

¡Hola, Cabo!

The Expert Traveler makes a run for the border to beautiful Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.



In my travels, I have found vacation locales that were purposely developed are often inferior to those that simply grew up because of the unique beauty or experiences they offer travelers. But Cabo San Lucas is the exception to the rule. On the contrary, the Mexican government's careful planning and heavy investment has made it one of the most pleasant tropical resort areas in the world. I recently returned on the latest of several trips to Los Cabos ("the capes" – which includes exciting Cabos San Lucas and her quieter cousin, San Jose del Cabo) and quickly remembered why I love to visit this beautiful corner of the world.



Located at the tip of the Baja Peninsula, what first strikes visitors about Cabo San Lucas is the stunning contrast of verdant golf courses and stark desert. And of course, golf is one of the things to do while visiting.

Cabo takes golf in Mexico to the next level. The courses, situated on the desert mountains and valleys, create unique and varied holes. With the sea as a backdrop, you'll experience pelicans diving into the course lakes while you try to clear sand, rocky shores and water – don't be

short! Greens fees are slightly on the expensive side – starting at \$200 – but certainly worth the investment.



Gig's Fish Tale

On my latest trip to Cabo San Lucas, I was invited out on a deep sea fishing trip. We reveled in a beautiful sunrise as our

captain piloted us to a spot he was certain would "net" us all the fish we could handle. The view itself was worth the trip. Appreciating the serenity of the water, I relaxed and observed the picturesque scene of dark mountains appearing to rise right out of the blue sea. Glimpses of the occasional seaside resort offered additional splashes of other bright colors. The only thing that interrupted the lovely setting was a sudden tug on my line. The mate and captain skillfully helped me try to haul in whatever was pulling furiously at my line. At one point, I said to the mate, "This is hard work – what do I have? A whale?" He laughed and informed me that what I caught was a marlin. Half an hour later, with my arm ready to fall off, he proved right as I hauled in a vigorous 7-foot striped marlin. We released it and I only had minute to catch my breath before my next catch – a 7-foot sailfish – which we also released. Only the two dorados (which the mate informed me with smile, would be someone's dinner,) were kept.

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(Tip: Golf Destinations, 800/335-3534, www.golfdestinationsonline.com offers excellent golf packages for two of Los Cabos' most exclusive resorts.)

The other must-do adventure on any visit to Cabo is deep-sea fishing. The rich waters off the coast of Los Cabos thrive with numerous fish. Fishing in Cabo is different from other locations because the perfect

weather – year-round temperatures of 85 degrees during the day and nighttime lows of 60 – makes it a twelve-months-a-year activity. There are a number of fishing craft available for charter for almost any size group.

After a day of golf or fishing you'll be ready for dinner and later, dancing. With a variety of excellent restaurants and exciting nightclubs, there's something to suit every



Even a trip as perfect as a visit to Cabo San Lucas can be ruined if you don't know what to watch out for. Follow these few tips to make your Cabo adventure as perfect as the weather.

- **Timeshare Trouble** – Unless the purpose of your trip is to purchase a timeshare, you should avoid any offers of “free” information, meals or discounted activities that are so enticing to bargain-lovers, like myself. More likely than not, these “freebies” come attached to long and aggressive timeshare sales pitches.
- **Pre-Paid Prepared** – Phone charges from Mexico to the U.S. can be astronomical. If your cell phone provider doesn't cover you, having a pre-paid phone card will save you phone charges that can exceed \$15 per minute.
- **Insurance Insight** – If you rent a car, ALWAYS get full insurance. Driving in Mexico can be an adventure in itself. Full insurance will protect you from unplanned charges when it's time to return your vehicle.
- **Shopping Savvy** – Take time to browse and look around the whole town before spending a lot of money shopping. You'll almost always find the best deals in the secluded and “flea market” areas.

taste. I recommend heading to San Jose del Cabo to eat. Of the two towns, San Jose del Cabo is quieter and maintains a more distinctly Mexican flavor. (In many ways Cabo San Lucas remains true to its Mexican heritage, but as the main tourist destination, it has adopted an American feel.)

So what should you order? You may find this funny, but my favorite dish – morning or night – is *juevos rancheros*. You can find this traditional Mexican dish served a variety of ways but always with the basics of eggs, salsa, cheese and chiles over a warm tortilla. Delicious! Here's a hint: in the morning, order sides of fruit and orange juice. At dinner, a margarita!

To work off your meal, dance the night away at one (or several,) of Cabo San Lucas' many nightclubs. Contrary to what some Spring Break reports might have you believe, there are some very nice, upscale nightspots to be enjoyed. Another hint: a family man myself, I rate every place I visit on my own “family friendly” scale. For a trip to Cabo San Lucas, I recommend sending the kids to their grandparents. If you're determined to take them along, you will certainly find plenty to do, but Cabo truly lends itself to a relaxing adult vacation.

Enjoy your trip!

– Gig ▶