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# Cabo San Lucas Welcomes Back Tourists With A Focus On Creative Social Distancing



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Travel

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Northern Dream yacht in Cabo San Lucas NORTHERN DREAM

I visited Cabo San Lucas reluctantly last week as one of the first tourists to the area since the pandemic started. Cabo has always been one of my favorite escapes with an easy, inexpensive flight from Los Angeles, but this visit was dramatically different.

The United States is the primary tourism market for Los Cabos, contributing 80% of its international travelers. On June 20, Los Cabos started welcoming flights from California, and Texas. In August, budget Eastern Airlines will

launch its first direct flight from New York JFK to Los Cabos, operating twice a week.

According to Rodrigo Esponda, Managing Director of Los Cabos Tourism, during the first week of July, almost 70 hotels have opened for tourists. However, don't expect to see crowds at any of the resorts since the phased opening is only 30% occupancy per property, which also includes residence owners.



Yachts Cabo also charters private jets for visitors to Cabo San Lucas, La Paz and other Mexico ... [+]  
YACHTS CABO

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## THE AIRPORT

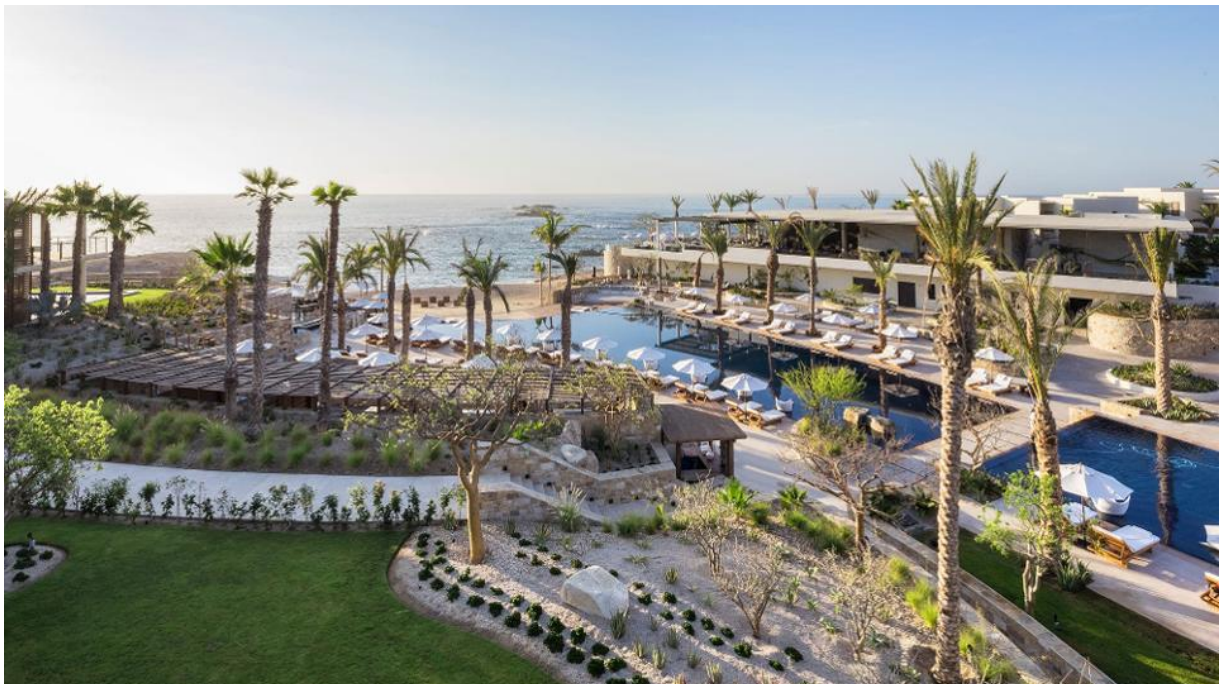
The experience was blissfully peaceful and eerily quiet. At the time, American Airlines was still committed to social distancing, and the flight was not full. Los Angeles International Airport was a ghost town with no traffic, no lines, and few passengers in the terminal. Onboard, travelers are handed a paper bag with a bottle of water and a small pack of crisps, and that's it for customer service. The flight attendants are never seen for the

rest of the flight, as there is no service whatsoever. Masks, of course are required, and you are given a form to fill out with extensive questions about symptoms and where you have traveled previously before you are allowed to enter the country.

Upon arrival into Los Cabos, it was refreshing to see the remodeled and expansive Terminal 2, and with so few visitors at the time, the entire arrival experience took barely five minutes to complete the customs process. A thermal scanner takes temperatures at the entrance and hand sanitizers are plentiful. Every single worker in Los Cabos is proudly wearing a mask for protection.

## **GROUND TRANSPORTATION**

Luxury visitors are met by their resort driver outside of the terminal entrance and quickly whisked away in a large SUV where a masked uniformed driver and butler provide guests with pre-packaged goodies and drinks as well as hand sanitizer. The quick trip into town makes for a smooth transition. It is recommended you arrange private transportation through your resort in advance.



Chileno Bay Resort & Residences CHILENO BAY RESORT & RESIDENCES, AUBERGE RESORTS COLLECTION

## RESORTS

### **Chileno Bay Resort & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection**

This property is located on one of the few swimmable beaches in Cabo, and the crowd here is more upscale than most. Positioned along a protected, quiet cove, guests can snorkel colorful coral reefs where you may come across celebrities and billionaires who are among the regular visitors and residence owners. During my visit, there were several billionaire homeowners, an Oscar nominee, and a pro athlete practically enjoying the entire resort to themselves.



Villa Outdoor Living Room CHILENO BAY RESORT & RESIDENCES, AUBERGE RESORTS COLLECTION

The arrival experience is smooth, and you avoid the check-in process as you are taken by buggy directly to your villa. Among the best options at the Auberge property are the open-air oceanfront villas with sliding walls bringing in the constant breeze from the Sea of Cortez.

Guests can select from a wide variety of accommodations, including the dramatic and pricey 24,000 sf Brisa Del Mar Villa, which features six bedrooms that accommodate 12. You can host your entire family in the villa with your own private media room, outdoor terrace with custom bar, and outdoor pool table. The large outdoor pool with private outdoor shower also includes private beach access.



Social distance dining at Chileno Bay Resort & Residences REBECCA YALE /CHILENO BAY RESORT & RESIDENCES

You can also opt to stay in one of the stunning Sky Villas with up to 5,700 sf of luxury indoor/outdoor living. The villas include a rooftop pool, up to four bedrooms, and an enormous bi-level rooftop terrace with dramatic ocean views, a private pool, fireplace, wet bar with grill and dining area. The sliding glass walls give you plenty of fresh air. The villas include a private butler, where everything from unpacking to preparing cocktails and snacks is provided.



Osvaldo Vazquez, Beverage Manager at Chileno Bay Resort & Residences JIM DOBSON

There were few guests during my brief visit as the property had just opened, and considering the limit on occupancy, there is not a lot of contact with other people. The numerous outdoor health options include in-water spinning classes, snorkeling, swimming, and luxury Auberge spa treatments in airy cabanas on the beach, where you will find yourself far removed from the headline news.



H2O Cave & Outdoor Beach Spa treatments CHILENO BAY RESORT & RESIDENCES, AUBERGE RESORTS COLLECTION

The resort is headed by the wonderful GM Roger Ponce, who has put together an energetic staff dedicated to the customers safety and health concerns. All employees are masked, and every room is completely sanitized before you check in.

Guests are also provided with masks for use only when around other guests; you have the freedom to not wear a mask as you choose or when enjoying activities or dining. The dramatic open-air concepts at the resort provide many social distancing options from dining outdoors at the amazing wide open space of the COMAL Restaurant with possibly the world's best tacos from one of my favorite Chefs in all of Mexico, Yvan Mucharraz.

## DINING

This is the more difficult option in Los Cabos as many restaurants are still closed, and most visitors end up dining at their individual resort to stay away from the crowds. Famed open-air restaurants like my favorites **Flora Farms** and **El Farallon** recently opened, but to extremely limited capacity to guarantee social distancing.

And the crowded downtown Cabo with its famed tourist bars is quiet. “The bars are not open,” says Esponda, “We decided to design a five-phase reopening of the destination. Right now, we're in phase one which is just 30 percent capacity. The bars will likely open later in the year, towards the fall.”



El Farallón restaurant with socially distant outdoor seating at Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos WALDORF ASTORIA

## YACHTS

One of the best options for staying away from crowds is charter a private yacht during your visit to the area. **Yachts Cabo** has long been the leading provider of luxury options in Los Cabos from Private Jet charters to day



trips and overnight experiences on a superyacht. Francisco Garcia, the CEO of Yachts Cabo, specializes in private yacht, and Jet charter service. Garcia's attention to detail is incomparable, where every particular request is never too big or small. Garcia, tells me, "All of my guests are treated with the utmost care - we charter to the wealthiest, most famous people in the world, as well as regular visitors who want to celebrate an extra special occasion."



Northern Dream yacht in Los Cabos with water toys NORTHERN DREAM

Garcia goes on to explain that onboard his yachts, they have chefs that have been trained in Paris under the tutelage of the finest chefs in the world. The stewards/butler have also studied mixology to create the perfect cocktail to enjoy a cruise as the sun goes down.

Yachts Cabo has now evolved into exclusive yacht distribution and sales from the biggest names in yachting; Schaefer yachts, Numarine yachts, Iguana Yachts, and a new solar yacht that needs no fuel. They also sell and charter private jets.



Northern Dream yacht in Los Cabos NORTHERN DREAM

Among the newest charters that I toured is the stunning new 130 foot **Northern Dream** yacht, owned by Canadian building supply magnate Barry Stewart. With accommodations for eight guests, and an open, modern design, charter guests have plenty of fresh air to enjoy as they spend the day utilizing the ample supply of water toys the yacht has to offer.



Francisco Garcia, the CEO of Yachts Cabo | JIM DOBSON

The yacht is also one of the few luxury options for deep sea fishing, with an enormous selection of custom Talics Shimano reels. There is nothing better than having your private chef prepare fresh Ceviche from what you just caught.

Los Cabos currently has restrictions on the number of yacht charters during the pandemic, but the Northern Dream is one of the few options available to luxury travelers throughout July, where you can practically have the entire coastline to yourself.



La Datcha Villa in Cabo San Lucas LA DATCHA

## VILLAS

### La Datcha

Russian billionaire Oleg Tinkov opened this spectacular oceanfront villa as part of his Tinkoff Collection. The enormous villa is made up of three interconnected buildings, two or three floors each. The villa can easily accommodate up to 20 people with two large suites, each with a private terrace, one with a fireplace and the other with a swimming pool, and eight guest bedrooms.

The most amazing part of the villa is the enormous spa with Sauna, Turkish bath, and massage rooms. The spa also features a stunning snow room. The villa rents for up to \$23,000 per day in high season and can be booked directly through Yachts Cabo.

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The amazing staff at Chileno Bay Resort & Residences (L to R) Victor Cruz (Bellman), Claudia ... [+] JIM DOBSON

## Las Ventanas al Paraíso

I took a tour of the stunning Las Ventanas, one of my favorite resorts in Mexico, and it is easy to see why the rich and the famous make this their ultimate retreat. With expansive open walls in their amazing Ocean Front Villas, this is the perfect place for travelers who are nervous about staying in hotels.

The Rosewood branded resort re-opened July 1 and features 84 luxury suites and villas. Among the new highlights promoting social distancing is the newly built-out Speakeasy lounge, which is now located outdoors floating on a pool for Cuban singer Rosalia de Cuba to perform socially distanced from the audience.



### Las Ventanas Ocean Front Villa

from **Jim Dobson**