

Puerto Vallarta

2017



PUERTO VALLARTA is a beautiful resort area consisting of endless time-share owners and vacation rentals. We anxiously planned our vacation, expecting to actually rest and relax. Soak up some sun and find a few new adventures in a place we hadn't before traveled. But we didn't do our homework and we weren't prepared for.... Mexico. From the minute we cleared customs and stepped into the airport lobby, we were attacked by the time-share sharks! And somehow within ten minutes—literally ten minutes—we world travelers managed to give a crisp \$100 bill to a total stranger who promised he would “give it back” if we would show up for a sales presentation the next day. We actually GAVE him a one hundred U.S. dollar bill. Now I didn't sleep all night thinking how crazy we were, and the next morning I had the plan ready for action when I saw this guy again. I had the number of the police in my hand and I was ready for any fight,

knowing already, that I would never see my money again. We were whisked away to our promised breakfast for the ‘sales talk’. My eyes had a no-nonsense gleam, and we both stood strong together and said NO. And without much pressure at all, we were thanked for coming. We were given our cash right back into our hands and we were given free tours to local spots in the city. Just as promised. It still amazes me. Happily we went away learning a new lesson and ready to enjoy our vacation. Puerto Vallarta is a land of contrasts. Deep forested mountains falling into the ocean on one end and then flat wide beaches on the other end of this scenic city. Plush “American” resorts sprinkled between the local life style of Mexico. We chose a time-share unit located in the older part of the city. It was very nice and had a view overlooking the ocean. Perfect. Strolling through old town we were again attacked by hundreds more time-share sharks. They're on every corner, in every hallway and at every store front. Bill said he “wasn't running the gauntlet ever again”. It certainly is a challenge there on main street. The streets are broken down, the sidewalks are crumbling. Litter is almost everywhere. All the beaches are public property, so vacationers are often surrounded by the vendors trying to sell their worldly wares in a basket. I guess we must seem so rich to these hard working people. But the whole contrast makes me uneasy. Our tour guide told us that everyone is expected to work in Mexico, even the children. You work and you get a free education and medical benefits. You don't work, you don't get anything. Period. If you get parking ticket, the police take your license plate to their station. When you pay your ticket, you get it back. Pretty simple and smart thinking. They have a strong penal system. You break the law and you're in jail for a long, long time. You get to sleep on a concrete slab with no amenities, not even FOOD. Your family is expected to bring food daily to feed you. Now that seems to be quite harsh, but it must work very well indeed as they have almost a zero problem with anyone breaking the law. This time of year the weather was sticky and hot. The humidity rots and rusts everything while the black mold makes the roofs and walls of the city look dirty. I noticed the young women—just the women-- cleaning every step, every window, and every wall each day. It didn't seem to really help. Nature has the upper hand in this section of the world. We were bitten by bugs of all sorts. We saw iguana's in the trees. Bill put a BIG one on his shoulders. And we kept asking ourselves if we were having fun yet. Yes we did manage to make it a fun vacation. The water was warm and clear. The snorkeling was pretty good. The food was delicious. And the people are very kind and friendly. This is Mexico, a land of color and music. A land of mariachi madness! Actually think we might go there again.....maybe man Yana. Viva la Mexico

