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MEXICO

The Complete LGBTQ+ Travel Guide to Puerto Vallarta

A confident, polished gay travel guide to Puerto Vallarta covering Zona Romántica, gay-friendly hotels, nightlife, beaches, excursions, Vallarta Pride, and a sample 5-day itinerary.

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IMPORTANT

This guide is current as of 2026. Bar names, hotel openings, and event dates change — when you're ready to lock in your trip, we'll confirm everything in real time and tailor the details to you.

Puerto Vallarta is one of the most welcoming destinations on the planet for LGBTQ+ travelers, and it has earned that reputation honestly. Tucked between the Sierra Madre mountains and Banderas Bay on Mexico's Pacific coast, this city blends old-world Mexican charm with a vibrant, openly gay-friendly culture that few other destinations can match. For gay men in particular, Puerto Vallarta has been a top-tier escape for decades, but the city has also matured into a destination that lesbians, trans travelers, and queer friend groups call a favorite.

What makes Puerto Vallarta different is the seamlessness of it all. You can walk hand in hand down the Malecón at sunset, dance until 4 a.m. at a packed beach club, then sit down to a quiet rooftop dinner overlooking the bay, and never feel like you have to switch modes. Locals, hospitality staff, and fellow visitors expect LGBTQ+ travelers here. That confidence shapes every part of the experience.

Whether you are planning a romantic getaway with a partner, a high-energy boys' trip with friends, or your first solo international vacation, this gay Puerto Vallarta travel guide will walk you through where to stay, where to play, and how to make the most of one of the world's premier LGBTQ+ destinations.

At a Glance

WEATHER

BEST TIME

Late October –
early May

AVG HIGH

85°F

AVG LOW

70°F

RAINY SEASON

June – September

MAP · NOT INCLUDED IN PDF

An interactive map appears here in the online guide.

Why LGBTQ+ Travelers Love Puerto Vallarta

Puerto Vallarta sits at the intersection of culture, climate, and community in a way that few cities can rival.

- **An established gay neighborhood:** The Zona Romántica (also called Old Town) is one of the most concentrated and walkable gay neighborhoods in the world, with bars, hotels, restaurants, and a famous gay beach all within a few blocks of each other.

- **Legal and social inclusivity:** Same-sex marriage is legal throughout Mexico, and the state of Jalisco recognizes same-sex unions. Puerto Vallarta consistently ranks as one of the most progressive cities in the country for LGBTQ+ rights.
- **A genuine local community:** Not a resort town that simply tolerates gay tourism. Puerto Vallarta has a year-round LGBTQ+ population, gay-owned businesses, and Pride events that draw Mexican and international visitors alike.
- **Range and depth:** From luxury all-inclusive resorts to boutique adults-only hotels, world-class dining, jungle excursions, and a nightlife scene with global recognition, the city offers a complete trip rather than a single experience.
- **Accessibility:** Direct flights from major U.S. and Canadian hubs, English widely spoken in tourist zones, and the U.S. dollar accepted in many establishments make Puerto Vallarta one of the easiest international destinations for first-time and seasoned travelers alike.

ADVISOR TIP

First time in Puerto Vallarta? Stay in the Zona Romántica. Almost everything in this guide is within a 10-minute walk of each other there.

Best Areas to Stay

Puerto Vallarta is long and narrow, stretching along Banderas Bay. Where you stay shapes the entire trip, so it pays to choose deliberately.

Zona Romántica (Old Town)

The heart of gay Puerto Vallarta. If your priority is nightlife, the gay beach, walkability, and being in the middle of the action, this is the only real choice. Boutique hotels, lively streets, and constant social energy.

Best for: first-timers, party trips, solo travelers, friend groups.

Conchas Chinas

Just south of Zona Romántica, Conchas Chinas climbs up the hillside and offers some of the most dramatic ocean views in the city. Quieter and more upscale, but still a short cab ride or walk from the gay scene.

Best for: couples seeking romance and luxury.

Marina Vallarta

A planned development north of downtown, with a yacht marina, golf course, and large hotels. More

Mismaloya & South Shore

South of the city, the coastline gets wilder, the resorts more secluded, and the pace much slower. Honeymoon and decompression territory.

sedate and family oriented, generally not the best fit if you want to be in the gay nightlife mix. **Best for:** honeymoons, anniversaries, total escape.

Best for: longer stays, multi-stop trips.

Gay-Friendly Hotels and Resorts

Puerto Vallarta has an unusually deep bench of gay-friendly hotels, ranging from full-on adults-only gay resorts to mainstream luxury properties that welcome LGBTQ+ guests warmly.

Almar Resort Luxury LGBT Beach Front

One of the only true beachfront gay resorts in Puerto Vallarta. Right on Los Muertos Beach, steps from the gay strip, with a rooftop pool and a famously social vibe. Best for travelers who want the gay scene at their door and a stylish modern property to come back to.

Casa Cupula

The grand dame of gay boutique hotels in Puerto Vallarta. A small, elegant property tucked into the hillside above Zona Romántica with several pools, a renowned restaurant (Taste), and personalized service. Ideal for couples, friend groups renting suites, or travelers who want quiet luxury within walking distance of the action.

Hotel Mercurio

A gay-owned, gay-run staple just steps from the main bar strip and the beach. Mid-range pricing, a friendly pool scene, and a long-running reputation as a social, easy place to stay. A strong choice for solo travelers who want to meet people without any effort.

Pinnacle Resorts 220

Condo-style suites with full kitchens and ocean views, popular with travelers staying a week or longer. Not exclusively gay but very gay-friendly, and the location is hard to beat. Good fit for friend groups who want space and self-catering options.

Grand Miramar All Luxury Suites Resort and Spa

A luxury hilltop property in Conchas Chinas with sweeping bay views, multiple pools, and excellent spa facilities. LGBTQ+ travelers report consistently warm treatment. Best for honeymoons, anniversaries, and travelers prioritizing romance and views over walkable nightlife.

Hyatt Ziva Puerto Vallarta

A mainstream all-inclusive south of downtown that has built a strong reputation for welcoming LGBTQ+ guests. The all-inclusive format works well for travelers who want predictability and a wide range of dining and activities without leaving the property. Plan for a short cab ride to reach the gay scene.

ADVISOR TIP

Pride Travelers can match you with the right hotel based on your group, your travel style, and the week you're going. Some hotels run very different vibes during circuit weeks vs. quiet shoulder season — we'll point you to the right fit.

Gay Nightlife and Bars

PARTNER WIDGET · NOT INCLUDED IN PDF

This embed is interactive and is not included in the printed version.

Puerto Vallarta's gay nightlife is concentrated in Zona Romántica, primarily along Lázaro Cárdenas and the surrounding blocks. The scene runs late, with bars filling up after 11 p.m. and clubs peaking between 1 and 3 a.m.

CC Slaughters

A long-running dance club drawing a high-energy crowd, with go-go dancers, drag shows, and a mix of locals and visitors. A good anchor for a big night out.

Mr. Flamingo

An open-air, street-facing bar that has become almost a rite of passage in Puerto Vallarta. The crowd spills onto the sidewalk, the music is loud and fun, and it is the unofficial pre-game for the rest of the strip.

Reinas Bar

An intimate venue known for vibrant drag performances. A great change of pace from the dance club scene, and a chance to see some of the best Mexican drag talent in the country.

Industry Club

Puerto Vallarta's marquee dance club, with a larger venue, a serious sound system, and a younger, late-night crowd. Themed nights and circuit-style events are common.

Anonimo

A more relaxed lounge-style bar that draws a slightly older, conversational crowd. Strong cocktails and a good place to start the evening or land at the end of one.

Paco's Ranch

A long-standing institution that mixes a Latin music focus with cabaret-style entertainment. Worth a visit for a different flavor of nightlife.

For a beach-day version of the same energy, Mantamar Beach Club (attached to Almar Resort) is the main daytime gathering spot, with pool parties, DJs, and a famously social atmosphere.

Things to Do Beyond Nightlife

Puerto Vallarta is not just a party destination, and the travelers who enjoy it most build in time for the rest of what the region offers.

The Malecón

The mile-long oceanfront promenade is a must, especially at sunset. Public art, sand sculptors, street performers, and a steady breeze off the bay.

Los Muertos Beach and the Blue Chairs

Los Muertos is the main beach of Zona Romántica, and the south end (long known as the Blue Chairs area, now Mantamar and surrounding clubs) is the gay beach. Beach service, food and drinks, and an easy social scene.

Day Trip to Yelapa

A small fishing village reachable only by boat, tucked into a cove south of the city. Waterfalls, a quiet beach, fresh seafood. A welcome contrast to the energy of Old Town.

Sierra Madre Adventure Tours

Zip lining, ATV tours, and jungle hikes in the mountains behind the city. Vallarta Adventures is the largest operator and runs LGBTQ+-friendly excursions.

Whale Watching

December through March, humpback whales migrate through Banderas Bay. Half-day boat tours are widely available and consistently rewarding.

Cooking Classes and Food Tours

Puerto Vallarta has a serious food scene, and several tour operators run walking food tours through Old Town that include taquerías, mole specialists, and tequila tastings.

Cultural Sights

The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with its distinctive crown atop the bell tower, is the city's most recognizable landmark. The municipal art galleries and Saturday Olas Altas farmers' market are worth working into your schedule.

ADVISOR TIP

Add an excursion in the middle of your trip, not the end. A jungle day after two big nights out is the reset that lets you go hard again on the back half.

When to Visit

Puerto Vallarta has a tropical climate with two clearly defined seasons. Plan around weather, prices, and which week's energy fits your trip.

High Season

November – April.

Dry, sunny, warm days in the 80s, cooler evenings. The busiest and most expensive time, particularly mid-December through March.

Shoulder

May, October.

Warm, with rising humidity in May and lingering rain in October. Prices drop noticeably and the city is less crowded.

Low Season

June – September.

Hot, humid, and rainy with afternoon storms. Lowest prices of the year and a lush, green landscape. Some venues run reduced hours.

Key LGBTQ+ Events

- **Vallarta Pride:** Late May. A week of parties, a parade down the Malecón, cultural events, and special programming across the gay venues. One of the largest Pride celebrations in Mexico and worth planning a trip around.
- **Beef Dip:** Late January. A long-running bear-focused circuit event that draws an international crowd.
- **Vallarta Wedding Week:** Various circuit and themed weeks pop up throughout the high season. A good travel advisor can match your trip to an event you will enjoy or steer you away from one you will not.

Travel Tips for LGBTQ+ Visitors

- **Safety:** Puerto Vallarta is widely considered one of the safest tourist cities in Mexico, and Zona Romántica in particular is comfortable to walk at night. Standard precautions: keep an eye on your drink, use registered taxis or rideshare apps, do not flash valuables.
- **Public affection:** Holding hands and visible affection between same-sex couples is normal and accepted in Zona Romántica and throughout most tourist areas. Outside the main tourist zones, read the room as you would in any unfamiliar city.
- **Currency and payment:** Mexican peso is local; most gay-friendly venues accept U.S. dollars and credit cards. Carry some pesos for taxis, tips, and smaller venues.

- **Tipping:** 15 to 20 percent at restaurants and bars; tip housekeeping and bellhops as you would in the U.S.
- **Water:** Drink bottled or filtered water. Most reputable hotels and restaurants use purified water and ice.
- **Getting around:** Walking covers most of Zona Romántica. Uber and registered taxis are widely available.
- **Language:** English is widely spoken in tourist areas; a few Spanish phrases go a long way.

Pre-trip Checklist

PACKING LIST

- Passport valid 6+ months past return date
- Travel insurance (we recommend it)
- Sunscreen (reef-safe for ocean days)
- Light layers for cool evenings November to March
- Swimsuits (plural — they will not dry overnight in humidity)
- Comfortable walking shoes for the Malecón
- Going-out outfits for the strip
- Adapter (Mexico uses U.S. plugs, so usually no adapter needed)
- Prescription meds in original packaging

What's Included Where

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Most all-inclusive resorts: meals, drinks, basic activities
- ✓ Vallarta Pride wristband: parade access, themed parties
- ✓ Most excursion tours: hotel pickup, gear, guide

NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Tips at all-inclusive resorts (still customary)
- ✗ Beach club day passes (separate from hotel)
- ✗ Premium liquor at some all-inclusives
- ✗ Spa services

Sample 5-Day Itinerary

A balanced first-time itinerary for a couple or friend group based in Zona Romántica.

1

Arrive and Settle In

Ease into the city

Arrive at Puerto Vallarta International Airport, transfer to your hotel in Zona Romántica. Walk the Malecón at sunset, dinner at an Old Town favorite like Café des Artistes or La Palapa on the beach, drinks at Mr. Flamingo to ease into the scene.

2

Beach and First Big Night

Pool, then the strip

Late breakfast, then a full day at Mantamar Beach Club or the gay section of Los Muertos Beach. Afternoon nap, sunset cocktails on a rooftop. Dinner, then a night out across CC Slaughters, Industry, and Reinas.

3

Adventure Day

Get out of the city

Book a half-day excursion: zip lining in the Sierra Madre, an ATV tour, or whale watching if you are visiting in winter. Return to the city in the afternoon for a spa treatment or pool time. Casual dinner, low-key drinks at Anonimo or a quiet rooftop, and an early night.

4

Yelapa or a Sunset Cruise

Half-day on the water

Take a boat to Yelapa for the day, with a hike to the waterfall and a long lunch on the beach. Or book an LGBTQ+ sunset cruise around Banderas Bay. Dinner downtown followed by drag at Reinas or a cabaret show at Paco's Ranch.

5

Slow Morning, Final Night

Wind down and savor

Sleep in. Brunch in Old Town, last bit of beach time, a stroll for souvenirs and gallery hopping. Splurge dinner at a standout like The Iguana Restaurant for a Mexican fiesta night, or a quiet rooftop dinner. One last stop on the strip before heading back.

For travelers staying three days, condense by combining Day 3 and Day 4 into a single half-day excursion and a relaxed evening.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Puerto Vallarta safe for LGBTQ+ travelers?

Yes. Puerto Vallarta is widely considered one of the safest cities in Mexico for LGBTQ+ visitors, particularly in Zona Romántica where the gay scene is centered. Standard travel precautions apply, but anti-LGBTQ+ harassment is rare in tourist areas.

How long should I stay?

Five to seven days is the sweet spot for a first trip — enough to enjoy the nightlife, do a couple of excursions, and still have downtime. Three- and four-day trips work for return visitors who already know what they want.

Do I need to speak Spanish?

No. English is widely spoken in tourist zones, hotels, and the gay scene. A few Spanish phrases are appreciated but not required.

Should I visit during Vallarta Pride?

It depends on what you want. Pride week is high-energy and packed; if you want the parties and the parade, plan around it. If you want a quieter trip with more space, avoid late May.

Is Puerto Vallarta good for solo gay travelers?

Excellent. The gay neighborhood is small enough to feel social fast, hotels like Hotel Mercurio and Almar are built around easy social environments, and the scene is welcoming to solo visitors.

Can same-sex couples get married or have a ceremony there?

Yes. Same-sex marriage is legal in Mexico, and Puerto Vallarta is a popular destination wedding location with vendors and venues experienced in LGBTQ+ ceremonies.

Plan Your Trip with Pride Travelers

Puerto Vallarta is one of those rare destinations that genuinely lives up to its reputation, but the difference between a good trip and a great one comes down to the details: the right hotel for your group's vibe, the right neighborhood, the right week to be in town, and the right mix of activities to balance the energy of the city.

If you are considering a trip to Puerto Vallarta, we can help you plan the perfect itinerary, from the right hotel to the best experiences, restaurant reservations, and event-week timing. Pride Travelers specializes in

LGBTQ+ travel planning, and we have the on-the-ground knowledge to make sure your trip lands exactly where you want it to.

[Book Your Puerto Vallarta Trip →](#)

Whether it is your first time or your tenth, we will make sure it is your best one yet.

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