical Sites	<p>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.</p>

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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	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 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.

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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

Telephone: (322) 226-6770

La Portena

Specialty: Quality steaks like the "vacio" 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

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

La Cruz de Huanacaxtle

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

Sky Bar
Specialty: Bar with light snacks overlooking Banderas Bay
Address: La Cruz de Huanacaxtle, 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 Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: (329) 295-5880

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

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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 Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 295 61 85

La Glorieta

Specialty: Seafood, Fish Tacos and chilaquiles

Address: Coral 26, La Cruz de Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone/Cell: 044 (322) 278-3292

Philo's

Specialty: BBQ ribs and hamburgers

Address: Calle Delfin 15, La Cruz de Huanacaxtle

Telephone: (329) 295-5068

Taco Stands - El Güero De Sinaloa

Address: Huachinango, La Cruz de Huanacaxtle, 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 Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: 01 (329) 295-5071

Columba

Specialty: Seafood

Address: Marlin 14, La Cruz de Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit

Telephone: (329) 295-5055

Britannia Bar

Specialty: Drinks and bar snacks

Address: Coral 68, La Cruz de Huanacaxtle, Riviera Nayarit

Miramar

Specialty: Seafood (i.e. sarandeado fish Mexican style grilled fish;

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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
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

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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
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

San Blas

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

San Francisco

Mar Plata
Specialty: Seafood and steak
Address: Calle de Palmas 30, Col. Costa Azul, San Francisco, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: 52-311-258-4425

Café del Mar
Specialty: International cuisine
Address: Café del Mar, China no. 9, San Francisco, Riviera Nayarit
Tel: 52-311-258-4251

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MORE INFO	
Brochures	Pick up a copy of the Air Canada Vacations Sun Collection 2012-2013 from your local travel agent to see their selection of resorts and vacations in Riviera Nayarit.
Websites	www.rivieranayarit.com http://www.facebook.com/rivieranayarit.mex www.twitter.com/riv_nayarit www.aircanadavacations.com

HOTEL PRIZE PARTNER	Marival Resort & Suites in Nuevo Vallarta Stay at the Marival Resort & Suites in Nuevo Vallarta - a 5-star, all-inclusive beachfront property with a finer touch. http://www.marival.com
Location	A modern planned resort area right on the beach, 25 kms north of Puerto Vallarta, it's a wonderful place for your vacation in the sun.
Facilities	Four outdoor pools: Activities Pool with swim-up bar, Adults Only Pool, Grand Pool with swim-up bar and Jacuzzi for adults, Kid' s Pool with children's activities and waterslides.
Spa	Boutiques, Beauty Salon and Spa with spa services including facials, massage and body treatments
Accommodation	The resort has 495 luxurious rooms and suites distributed among 11 villas, 1 main building and 2 towers with the ambiance of a Mediterranean village. All accommodations feature a private balcony or terrace.
Activities	Tennis (daily tennis clinics available with a professional tennis pro), basketball, volleyball and fitness centre
Children	Kids Club (ages 4-12) with supervised activities including miniature golf, repelling, kid's movie area and camping nights. Teen Activities (ages 13-17) with Rock climbing, Soccer, Pool tables, Xbox video games and more.
Restaurants	7 bars and 6 restaurants including 4 à la carte (Steakhouse, Italian, Mexican, International)

AIR PRIZE PARTNER	Air Canada www.aircanada.com
Flight Details	Fly to Puerto Vallarta with Air Canada, offering frequent scheduled service from Toronto and Montreal. Air Canada offers the most non-stop service from Canada to Puerto Vallarta. Departing from Montreal Air Canada offers a weekly direct flight on Fridays beginning December 21, 2012 – plus convenient connections via Toronto. Departing from Toronto are daily direct flights commencing 19 December, 2012. The beauty of Air Canada is their strong network of connections from cities across Canada – which is a great advantage if you are meeting up

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with friends of family from other parts of the country. So, for example, there are weekly flights to Puerto Vallarta from Vancouver as well. All this – and earn Aeroplan miles too!

<p>CURRENT DEALS DEC 2012</p>	<p>Here are some current deals on resorts and hotels in the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marival Resort & Suites in Nuevo Vallarta Escape to the Winter Special with their new Winter Special, everyone can afford a Puerto Vallarta beach vacation this winter. The longer you stay the more you save, up to 45% off. These reduced winter sale rates are capacity controlled and savings are automatically reflected in the prices. Must be booked by January 12, 2013. http://www.marival.com• Escape to the St. Regis Punta Mita Resort and take advantage of its “Sunsational Savings” package to enjoy beautiful beaches and amazing sunsets this winter. The package offers a glass of champagne upon arrival, third night free, daily full breakfast at Las Marietas Restaurant, signature St. Regis Butler service with its wake up call with complimentary coffee or tea and the pressing of two garments, Children’s Club for children from 5-12 years free of charge and free access to Exercise Room and Remède Spa. Starting from US\$406 in a Deluxe Garden View Room per room per night based on a double occupancy, this package is valid for a minimum stay of three nights from November 5th - December 20th, 2012 using rate code SUNSAV. www.stregis.com/puntamita• The Four Seasons Punta Mita allows you to beat the holiday rush with more days to relax, explore, or do whatever you want in Riviera Nayarit with its “Stay Longer” package. For every two consecutive paid nights you get the third night free from now until December 21st. With every three consecutive paid nights you get the fourth and fifth nights free from November 25th until December 21st. Or, extend your four-night stay with a complimentary fifth night between January 3 and April 6, 2013. Starting at US\$400 per room per night based on a double occupancy, this package can be booked online at http://www.fourseasons.com/puntamita• The newly renovated Occidental Grand Nuevo Vallarta is offering reduced rates this winter with two special promotions. The “Holiday Sale” promotion includes the resort’s all-inclusive features at a discounted rate of US\$167 per person per night from December 23 – January 2, 2013. The “Winter EBB” promotion includes 48 percent off your stay in a Deluxe room from January 3 – April 30, 2013 when you book before November 29.
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	<p>http://www.occidentalhotels.com/grand/NuevoVallarta.asp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Riu Palace Pacifico, characterized by its elegant palatial architecture, is offering special rates starting at US\$94 per night per person based on a double occupancy. Riu Vallarta, distinguished by its avant-garde design, is offering special rates starting at US\$74 per night per person based on a double occupancy. Valid now until December 23rd, these promotions can be booked online at http://www.riu.com• The AAA Five Diamond all-inclusive Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit in Nuevo Vallarta is offering special discounted rates and no minimum night stay requirement for Christmas. Starting at US\$380 per room per night based on a double occupancy, this promotion is valid for travel from December 20-27. For reservations, use code X12BRO online at http://vallarta.grandvelas.com• Discover historic San Blas at the stunning Garza Canela Hotel with discounted rates for the holiday season. From now until December 15th, guests can book a room for US\$80 per room per night based on a double occupancy plus two kids under 12 stay for free when sharing the room. During Christmas and New Year's, guests can book a room for \$140 USD per room per night based on double occupancy, complimentary breakfast and kids under 12 stay for US\$20. For reservations, visit http://www.garzacanela.com
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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES	<p>I broadcast the Travel Show on location from Nayarit in 2009 and had the chance to see some of the sights of the region: see my Travel Blog at http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog/tabid/400/EntryId/52/Riviera-Nayarit-Mexico.aspx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dreams Villamagna Hotel and Spa treatment- Lo de Marcos: A small town with a friendly atmosphere and outstanding beaches and beachfront restaurant serving authentic local food.- Rincón de Guayabitos: Described as the “Hidden Pearl” among the beaches of Nayarit, Rincon features all the conveniences of modern life in a relaxing, traditional setting; an excellent option for fishing and diving.- El Tigre golf course and the tiger habitat- Tino's La Laguna in Nuevo Vallarta for the local specialty, pescado sarandeado (situated by a lagoon, Tino's serves up the mouthwatering dish which is grilled fish marinated in spices, chilis and lime)
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- **Bucerias:** This tiny fishing town has grown into a popular spot for dining and shopping near the resorts of Nuevo Vallarta. It retains its authentic Mexican charm with cobblestone streets, Main Square, tiny shops and numerous seafood restaurants and beach clubs. Each January it is the setting for a popular annual festival celebrating the “Virgen de la Paz” which includes the blessing of the fishing fleet.
- **Vallarta Adventures** for tour and learn more about the opportunities to experience Riviera Nayarit nature. Following, experience Swimming with the Dolphins.
- **Sayulita:** Internationally recognized for its outstanding surfing, Sayulita is a somewhat bohemian art colony with a thriving expat community. There are also several beachfront restaurants and cafes, luxurious villas and spas. Wandered around in this charming eclectic town and enjoyed browsing the fine art galleries and stylish colourful shops with clothing, handicrafts, decorative items, handmade cosmetics and jewelry. I took my first surfing lesson here!
- **La Cruz de Huanacastle:** A traditional fishing village with an elegant new marina accommodating yachts to 400 feet. Rapidly growing, the town has new boutique hotels, restaurants and shops.
- **Hotel Des Artistes del Mar** and dinner at the Cafe Des Artistes del Mar.

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