



EDUCATING STUDENTS THROUGH TRAVEL

COZUMEL INFORMATION

“A Divers Paradise...” - Jacques Cousteau

Continually named in the top 5 dive locations in the world, Cozumel is Mexico's largest island, nestled just 12 miles off the coast of the Yucatan Peninsula and Playa del Carmen. Before becoming famous for diving, the island was a small community of mainly fishermen until 1961 when Jacques Cousteau told the world he had found one of the most beautiful diving areas in his travels. Cozumel measures 28 miles long and 10 miles wide and is world renowned for its dazzling white sandy beaches and the remarkable clarity of the multi-hued azure Caribbean ocean in which it rests. The climate is subtropical & the people native to Cozumel are of Mayan descent.



The Maya were a great culture of farmers, fisherman & warriors who ruled from Campeche to Guatemala for over 2000 years before the arrival of the Spanish Explorers in the 15th Century. They were quite an advanced civilization, and the legacy of their culture survives in the vestiges of the huge cities that they built during their reign. Fascinating sites such as Chichen Itza with its massive pyramids that rival those at Cheops; and Tulum, the only Mayan city built overlooking the sea; and even Tikal in its lush jungle settings where wild monkeys still can be seen. Each are an easy one-day excursion from Cozumel.

Cozumel itself was a sleepy little fishing community until 1961 when a Frenchman by the name of **Jacques Cousteau** declared the island one of the most beautiful scuba diving areas in the world. Since that time, Cozumel has become an underwater marine park to protect the delicate balance of its dazzling coral reefs and abundant variety of tropical fish. The underwater wildlife is absolutely stunning and you don't have to be a diver to enjoy it. Simply put on a mask and snorkel and jump in! You'll feel like you've been dropped into a tropical fish tank!

What makes diving in Cozumel amazing is the clarity of the Caribbean Sea, with up to 200 feet visibility. Many famous oceanographers have praised these reefs for their beauty and abundant marine life. Due to this, Cozumel's National Marine Park was established in 1996 by federal decree, with the aim to protect and monitor the area. The park is simply a diving dream come true and a paradise for scuba diving. Cozumel's National Marine Park starts its chain of outstanding dive sites south of downtown, with the aptly named Paradise Reef, and stretches out all the way to the southern end of the island, Punta Sur. This marine park is the protected home to one of the most incredible coral reefs and marine inhabitants on the planet.



