

Mexico's Luxury Tourism Industry Continues to Trend Upwards



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When you think about visiting Mexico, what comes to mind? For many people it's a curious dichotomy: ancient historical sites and indulgent party scenes. But for experienced travelers, Mexico is a destination of extraordinary art and culture, not to mention natural wonders – from majestic canyons and caves to breathtaking beaches and cenotes.

With so many assets, the Mexican tourism industry continues to rebound from pandemic lows along with the rest of the world. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization ([UNWTO](#)), international tourism is on track to return to pre-pandemic levels, with close to 235 million people traveling internationally during the first quarter of 2023, twice as many compared to Q1 2022. Despite high inflation and rising oil prices, UNWTO projects further resilience in the sector during the coming year.

One travel and leisure company seeing this strong recovery swing is **Vidanta**. Dotting the Baja Peninsula and Mexico's west and east coasts, its luxury resort destinations are situated on prime beaches that span Los Cabos, Nuevo Vallarta (Riviera Nayarit), Puerto Peñasco, Puerto Vallarta, Riviera Maya and Acapulco. The natural beauty of its locales serves as a backdrop for experiential opportunities that have driven the return of upscale travelers.

At its resort in San José del Cabo—Vidanta Los Cabos—sequestered 20 miles away from the busy Vegas-like marina of Cabo San Lucas, guests can opt for The Reserve Beach Club, where they might sip a smoky mezcal margarita at a private pool with two-story cabanas and other VIP areas. Vidanta Nuevo Vallarta broadens that exclusive sensibility with two sumptuous luxury accommodation options: The Estates, a collection of one- to four-bedroom private residences with personal concierge and ultra-VIP amenities; and Grand Luxxe, a AAA Five Diamond haven of opulence with access to three private pools, spa services and championship golf. Almost all of Vidanta's resorts boast pro-level golf courses, with Nueva Vallarta serving as home to the PGA TOUR Mexico Open at Vidanta.

Beyond Mexico, other sophisticated hospitality brands are seeing robust business, with many aiming to bring new visitors to Latin America. A common thread among these: resorts that celebrate a symbiosis with local culture and nature.



In January 2023 Accor opened the Sofitel Casco Viejo Panama, a stunning waterfront property delivering bespoke experiences to travelers with its intimate ambiance and high-end services. Located in the heart of Panama City’s historic district, a United Nations-designated world heritage site, Sofitel Casco Viejo Panama has seen strongest weekend demand for its suites, evidencing the return of monied vacationers eager to explore Panama in style.

Luxury meets sustainability for Inkaterra, whose seven high-end properties in Peru include two popular five-star hotels bookending the historic Inca Trail. Inkaterra La Casona, the first five-star boutique hotel in Cusco, is a restored 16th century manor house, its suites equipped with large stone fireplaces and elegant marble bathrooms, with therapeutic spa treatments available that utilize local indigenous products. Weary travelers who finish the Inca Trail can relax in the cloud forest at Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo, an intimate Andean property with terraced hills and serene waterfalls set on a dozen acres featuring the world’s largest native orchid collection.

For wine lovers, tourists to Brazil are rediscovering a secluded gem in the south of the country, Hotel & Spa Do Vinho, part of Marriott’s Autograph Collection. Located in the

heart of Vale dos Vinhedos, this 128-room Tuscan-style hotel is set amid lush vineyards and is distinguished by a partnership with over 30 wineries in the region and a cellar that boasts close to 600 national and international labels. Its elegance and charm can be experienced in its plush guestrooms, three restaurants, and a spa featuring deep-tissue massages, body wraps and hydrotherapy. Watch a panoramic sunset from its spacious terrace, venture onto its rolling vineyard trails, and otherwise enjoy the temperate weather at its outdoor swimming pools and tennis courts.

In Mexico, two attractions hold equal appeal for individuals, couples and families, drawing travelers to Riviera Maya down the coast from Cancun. Cirque du Soleil JOYÀ is an immersive experience that has mesmerized guests for nine years with jaw-dropping performances prefaced by a three-course dinner. A joint venture between Vidanta and Cirque du Soleil, it marks the only Cirque du Soleil resident show in Mexico, taking audiences on a thrilling journey that celebrates the universal power of storytelling anchored by themes of tradition and nature.

A brief drive away is the Jungala Aqua Experience. Since opening in 2019, this collection of luxury water attractions sets a new standard for waterparks with such highlights as the longest lazy river in Latin America, a wave pool with waves up to five feet high, and the Kids Rainfortress, the largest interactive play structure on Earth. Jungala, which also lures travelers with its upscale dining concepts, private cabanas, spa treatments and concierge services, was recently honored with the Leading Edge Award by the World Waterpark Association.

There's no doubt that the pandemic cast a sizable shadow over tourism in Mexico, across the region, and worldwide. With hospitality companies investing and travelers returning, however, it's also clear that bright times are forecast ahead.

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