



TRIP PLANNING

Effective May 6, 2020

Trip Insurance: Due to our cancellation policy and the unexpected events that can possibly occur, Dive Paradise STRONGLY recommends that all divers obtain international medical coverage, and/or a comprehensive travel insurance policy for their reservations, with coverage that includes cancellation, medical, personal liability and coverage for dives cancelled due to bad weather/port closures. For US and Canadian citizens, we suggest travel insurance from either [The Divers Alert Network \(DAN\)](#) or [DiveAssure](#). For all other nationalities, we recommend travel insurance from [DiveAssure](#).

Dive Equipment Rental: Rental gear is not included in trip prices. If you know you will need gear, please specify this ahead of time in your Diver Registration Form, to ensure the proper size is available to you. While we always do our best to provide requested sizes, gear is provided on a 1st-come 1st-served basis.

Wetsuits – Do You Need One? Everybody generates a different level of body heat and has different needs. If you are traveling in the “cooler months” (December – March), a shorty or 3mm wetsuit is a good option. Those who are more sensitive to water temperature might also benefit from wearing a hoodie, dive skin, or vest under wetsuits for added warmth. In the warmer months (April – November) many guests are comfortable enjoying our beautiful waters with only a rash guard or dive skin, which can also protect you from sunburn.

Getting to Cozumel: Cozumel's International Airport (CZM), is served by most major North American airlines. For more flight options, you may also want to consider flying into Cancun International Airport (CUN). You can then take a bus, shared ride transfer, or taxi from Cancun to Playa del Carmen, and then take a [Winjet](#) or [Ultramar](#) ferry to Cozumel. Or, you can fly from Cancun to Cozumel on [MayaAir](#) - be sure to check with the airline re: current luggage weight limits. (Recent policy: complimentary up to 15 kilo (30 pounds), then \$50 USD per kilo for additional weight.)

About Cozumel: To learn more about Cozumel and chat with locals (Mexican and ex-pats), visit the public Facebook group [Cozumel 4 You](#).

Cozumel Weather: Weather in Cozumel does not change drastically throughout the year. For those who like to follow current weather, we recommend the following sites: [windguru](#), [windy.com](#), or [conagua](#).

Credit Cards: We recommend getting a credit card that does not charge international transaction fees before you travel. Notify your credit card company in advance that you may be making charges in Mexico. MasterCard, Visa and debit cards are widely accepted. American Express is not accepted at many locations.

Phone Service: If you want to use WhatsApp (<https://www.whatsapp.com>) for free calls & texts while traveling, it must be downloaded to your phone from the USA prior to travel. It will not download in Cozumel. International calls are expensive, so local prepaid sim cards are a good way to go and can be purchased from TelCel or another local provider. You can use your local cell phone on Wi-Fi service. To call Cozumel, dial +52 1 (987), then the number.

Currency: The official currency is the Mexican peso; however, the US dollar is also accepted at many businesses, including Dive Paradise. If you're coming from the US, it is recommended that you bring some small denomination dollars, especially \$1's and \$5's which are great for tipping porters, van drivers etc. For other expenditures, you can use a Mexican ATM machine to access your accounts and obtain pesos at a good exchange rate. (There are ATMs at Hotel Cozumel and the Royal Village that dispense US dollars.) Notify your hometown bank before you leave that you'll be making withdrawals in Mexico, so they don't block the charges. Also plan to pay a fee for each transaction. It is usually per transaction and not by the amount, so it is best to take out larger amounts in fewer batches.



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Packing Considerations:

- **Water bottles** - To reduce waste and protect the ocean, we no longer provide disposable plastic water bottles. You can collaborate on this conservation effort by bringing your own bottle, or by purchasing a Dive Paradise reusable thermos from our on island shop.
- **Reef safe, biodegradable SPF sunscreen.** Biodegradable sunscreen is the **only** type of sunscreen that is allowed on any snorkeling tour, scuba diving trip, or other water activity inside Cozumel's protected marine park. Dive Paradise has reef-safe sunscreen available for purchase in our shops.
- **Pack light!** Cool, casual, comfortable wear is acceptable everywhere. A light sweater may be welcome on some breezy evenings and after diving, especially in December, January and February. A windbreaker or rain slicker should also be considered.
- **Log book** to record all your new dives.
- **Medications.** Some people love diving although they get sea sick. Bring your remedy of choice to be prepared for those days when the ocean is a little choppy. We also recommend Ginger (tablets, cookies) to settle tummies.
- **Airline luggage restrictions** are constantly changing. Check your airline's website(s) for the most current information on baggage allowances and restrictions. For most international flights, any luggage over 50 lbs will have a surcharge and you could potentially be told to remove something from the bag. In most cases luggage over 70 lbs will not be accepted.
- **Carry-on baggage:** In the unlikely event you arrive in Cozumel without your luggage, please make sure you have packed your "trip essentials" in your carry-on bag, such as your diving C-Card, DAN or other dive insurance card, shorts, bathing suit, dive mask, dive computer, medicine, sunglasses or anything necessary to begin enjoying your stay from the moment you arrive.
- **Batteries:** Your devices and dive equipment might require special batteries. Some batteries are difficult to obtain in Cozumel. Please bring your own spare batteries with you. **Reminder:** The airlines require that all spare (uninstalled) lithium batteries be packed in carry-on baggage only. When a carry-on bag is checked at the gate or at plane side, all spare lithium batteries must be removed from the bag and kept with the passenger in the aircraft cabin. Dive Paradise is fully committed to recycling and conservation; our office staff can assist with proper disposal of spent batteries.



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Arriving in Cozumel (Bring this info with you)

Airport Transfers: Unless you have pre-purchased transfers to your hotel, the transportation available from the airport is via shared vans ("colectivos"), priced per ride for private or shared rides along fixed routes. The Colectivo kiosk is in an open air hallway just outside baggage claim. Purchase a one-way ticket, as a taxi will be the best option for return. USD, credit cards and peso's accepted.

Taxis: To catch a taxi (a cheaper and faster option) from the airport, you will need to go out to the street, beyond the airport (go to Airport Boulevard or 65 th Av.). From the Ferry terminal, simply proceed to the street. Taxis generally only accept cash and will accept US dollars, but generally at a poor rate, so it is best to pay in pesos. There are several ATMs at the Airport as you exit customs where you can get pesos. Fares are regulated based on location with the tip built in. However, if they offer extra service -- like helping you load heavy luggage or groceries - a tip is a nice thing to do. It is always a good idea to ask what the fare will be before you get into the cab.

Contacting Dive Paradise: To reach us when in Cozumel, our main office is open from 8 AM – 9 PM, in downtown San Miguel at 602 Avenue Rafael Melgar (between Hotel Barracuda and the Naval Base). The on-island office phone is (987) 872-1007.

Additional Locations: We also have locations at Hotel Cozumel & Resort and the Villablanca Garden Beach Hotel. Your trip confirmation email/voucher will specify the location closest to your hotel.

Mandatory on-island check in:

- Each diver must stop by to register (by 3 PM at our Villablanca beach location, or by 7 PM at our Hotel Cozumel location or at our Main Office downtown), on the day before the 1st date of diving, unless you have notified us that you are arriving on the day of your first dive. This serves to reconfirm dive days, boat pickup times, and departure point, verify completion of the [Waiver](#) and [Diver Registration](#) forms, plus divers should try on rental gear the day before their first dive. This is also a good time to let us know of any requests for changes or additions.
- Each diver must present their confirmation email or voucher at check in (a digital image on a cell phone is fine). This is your proof of purchase and ticket for services to be rendered.
- Each diver must bring their C-Card if diving (not required for Discover Scuba, Open Water certification or Open Water Referral). A digital image on a cell phone or the PADI app is fine.
- Those doing training dives must bring any relevant Referral Form or signed log book along with completed medical questionnaire.
- Each diver should bring a VISA, MasterCard or American Express credit card to be used for a security deposit on any rental equipment required and to open a dive shop account for any incidental expenses they may incur.

Welcome Tanks: For any certified diver who has booked a boat dive with us, we provide a complementary Welcome Tank on the arrival date, at the check-in location specified in the trip instructions. Use of this welcome tank is optional, though we strongly advise all divers to take advantage of this opportunity to do a shore dive for a buoyancy/equipment check, to prepare for their first boat dive. The welcome tank must be used and returned during daylight hours, prior to boat diving.



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Diving Certification Agency Safety Standards:

- If a diver's last dive was more than 1 year ago, a *daytime* shore dive is required before any boat dives, using a welcome tank (from a package) or a rental tank. This dive ensures divers are prepared to enjoy their boat dives with refreshed skills and proper buoyancy. No solo divers allowed for shore dives; you can complete this with your buddy, or you can hire a Divemaster to do this with you.
- If a diver's last dive was more than 2 years ago, we require a Refresher course with an Instructor before any open water dive trip.

Maximum Peace of Mind: We provide one Divemaster for each eight divers. For more personal attention, a Personal Divemaster can be hired for \$55.00 per dive trip (in addition to trip price) for 1 or 2 divers. This service is available on the morning Caribbean 2-tank Trip or the Afternoon 1-tank Trip.

Boat Pickups: The first pick-up is at Hotel Cozumel & Resort at 8:30 AM. Dive tours on fast boats (Lanchas) return approximately 4½ hours after departure; big boats (Barcos) return from 5 to 5½ hours after departure. The boats then head south, for pick-ups at other Dive Paradise locations and affiliate resorts:

- Villablanca Resort / Dive Paradise
- Casa Del Mar

By prior arrangement, our boats can make additional pick-ups at the following resorts.

- Barracuda, Cozumel Palace, Park Royal, El Cid La Ceiba, Intercontinental Presidente, Fiesta Americana, Sunscape Sabor, Secrets Aura Cozumel, Allegro Cozumel, Occidental Grand Cozumel, Iberostar

* Be sure to verify with your hotel if you can use their pier for pickups, and if that is included in your hotel package/inclusions. Some hotels charge an extra fee to their guests. Dive Paradise does not charge any extra fees for pick ups at their docks.

Tipping: If you receive good service, please consider showing your appreciation with tips. Dollars are universally and happily accepted by service providers, as are pesos. Tour guides and dive professionals customarily receive tips and split them between the captain, the dive master and any other helpers on board. Restaurant tipping should be in line with what you pay elsewhere -- typically 15% of your bill. Tour operators will be happy to suggest an appropriate tipping range for their workers if you ask ahead of time.

Medical Treatment, Consultations, Emergencies, and to complete Medical Release Forms as needed, Dive Paradise is affiliated with:

- Hospital Internacional. <https://hospitalcozumel.com>
- Meditur Hyperbaric Chamber, (987) 869-0300 or hipercozumel@meditur.com.
 - This is a state-of-the-art recompression chamber facility connected with the hospital "Clinica San Miguel" on Calle 6 Norte (6th Street North) #135, between 5th Ave. and 10th Ave. Dr. Pascual Piccolo is the presiding hyperbaric physician and general practitioner.

All divers are advised to purchase Travel Insurance for their reservation. Meditur accepts [DAN](#) and [DiveAssure](#) for direct billing with no out-of-pocket expenses. (PADI insurance members pay out-of-pocket and submit for reimbursement).



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Bad Weather and Unforeseen Circumstances: Dive Paradise strives to ensure that all trip arrangements will run as planned. However, we occasionally need to make changes including altering, postponing or canceling dives due to weather and other circumstances or safety considerations.

If the ocean swells make docking on the hotel piers unsafe, we may move boarding to Marina Fonatur for everyone's safety. In these cases we will organize taxi services.

If the Mexican Marine and Federal Authorities determine conditions are unsafe for tourist maritime activities, they will close the ports and we will be required to pause dive operations. If such circumstances occur during your visit, **it is essential to stay in touch with our shop to confirm any rescheduling**. The port could reopen, allowing boats to go out later in the day, or we will try to reschedule the missed dive for another day during your stay. Having a phone/text/WhatsApp# where we can reach you while on Cozumel is most helpful for our trip planning in these cases.

If rescheduling is not possible, we can also provide a rain check for the same type of dive trip, to be used within two years with an advance reservation (required to confirm availability/scheduling). **Rain checks must be requested and arranged at our main office in Cozumel, before leaving the island at the end of your trip.**

Mother Nature is unpredictable, so we STRONGLY advise all divers to obtain trip insurance that covers reimbursement for missed dives due to port closures and other unforeseen circumstances.

Enjoying Your Stay: We want you to have the scuba diving vacation you've been dreaming about! If you have any questions or concerns while on island, please bring it to our attention as soon as possible by communicating with our General Manager in Cozumel, or by sending us a message at customerexperience@diveparadise.com.

Thank you for choosing Dive Paradise!

Let's Go Diving!