



The Cruise Port Of Cozumel, Mexico

Cozumel is referred to as the port of call, but is actually an island on the southeast coast of Mexico with the actual port city being San Miguel de Cozumel. Located off the Yucatan peninsula it is part of the Mexican

state of Quintana Roo and a very popular cruise stop on most western Caribbean itineraries.

Its real claim to fame are the beaches and the diving sites but it is also a good place for shopping as well.



Where Your Ship Docks
Terminal de Cruceros or Cruise Ship Terminal is the major location for cruise ships but there is another major terminal located in the town proper. With this destination being so popular there

is a possibility that your ship could dock at either location.

The Terminal de Cruceros is a well developed area with excellent facilities, two shopping villages, a number of bars (the infamous Mini Senior Frog's and Three Amigos) and a number of good restaurants. It is about two and a half miles into downtown San Miguel. It is right next to a remarkably good snorkeling area right at the terminal "beach".

The other cruise docking pier is central to San Miguel and an easy walk to the main shops, restaurants and the original Senior Frog's.

Transportation

If you are looking to get to locations within a few miles of the pier the best choice is a taxi. They are plentiful and moderately priced. Just make sure you settle on a fare before heading out. If

THIS PORT AT A GLANCE

X Tender Port **✓** Docks At Pier **✓** With Terminal
✓ Restrooms Near Pier **✓** Port Allows Walk Outs
✓ Near Town **X** Shuttle Service Usually Provided
X Near Public Transportation **✓** Taxis Available
Relative Values with 5 Good and 1 Expensive or Difficult
NA Shuttle Service **4** Taxis **X** Public Transport
4 Port Wheelchair Accessibility
Distance Into Town In Miles 2
Average Taxi To Airport \$15 **To CBD** \$7 (US\$)

your goal is to do some diving or serious snorkeling the recommendation is to book with a tour operator of which there are a number right at the pier and they

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usually include transportation. Taxi drivers also will offer a fixed price tour of the island and most people we have spoken with have been happy having taken this option. There are also numerous tours you can book with your ship.

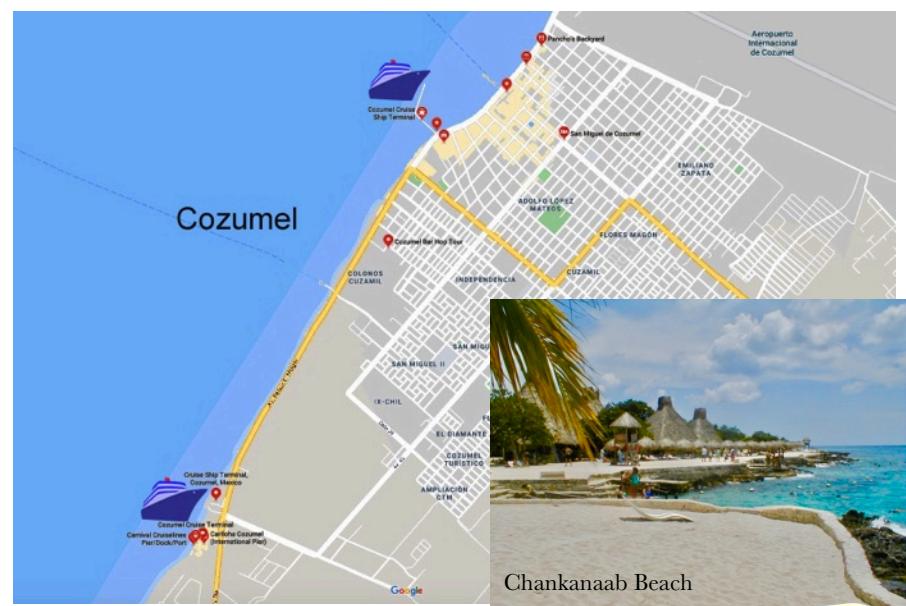
Money

The local currency is the Mexican peso (\$1 about 2 pesos) but U.S. Dollars are commonly accepted. One word of caution – this is a port where liberating tourists from their money is a popular past time. Be cautious of ATM's, money changers and especially pay phones that accept credit cards cannot be trusted. ATM fees can also be unusually high.

Attractions

Shopping – Both at the terminal and in town there are a number of bargains to be found. Mexico is famous for silver, onyx and pottery and often the prices are too good to pass up. Two items that are always a good deal are vanilla and tequila. In shopping for vanilla don't be tempted by those large, cheap bottles of vanilla available in many gift shops. They may not contain real vanilla extract, and sometimes may contain something that could hurt you. That "something" is coumarin, an extract of the tonka

Mayan ruins are within reach on Cozumel at San Gervasio and two hours south on the coast at Tulum.



bean that imparts an intense vanilla aroma and thus makes it smell like the real thing. Coumarin was banned as food additive in the U.S. in 1940 because of toxicity. Pay attention and make sure you know what you are getting.

One good recommendation is a visit to a beach and one popular choice is **Chankanaab**. The cruise ships will offer tours including beach trips and

A NOTE OF CAUTION

For parents traveling with children be warned that there is no age in Mexico for the consumption of alcohol. Local bars will encourage children to drink and even make a game of it. This has led to serious problems.



snorkeling but if you are looking for a day at the beach our recommendation is to take a taxi to **Chankanaab Beach Park** and pay the park admission. You'll save a lot of money over the tour cost and can go and return when you want. It's not far and there are usually taxis waiting at the park to take you back to the ship. There is a beach bar, a couple of food options, snorkeling and beach chair rentals and the water is great. To get out to the better reefs it's a bit of a swim though.

Mayan Ruins - Looking for some history? Cozumel has **San Gervasio**, Mayan ruins centered on the sanctuary of the goddess Ixchel, the island's ancient deity. For the more adventurous there are usually tours available that will take you two hours south along the coast to **Tulum**, the pre-Columbian Mayan walled city. The ruins are situated atop 12-meter tall cliffs above the Caribbean Sea. Tulum was one of the last cities built and inhabited by the Maya between the 13th and 15th centuries.

For a price many cruise ships also offer tours to **Chichen Itza** some two hundred miles inland (by plane of course). This Mayan city is on everyone's list of the seven ancient wonders of the Americas with the central city covering almost two square miles of temples, stadiums, courtyards and palaces.