



essential MEXICO

The state of Quintana Roo is the easternmost state of the Yucatan Peninsula and its territory is a patchwork of ecosystems rich in wildlife.

Towards the coast the jungle gives way to mangroves, lagoons and finally, the white beaches of the Mexican Caribbean which are protected by a chain of coral reefs. The stunning coastline and turquoise Caribbean waters stretch from Cancun in the north of the province to Riviera Maya in the south.

This is the region of the Mayan - the famous ancient civilization that populated the region and whose remains are still visible in the many striking ruins – the most famous being Chichen Itza, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Tours and excursions are available- this is a must see experience for those interested in learning about the local culture and its peoples.

Brief history: Experts believe that the first villages on the Yucatan Peninsula were founded between 500 and 300 BC and the Mayan cities of Coba and Tulum are still visible today. When the Spanish conquistadors first set foot on Mexican soil in 1519/20, the Maya resisted until 1546 when large parts of the peninsula were divided into landholdings. Independence brought little change to the peninsula and in 1847, the Caste War ignited the entire region- the greatest in a long line of Mayan rebellions, it continued for more than 50 years. In 1902, Quintana Roo became a territory and was declared a state in 1974.

Climate/when to go: Mexico provides an all year round meetings and incentive destination, with an average temperature of 25°C, often reaching over 30°C during the summer months. The driest season is between November and April.

Population/language/currency: The population of Quintana Roo is around 1 million. Currency is the Mexican peso. Spanish is the first language but English is widely spoken.

Passports/visas/health: A valid passport plus a return air ticket is required for all visitors to Mexico. There are no visa or vaccination requirements for UK citizens.

Time zone: Quintana Roo is 5 hours behind GMT.

Flight access: British Airways, Thomas Cook and Thomson all fly direct from the UK to Cancun. Flight time from UK to Cancun is 10.5 hours.

Hotel transfer times: From Cancun International Airport:

Cancun hotel zone - 25 minutes
Moon Palace - 10 minutes
Playacar Palace - 45 minutes





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Mexico with hosmarkhotels

Hosmarkhotels represents 7 fabulous Palace Resorts in Cancun and Riviera Maya, all ideal for meetings and incentives. Excellent 5 star all-inclusive resorts

- Capacity for residential meetings up to 4,000 people
- Superb service and excellent a la carte restaurants
- Premium bar and award winning wines
- Meeting room hire and private functions included
- Le Blanc Spa Resort in Cancun is rated No. 1 hotel in Cancun and No. 2 all inclusive in the world on Trip Advisor
- Resort Credit or discounts on golf and spa available for groups

Top Essential things to do

- **Mayan ruins:** visit the awe inspiring ancient sites and temples of Chichen Itza, Tulum and Coba
- **Rafting and snorkelling:** in the many networks of underground rivers, locally known as *Cenotes*
- **Xel-Há:** a nature park formed of inlets, lagoons, *Cenotes* and caves fed by the sea and where underground fresh water springs and rivers create a huge aquarium where visitors can snorkel amongst hundreds of multi-coloured fish
- **Coco Bongo Nightclub:** with its nightly shows and myriad of dance floors

Popular group activities

- Archeological tours to the ancient Mayan sites
- Jungle tours: through the mangrove channels in speed boats, 4 x 4s or paddle steamers
- Rafting through the network of underground rivers and *Cenotes*
- Snorkelling and certified diving
- Swimming with dolphins
- Extreme ATVS: 4 wheel motorcycle through the jungle
- AquaWorld Skyrider: para-chairs for views of the Caribbean
- Zip lining
- Horse riding through the rainforest
- Golf at Moon Palace's Jack Nicklaus Signature courses

DMC recommendations

Cancun Travel Advisors
Amstar

F & B tips/info

Most popular theme events:

- *The Mayan Evening:* recreates the mystical world of an ancient civilization surrounded by the jungle and realistic backdrops
- *The Lounge Party:* with its stylish, hip décor is the ideal setting for a relaxed, fun evening on the beach or in one of the Palace ballrooms.
- *Caribbean Island Paradise:* a warm sunset, palm trees, *tikki* torches, thatched roof huts and the mystery of the jungle
- *The Mexican Theme Party:* experience a typical Mexican fiesta set within a small rural town, complete with house facades and town square

Local delicacies you must try:

- *Cochinita Pibil:* marinated pork, wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in a pit
- *Panuchos:* fried tortillas topped with turkey, lettuce and pickled onion
- *Papadzules:* hard boiled egg tacos in a pumpkin and tomato sauce

Souvenirs/shopping

- Mexican handicrafts include: weavings from Chiapas and Oaxaca; pottery, wooden masks, basketry, straw hats, paintings and silver jewellery.

Famous Mexicans

- **Emiliano Zapata:** great idealist of the Mexican Revolution 1910-20
- **Anthony Quinn:** Mexican American actor and painter 1915-2011, born Antoni Rodolfo Quinn-Oaxana
- **Richard 'Pancho' Gonzales:** American, world number 1 tennis player, unequalled for 8 years in the 1950's and 60's
- **Luis Miramontes:** joint inventor of the contraceptive pill in 1951