



CostaBaja

Gateway to the
Sea of Cortez
by Michel Johnston

WELCOME TO BAJA'S BEST KEPT SECRET

For years, Baja was the antithesis of Southern California, an antidote to the ubiquitous hum of civilization, where millions and millions of people lived on the hamster wheel of traffic jams and business appointments and grade-school soccer matches. Baja was a quieter place, peaceful, slow and, to many, idyllic. Dawn would find Mexican fishermen in quiet coves repairing their nets, and at night, Baja was quiet enough to hear a sea turtle digging a hole in the coarse sand to lay her eggs.

The CostaBaja Resort & Marina sits just outside La Paz, the most diverse city in all of Baja.

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The CostaBaja Resort & Marina offers a world class concierge service to customize any trip to La Paz and the Sea of Cortez. Make arrangement to stay at CostaBaja, then give them your personal wish list. It's that easy!

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But Baja is changing. You'd be challenged to find a personal jet that hasn't come and gone from Cabo San Lucas, darling destination de rigueur for the jet set. Cruise ships now bring tourists to a long list of Baja coastal towns, multinational companies – like Austrian energy drink maker Red Bull – sponsors riders in the Baja 1000, and Donald Trump is selling condominiums. One city in Baja, however, has remained strangely resistant to this tsunami of international attention. La Paz.

"This is a place where you can hear yourself breathe," says Manuel Arango, as he walks the beaches of his new CostaBaja Resort & Marina in La Paz. "The beauty and depth of its personality is astounding."

His ideas to create CostaBaja came from a desire to enhance a part of Baja, not change it. La Paz – not generally regarded as a tourist town – remains southern Baja's bellwether for stability and tradition. It is the center of commerce for the bottom half of this Mexican peninsula, offering all

the amenities anyone could expect from a city, not a town. Stroll the Malecón along the harbor, and all of your senses are immediately put on alert. Mariachi music floats your way from the nearby town square.... Sea gulls squawk at a returning fishing boat.... Street vendors sell handmade tamales and Mexican pastries.... Kids are kicking a soccer

ball. Around the corner, you're suddenly engulfed by the smell of rich French sauces being prepared by a Parisian expat whose seafood restaurant is a popular alternative to indigenous fare. At first blush, La Paz might not seem like the kind of a place where a world-class development would take root. But the developers of CostaBaja are not typical, either.

LA FACTOID

La Paz (Spanish for 'Peace') was first inhabited by Neolithic hunter-gatherers at least 10,000 years ago who left traces of their existence in the form of rock paintings near the city and throughout the Baja peninsula.

From the beginning, CostaBaja offered up a level of environmental integrity that raised the bar. Plans were drawn and refined to absolutely minimize the development's "footprint" on the comparatively untouched landscape of La Paz, and a full-time employee was assigned the task of monitoring the CostaBaja's commitment to being green. A state of the art desalinization plant was constructed to minimize the resort's effects on the deep Baja aquifer, and a system to recycle the development's gray water followed immediately thereafter. The results have been significant enough to attract the attention of resort developers from around the world.

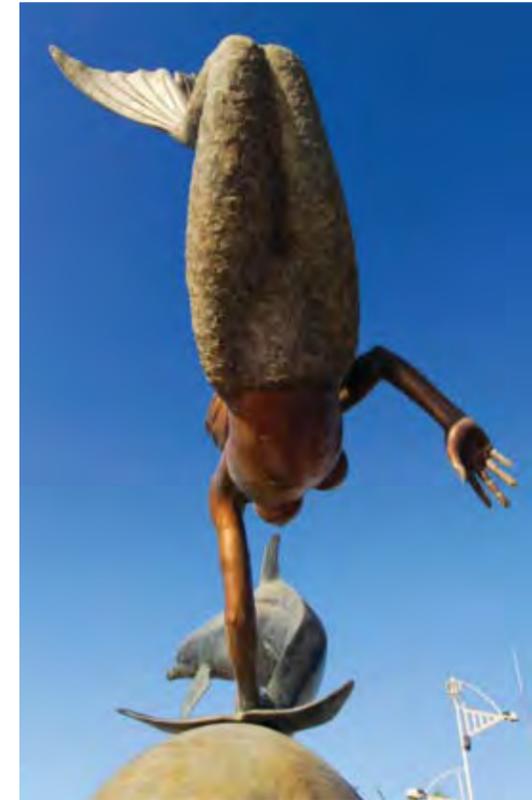
The birth of CostaBaja turned heads from the beginning. Because La Paz is the gateway to the Sea of Cortez, two marinas initiated the development. In no time, the slips were filled with the potpourri of vessels which crisscross the area. For those who found themselves yacht-free, CostaBaja brought in the largest yacht-chartering company in the world, The Moorings. Landlubbers can easily charter a boat and crew, or just a boat for anyone with enough experience at the wheel.

Not surprisingly, the first phases of homes in CostaBaja – the Beach Villas, the Beach Condos and the Marina Village Condos – immediately sold out. Hugging the hillsides are the newest and most notable homes in the next phase of the development, the Las Colinas hillside homes, plus the VistaMar waterfront residences, casitas and penthouses. All share the landscape with the new Gary Player golf course that's woven into the community design. For visitors who have not yet purchased a home in the CostaBaja development, a luxury hotel with all the expected amenities sits beachside of the marina and a second hotel is in the planning stages.

CostaBaja provides a complimentary shuttle into the town of La Paz, but residents are selective about leaving the idyllic little community. Six restaurants operate within the bounds of CostaBaja, and more are planned. People from La Paz actually come to eat at CostaBaja instead of the other way around. For example, the seafood offered at the popular Azul Marino eatery is prepared by a chef trained at the Culinary Institute of New York and other restaurants at CostaBaja boast similar culinary acumen.



CostaBaja is not only offers luxury accommodations for both people and boats, the resort offers complimentary shuttle service to visit La Paz.



Many of the islands off of La Paz have been designated as World Heritage Fund sites by UNESCO.

La Paz is a rich blend of both sea and shore. Abundant sea life mixes with an increasingly upscale culture in the city.

To their credit, the developers' deference to the land and sea is spread throughout the resort: A series of well-groomed foot trails that meander through the homes from hilltop to seashore. Each day at CostaBaja can include a jog or a walk into a panoramic tapestry of birds and mountains and, of course, the Sea of Cortez.

And that's important because much of the magia for CostaBaja comes directly from the Sea of Cortez. Hundreds of islands are World Heritage Fund sites, so designated by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Many of the

islands are uninhabited and invite exploration, solitude or adventure. In the summer months, the water temperature in the white sandy coves of nearby Isla Espiritu Santo can reach the high 80s. Jacques Cousteau referred to the Sea of Cortez as the "world's aquarium" and the "Galapagos of North America."

The Sea of Cortez boasts more than 800 species of marine vertebrates. These include countless vibrantly-colored varieties of tropical fish and indigenous birds, such as: marine terns; blue, gray and white herons; pelicans; ospreys; and many others. Also included are

mammals such as elephant seals, sea lions and porpoises – including the California Gulf porpoise, or vaquita marina, the rarest of sea mammals that are only found in this region.

These tropical waters are also home to countless schools of dolphins and pods of more than a dozen varieties of whales, including the Blue Whale – the largest animal on Earth. Numerous "sea mounts," mountain peaks that rise up from the ocean floor and stop just short of the surface, attract scuba divers and snorkelers from around the world. The most famous of the sea mounts, El Bajo,

often provides divers a glimpse of schooling hammerheads, manta rays and the occasional baleen-feeding whale shark.

Fishing the Sea of Cortez is legendary worldwide. Schools of yellow tail, dorado, sailfish, marlin and many more species draw an equivalent bounty of pescadores year round. Numerous fishing tournaments call La Paz home.

Flying into La Paz's General De Leon Airport (LAP) is practically effortless. The tower-controlled airport is an official Mexican airport of entry for aircraft that have the range

to go direct, and both Jet A and 100LL are in abundant supply. Numerous commercial air carriers service La Paz as well. No matter how you arrive, CostaBaja is happy to greet you and drive you to the resort.

The uniqueness of the Baja peninsula is no longer unnoticed. Within the last few years, CNN and The New York Times have both called La Paz the best place in the world to retire. Whether you're ready to slow down for good or just take a week-long break, CostaBaja offers a remarkable chance to taste the best of Baja. They're happy to arrange sightseeing,

fishing, scuba diving, anything to make your trip a highpoint.

But no one would argue that the real destination is the Sea of Cortez. After dark, you can hardly imagine yourself as anything more than a speck under a bright canopy of stars which stretch from horizon to horizon, and after the sun rises, there is an unavoidable kinship with the sea. When Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck explored the Sea of Cortez in the early 1940's, he described his awe over being 'no longer set apart or alone' from the world around him. His experience in

DA Google4more

- Piche Lingua
- Sea of Cortez: A Leisurely Journal of Travel and Research
- Shipwreck of the Salvatierra
- Islas Los Islotes

DA FACTOID

During the summer the cooling Coromuel winds, a weather phenomenon unique to the La Paz area, blow during the night from the Pacific over the Peninsula and into the Bay of La Paz.

ARRIVE IN STYLE

If you owned a **PiperJet**, you and another couple could fly nonstop from the United States to La Paz, and still carry lots of luggage. The PiperJet is scheduled for its maiden flight in early July and is expected to make a public appearance at AirVenture a few weeks later. Deliveries begin in 2011.

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LA PAZ

the Sea of Cortez so moved him that he wrote ‘with astonishment the knowledge that all things are one thing and that one thing is all things – plankton, a shimmering phosphorescence on the sea and the spinning planets and an expanding universe, all bound together by the elastic string of time. It is advisable to look from the tide pool to the stars and then back to the tide pool again.’ 

To visit La Paz and the Sea of Cortez, contact CostaBaja Resort & Marina at 866.409.9940. Also see: CostaBajaResort.com, VivaLaPaz.com, and RozInLaPaz.com

Visitors to the CostaBaja Resort & Marina have the ocean, the desert and the area’s incomparable history to balance out the perfect getaway.

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Manuel De Leon International Airport (LAP/MMLP), La Paz, Mexico

AIRPORT DATA

Elevation: 21'
Runways: 18/36 8,202'
Approaches: VOR-NDB, NDB
ATIS/ASOS: None

FIXED BASE OPERATIONS/FUEL/SERVICES

Airport Authority (100LL & Jet A) 52.772.273.1156

ACCOMMODATIONS

CostaBaja Resort & Marina 866.409.9940
costabajaresort.com

TRANSPORTATION

Airport Collectives ~ \$15 US
Taxi Service ~ \$20 US
Dollar Rent A Car dollar.com



Profile map viewed from the east looking west



Maps provided by Voyager Flight Planning Software