



Yucatán Peninsula

Includes »

Cancún	250
Isla Mujeres	259
Isla Holbox.....	264
Puerto Morelos.....	266
Playa del Carmen	267
Isla Cozumel.....	272
Tulum.....	278
Mahahual.....	287
Xcalak.....	288
Chetumal.....	290
Mérida.....	294
Chichén Itzá	317
Valladolid.....	321
Ek' Balam.....	324
Campeche.....	326

Best Places to Eat

- » Kinich (p316)
- » Hartwood (p282)
- » Chaya Maya (p301)
- » Eladio's (p315)

Best Places to Stay

- » Luz en Yucatán (p299)
- » Casa Takywara (p264)
- » Hotel Maya Luna (p288)
- » Hotel Macan Ché (p316)
- » Pickled Onion (p310)
- » Hotel El Rey del Caribe (p252)

Why Go?

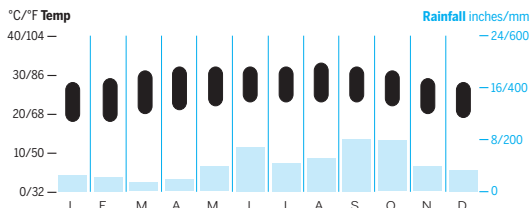
A better question is why not? With charming colonial cities (both heavily toured and virtually unheard of), world-famous Maya ruins, thumping nightlife centers, sleepy country villages, talcum-powder beaches leading to crystal turquoise waters and more dive sites than you could ever cram in one vacation, the Yucatán is one sweet destination.

Despite patches of overzealous development, the natural beauty of the Yucatán abides. The coo of the motmot still reverberates overhead, while below the creepy-crawlies continue to writhe. Further down, freshwater rivers gurggle through massive limestone caverns.

Around here, the past is the present and the present is the past: they intertwine like two brawling brothers. You'll witness it in the towering temples of the Maya, Toltecs and Itzáes, in the cobblestone streets of colonial centers and in the culture of the Maya themselves, quietly maintaining their traditions as the centuries tick by.

When to Go

Playa del Carmen



Jun–Aug The summer is hot – the ocean heats up and occasional afternoon rains are very welcome.

Sep & Oct Hurricane season means frequent rain, although temperatures are still warm.

Nov–May Temperatures drop and the rains thin out. The ocean gets warmer and clearer around February.



Yucatán Peninsula Highlights

① Set out for a morning bird-watching mission from the remote Costa Maya beach town of **Xcalak** (p288), then head out for a dive at **Banco Chinchorro** (p288)

② Haul yourself up the massive pyramid of **Calakmul** (p335) as heavy-nosed toucans soar past toward their tree-top jungle hideaways

③ Marvel at the colonial architecture or attend a free concert in **Mérida** (p294)

④ Find out why they named **Chichén Itzá** (p317) the 'seventh modern wonder of the