

## CANCUN È MEXICO GENERAL INFORMATION



**Cancún** is a city in south eastern Mexico, located in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo. It is a world-renowned tourist destination. The city is located off the Caribbean Sea, and is one of the easternmost points in Mexico. Cancún is located just north of Mexico's Caribbean coast resort band known as the Riviera Maya.

There are two possible translations of Cancún, based on the Mayan pronunciation. The first translation is "nest of snakes or pot." The second version and less accepted is "place of the golden snake"

The history of Cancun dates back to 1967 when the Mexican government, recognizing the importance of tourism to the country's economic future, began a detailed search to pinpoint ideal sites for tourism development. Resting on the northeast corner of the Yucatan Peninsula, Cancun was a part of the ancient Mayan civilization and is still considered the gateway to El Mundo Maya (the Mayan World).

Unlike many other parts of the Caribbean and Mexico, Cancun was built for tourism. Cancun delivers to travelers the best of many worlds: the Caribbean and Mexico; modern and ancient; action packed and laid back. Cancun is unequalled in its ability to offer cultural treasures, natural beauty, infinite activities and North American-style conveniences.

The landscape of Cancun encourages the growth of many exotic flowers, such as flamboyances (named for the dazzling orange-red splash they make lining sidewalks and plazas) and fascinating fauna, like the prehistoric-looking iguanas.

### **Climate**

Cancún has a tropical climate, specifically a tropical wet and dry climate, with few temperature differences between seasons, but pronounced rainy seasons. The city is warm year-round, and moderated by onshore trade winds, with an annual mean temperature of 27.1°C (80.8 °F).

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More temperate conditions occur from November to February with occasional refreshing northerly breezes. Due to proximity to the Caribbean and Gulf humidity is high the year round, especially so during hurricane season.

The hotel zone juts into the Caribbean Sea, it is surrounded by ocean therefore daytime temperatures are around 1-2°C less and windspeeds are higher than at the airport located some distance inland.

### **Language**

Spanish is the de facto national language of spoken by the vast majority of Mexicans. The government of Mexico recognizes 68 distinct indigenous Amerindian languages as national languages in addition to Spanish.

### **Currency**

The currency in Mexico is the Mexican Peso (MXN). The current exchange rate is:

1 EUR = MXN 16.6266

1 USD = MXN 12.6780

*Source: Oanda.com / 12.01.2013*

Merchants and businesses are no longer allowed to change U.S. dollars for pesos.

Currency exchange offices . You will usually find a currency exchange counter at international airports throughout Mexico; these can be identified by the %Exchange+ sign. You will have to show your passport in order to be able to exchange money. This is a convenient way of changing currency.

Banks . Not all banks provide the service of exchanging pesos and dollars, and some require you to have an account with them. You will also need a valid U.S. passport to make the exchange.

ATM . One of the most convenient ways to buy pesos is by using an ATM. You will often receive better exchange rates, even though you have to pay a service fee, as with most ATMs outside your bank network.

Credit card . If you have a credit card, you will find that it provides one of the best exchange rates.

### **Voltage**

Electrical sockets/outlets in Mexico usually supply electricity at between 110 and 120 volts AC. You will require a voltage converter and an adapter.

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### Local Time

There are three time zones in Mexico: one for the Northeast, one for the Pacific and one Central time zone. Between the first and second, and the second and third, there is a one hour difference.

Cancun, Mexico time is GMT/UTC -6:00 hours.

### Mexican Cuisine

Mexican cuisine is a style of food which is primarily a fusion of indigenous Mesoamerican cooking with European, especially Spanish cooking.

Mexican cuisine is complex. Native ingredients include tomatoes, squashes, avocados, cocoa and vanilla, as well as ingredients not generally used in other cuisines such as various edible flowers, vegetables such as huauzontle and papaloquelite or small criollo avocados, whose skin is edible. European contributions include pork, chicken, beef, cheese, various herbs and spices and some fruits. Tropical fruits such as guava, prickly pear, sapote, mangoes, bananas, pineapple and cherimoya (custard apple) are popular, especially in the center and south of the country.

The basic starch remains corn in almost all areas of the country. The most common way to eat corn in Mexico is in the form of a tortilla, which accompanies almost every dish in Mexico.

Mexican food has a reputation for being spicy, but its seasoning can be better described as strong. In Mexico, the various chili peppers are used for their flavors and not just their heat, with Mexico using the widest variety of chili peppers.

Alcoholic beverages from Mexico include tequila, pulque, aguardiente and mezcal, with brandy, wine, beer and rum also produced. The most common alcoholic beverage consumed with food in Mexico is beer, followed by tequila



**Please note that all individuals are responsible for their own travel arrangements and visa matters.**

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