

MEXICO – HUATULCO AND LA CRUCECITA



Colorful La Crucecita, Huatulco.

Having done all the Shore Excursions in this area over half a dozen visits, we now take a \$5.00 USD Taxi to La Crucecita the little town near the Cruise Port. There are a plethora of Bars and Restaurants here, as well as plenty of shopping both touristy and sophisticated. We usually spend three or four hours walking around, sitting around the Town Square, inhaling several brews or Maggies before returning to sit in a Palapa on the beach at the port.



Beach Palapa, Huatulco

In the 1500s the pirate Thomas Cavendish arrived in the area and after looting, tried by various means to remove or destroy the cross, but was unable to do so. The name Huatulco comes from the Nahuatl language "Coahatolco" and means "place where the wood is revered." You can see a fragment of the cross from the legend in the church in Santa Maria Huatulco, and another in the cathedral in Oaxaca City.

History of Huatulco:

The area of Oaxaca's coast has been inhabited since ancient times by groups of Zapotecs and Mixtecs. When FONATUR set its sights on Huatulco, it was a series of huts along the beach, whose inhabitants practiced fishing on a small scale. When construction on the tourist complex began in the mid 1980s the people who lived along the coast were relocated to Santa Maria Huatulco and La Crucecita. The Huatulco National Park was declared in 1998. Later listed as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the park protects a large area of the bays from development. In 2003 the Santa Cruz cruise ship port began operations, and currently receives some 80 cruise ships each year.

The Huatulco Bays:

Since there are nine different bays in Huatulco, the area offers a variety of beach experiences. Most have blue-green water and the sand ranges from golden to white. Some of the beaches, notably Santa Cruz, la Entrega and El Arrocito have very gentle waves. Most of the development is centered around a few of the bays. Tangolunda is the largest of Huatulco's bays, and is where most of Huatulco's large resorts are located. Santa Cruz has a cruise ship port, marina and shops and restaurants. Some of the beaches are completely pristine and only accessible by boat.

La Crucecita:

La Crucecita is a small town located just a few minutes' drive inland from Santa Cruz bay. La Crucecita was built as a support community to the tourist area, and many of the tourism workers have their homes here. Although it is a new town, it has the feel of an authentic small Mexican town. There is an abundance of shops and restaurants in La Crucecita, and it's a good place to do some shopping, have a meal, or an evening stroll. The church in La Crucecita, La Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, has a 65 foot tall image of the Virgin of Guadalupe painted in its dome.

Dining in Huatulco:

A visit to Huatulco will offer an excellent opportunity to sample Oaxacan cuisine, as well as Mexican seafood specialties. There are numerous beachfront palapas where you can enjoy fresh seafood. Some favorite restaurants include El Sabor de Oaxaca and TerraCotta in La Crucecita.

What To Do in Huatulco:

- Shop for jewelery and souvenirs in La Crucecita
- Take a boat tour of Huatulco's bays, which includes stops for swimming, snorkeling and lunch
- Play golf at the 18-hole Tangolunda golf course

- Visit Hagia Sofia, a beautiful ecological retreat located about 45 minutes away from the downtown area of Huatulco
- Tour the Parque Eco-Arqueológico Copalita
- Take a day tour to a coffee plantation, where you can learn about coffee production, visit a waterfall and have lunch with the owners of the *finca cafetalera*