

TRAVELAGE WEST

Tired of Crowds? These Mexico Destination Dupes Are Great Alternatives

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Las Alamandas is located on Mexico's Costalegre, the stretch of Pacific coast between Puerto Vallarta and Manzanillo.
Credit: 2025 Las Alamandas

Overtourism is a challenge in many destinations around the globe, and Mexico is no exception — as anyone who has had to navigate through crowded airports in places such as Mexico City or Cancun has surely noticed. But there are lots of ways to plan a memorable Mexico getaway far from the vacationing throngs.

And traveling to less-visited destinations in Mexico does more than just provide a calmer vacation experience; it can also help minimize the strain on overtaxed destinations while spreading tourism's economic benefits to a wider array of cities, towns and communities around the country.

Whether a client is hankering for sun and sand, big-city sophistication or small-town charm, Mexico has a destination dupe to fit the need. Here are some noteworthy options.

Destination Dupes on the Coast

Bacalar

The Mexican Caribbean is home to some of the nation's best-loved and most-visited vacation destinations, but there are still lots of corners where tourism is on an enticingly smaller scale. Bacalar, which is located near the Belize border, offers an idyllic getaway that's even easier to reach now, thanks to the opening of the new airport in Tulum. The Lagoon of Seven Colors is simply stunning, and visitors can also relax at a beach club, admire an 18-century fort and spot wildlife such as toucans.

Hotel options in Bacalar include [Mia Bacalar](#), which has a spa and gourmet restaurant, and [Amainah Bacalar](#), an adults-only property with lagoon-view rooms.



A palapa at Las Alamandas
Credit: 2025 Las Alamandas

Costalegre

Located on the Pacific coast between Puerto Vallarta and Manzanillo, Costalegre is graced with multiple beaches and bays, as well as thousands of acres of protected land. The new Chalacatepec International Airport may make it easier to reach this scenic region, but it's still a naturally beautiful setting for a Mexico vacation.

Costalegre is known as a luxury travel destination thanks to blissfully uncrowded upscale properties such as [Las Alamandas](#), a 2,000-acre eco-luxury resort with just 18 colorful villas and four private beaches (you can even reserve an entire beach for yourself). Another popular luxury option is [Careyes](#), an expansive development dotted with villas, casitas and bungalows.



Playa Viva is set just 45 minutes from the Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo International Airport.
Credit: 2025 Playa Viva

Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo

This area along Mexico's Pacific coast may have been chosen by the Mexican government's tourism development organization for development several decades ago, but the rate of growth has been far slower than other regions, and there are lots of ways to enjoy the destination's natural beauty.

Among the options for connecting with nature is a stay at [Playa Viva](#), which is located about 45 minutes from Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo International Airport. With just 19 rooms set on 200 acres, this solar-powered property serves farm-to-table food and offers opportunities to volunteer in a turtle sanctuary and join efforts to help the local community. Stylish accommodation options also include [La Casa Que Canta](#), a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, and [Thompson Zihuatanejo](#), part of the Hyatt portfolio.



Playa Norte in Mazatlan is a beloved destination for locals and visitors alike.

Credit: 2025 Go Mazatlan

Mazatlan

Long known as the “pearl of the Pacific,” [Mazatlan](#) offers wide beaches and lots to do, but with fewer crowds than Mexico’s larger coastal destinations. It’s home to what tourism officials claim is the second-longest oceanfront boardwalk in the world, as well as a beautifully restored historic downtown with an opera house. The city also hosts one of Mexico’s best pre-Lenten Carnival celebrations — next slated for Feb. 27 to March 4, 2025. (Note: This lively event does draw lots of revelers.)



Dreams Estrella del Mar Mazatlan is one all-inclusive option in the region.

Credit: 2025 Hyatt Inclusive Collection

Accommodation options range from budget-friendly to luxurious, including [Dreams Estrella del Mar Mazatlan Golf & Spa Resort](#), a recent addition to Hyatt's Inclusive Collection, and [Casa Lucila](#), a lovely boutique hotel that hugs the hills downtown.

Other Crowd-Free Experiences

Campeche

One of the many interesting destinations on the new Tren Maya (Mayan Train) route, [Campeche](#) is a picturesque port city with a UNESCO-recognized downtown, lots of dreamy colonial architecture and cobblestone streets. It's a good base for visiting nearby attractions, including fascinating Mayan archaeological sites such as Calakmul and Edzna.

Accommodation options include two IHG-affiliated hotels set on historic properties: [Hacienda Uayamon](#), which is located in the countryside, and [Hacienda Campeche](#) in downtown Campeche.

Chihuahua/Barrancas del Cobre

The shiny new Tren Maya is attracting attention in Mexico's tourism scene, but the long-running [Chepe Express](#) provides yet another way to ride the uncrowded rails while getting to know Mexico's vast natural beauty and cultural attributes. Running between Los Mochis, Sinaloa, and Creel, Chihuahua, the Chepe Express whisks passengers through the stunning scenery of Barrancas del Cobre (Copper Canyon), a series of six massive canyons in northern Mexico.

To maximize their appreciation of the gorgeous views, clients should consider staying at a hotel such as [El Mirador Grand Hotel](#), where every room overlooks the canyon.

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