

A large marlin is captured in mid-leap, its long, pointed snout and dorsal fin cutting through the blue ocean water. The fish is angled towards the left, with its tail and lower fins still submerged, creating a splash. The background is a vast expanse of blue sea under a clear sky.

2020

Travel Planner

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or decades, the mere mention of Baja – and destinations beyond – has been enough to inspire fantasies in anglers who dream of fishing in warm salt water as well as in those with memories of past trips. Although fishing is at the core of their expectations, Baja offers so much more and it just keeps getting better.

There is no other destination in the world that rivals the Baja Peninsula's diversity. There is the beauty of the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Sea of Cortez on the other. Mountains that offer opportunities for all sports imaginable. Fishing, diving, snorkeling, and miles and miles of beach on the placid gulf side, or fishing and kayaking on the surf side. Simple open-air camping and unprecedented luxury hotel stays can be enjoyed all in one visit. There are around 1,000 species of fish to be found in the waters surrounding the peninsula.

Join our staff as we call attention to some of our old favorites and new discoveries.

Below the

By Gary Graham

Border



Entrance to Marina Puerto Escondido.

ENSENADA

Ensenada is a port city about two hours' drive below the U.S. border on the Pacific Coast of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula. At its heart is the harbor and waterfront area with its *malecón* or promenade. Once a casino, the Riviera de Ensenada is now a cultural center. The nearby Museum of History and the Regional Historical Museum trace the area's people and past. Migrating gray whales visit the waters offshore. Southwest of the city is the La Bufadora blowhole.

Hotel Coral & Marina

Hotel Coral & Marina invites visitors to discover a getaway unlike any other in Ensenada, with warm, friendly service and five-star amenities amid tranquil oceanfront surroundings. They offer a relaxing destination among hotels in Ensenada; all you need in one place.

Allow their concierge to arrange a day of wine tasting in the Guadalupe Valley. Immerse yourself in the flavors of Mexico on a culinary journey in the restaurant, or relax and sip delicious tropical cocktails at the Marina Grill Bar as the sun sets over the marina and ocean.

Hotel Coral & Marina is home to the premier marina in Ensenada, a world-class facility boasting 353 slips with access to the hotel's five-star amenities and services.

800-862-9020 www.hotelcoral.com
marina@hotelcoral.com

SAN QUINTÍN

San Quintín is on the West Coast of Baja, some 190 kilometers south of Ensenada on Highway 1. The town is also in the middle of an important agricultural area, celebrated for growing some of the finest strawberries and tomatoes.

In summer and early fall, the economy of the San Quintín bottom-fishing paradise is supplemented by runs of yellowfin and bluefin tuna, along with dorado that bunch up in the warm currents just outside the cool upwelling zone during their northward migrations.

Bahia de San Quintín Old Mill Hotel

The hotel was founded in 1920 with the restaurant opening in 2016. Guests at the Old Mill Hotel San Quintín are astounded to find comfortable, pleasant accommodations and excellent dining, as well as first-class service in somewhat of an unlikely setting.

hoteloldmill.com/
 011-52-616-165-6030
Oldmillbaja@gmail.com

K&M Sportfishing

K&M Sportfishing's Capt. Kelly has been running boats in San Quintín for more than 30 years, while Oscar, George and Christian started on pangas when they were 15 years old. K&M Sportfishing features seaworthy Parker Boats made in North Carolina. Their 2520 Pilothouse features a 9 1/2-foot beam with ample open deck space to fight offshore fish while aboard a very stable platform. Fish live bait on offshore kelp paddies for yellowfin and bluefin tuna, dorado, yellowtail and even marlin and swordfish. Or fish inshore for yellowtail, seabass, lingcod, rockfish, barracuda, halibut or calico.

Call or text for fish and weather reports or booking:
 Capt. Kelly Catian 011-521-616-109-1869
 Capt. George Catian: 011-521-616-113-3304
capitanm2@yahoo.com.mx
[@bajafishingfamily](https://www.instagram.com/bajafishingfamily) on Instagram

BAJA SUR

Black Bass Lodge

Remote, private and completely off the grid, the Black Bass Lodge is a destination unto itself. It is located just steps from the beach in Punta Abreojos, where the surrounding reefs are abundant with heavy seabass-type fish.

Recently opened to the public, this fishing, surfing and eating adventure lodge features four beachfront rooms, private chef and daily cleaning service.

Drive up and rent a room or bring a group and book the entire lodge (sleeps 15). Meals included with your stay.

Find rates, photos and details at www.TheBlackBassLodge.com
BlackBassLodge@gmail.com
 619-981-4582

Cedros Island

Cedros Outdoor Adventures (COA) offers fishing tours to Cedros Island and whale-watching tours to San Ignacio Lagoon. Their Premium Guide Service (PGS) packages include transportation in a private plane, either from Brown Field Airport in San Diego County or via Cross Border Express (CBX) with flights from Tijuana.

In only two to three hours, anglers will be at Cedros Island fishing and enjoying what many agree is the best sportfishing operation on the island. With a fleet of up to nine pan-

gas, there are now options of fishing single, double or triple anglers. The recently increased capacity includes your choice of all ocean-front lodge rooms or private cabins. Other services include hot breakfasts, lunches to go, four-course dinners, on-site owner, satellite Internet, a new larger panga – with cabin and free use of Seeker rods. PGS also includes additional fish cleaning and vacuum sealing of your filets.

Whale watching guests will arrive by plane to San Ignacio Lagoon in about three hours for one of the best eco-tour experiences to be found anywhere and the chance to interact with friendly gray whales in the wild. Packages include all transportation, food and drinks, lodging, daily boat outings to see the whales and optional side trips to San Ignacio town, cave paintings, kayaking and bird watching.

COA has been one of the top outfitters in Baja for over a decade, with a stellar reputation; many clients return each year.

To learn more, visit saignaciowhalewatching.com/ or www.cedros-outdooradventures.com
 619-793-5419

La Bocana

La Bocana offers inshore, offshore and estuary fishing. Fish in the area are grouper, calico bass, spotted bay bass, sand bass, halibut, snook, triggerfish, yellowtail, sheepshead, white sea bass, black sea bass, tuna, wahoo, dorado, marlin, sailfish, rock cod, lingcod, whitefish and sierra. At La Bocana, the possibilities are endless!

Accommodations at La Bocana are the best within a 100-mile radius with beachfront cabins only steps to the water, comfortable beds, private bathrooms with hot water, ceiling fans and satellite dish TV.

There are cabanas on the beach and because of its east/west orientation, one of the most remarkable wonders is the ability to watch the sun rise and set on the ocean.

619-483-7315 • www.bajafishingconvoys.com/la-bocana-abreojos.html

LORETO

Loreto is the oldest city on Mexico's Baja Peninsula. Here, its colonial buildings include the Misión de Nuestra Señora de Loreto, a 17th-century church and its historic missions still await the prayerful in the shadows of the Sierra de la Giganta mountain range where trails lead to prehistoric cave paintings.

Fishing boats dot the intense blue of the Sea of Cortez and off the coast, the islands and waters of Bahía de Loreto National Park. These waters are home to porpoise, whales and pelicans and offer excellent fishing, both nearshore or offshore, or fishing the reefs for an impressive array of sportfishing – sailfish, striped, blue and black marlin, dorado, yellowfin tuna, roosterfish, yellowtail on conventional, spinning and fly tackle.

La Misión Hotel

La Misión Loreto Hotel in Baja Sur welcomes those who are looking for a meaningful travel experience. It is a stunning, elegant resort with a contemporary European-Mexican Hacienda style evocative of the Old Mission flavor of Baja Mexico.

Although new, it envelopes a rich tapestry of Old Mission traditions, authentic lifestyles and a wealth of Mexican culture. La Misión is just a 2 1/2-hour flight from Los Angeles, but an eternity from the noise, crowds and stress of "the other Mexico."

877-53LAMISION
www.lamisionloreto.com/info@lamisionloreto.com

Marina Puerto Escondido

A natural basin with only a small opening to the sea, Marina Puerto Escondido is up against the nearly mile-high rock wall of the Sierra de la Giganta. It can accommodate megayachts to over 200 feet, with power pedestals fitted with 50 amps, 100 amps, single or three-phase service with 480V outlets available for larger boats.

The marina also has a fuel station for vehicles and boats with both gasoline and diesel, free pump-out at the fuel dock and amenities such as concierge services, a rooftop pool, a supermarket and a pizza restaurant with more being added in 2020.

011-52-613-131-8097

Javier Fuerte, Harbor master

harbormaster@marinapuertoesccondido.com
www.marinapuertoesccondido.com/index.php

Hotel Tripui

Hotel Tripui is a secluded, romantic and cozy facility embraced by the tranquility of the Sea of Cortez and the majestic Sierra de la Giganta. Located in Puerto Escondido, 27 kilometers south of the city and the "Magic Town of Loreto," and 15 kilometers south of Loreto International Airport (LTO).

Set just off Highway 1, this chic hotel is surrounded by both desert and the Sierra La Giganta Mountains and is 1.2 kilometers from the Sea of Cortez.

A refuge for admirers of nature with a boutique hotel atmosphere, it offers a pool surrounded by colorful trees that distinguishes it from other hotels in Loreto. Generous in its service to all guests, the hotel simplifies adventures and

outdoor activities, sport fishing, kayaking, hiking, visits to the Loreto Islands and whale watching trips, among many other activities from the Tripui Hotel.

011-52-612-175-0860 • www.tripuihotel.com.mx/

LA PAZ

La Paz, capital of Baja California Sur, with over 481 years of history, is rich with culture and diversity. The people of La Paz ("Paceños") set the city apart from many others. Helpful, caring, friendly folks are quick to smile and define what La Paz is all about.

It is undoubtedly a place that offers top-quality services without losing the charm of a small city, safe and welcoming but cosmopolitan at the same time – it is a city that covers all your needs. It's an ideal place to enjoy beaches, landscapes, water activities, adventures and promenades, thanks to its tranquility and features that make it a hideaway from the hustle and bustle.

The Sea of Cortez extends along the Gulf of California from the Colorado River to Los Cabos. Stunning, breathtaking and pristine are all words that describe the natural beauty created by geographic contrasts and the extensive biodiversity that made Jacques Cousteau refer to this true sanctuary as "The Natural Aquarium of the World."

La Paz, or the "City of Peace," has a quiet energy that emanates from the sea, mountains and natural vibrations that leave you feeling rejuvenated and in harmony with the universe. Venture out into this historical city with its boardwalk or promenade lined with bronze sculptures.

Here you can enjoy activities such as sportfishing, gray whale sightings, swimming with whale sharks, or diving and snorkeling at Espíritu Santo Island. You can also take a quiet walk visiting the Todos – Santos – "Magical Town" – and its surroundings.

CostaBaja Resort

The CostaBaja Resort and Spa is the first and only luxury resort and spa in La Paz. This boutique resort offers a selection of ocean, mountain and marina views. Located north of the resort, Espíritu Santo Island is where you will find the most magnificent marine life in the world and the best sport fishing within Baja Sur.

Witness an unmatched marriage of elements distinctive to this part of the world, where the desert meets the sea. Discover how elegance, refinement, hospitality and privacy combine with the charisma of La Paz to create a place you will want to experience again and again.

Standing alone, facing the majestic Sea of Cortez, CostaBaja offers an exceptional blend of beauty and peace.

Marina CostaBaja is considered a state-of-the-art marina in Mexico and beyond with a protected location, a superior design and a foundation created with concrete docks. Marina CostaBaja's double-basin design offers controlled access to 250 prime slips for vessels ranging from 30 to 225 feet. Each provides every conceivable convenience: potable desalinated water, secure dock boxes, high-speed Internet and pump-out access. Additional amenities include the largest fuel dock in the area, crew lounge, laundry service,

marine supply store, 24-hour security and a staff dedicated to helping in any way possible.

It's also home to the first Gary Player Signature Design Golf Course in Mexico, a world-class golf course with water views from 14 of the 18 holes. With multiple tee boxes, this course challenges experienced golfers and allows novices to enjoy their rounds.

011-52-612-123-6000

877-392-5525

www.costabajaresort.com/

Tailhunter International

Tailhunter International Sportfishing was founded in 1996 by angling expert Jonathan Roldan, who along with his wife/fishing buddy, Jilly, still oversees all operations.

Tailhunter Sportfishing is a full-service outfitter and guide service in La Paz. Since 1998, they are the only operators running two full-time sportfishing fleets, giving anglers the option for the best fish and best conditions during a Baja fishing vacation. The Tailhunter La Paz Fleet fishes north, around the fertile Espíritu San-



to Island. The Tailhunter Las Arenas Fleet at Bahia Muertos/Sueños fishes the legendary area around Cerralvo Island.

626-638-3383 • www.tailhunter-international.com/

EAST CAPE

Los Barriles (population 1,174) is along Highway 1, 40 miles north of San José del Cabo and 65 miles south of La Paz. Considered Baja's most exquisite vacation and big game fishing spot, on the edge of the Sea of Cortez, it is not overdeveloped or crowded and it still offers the unequaled sportfishing that drew early pioneers to the area. It is known not only for its sportfishing but also as Baja's windsurfing capital.





The Van Wormer Resorts

The Van Wormer Resorts is recognized as a premier big-game fishing destination, consistently produce winning numbers of blue and striped marlin, sailfish, dorado, wahoo, yellowfin tuna, roosterfish and more. The resorts are acknowledged as having the largest sportfishing fleet in Mexico. A private dock in front of each of their three hotels provides a quick and convenient way to board their vessels.

Hotels Palmas de Cortez, Playa del Sol and Villas de Cortez span the white sand beachfront of the town of Los Barriles. It offers full amenities for anglers and non-angler family members alike. The infinity edge pool and resort-style swim-up bar overlooking the sparkling Sea of Cortez is one of a kind at East Cape.

Not only will guests find fishing, diving, kayaking, golfing, horseback riding or just relaxing poolside in the sunshine, but their on-site wedding planner specializes in making wedding dreams come true. Van Wormer Resorts is one of the best vacation destinations East Cape has to offer.

877-777-8862 • www.vanwormerresorts.com/

Martin Verdugo's

Regardless of the manner of travel – air, road or water – most Baja visitors seek similar perks when they arrive. They want to find a spot overlooking the water with easy access to the Sea of Cortez, good fishing, comfortable accommodations, camping, RV facilities, boat launching and storage, plus a variety of stores, restaurants nearby and of course, Internet access. Finally, it must have easy access and it cannot be in any of the larger tourist centers, e.g., Los Cabos or La Paz. It almost seems like an impossible list of requirements.

Family-operated Martin Verdugo's – on the beach in Los Barriles in the heart of East Cape, overlooking the expansive Sea of Cortez – will satisfy all the above. It has air-conditioned rooms – some have refrigerators and

kitchenettes – pool, palapa bar and a small restaurant, a small RV park and even some tent camping spots. Here is a family-run operation that is eager to pay attention to what you want for your vacation.

011-52-624-1-4100-54

888-567-8552 • 949-226-7169

www.verdugobeachresort.com/

Hotel Buenavista Beach Resort

Along the white sand beaches that border the Sea of Cortez, Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort earns its name as the “Jewel of East Cape.” This family-run hotel, in the heart of the East Cape region of Los Cabos, sits over an underground river of natural hot springs that flow into the azure-blue sea. The mineral-rich water creates lush tropical landscaping of palm trees and exotic flowers and provides the perfect elements for a relaxing, quiet getaway or an adventurous vacation, offering world-class, big game saltwater fishing, diving and snorkeling among other great adventures.

The resort honors the tradition of sport-fishing that put the East Cape on the map in the 1950s by offering the best services available in the Sea of Cortez. From traditional super pangas to deluxe 31-foot Albemarle and Blackman boats, they boast the largest twin-engine cruiser fleet at East Cape. They are equally proud of their safety record. There is little doubt that's the reason the highest rated fishing programs are frequent visitors to their location. Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort has hosted the prestigious Bisbee's East Cape Offshore Tournament for the past two decades and has been selected for the 21st annual event in 2020.

Running the hotel, the second Valdez generation, Esaul, Axel and Felipe, embrace the same philosophy as their late father, Chuy Valdez: “You come as a guest, you are treated like a friend and you leave as a part of our family.”

800-752-3555 • 619-632-4135

www.hotelbuenavista.com/

Rancho Leonero

Rancho Leonero features 34 rooms on almost 2 miles of private, pristine beachfront with warm, clear waters. This secluded retreat offers the “true Baja” experience. Enjoy spectacular sunsets and views from your private patio. Their spacious hacienda-style accommodations feature native flagstone and palapa-roofed cottages. Savor delicious cuisine while overlooking the Sea of Cortez

from a casual oceanfront dining room. Relax by the pool, which sits directly off the legendary oceanfront bar, known for its margaritas, cold cervezas and its eclectic mix of travelers.

Rancho Leonero is in the middle of Baja Sur's angling action. Catch of the day may include trophy varieties such as striped marlin, sailfish, dorado, huge yellowfin tuna, wahoo, grouper, snapper, roosterfish and dozens of other marine species.

Located in the East Cape region of Southern Baja, cradled by the Sea of Cortez and the Laguna Mountains, Rancho Leonero is a sporting and vacation getaway in one of the world's last great

natural frontiers. It is also home to some of the best sport fishing in the world.

800-646-2252 • 760-438-2905

info@rancholeonero.com • www.rancholeonero.com/

Four Seasons Resort and Residences Los Cabos at Costa Palmas

Four Seasons Resort and Residences, Los Cabos at Costa Palmas will open in fall 2019 on two miles of calm, swimmable beach in a thousand-acre resort community on the Sea of Cortez. When guests call Costa Palmas home, they'll enjoy organic orchards and farms, a 250-slip marina and Robert Trent Jones II golf. A beach





numerous bars. Past the marina is Land's End promontory, site of Playa del Amor (Lover's Beach) and El Arco, a natural archway in the sea cliffs.

COSTA RICA *Crocodile Bay Resort*

No doubt, Crocodile Bay Resort is "Where the World Comes to Fish." Anglers of all ages and skill levels have made the pilgrimage to Crocodile Bay to challenge the waters before them. Once you come, you'll understand why no other destination in the world can compare and why you must return.

Blue, black and striped marlin congregate here throughout the year. Sailfish raises are often in the double digits. Yellow-fin tuna up to 300 pounds inhabit the offshore waters year-round. Roosterfish are prolific and can often tip the scale at more than 50 pounds. Snapper come in more than a dozen varieties with the cubera being top dog. Dorado average 20 to 40 pounds and, at times, are as large as 60 pounds.

At Crocodile Bay Resort, rugged individualism and extreme self-reliance are honored and celebrated. Whether you're an angler or an eco-adventurer – or a little bit of both – days will be filled with pursuits that demand the notion of carpe diem. Guests may come for the fishing but stay for the opportunity to stand with Mother Nature and share in all the virtues of this locale: 30 land and water eco-adventures. Four distinct fishing experiences: offshore, inshore, shore and kayak. The Spa, a nurturing oasis with over 30 customizable therapi-

and yacht club that will offer the joy of belonging and the promise of adventure in the untamed nature of the East Cape is available with pre-opening pricing on luxury homes. 800-917-9115

www.costapalmas.com • info@costapalmas.com

LOS CABOS

Cabo San Lucas

Cabo San Lucas, a resort city on the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula, is known for its beaches, water-based activities and nightlife. Playa el Médano is Cabo's main beach, with outdoor restaurants and

esInviting pool, swim-up bar and elevated hot tubJust-caught, fresh, ocean to table dining28 comfortable, air-conditioned accommodations-Friendly and dependable service

www.crocodilebay.com • 855-945-4171

PANAMA *Tropic Star Lodge*

Fishing the legendary waters off Piñas Bay, Panama is an adventure of a lifetime for anglers. Tropic Star Lodge has provided the ultimate in offshore and inshore fishing adventures to guests for the past 55-plus years. Tropic Star Lodge is cut out of the side of a mountain at the edge of the Darien Jungle on the Pacific Coast of Panama. The lodge is 150 miles south of Panama City. It can only be reached by boat or plane since there are no roads within a hundred miles. A charter plane lands on an airstrip in Piñas Bay. You then take a 10-minute boat ride to the legendary lodge.

The Pacific waters are famed for holding a variety of fish including black marlin, blue marlin and sailfish along with monster tuna, dorado, roosterfish and cubera snapper attracting anglers from all over the world.

At the lodge, 41 guests are catered to by 100 staff members; there is a freshwater swimming pool and

bar, and the lodge hosts the guests in 23 spacious, air-conditioned rooms or villas with private baths. Each room has an ocean or tropical garden view; the expansive bay, along with native plants, birds and flowers, make these accommodations favorites of guests who return year after year requesting a special slice of heaven.

www.tropicstar.com/ • 800-682-3424 

