



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



Our last stop in Mexico...

by Amaru & Suzanne, January 22th 2009

We were now at the end of our Mexican trip and Puerto Vallarta was our last stop!

When we were planning our trip we wanted to finish up somewhere on the west coast where we could stay at an All Inclusive resort (we've never done that before) and just do as little as possible before it was time to head back home.

We chose Puerto Vallarta as it had everything we were looking for, beach, sun and the possibility for AI. When we planned the trip and were searching for a place to stay we were recommended by Kate to stay at the Hacienda Hotel & Spa where she had stayed just a few months ago. It was AI and according to her and the photos we saw, also quite nice!

Booked and done, we arrived at the airport and were immediately assaulted by the timeshare people.



MEDINA A. Street...
Talk about staying at the right place =>



The pool at our hotel

It's water polo time at the moment...

They were offering free taxi rides, free meals, free this and that, if you come with them for a "little" while to their presentation. Thanks, but no thanks! We quickly took off from them, jumped into a cab and headed to the hotel.

Check-in was easy and we were soon in our room... Our first impressions of the room were a bit divided, sure we had a king size bed which is nice but there was a slight smell of dampness. We opened the window to air it out somehow and then spent the rest of the afternoon either in or by the pool.

Dinner time arrived and of course it's a buffet. We're not the biggest fans of buffet style meals but we have to agree that the food here was quite good!

The next day we walked around old town and the area around the "Malecon" which is a boardwalk next to the beach. One of the cool things with Puerto Vallarta is that there are lots of cool and funny statues everywhere. And you can even find statues on the beach, sand statues that is. They are massive and very ornate.

We started to look around for stuff to buy and bring back home, up until now we didn't want to carry anything with us so we've been waiting until we arrived here as it's known to be good for shopping.

That evening Suz was online (free WiFi again) and chatting with Kate. They started to chat about the hotel and pretty soon she realized that the hotel Kate was describing didn't sound like the one where we were staying at.



We all now realized that we had been sent to the wrong hotel, no wonder... I mean, that hotel wasn't that bad, but we just wouldn't recommend it to anyone else.

It's a bit funny though since before the recommendation we had scoped out a couple of really nice resorts to stay at... well, what can you do =)

The next morning I left Suz at the hotel to go diving, originally I hadn't planned any dives here but since I had missed out on diving Isla Mujeres (due to my condition) and also because I get bored by doing nothing I had decided that a few dives would be fun.

The dive site was called "Los Arcos" and it's the most popular one in Puerto Vallarta.

Before the dive we were told to keep our eyes open as you frequently see whales on the way to the dive site. Well, we did spot some, unfortunately they were really far away so we couldn't really enjoy them.

The dives themselves were ok... visibility no more than 4m, there was a really strong current that made it difficult to stay still in one spot but I still managed to spot different kinds of crabs, shrimp, pufferfishes, pipefishes etc. Unfortunately since the visibility was so poor there was no chance to see any Mantas. We might have had them but we just couldn't see them.

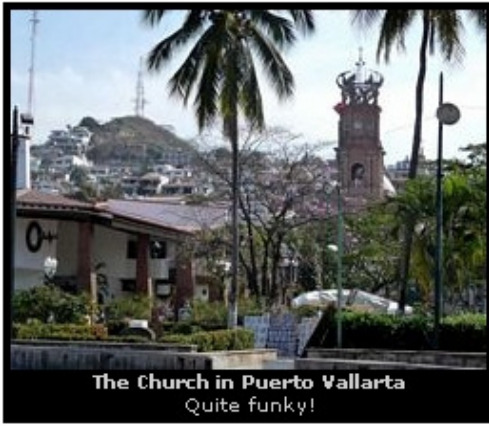
Well, our last afternoon was spent in the pool and later on shopping for a few souvenirs and gifts to take home with us.



Puerto Vallarta is not a place that we will return to, the beach is very boring, the town is WAY too touristic (which we knew it would be) and the general vibe of the place wasn't great either. Everyone is just trying to sell you something.

Besides from that, we really have enjoyed our Mexico trip. The highlight was our stay in Guadalajara and specially Tlaquepaque just because it felt very "Mexican" and not touristic. We will definitely return here if we return to Mexico in the future... Tulum would also be high on the list of places to re-visit, if nothing else just because of its wonderful Cenotes.

We now have day and a half to spend in San Francisco before it's time to head back home again to reality... who thought that five weeks would pass by so fast?



The Church in Puerto Vallarta
Quite funky!



The Beach
in Puerto Vallarta



The Malecon
The boardwalk



Some more statues
Not sure what they're representing



Suz
and a statue



Some of the backstreets
It starts going uphill quickly



Spraying the sand sculpture
They've worked quite a bit on that one



Another sand sculpture
Impressive as well



**Everybody gets to sign
their name on the wall**



**Two for one...
We should have ordered ONE beer...**



**Suz
relaxing by the pool**



**The armtag allows us drinks...
Basically an open bar!**



**Los Arcos
Famous dive site in Puerto Vallarta**



**My boat
Well, the one I went out with at least**



**I can barely see my divemaster
Visibility wasn't the best!**



**I wouldn't be handling the pufferfish
It makes them look funny though...**



The pufferfish can barely swim away
It's trying though =)



There were plenty
of sea snakes around



Pipefish
We thought it was a string first...



A tiny moray eel
A curious one



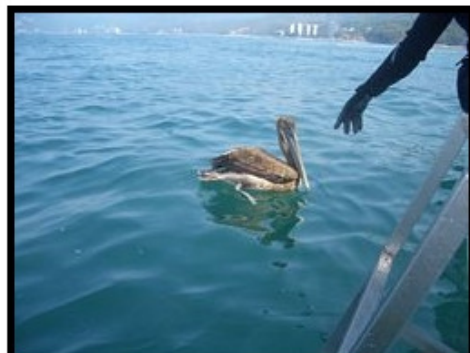
A stingray
It left in a hurry after the photo



Spidercrabs
They look quite freaky don't they?



Visibility might be crap...
but there is still lots to see!



A curious pelican
came to check us out!

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