



## **DIVE PARADISE PRE-TRAVEL PLANNING**

**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](#).

**Maximum Peace of Mind:** If you have been out of the water for a while or for any reason feel jittery about your diving, we recommend you either participate in a refresher course, or pre-book your own personal Divemaster for your first day.

The short 2 – 4 hour [Refresher Course](#) is a great program for any certified diver looking to brush up on skills or who wants a pre-assessment for a continuing education course to advance their certification.

Personal Divemaster service is available at \$44.00 for 1 or 2 divers on the morning Caribbean 2-tank Trip or the Afternoon 1-tank Trip, in addition to applicable dive trip charges. Special requests for specific Dive Masters or Instructors will be handled on a first come first served basis.

**Language:** Dive Paradise trips are escorted by professional English or bi- or multi-lingual Divemasters and Instructors. Currently, we have staff who speak Maya, Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, Italian and German. In order to meet the language needs of the majority of passengers on a trip, languages may be combined to enable operation of the tours. Please inform us of any specific language needs you may have when you book your trip.

**Packing Considerations:** 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 wind breaker or rain slicker should also be considered. **PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR LOG BOOK TO LOG ALL YOUR NEW DIVES.**

Some people love diving although they get sea sick. Bring Gravol or your remedy of choice to be prepared for those days when the ocean is a little choppier!

We also request that you bring only 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.

Airline luggage restrictions are constantly changing. **Be sure to check your airline's web site(s) for the most current information on baggage allowances and restrictions.** For most international flights, any luggage over 50 pounds will have a surcharge and you could potentially be told to remove something from the bag. In most cases luggage over 70 pounds will not be accepted.

Toll Free: 855-798-5300 | Florida: 954-743-5310

Dive Paradise Direct from USA: 011-52-987-872-1007 | Dive Paradise Direct on Cozumel: 987- 872-1007

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Last Update: 2/20/2019



**Wet Suits – Do You Need One?** Since everybody generates a different level of body heat, the answer to that question is going to be different for every person. If you are traveling in the “cooler months” (December – March) a shorty or 3mm wetsuit would be a good option. Those who are more sensitive to water temperature might also benefit from wearing a hoodie or a skin or vest under the wetsuits for added warmth. (Eating a proper breakfast with carbohydrates and bringing coffee on board helps too!)

In the warmer months, April – November, many guests are comfortable enjoying our beautiful waters with only a rash guard or skin. Perhaps in these months sun exposure is more of a concern than being cold. Rash and skin guards will protect you like SPF from burning your skin.

Our staff dives every day, you will see us all bundled up as our bodies no longer keep warmth the same way. If you come from winter land (Canada or Northern USA) you will have a good laugh as you will be warm and in shorts whilst we show up to work wearing hoodies and jackets

**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, a pair of 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 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. Please feel free to leave your spent batteries with the office staff so that they may be dealt with properly.

**Dive Equipment Rental:** Rental gear is not included in trip prices and will be payable upon registration at the dive shop. If you know you are going to need gear, we advise that you reserve ahead of time to ensure the proper size is available to you. While we always do our best to provide appropriately sized gear, all rental gear is provided on a first-come first-served basis.

**Currency:** The official currency is the Mexican peso; however, the US dollar is the preferred currency with 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, it is recommended that you use a Mexican ATM machine to access your accounts back home to obtain pesos at a good exchange rate. (Should you wish to obtain US dollars, there are ATM's at Hotel Cozumel and the Royal Village that dispense dollars.) Please be sure to inform 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 better to take out larger amounts in fewer batches.

**Credit Cards:** Please be aware that many credit-card companies are now adding an extra 2% to 5% fee on international transactions in addition to any currency-exchange commissions. It is also best to notify your credit card company in advance that you may be making charges in Mexico. American Express is not accepted at many locations; however, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted.

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**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 fly from Cancun to Cozumel on [MayaAir](#), or you can take a bus or taxi from Cancun to Playa del Carmen, then take a ferry to Cozumel. There are two primary ferry services: <http://www.mexicowaterjets.com.mx> and <https://www.ultramarferry.com/en>.

**About Cozumel:** If you would like to learn more about Cozumel and chat with locals (Mexican and ex pats) we recommend the Facebook Group "[Cozumel 4 You.](#)" You can also download the [Cozumel APP](#).

**Cozumel Weather:** Weather in Cozumel does not change drastically throughout the year, however for those who like to follow current weather, we recommend the following sites: [www.windguru.com](http://www.windguru.com); <http://seatemperatures.info>; [www.windy.com](http://www.windy.com); [www.noa.com](http://www.noa.com) or <http://smn.conagua.gob.mx>

### **IMPORTANT: PLEASE TAKE THIS DOCUMENT WITH YOU**

#### **ARRIVING IN COZUMEL**

**Contacting Dive Paradise:** If you need to call Dive Paradise Phone when in Cozumel, please call **987-872-1007**. Our main office, located in downtown San Miguel at 602 Avenue Rafael Melgar (between Hotel Barracuda and the Naval Base) is open from 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM.

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

**Airport/Ferry Transfers:** Unless you have pre-purchased transfers to your hotel, you will need to proceed out to the street to the taxi stand to transfer to your hotel.

**Taxis:** Taxis generally only accept cash and will take your US dollars if you offer them, 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. You can also ask to see the rates card.

**After Arriving at Your Hotel:** Please stop by the main office, located in downtown San Miguel, or the closest Dive Paradise location to your hotel (identified in your confirmation email), to reconfirm your dive days, boat pickup times, and departure point. Additional information on dive registration can be found at the end of this document. Make sure you stop buy and try your rental gear on the day before your first dive. If you haven't been diving in a year we encourage you to book a quick practical refresher course with our instructors to brush up on your basic skills. Let us know in advance if you plan to make any changes or if you wish to add on any night dives or specialties so we can plan ahead.

**Enjoying Your Stay:** We want you to have the scuba diving vacation you've been dreaming about! So, if something goes wrong, we will do all we can to make it right. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints, please bring it to our attention ASAP by communicating with our General Manager in Cozumel, or by sending us a message [HERE](#).



**Phone Service:** Local pre-paid sim cards can be purchased from TelCel or another local provider. International calls are expensive, so a local sim is the way to go. You can use your local cell phone on Wi-Fi service. From your phone dial +52 1 987 to call Cozumel numbers. 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 your trip. It will not download in Cozumel.

**Tipping:** Dollars are universally and happily accepted by service providers as are pesos. Remember that this is a cash economy and that Mexicans make incredibly low base salaries. They live for the tips so if you receive good service, please consider tipping. You will receive a grateful smile if you tip your airport van driver or the maids that clean your hotel room. Tour guides and dive ops definitely expect a tip if you enjoyed yourself. The tip is split 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. Tours and dive operators will be happy to suggest an appropriate tip for their workers if you ask ahead of time for a price range. Needless to say, if you are dissatisfied with service, show it in your tip!

**Medical Emergencies:** In the event of a diving emergency, Dive Paradise is affiliated with the Meditur Hyperbaric Chamber, a state-of-the-art re-compression chamber facility located on Cozumel Island. The chamber is connected with the hospital "Clinica San Miguel" on Calle 6 Norte (6th Street North) #135, between 5th Ave. and 10th Ave., and can be reached at 987-869-0300 or [hipercozumel@meditur.com](mailto:hipercozumel@meditur.com). 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).

### **FOR DIVERS**

**Dive Registration:** Your confirmation email/voucher is proof of purchase and your ticket for services to be rendered and must be presented to Dive Paradise at least 12 hours prior to the starting time of your first service, unless you have notified us that you are arriving on the date of your first dive.

As soon as possible after arrival, stop by the main store or the closest Dive Paradise location to your hotel (identified in your confirmation email) to reconfirm your dive days, boat pickup times, and departure point. It is essential for your trip to bring the following for your check in:

- Your printed confirmation email (if you booked directly with us), or your booking vouchers (if you booked via an agency).
- Your C-Card if diving (not required for a Discover Scuba, Open Water certification or Open Water Referral). A digital image on your cell phone or via the PADI app is fine.
- Your Diver's Information Sheet. You may download [HERE](#) to print and fill-out in advance or obtain one from Dive Paradise when you arrive in Cozumel. (Do not email. This must be handled in person at check in.)
- For divers doing their training dives, please bring your Referral Form or signed log book along with completed medical questionnaire.
- A **VISA, Master Card or American Express** credit card to be used as a security deposit on any rental equipment you require and to open a dive shop account for any incidental expenses you may incur.

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- If you plan to night dive, add an extra 3rd tank in the middle of the day or any other extra services please let us know in advance.

**Welcome Tanks:** For any certified diver who has booked a boat dive with us, we provide a free 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 then returned during daylight hours, prior to starting the boat diving.

**Boat Diving:** Boats make their first pick-up at Hotel Barracuda at 8:30 AM. The boats then head south, for pick-ups at other Dive Paradise locations or affiliate resorts:

- Hotel Cozumel & Resort / Dive Paradise
- Villablanca Resort / Dive Paradise
- Casa Del Mar

By prior arrangement, our boats can sometimes make pick-ups at the following resorts:

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

Dive tours on fast boats "Lanchas" return approximately 4 ½ hours after departure; big boats "Barcos" return from 5 to 5 1/2 hours after departure.

**Bad Weather and Unforeseen Circumstances:** Dive Paradise strives to ensure that all trip arrangements will be the same as planned. However, we reserve the right to make changes including altering, postponing and canceling dives due to weather and other circumstances and safety considerations.

If the ocean swells make docking on the piers unsafe, our staff will make the call to move boarding to Marina Fonatur. This measure is taken for your safety! Diver Paradise will be happy to assist with organizing taxi service for you, however it will be the guests' responsibility for the payment of their transportation to/from the Marina. In most cases, people can share a cab ride.

The Mexican Marine and Federal Authorities determine port closures if the conditions are deemed unsafe for tourist maritime activities. If such circumstances arise during your trip that result in cancelled dives, you will have a choice of two options, proportionate to the number of missed dives:

- 1) A rain check for all missed dives.
- 2) A refund for all missed dives.

In these circumstances, once Dive Paradise has informed you of a change to a trip, you must inform the main office in Cozumel of your preferred choice within 3 working days. Stop by to fill out a 'rain check' or 'change' form or click [HERE](#) to contact us. If we do not receive your preference in writing, we will assume you wish to go ahead with a rain check.