

**A tranquil destination, but not always known for it's beaches. It's not the place to see and be seen, but they offer their own charm**



Over the last few years La Paz has improved the quality and quantity of the beaches located along the Malecon within the Ensenada de La Paz. Crews clean the beaches almost daily, fresh sand has been imported and new palapas have been constructed. Despite all the improvements and as lovely as it makes La Paz as a Sea side community, few people opt to swim at the city front beaches. Most locals and tourist choose to make the short drive, taxi or bus ride to the outlying beaches.



El Coromuel is the first beach north out of town. convenient, but still within the harbor. It has been extremely popular with the local crowd as with the new malecon improvements, it's an easy walk from downtown and Club El Moro. The water here gets much better flow with the tide change and is suitable for swimming. The bottom is also clean sand and rock further out. There is some snorkeling here as well for the younger set. El Coromuel will be out of action for he 2007 beach season for all intents.



The new and extravagant aquatic park has begun construction. API, the port authority is paying for the construction of the project which will include waters slides and enclosed swimming areas for the little ones.

Pichilingue Beach is actually located in Little or Viejo Pichilingue bahia. One beach front palapa serves food and beverages and another restaurant is located across the road with a find upstairs view. This is a small beach compared to some just up the road. A palapa bar there is pretty popular in the hot summer afternoons. I can't tell you why, but it seems to be popular with folks driving up from East Cape. Well, at least it was the couple of times I was there.



Balandra is a huge playa area but does not offer any beachside amenities. Balandra is a less busy beach where young people and families go to enjoy the day to themselves. Parking is limited compared to the available sand space. The sandbar runs completely across the bay allowing you to wade from one side to the other, and half mile away through water usually no deeper the chest high. Balandra is one of the truly remarkable beaches in the La Paz vicinity. Sheltered from wave action from nearly every direction, the water warms early and is very safe for swimmers. The only down side is the

occasional stingray and the 12 mile drive from downtown. The famous Diamond Rock of La Paz is located in Balandra. The continued existence of Balandra may be in question as developers threaten to change bay for commercial development. It is a hotly debated issue in La Paz right now, as to legislatively block the development of the bay.

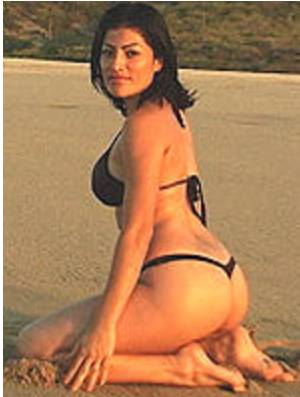
Tecolote is the largest and most popular La Paz Beach by far. Two restaurant/bars offer shade palapas and a large number of beach vendors offer refreshments. RV camping is available along with a wide variety of water sports rentals. You can even take a panaga ride to Espiritu Santo.



El Mogoté is the spit of land that separates the harbor of La Paz from the Bahía of La Paz. This natural treasure used to be accessible only with 4WD for the most part. Now driving out onto the peninsula is restricted due to the construction projects that have begun. Large areas of mangrove have been removed to make way for golf courses, homes and hotels.



One of the most unique beach experiences in the La Paz area requires a short panga ride to Isla Espiritu Santo.



You can only get to the island by boat, about 3 miles across the San Lorenzo Channel's closest point. Your panga driver can take you to miles of clean white sand playas frequented only by the limited number of people ferried to the island and an occasional pelican. Panga transportation is available from Tecolote Beach and from downtown La Paz. You will find the best value by far to be from the beach, as it will save you over 1 hr of boat time.

The Cortez Club in La Paz offers excursions from the major hotels in the area to the islands or dive trips to Los Islotes at the north end of the Partita/Espiritu Santos island group.

So if you visit downtown La Paz we recommend you roll your towel, don't forget the lotion, and explore some of the fine beaches just outside of town.

### ***Closest to La Paz, the beach is called "absurdly beautiful"***

Experts at the British publication The Travel Magazine spent one whole year traveling more than 26,800 miles and visiting over 1,000 beaches in all 6 continents on a quest to find the twelve Best Beaches in the World, one for each month. The impressive list, including Pink Beach in Antigua and Whitehaven beach in Australia, recognizes just one beach in Mexico... Enseñada Grande on Isla Espiritu Santo, Sea of Cortez, Baja California.

Co-author of the article and Deputy Features Editor of The Travel Magazine, Nick Havens writes, "To get up close and personal with nature, base yourself in La Paz. All the islands are UNESCO protected as World Heritage Biospheres. Uninhabited Espiritu Santo, absurdly beautiful, is the jewel in the crown: the sea is so turquoise it's like swimming in a bottle of Curaçao. Once ashore you'll find wedding-cake white sands, nail-varnish pink volcanic rocks, clouds of yellow butterflies and strange 300-year old boojum trees. At Los Islotes, you can snorkel with friendly sea-lions. There are many migratory species such as humpback whales, manta rays and leatherback turtles."

The islands can be easily accessed from the CostaBaja Resort and Marina, ten minutes from the charming authentic Mexican town of La Paz. The Resort features a new state-of-the-art marina with 250 slips that accommodate up to 200-foot yachts and hosts several businesses in the lovely village surrounding the marina that offer trips to the islands for the day, a week or more.



### ***Insider Notebook: The Sun Ain't Your Friend...***

So many people who visit the Baja bring their "Sun Worship" North American mentality with them. It is far better to leave your previous attitudes about the sun in the hotel room and bring things like hats, umbrellas and plenty of water and suntan lotion. We recommend at least an SPF rating of 24.

The summer solstice (21-22 June) puts the sun directly overhead the tropic of Cancer which practically bi-sects the southern Baja. With very little water vapor in the air to diffuse the sun's rays you will find the Baja Sun even hotter and more damaging than even that of the Caribbean. In addition you have the sun's heat. I've noticed on the hottest days of August you see the locals dart from one shade area to the next, as if they were dodging raindrops.

A few years ago I heard a radio program where the DJ's from LA and Miami had exchanged locations for a week. The LA DJ quipped, "The LA sun says: Come on out and play, it's a wonderful day!" in Miami the sun says: "Com-mon out, I dare ya!" The summer Baja sun doesn't say a word, it just glares down at you with a steely grin, hoping you know better!

