

Welcome  
to  
*Casa Toucan!*



**2020-2021 Edition**

¡Hola! Bienvenidos a Casa Toucan! We are pleased that you have chosen to be our guest, and we have written this document to help you prepare for your visit. Please read it carefully and don't hesitate to send us any questions that you have.

We apologize in advance for the length and tedium of this document, but we have found over the years that the clearer and more thorough we are, the more prepared you will be for your visit with us and to maximize your enjoyment of your time here in Puerto Morelos. We ask that you please read this thoroughly, and **PLEASE** share this document with **ALL** members of your party so that there is no misunderstanding about rules, procedures, etc.

Please note that all prices quoted for taxis, buses, exchange rates, etc. were accurate at the time of this writing but are subject to change.

**Location:**

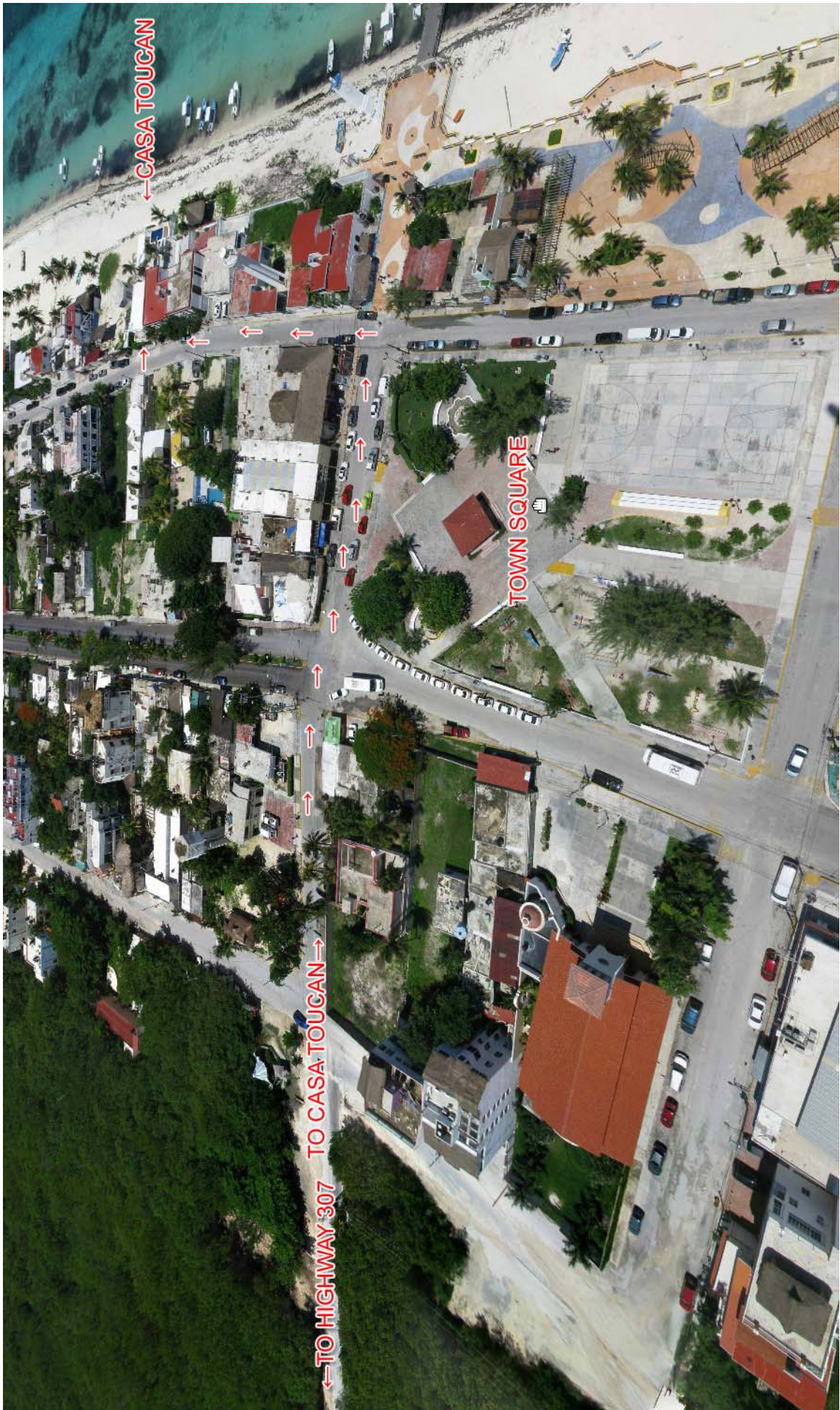
Unfortunately, we really don't have addresses here and we rely more on landmarks and directions. Here is the address I use when buying things on Amazon...this may make it easier for your shuttle/taxi driver to find us:

Ave Rafael Melgar Lote 8A  
Casa blanca 3 niveles en la playa, 50 metros al norte de los Faros, entre restaurantes Mar-Bella y Merkadito  
Puerto Morelos, Quintana Roo, 77580  
Mexico

You can also search for "Casa Toucan" in your phone's map application (Google Maps, Apple Maps, etc.) and you should find our exact location.

**Contact: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

My (Jon's) cell phone number is +52-1-998-301-3291. Feel free to have your driver call me if he is having any trouble finding us. You can call, text, or Whatsapp me at any time for any reason. Whatsapp? It's an app for instant messaging, calling, and sharing information that is very popular worldwide with literally BILLIONS of users. It hasn't caught on as quickly in the U.S. and Canada because of the prevalence of unlimited cellular calling and texting plans, but the rest of the world uses it for very easy, economical communication. And here in Mexico we use it for EVERYTHING – ordering a pizza, scheduling a massage, solving a plumbing emergency, ANYTHING. We encourage you to download the app to your phone and give it a try. To contact me via Whatsapp, you would add me as a contact using the phone number above, then simply send me a message!



## Directions:

There is only one main road into Puerto Morelos from Highway 307. As you arrive into town, continue straight on that road until it dead-ends into the beach/dock. Turn left, and Casa Toucan is about one-half block ahead on the right side of the street. You will pass the lighthouse, then a large white house with burgundy trim, and then Casa Toucan is the next house - it is the only three-story building on the beach side of the street, white with brown trim, with a two-story garage/workshop facing the street and a sculpture of a toucan (see the photo at the top of this document) on the front of the garage. Refer to the aerial photo on the prior page for a map.

## Airport Transfers: (Updated for 2020-2021)

We recommend that you arrange a private airport transfer prior to your arrival in Cancún. Unfortunately, as of this writing in December 2020, the ADO buses do NOT stop in Puerto Morelos. If you arrive without a pre-booked transfer and you do not intend to take the bus, a taxi from the airport to Puerto Morelos can cost as much as \$70-80 USD ONE-WAY for a 20-minute ride!!!

For a private shuttle, we recommend USA Transfers. You can book your reservation online at <http://www.entertainment-plus.net/affiliates/transfers/puerto-morelos-transfers.asp?affid=1302>. When prompted for your destination hotel, start typing "Casa Toucan" and select "Casa Toucan (Av.Rafael E. Melgar) - Puerto Morelos". They will meet you outside of the terminal and whisk you away to Puerto Morelos. Many of the drivers for USA Transfers have been to Casa Toucan many times and know exactly where we are, but just to be safe, print a copy of the map on the previous page and give it to your driver. We recommend USA Transfers because they are EXTREMELY reliable and will pick you up at the airport on time, and, (more importantly), get you back to the airport with plenty of time to spare to avoid stress and anxiety.

**(Updated for 2020-2021 – ADO does not currently stop in Puerto Morelos)** You can also take the ADO bus from the airport to the stop on the highway, and then take a taxi from the highway to Casa Toucan. ADO is a first-class bus line - the buses are very nice with a restroom, comfortable seats, television, air conditioning, and some even have WiFi Internet! A bus leaves the airport every 25-30 minutes, and it is about a 20-minute non-stop ride to Puerto Morelos. There is a booth for ADO outside of Customs in Terminal 3, but it seems to be rarely staffed. If there is no one in the booth, proceed outside and curve right past the bar – there will be a small kiosk with a friendly ADO employee ready to sell you a ticket. At the time of this writing we are unsure about the exact location of ADO in Terminal 4, but the bus is definitely available. The fare is currently 116 pesos per person, which is currently around \$6.00 USD or \$8.00 CAD. The taxi ride from the highway to Casa Toucan is 30-35 pesos. There is a taxi stand on the east side of the highway where you should always be able to catch a cab at any time. The bus will drop you off on the west side of the highway – if there is not a taxi waiting there by the 7-11 store, just walk across the intersection (under the overpass) to the taxi stand.

## Car Rental/Parking: (Updated for 2018-2019)

We recommend AGAINST renting a car for your entire visit, unless you intend to travel outside of Puerto Morelos for the majority of your stay. Convenient parking has become increasingly difficult on our street, to the point of being impossible at times (particularly on weekends), so you may have to park on another block and walk to the house. And often we see the rental cars of our guests sitting on the street unused for the majority of their visit. Save the rental and spend that money on a few more great meals in Puerto Morelos!

If you would like to travel outside of Puerto Morelos to any of the many attractions in this region, we recommend that you rent a car on a day-to-day basis as your needs dictate. There are several rental car agencies within a few blocks, and rates are in the \$30-50 USD/day range, insurance included. In addition, renting a car at the airport is often a time-consuming process, and returning the car at the airport before your flight can add some frustration and/or anxiety to your day.

If you are arriving at Casa Toucan by car, you may park anywhere on the street. Just be careful not to block anyone's driveway, carport, or other entrance, including our garage. Park as close to the curb as possible - our street is very narrow, and when cars do not park very close to the curb, sometimes larger trucks will have difficulty getting down the street, causing a "traffic jam" on our street.

### **Arrival: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

When you have finalized your travel plans, please e-mail us your flight information so that we can estimate your arrival time at Casa Toucan. At some point we will send you an online form to complete that will provide us with your arrival/departure information. If you will be making a stop for groceries, stopping for lunch, or any other detours, please let us know so that we can adjust our arrival time estimate accordingly. Even better, if possible, please call, text, or Whatsapp us (see "Contact" above) when you are leaving the airport so that we can do our best to be here when you arrive. We will likely be on-site for your arrival, but if we are not here, your suite will be unlocked with the keys inside. One of us will be available throughout your stay with us to help you, to answer questions, to make recommendations, etc.

### **Check-In:**

We generally quote 3:00 p.m. as our check-in time. However, if you will be arriving earlier, please check with us - it is possible that your suite will be ready earlier than 3:00. We use 3:00 as a guideline so that we have adequate time to clean and prepare a unit when one guest is departing and another guest is arriving on the same day. If we cannot accommodate an earlier check-in, you are welcome to drop off your bags at any time and go enjoy your first meal in Puerto Morelos, explore the town, walk the beach, etc.

### **Check-Out: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

Our check-out time is 11:00 a.m. If you have a later flight, or a later check-in at another destination, please feel free to ask us for a late check-out, and we will do our best to accommodate you. However, if we have an arrival for your suite on the day of your departure, we will likely not be able to provide a late check-out. We will gladly store your bags until the sad time arrives that you must leave. You are welcome to "hang out" in the common areas of the property, but you will not have access to a restroom, and please do not enter your suite after check-out time as you may interfere with housekeeping.

Feel free to leave behind anything that you did not consume. Food, beverages, and other items will not go to waste. We frequently gift these things to our housekeeper, who will give them to someone in her church if she cannot utilize the items.

Be sure to do a final check to assure that you haven't forgotten anything - check all drawers, closets, etc. And check for phone/tablet/laptop chargers!

When leaving the property for the final time, please use your keys to unlock the gate to the street, and then leave both sets of keys on the kitchen counter inside your suite. Close the door to your suite and the gate to the street, but do not worry about locking them. If you are storing your bags on the property until a later departure, please leave one set of keys on the counter and keep one set of keys with you until you are leaving for the final time so that you can lock/unlock the gate.

### **Same Time Next Year?: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

We have an increasing number of guests each year that become "repeaters" – they return each year for roughly the same dates. We do our best to accommodate these requests before opening our reservation calendar to "new" guests. If you would like to return next year, please make it a point to talk with us about it while you are here. We receive frequent inquiries for dates up to two years in advance, so once your stay has ended, it may be more difficult for you to secure your dates for the following year.

## **Covid: (New for 2020-2021)**

Needless to say, the world changed in 2020, and Puerto Morelos is no exception. We went into extreme lockdown in March, 2020, with requirements that did not come for many months later for our friends to the North, including mandatory face coverings, temperature checks, curfews, and business closings and/or limited capacity operation. As a result, the number of cases has stayed relatively low in Puerto Morelos. We ask that you keep it that way by respecting all local rules and recommendations, including wearing your face covering in all public areas when you are in the vicinity of other people. Unfortunately we often see tourists who walk the streets without respecting these procedures. Please understand that the healthcare system here is overwhelmed on any given Tuesday without regard to the pandemic, and if people here get sick, or have to quarantine, they will (at the very least) miss work, and there is no government support here for people who are out of work – families simply go hungry. Your “constitutional” or “god-given” rights don’t apply here – please respect and help to protect the local people, as they do not have the luxuries that you experience in your home country.

Also, please understand that the situation is very dynamic and fluid, and rules/procedures/recommendations change regularly. Just relax and go with the flow!

## **Travel Insurance: (New for 2020-2021)**

As was STRONGLY recommended in your Rental Agreement, please purchase “Cancel for Any Reason” travel insurance for your trip so that you are protected in the event that you are unable to complete your visit with us here at Casa Toucan. We have had countless guests that had to cancel in 2020 and 2021, and we have done our best to be flexible and to work with them, but we can’t promise that every case of cancellation will be resolved in your favor. Please understand that our rentals are our livelihood. Further, please understand that there is a cost to occupying dates on our reservations calendar, and that this cost may not be preserved in the event you have to cancel your reservation. In addition, travel insurance can also protect you against problems with your airfare and other expenses involved in your travels.

## **Locking Your Door: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

During our major remodel in 2016 we installed all new doors and windows. They are durable, beautiful, and storm-resistant, but there is one extra “trick” to locking the doors to all suites except Toucan 1. You must first turn the door handle up as far as it will go, then release it, before inserting the key. Then insert the key horizontally (9 o’clock – 3 o’clock), turn it a full turn toward the jam, remove the key (also horizontally), and try to turn the door handle down to make sure that it is locked. The procedure is the same from the inside of the suite using the bolt instead of the key.

There is no extra trick to unlocking the door – insert the key (horizontally), turn it a full turn AWAY from the jam, remove the key (horizontally), and push the door handle down to open the door.

## **What We Provide:**

Each unit at Casa Toucan has the following:

- Bed linens and pillows
- Bath towels, hand towels, and washcloths
- Beach towels
- Toilet paper
- Dish soap and sponge/scrubber
- Dish towels
- Trash cans and trash bags
- Purified, bottled water for drinking, cooking, and making ice
- Dishes, glassware, and eating utensils

Basic pots, pans, and cooking utensils  
Coffee maker  
Gas stove with oven  
Refrigerator with freezer

If you find that something that you need for cooking is not in your suite, please ask! Cookware and other items seem to migrate between units frequently, and we will try to find what you need.

### **Notable Items That We Do Not Provide:**

Toiletries - bath soap, shampoo, lotion, etc.  
Hair Dryers – unfortunately they are very expensive here and they rust within a matter of months  
Paper Towels  
Coffee filters  
Pool floats – ditto – they simply do not last here – pick them up at your local store

### **Notable Items That You Should Bring:**

1) Sunscreen! The sun's rays are very strong here year-round. Please protect your skin appropriately with sunscreen, hats, etc. Sunscreen is very expensive here - we recommend that you bring it with you. Also, if you intend to snorkel the reef, biodegradable sunscreen is recommended as normal sunscreen can damage the delicate ecosystem of the reef.

2) Mosquito repellent. Puerto Morelos is in a warm, wet, tropical environment with a mangrove between us and the highway, so mosquitoes may be present from time to time. We have found that products with DEET work best, although they are a bit harsh on your skin. You will generally not be pestered by mosquitoes while on the property at Casa Toucan, as the steady breeze from the ocean keeps them away. However, once you step off the property and go to areas that are sheltered from the wind by buildings, including just across the street to a restaurant, the mosquitoes can be pesky at times. They tend to prefer to bite your legs, feet, and ankles, so apply repellent accordingly. They are worst around dawn and dusk, so if you go out to one of our many restaurants for dinner, we recommend that you take mosquito spray with you. If you forget, ask the employees of the restaurant - most of the restaurants will have repellent available for you if you need it.

### **Wi-Fi and Internet Access:**

Casa Toucan has high-speed (300 Mbps!) fiber optic Internet service and seven Wi-Fi access points. The structures on the property are made of very thick concrete reinforced with steel, but signal strength is fairly good throughout the property. When you are attaching for the first time, you will see several Wi-Fi- access points – Casa Toucan 1 through Casa Toucan 4 and Casa\_Toucan\_Pool. The access points numbered 1-4 correspond to the four suites. The access point in your suite should be the strongest for you, but feel free to connect to any of the access points. The password is the same for all access points – “toucanpm” (all lower case).

### **A Note About Your Smart Phone: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

You should check with your cell phone carrier before departing your home country to see what arrangements they have for traveling in Mexico. Many of the major U.S. and Canadian carriers have made traveling throughout North America (which includes Mexico!) no different than being at home, but some require you to notify them of your travel. Otherwise, unless you have made prior arrangements with your telephone carrier, we HIGHLY recommend that you DISABLE “Data Roaming” while you are in Mexico. It can be VERY expensive, and we have heard horror stories of tourists going home to find that they were charged THOUSANDS of dollars for using data service on their smart phone while roaming. Turn it off, and use our Wi-Fi for data service for your devices.

## **Telephone Service While At Casa Toucan: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

We have a VOIP (Internet-based) telephone line at Casa Toucan. It provides unlimited, free calling to/from the USA, Canada, and many other countries. In the past we have maintained a cordless telephone in each suite. However, with the changes mentioned above that have made cell phone use very easy and affordable while traveling in Mexico, we will no longer keep handsets in each suite. If you would like to use this service, just let us know and we will put a phone in your suite. The cordless phones all share the same phone line. It is a USA number with a Dallas, Texas area code. The telephone number is 469-454-2540. If you would like, you can use this telephone to make calls while you are our guest – dial directly (area code + phone number, 10 digits total) as you would from the USA or Canada. To call local (Mexico) numbers, dial 011-52-1 and then the ten-digit number. If you are not expecting someone to call you, please do not answer inbound calls – almost all inbound calls are for us, and we will answer if we are on the property.

As everyone on the property shares that same telephone line, please be courteous of your fellow guests in your use of the telephone.

You can contact me (Jon) via my cell phone at any time – +52-1-998-301-3291 from your cell phone. To reach my cell phone from the VOIP phone you would dial 011-52-1-998-301-3291. I am also available via Whatsapp at the same number - +52-1-998-301-3291.

### **Notes About Electricity:**

We use the same 110V AC power as the USA and Canada, so no adapters or converters are needed unless you are visiting from Europe or other regions that use 220V power. Some times a few of our phases run a bit “hot” – 130 volts or more. If you are bringing sensitive electronics or other devices, you may wish to consider a voltage regulator to protect them. On occasion we have had damage to devices due to a presumed power surge.

Electricity is VERY expensive in Mexico. Current rates are around 25 cents per kilowatt-hour, compared to around 10 cents for the same kilowatt-hour in the USA and Canada. We absolutely want you to be comfortable during your stay at Casa Toucan, but we ask that you be aware of your electricity usage and to use it responsibly. Please do not use the air conditioning if you have windows and/or doors open, and please do not use the air conditioning while you are not in your unit or soon-to-be in your unit. The air conditioners are capable of cooling down the rooms very quickly, so please only use them while you are occupying your unit. More importantly, we get FREE air conditioning from the ocean breezes - please take advantage when you can. Your cooperation will help us keep our expenses down, which will translate to affordable rental rates for your many return visits to Casa Toucan!

### **Notes About Water:**

We provide 20-liter bottles of purified water in each apartment for drinking, cooking, making ice, etc. When your bottle is empty, set it outside your door and we will replace it.

You should ALWAYS have hot water. If you do not have hot water in your suite, please let us know so that we can address it. Sometimes guests just think “Oh well, this is Mexico” and assume that hot water is not available, but we need to know these things! Our water heaters are all on-demand units, and at times they are finicky about the volume of water flow and they will suddenly turn off. If you notice this problem, the “hack” to fix it is to turn on another hot water source – either the kitchen or bathroom sink faucet - and you should be able to have consistent hot water. If this doesn’t work, please let us know – the heater may need adjustment, maintenance, or repair.

The faucets and shower controls here are oriented the same way as is customary in the US or Canada – Hot is on the left, Cold is on the right – Don’t be confused by the “C” on the left faucet – that means “Caliente”, not “Cold”! The hot water takes a varying amount of time to “arrive”, especially in Toucan 1 and Toucan 2 – be

patient and wait for it. If you start adjusting the hot faucet too quickly, you may get an unpleasant surprise when it finally arrives!

While our infrastructure here is continuously improving, outages in our municipal water service are not uncommon. Casa Toucan has two underground cisterns for water storage, so low water pressure from the water company or complete water outages will not affect you as long as we do not exhaust the water that is in the cisterns. In that spirit, please be responsible with your water usage – please do not leave faucets, showers, hoses, etc. running any longer than you need to.

### **Toilet Paper: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

It goes in the toilet! In Mexico and many other parts of the world, you do not place your used toilet paper in the toilet - it goes into a wastebasket nearby. However, we are connected to the local sewer system via a grinder pump that pulverizes all of the unmentionables, so just do what you would do at home.

### **Pets:**

A number (currently three) of our local street cats have decided to adopt us as their own. If you have allergies or otherwise don't like cats, please let us know and we will do our best to keep them from bothering you. Two of them are particularly social and they will invite themselves into your apartment, your lap, or your bed without warning. Feel free to shoo them away and they will eventually get the hint. We ask that you do not welcome them inside, because it is possible that the next guests do not like them inside, so we don't want to reinforce this behavior. If you DO like cats, feel free to give them as much love and attention as you want (while enjoying the outdoor areas of property) – they never seem to get tired of attention!

We also have two male Huskies that live with us. They are friendly and playful and they do not bite, but be aware that they may say “hello” by jumping on you, and they don't realize their own strength/size/weight.

### **Housekeeping:**

We generally provide housekeeping on a weekly basis. The housekeeper will clean your suite and change the sheets, towels, and mats. If you desire more frequent housekeeping visits, we can arrange this at minimal cost. If you would like your sheets and/or towels laundered more frequently, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

### **Smoking:**

As clearly stated in your Rental Agreement, Casa Toucan is completely non-smoking. If you smoke, please go off the property to the beach or to the street outside our gates, and please dispose of your cigarette butts responsibly – please do not throw trash on the beach or in the street.

### **Trash:**

All trash must be bagged in order for the garbage truck to take it away. There is a black trash barrel labeled “Casa Tukan” on the street next to our carport. Please tie your trash bags securely and place them in this barrel. If the bags are left outside the barrel, it is possible that dogs or cats will tear into them, leaving trash scattered on the street. Trash is picked up by the town almost every day. There should be a roll of trash bags in your apartment, but if you need more, please let us know.



## **Recycling: (New for 2016!)**

After a year or two of “false starts”, Puerto Morelos now has a reliable recycling program! There is a plastic bin in front of the bar in the pool area. Please deposit your aluminum, glass, plastic and paper/cardboard here. Or you may leave them in your suite and we will sort them after your departure. Please completely empty your cans and bottles and give them a quick rise with water. Our recycling is only picked up once per month, and month-old beer doesn't smell so good!

## **Employees:**

We have an employee that is in the property daily (except Sunday) from around 6:00 a.m. until around 7:30 a.m. Don't be alarmed if you see someone outside your apartment early in the morning – that is Enrique, and he is working hard to keep the grounds clean and to keep the plants growing and beautiful!

## **Glass:**

Please do not take anything glass (beer bottles, soda bottles, wine glasses) or otherwise breakable (plates, bowls, coffee cups, etc) out to the patios, balconies, and pool areas. Broken glass is very difficult to clean up from our rough concrete outdoor surfaces, and very uncomfortable if you step on it! Please pour any beer or other beverages from bottles into the plastic cups provided in each suite, and please do not take ANYTHING breakable outside of your suite.

## **Floors and Other Surfaces:**

All of our floors and other surfaces are tile, concrete, or other HARD material. They are also slippery, even when dry, and EXTREMELY slippery when wet. Please be very careful while walking so as to avoid an unpleasant fall!

## **Outdoor Lighting: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

The outdoor lighting here at Casa Toucan is automatic and controlled by an automation system so that the property has adequate light at night for your safety while walking around the property and also for security. However, there are switches in each suite that control the lighting to your patio or balcony. If these lights are negatively impacting your enjoyment of the evening, feel free to turn them off. Also, if there is a porch light that would be visible from your sleeping area, there will also be a switch for you to turn off this light. As always, don't hesitate to ask us if you have any questions.

## **A Note About Sand:**

We're on the beach, so it's everywhere! But please help us minimize the amount of sand that we have to clean out of the suites and out of the pool by washing the sand off your feet/legs/body when you come in from the beach. When you enter our front gate from the beach, if you turn to your left, there is a hose and faucet on the side wall, and also a faucet near the door of the pool house as well as a shower above it. Feel free to use any/all of these to clean up your feet, legs, body, sandals, snorkeling gear, etc.

## **Common Areas:**

The area around the pool and all of the lounge chairs and umbrellas are for common use. Please use the common areas courteously and keep them free from clutter, clothing, towels, dishes, etc. so as not to inconvenience your fellow guests – they are on holiday too! The clothes line on the ground floor is for community use by everyone – please use this for drying clothes and towels rather than the tables, chairs, or railings/cables.

## **Pool/Hot Tub: (Updated for 2020-2021)**

*We had a very active hurricane season in 2020, and one storm caused serious damage to our pool equipment. Our heater for the pool and hot tub was destroyed, and we are working to replace it with a different solution. We appreciate you understanding as we try to remedy this problem.*

Our pool is heated to keep it comfortable in the winter months (most pools here are unusable in the winter, unless you like water around 70 degrees F!). We keep the pool covered at night to insulate it against cooler air and winds that steal the warmth. However, just because the pool is covered does not mean it is closed. Feel free to use the pool at any time – to remove the cover, slowly pull it into the trough at the end of the pool, taking care not to damage it or to dump any water/sand from the top of the cover into the pool. If you do so at night, please replace the cover when you are finished using the pool, again taking the same precautions.

We re-plumbed our smaller pool to make it into a makeshift hot tub. We do not keep it hot at all times – any time that you would like to use the hot tub, please give us at least two hours notice and we will have it nice and warm for you! The same process applies to the hot tub cover – remove it any time, folding the corners in so that the sand on top does not fall into the hot tub. Place the cover to the side, and re-cover the hot tub when you are finished using it if it is night.

## **Umbrellas:**

There are several large umbrellas in the common area to provide extra shade. Feel free to raise these any time you like, but please lower them when you are finished so that the wind does not damage them.

## **Pool/Beach Furniture:**

In the pool house you will find folding chairs and umbrellas for use on the beach – feel free to take these to the beach. Please rinse the sand off of them when you return. Please do not take any other furniture to the beach. If you rearrange the loungers/umbrellas around the pool, please move them back to their original location when you are finished.

Our patio furniture is durable, but it will break. Please be careful when taking a seat in our chairs or loungers – if you “fall” into the furniture, you may break it.

## **Indoor Furniture/Household Items: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

Please do not move any furniture, pillows, cushions, etc. located inside your suite to the outside areas to prolong the life and cleanliness of the items. Also, please do not rearrange the furnishings inside the suite.

## **Personal Speakers: (New for 2018-2019)**

The advent of battery-powered Bluetooth speakers has revolutionized personal entertainment. Key word **PERSONAL**. If you will be utilizing a speaker, please be considerate of us and your fellow guests with regard to the volume level and content of your music.

## **Roofs:**

Please do not climb on top of the roof of the pool house. From time to time we put pool furniture on top of the pool house area for our own use, but these areas are not for use by guests.

## **The Bodega:**

The Bodega (“warehouse” or “storage room”) is located across from Toucan 1 and 2 on the north end of the property, directly below the Tower. Even though we often keep the door open during the day, please refrain from entering the Bodega.

## **Cables/Railings: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

The stainless steel cables that line our balconies and railings are durable, but they are not designed to support additional weight. Please don't use them as a footrest or armrest as you can damage the VERY EXPENSIVE connectors that connect the cables. Also, please refrain from using the railings/cables to dry clothing or towels – please use the community clothesline near the pool.

## **Security:**

Casa Toucan and Puerto Morelos are Paradise, but not Utopia. Unfortunately the bad guys know that each high season the foreigners come with expensive smart phones, computers, tablets, cameras, cash, etc. – we don't want to create an opportunity for them. Exercising a little caution and common sense will go a long way toward making sure that your vacation is free of unpleasant surprises:

- 1) Each apartment is equipped with a security safe. Please use the safe to store your cash, wallets, Passports, laptops, telephones, watches, and other valuable items. The safes are large (2.66 cubic feet) - large enough to hold 17” laptops as well as many other items.
- 2) If the safe in your suite uses a keypad, pick a 3-6 digit code that you will easily remember to lock the safe. Simply close the door, enter your code, and then press the “LOCK” button. The safe will lock and will display the code that you entered. Read the display to double-check that you did indeed enter the desired code! To reopen the safe, enter the same code and then press the “LOCK” button again, and the safe will open. If all else fails, we do have keys that will open a safe for which the code was forgotten or otherwise entered incorrectly.
- 3) If the suite in your safe uses a key (there will be an extra key on one of your sets of keys), insert the key with the small “rifle sight” facing up. Turn the key a quarter-turn to unlock, turn it back to lock. The key will only come out of the hole when the safe is locked.
- 4) When you are leaving the grounds of Casa Toucan, and also when you are in for the night, please close and lock your doors. Sliding doors can be left open with the tube in the track that only allows them to open a small amount, keeping unwanted visitors (including cats!) out. Please close and lock larger windows with access from the outside. Smaller windows, like bathrooms, as well as second-floor windows with no access below them can safely be left open to enjoy our Caribbean breezes.
- 5) We keep the three gates (two to the street and one to the beach) locked at all times. This is as much to prevent uninvited tourists from wandering into the property as it is to prevent security problems. The sets of keys for each suite also contain a key to the gates.
- 6) The beach is very safe for walking and otherwise enjoying during the day, but it is very dark at night, so we do not recommend that anyone walk the beach at night alone.
- 7) Please do not bring anyone onto the property. Even if you have friends or know other people here in town, do not bring them onto the grounds out of courtesy for us and for your fellow guests. Also, we very much appreciate our guests speaking highly of Casa Toucan, but for the sake of security and also for the sake of your fellow guests, we also ask that you do not bring potential future guests into the grounds – if someone is interested in seeing Casa Toucan, please ask them to contact us by e-mail at

[Info@CasaToucan.com](mailto:Info@CasaToucan.com) and arrange an appointment with us. This is our home and we do not like “intruders”, and we also do not want to inconvenience other guests or otherwise make them uncomfortable by bringing extra people here. Conversely, because this is our home, we frequently have friends over for dinners, drinks, and other social functions. If we are disturbing you in any way, please do not hesitate to tell us. We occasionally throw BIG parties, but we would never have a large number of people here without first talking to our guests and getting their approval to do so.

## **Cash/Currency: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

Slowly, more restaurants and merchants are beginning to accept credit/debit cards, but many still do not, so you will definitely need cash during your visit.

While restaurants, shops, and other vendors will generally accept U.S. and in some cases Canadian Dollars, you should always spend Pesos here in Puerto Morelos. Otherwise, you will be likely to receive an arbitrary, unfavorable exchange rate from the merchant. The most convenient method to obtain Pesos is via our local ATM machines using your debit/credit card, and this method will also provide you with the best exchange rate. At this time, the best ATM machines to use on the “Port” side of town are the machines inside the “new” Chedraui grocery store about three blocks south of Casa Toucan. The ATM will give you a very favorable exchange rate relative to the currency exchange booth and other methods.

There is also an HSBC ATM in Terminal 3 of the Cancun airport, just outside of the Customs area near the restrooms. You may wish to pick up your first batch of Pesos at the airport when you arrive.

I have not received confirmation that an ATM has actually been installed in Terminal 4, but I am told it is coming!

There are also four “good” ATM's at the Chedraui on the highway. There is an ATM from CIBanco just outside the entrance to the Chedraui, and also a Santander ATM inside the Chedraui past the checkout lines. The Santander machine is nice because it gives you a nice assortment of smaller-denomination bills. It seems that no one has change in Puerto Morelos, especially early in the day, so small bills may be very convenient. Conversely, the CIBanco ATM gives you a very minimal number of smaller bills, but it has the lowest fee of any of the machines – currently 17 pesos. Choose your machine accordingly.

A new “profit center” for the banks that offer ATM services is the offer to provide the currency conversion service, rather than allowing your bank (or your bank’s agent) to perform the conversion. You should ALWAYS “decline conversion”, as the result will be an unfavorable exchange rate.

Occasionally there have been incidents of card “skimming” reported at ATM machines. We recommend that you cover the number pad on the ATM machine so that no one and no overhead camera can see and capture your PIN.

Other ATM’s in town are independently owned (i.e. not bank-affiliated), and they have higher fees and lower maximum withdrawals. For instance, the fee at the ATM at the “old” Oxxo just off the Square is 60 Pesos and has a maximum withdrawal of 3000 Pesos, while the others will allow withdrawals of 6000 Pesos or more.

We recommend that you do NOT use the ATM’s that dispense U.S. Dollars. These machines manipulate the exchange rates to effectively overcharge you, and this can result in an effective fee of 20% or more to withdraw Dollars. Pesos, pesos, pesos!

It is always advisable to notify your bank or credit card company that you will be in Mexico so that your attempted use of your card does not cause it to be blocked by the company’s fraud detection systems.

If you need to exchange currency here in town, there is a Cambio booth just to the left of the new Circle K store, but please be aware that bills you are exchanging must be in very good condition without any tears, and

sometimes you must also show your Passport in order to complete the transaction. The exchange rates offered at our local Cambio are usually MUCH better than the rates offered by the Cambio at the airport – airports are generally the worst place to exchange currency. The employees of our local Cambio booth are notorious for “accidentally” short-changing their clients. Please count the pesos you receive and verify it against the printed receipt you are given to make sure you weren’t shorted. If there is a problem, they will quickly resolve it in your favor.

### **Groceries: (Updated for 2020-2021)**

We are proud to announce that Puerto Morelos now has a Chedraui Selecto just a few blocks from Casa Toucan! No need to go to Cancún or Playa for groceries, or even to go to the “old” Chedraui on the highway! It is an easy walk to the new Chedraui Selecto, but you might want to take a taxi back if your purchases are voluminous or heavy.

Of course we still have the “old” Chedraui on the highway. The taxi ride is about 3 minutes and 30-35 pesos, and the older store is larger and has a slightly larger selection of some items.

Our state government has banned the use of some single-use plastics, and as a result, there are no plastic bags available at the grocery stores. Instead, they have reusable bags available for purchase in the neighborhood of 10 pesos each, or you can always bring your own.

Also, in the age of Covid, there are new and (seemingly) ever-changing rules with regard to alcohol sales. For most of 2020, no sale of alcohol is permitted after 5:00pm on Sundays. So plan ahead!

There are also two Oxxo convenience stores and a new Circle K store near the square that generally have a good selection of beer and other drinks but fewer food and household items. And Oxxo is open 24 hours! There is also a fruit/vegetable store on the Puerto side of town – it is on the third street about two blocks north of the square. There are also some good sources of fruits and vegetables, meats, breads, etc. at various merchants in the Colonia, which is the “other side” of Puerto Morelos on the west side of the highway. You can get to the Colonia via the Colectivo buses for 8 Pesos or by taxi for 30-35 Pesos. Ask us, or anyone else you encounter, for directions to the fruteria, carniceria, panaderia, etc.

Each Wednesday morning there is a fruit/vegetable market just off the square, beside the church and across the street from the Oxxo. You can buy fruits, vegetables, and other products of good quality at relatively low prices.

The town has constructed a walking/biking path along the road from the beach to the highway. It is about a 1.5 mile walk to the Colonia if you wish to exercise while you pick up your groceries!

### **Medical/Dental Care: (Updated for 2018-2019)**

As Puerto Morelos has grown, we have better and better access to health care and dental services. We even have a real hospital now! We have found the care here to be much more personal than in the U.S. (sorry, we have not experienced the care in Canada to be able to comment), and the care and medications here are of high quality and very economical compared to the U.S. Some doctors here still make house calls! Please don’t hesitate to ask us, either in advance of your visit or while you are here, if you have any questions.

### **Bicycles:**

The bicycles on the property are for our personal use only. You can rent a bicycle at various locations around town. Most of them rent by the hour, day, or week and the rates are very reasonable. You can also contact Puerto Morelos Green Bikes and they will deliver the bike(s) here for you and pick them up when you are

finished – 998-734-8132, Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PuertoMorelosGreenBikes/>, email [ride@greenbikesrentals.com](mailto:ride@greenbikesrentals.com).

## **Laundry:**

On the third street there is a lavandería (laundry) that will wash, dry, and fold your laundry for around 15 pesos per kilo! For about 35 cents per pound, who wants to do laundry on vacation? Laundry dropped off in the morning is generally ready by the end of the day, and laundry dropped off in the afternoon is ready the next morning. There is also a self-service laundry on Niños Heroes (the third street back from the beach) across the street from John Gray's Kitchen.

## **Feedback:**

At the end of your stay with us, we will email you soliciting a glowing, amazing, five-star review on TripAdvisor and/or Airbnb. Accordingly, if there is anything that we can do to make your stay with us more comfortable, please do not hesitate to let us know. If you have any problems or issues that would prevent you from awarding us with that glowing five-star review, please tell us. Please don't wait until you get home to tell us that we could have done a better job! Our job is to make your stay as enjoyable as possible, and we will do everything we can to accomplish that.

If you have made it this far, we thank you for taking the time to thoroughly read this document. The remainder is "optional" because it is recommendations for restaurants and activities. Exhausting, we know. But there is a bonus! If you will tell us "We want to claim our prize for reading the Welcome document", your prize is that I promise not to bore you with the in-person, even more tedious version of this lecture! I will answer your questions and then let you start enjoying Puerto Morelos instead of having to listen to me talk for another hour or two.

## **Restaurants:**

At any given time, tiny Puerto Morelos has between 80 and 100 restaurants. Most are very small, and with very few exceptions, all that we have tried have great food and great service at very reasonable prices. Web sites such as TripAdvisor.com are helpful for researching your many choices and reading what your fellow travelers think about them. While independent web sites for small businesses are relatively uncommon here, almost all of our local restaurants (and other businesses) have Facebook pages, and most of the restaurants post the hours/days of operation and photos of their menus and prices on their Facebook page. Many restaurants take a day off – many are closed on Mondays. This may or may not be posted on their Facebook page.

Please understand that in the age of Covid, the status of restaurants and business is very dynamic and fluid. Changes happen daily. Keep an open mind and go with the flow!

Regarding locations, more and more of our restaurants and other business are listed on Google. Use Google to find a particular restaurant, or use Google Maps so see a map of many of our town's restaurants and businesses.

If you find a restaurant that you liked, please tell us about it! There are many that we have never tried and new ones are popping up all the time. Among our favorites are:

**New for 2018-2019! A&V Chef's Choice** – A creation by our neighbors Arnaldo and Vanessa, they welcome you into their home (just a few doors north of Casa Toucan) for an intimate semi-private dinner for up to six people. We were recently invited to dinner in their home and WOW! Arnaldo is an experienced chef from Uruguay and an avid spear fisherman, and many of the creations he will make on your plate were personally caught that same day in the waters offshore from Puerto Morelos. He takes local seafood to a whole new level! Vanessa is his wonderful assistant and will be your hostess. Advance reservations are required, and they offer selections with or without their recommended wines. <https://www.facebook.com/AyVChefsChoice/>

**New for 2018-2019! Burger Underground** – Burgers and house-made fries. Joe started delivering burgers made in his home a year or two ago, and now you can eat-in or pick up at their new retail location on the third street about a block from the entrance to town and the “new” Oxxo. Or you can order and they will deliver. Use Whatsapp! Joe’s number is +52-1-998-353-8838. <https://www.facebook.com/theburgerundergroundpm/>

**New for 2018-2019! Mande Patrón (Carnitas Estilo Michoacán)** – Not new - we just kept forgetting to add them to the list! Pork carnitas sold by the taco or torta, or by weight. The food is delicious and they have a fixins bar with onions, cilantro, pickles, cabbage, etc. and various sauces to dress your taco/torta to your tastes. We have ordered their delicious meat and fixins many times for parties, events, to feed workers, etc. The food and the service have always been excellent, and the prices are VERY economical. They are located on the southbound service road to the highway, between the “old” Chedraui and the Pemex station. There is only an “unofficial” Facebook page, but it correctly shows their location. Everything else you’ll have to experience in person! <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mande-Patr%C3%B3n/324328228120893>

**New for 2018-2019! A La Burger** – Great burgers, wings, and onion rings! On Rojo Gomez (the second street back from the beach) about two blocks north of the square. This unofficial Facebook page shows the correct location: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/A-La-Burguer-Puerto-Morelos/188243205309644>. This location is part of a small chain based in Cancún. This company Facebook page includes their menu: <https://www.facebook.com/A.La.Burger.Cancun/menu/>

**New for 2016! El Campanario** – Great steaks, empanadas, and soups. The steaks here are REALLY good and less than half the price of the other good steaks in town. Currently 240 pesos for a large fillet. About three blocks south on our street, past the town square, the new Chedraui, and hotel Hacienda Morelos. Turn right at the shipping container restaurant (see “DK” below), and El Campanario is on the left side of the street after the health center. <https://www.facebook.com/El-Campanario-100859880304171/>

**New for 2016! DK** – Also known as the “container restaurant” because it was built from an old shipping container. Unique dishes with some Asian influences. Very good and very economical. About three blocks south on our street past Hacienda Morelos on the right side. <https://www.facebook.com/DKPuertoMorelos/>

**New for 2016! Café Lola y Moya** – Great breakfast and lunch choices, fresh juices, and great coffee, and I hear that Ivett (the owner) will be open for dinner soon. About 2.5 blocks south on our street, just past the new Chedraui on the right side. Try the Breakfast Bagel! <https://www.facebook.com/lolaymoya/>

**New for 2014! (Updated for 2018-2019) La Sirena** – located on the second floor above Circle K on the square, La Sirena offers a diverse menu as well as a full bar and draft beer. They frequently feature live music and it is a great spot to catch American college and professional football games, NHL hockey games, etc. Try the Cobb Salad, or the Grilled Chicken Gyro, or the Lion Fish (when available)! <https://www.facebook.com/LaSirenaPM>. La Sirena is now serving breakfast in the main restaurant and balcony as well as afternoon/evening tapas and beverages on the rooftop!

**New for 2014! Caribelos** – located in the former location of the legendary El Tío’s – on our street right before the square. AMAZING shrimp tacos and fish tacos, massive burritos, and unique huevos rancheros. Very reasonable prices and good service from a family-owned and –operated business. <https://www.facebook.com/caribelosPM/>

**New for 2012! El Nicho** – on the opposite corner of the square, between Dona Triny’s and Café de Amancia. Amazing dishes and a great deal of variety. The Eggs Benedict (Bennys) are heavenly. The prices are remarkable as well for such delicious food – everything is less than 120 pesos! <http://www.elnicho.com.mx>

**New for 2012! Unico** – beach bar with excellent food. It’s about a 15-minute walk to the north along the best stretch of beach in Puerto Morelos. Between the “Star Wars” condos and the Casita Blanca condos – you’ll recognize it by the swings around the bar. Fun atmosphere with great staff. Drinks are good, and the Ceviche Caribeño is one of the best we have ever tasted. Out of this world! They generally close around sunset, so it’s

primarily a day-time hangout. <http://www.facebook.com/UnicoBeach>. They also operate a restaurant in the evening on the street-side of the lot, offering delicious brochettes with Argentinian roots.

**Spaghetino** – on Rojo Gomez just past the new Chedraui, close to the street where El Campanario is located. Great Italian, salads, and thin-crust pizzas. Try the Fondue and the Pizza Napolitana!  
<https://www.facebook.com/spaghetino.mx/>

**El Pesquero** – directly across the street and two lots south from Casa Toucan – good seafood, good drinks and great service. They have a nice TV at the bar, and if no one else has requested anything, they will show your sporting event or other selection if they have it. Try the Tuna Tostada and Horseback Shrimp!  
<https://www.facebook.com/elpesqueroportomorelos/>

**El Picudo** – Great seafood in the Colonia. Large portions and very reasonable prices. When you see a lot of taxi drivers at a particular restaurant, you know the food is good and CHEAP! At the far south end of the colonia on the west side of Ave. Zetina Gasca, which is the first large divided avenue that runs north/south in the colonia. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/El-Picudo-Puerto-Morelos/200700186700307>

**La Playita** – about eight lots north of Casa Toucan (walk on the beach!) – enjoy great fish, shrimp, and other seafood and cold beer with your toes in the sand! Try the whole fried boquinete (hog fish).

**T@cos.com** - on Rojo Gomez (the next street back from the beach), to the north of the Square – delicious tacos, including some vegetarian selections, with homemade salsas and gourmet flare. Try a margarita! They are made with a touch of orange juice for incredible flavor. <https://www.facebook.com/TacosCom-209345819093240/>

**John Gray's Kitchen** – on Ninos Heroes (the third street back from the beach), a few hundred meters north of the square. This is the “fancy” restaurant in town, and the only completely indoor restaurant with air conditioning. John Gray had a prolific culinary career with the Ritz Carlton hotel chain, including creating the entire culinary department when the Ritz opened in Cancun. Wonderful entrée selections at very reasonable prices – most are in the 300-450 peso range. Try the Tuna Tostada!  
<https://www.facebook.com/johngrayskitchen/>

## **Recommended Vendors and Activities:**

We only recommend vendors who we have used ourselves and who offer outstanding service. We do not accept commissions or otherwise receive any compensation from the vendors – we simply want you to enjoy your time here so that you will want to return and be our guest again! In addition, most of the vendors we recommend are self-employed, so we know that the money you contribute to the local economy STAYS in the local economy and directly benefits the families here in town, rather than going into the coffers of the large tour companies.

### **Doña Sonia and Chef Marco – New for 2017!**

Sonia and Marco will provide catered meals to your suite or prepare a romantic dinner using your suite's kitchen. The food is excellent! Perfect for celebrating a birthday or anniversary. They also offer cooking classes in your kitchen that our guests have really enjoyed. <http://CateringPuertoMorelos.com>.

### **Alligator's Gym – New for 2016!**

We have a large gym on the southbound service road of the federal highway, a few blocks to the north of the “old” Chedraui. The gym has a large selection of machines, freeweights, and cardio equipment. They offer daily and weekly memberships for visitors to Puerto Morelos at very reasonable prices.  
<https://www.facebook.com/alligatorsgym/>



## **Walking Tour of La Colonia –**

Our friend Ana offers a very interesting and informative tour of the Colonia, which is the “other side” of Puerto Morelos where most of the locals live. We recommend that you take this tour early in your visit, because the information that you learn will benefit you throughout the rest of your visit. Ana will meet you at the square, show you how to use the Collectivos (the local buses), and take you on a tour of the fruit and vegetable markets, restaurants, library, medical center, senior center, and other resources in the Colonia. Once you have “learned the ropes”, you can catch the bus to the Colonia for 8 pesos and pick up fresh fruits, wonderful juices, etc. as often as you like! She will show you a side of Mexico that many visitors do not experience. Ana is originally from Montreal and has lived full-time in Puerto Morelos for many years. She is very active in the local community and very much an activist for preserving and protecting Puerto Morelos from excessive development and activities that would damage our delicate environment. You can reach Ana at [welovepuertomorelos@yahoo.com](mailto:welovepuertomorelos@yahoo.com) or by phone at +52-1-998-201-7060.

## **Massage –**

We prefer massages here in the privacy of Casa Toucan rather than on the beach where you are “on display” for everyone else on the beach, and where you may not be able to relax due to noise from other people on the beach, their children, their dogs, etc. Our recommended masseuse is Blanca, and you can reach her at +52-1-998-202-0875. At the time of this writing, Blanca charges 600 Pesos, which is roughly \$30 USD or \$40 CAD, for a one-hour massage. She will come to the property with a portable, professional massage table and provide you with a wonderful massage in your suite, by the pool, under the palapa, or wherever you feel most comfortable. Most guests have difficulty walking after their massage because Blanca has turned them into a bowl of jello! Blanca also offers salon and spa services in her home. <https://www.facebook.com/Estetica-y-Spa-Mujer-Bonita-593769537407737/>

## **Snorkeling -**

For guided snorkeling tours to the reef we recommend our friend Joaquin. He has lived in Puerto Morelos for decades and provides an excellent boat, equipment, safety, and service. You can't come this close and not visit the world's second-largest barrier reef! Prices are usually \$20-25 USD depending upon the season and level of tourism, and you'll spend 1.5 to two hours visiting one or two locations at our reef just off-shore. You can reach Joaquin at +52-1-998-259-0602. If you have trouble reaching him. Let us know and we can contact him for you.

You can also snorkel directly off the shore. About 200 meters north of Casa Toucan on the beach is a roped-off area with buoys that is the best area to swim and snorkel. We do not recommend swimming too far off the shore other than in the protected areas, because the boat traffic can be dangerous to a swimmer. If you walk the beach until you are even with the large cell phone tower, then swim out and then work your way south, you can see coral formations, fish, barracuda, and rays. There is also an underground cenote with fresh water coming up from the ocean floor – it is our “Ojo de Agua”. Any of the local dive shops or the fishermen's co-op can rent you snorkeling equipment if you would like to explore on your own, but we HIGHLY recommend at least one trip to the reef with a guide to experience our beautiful underwater world!

## **Fishing –**

Ditto – we recommend Joaquin (see Snorkeling above). We think trolling is boring, so we would always ask the captain to take us directly to do some bottom fishing. The captain and the mate will clean or filet your fish for you (please tip them), and many of the local restaurants, including El Picudo, El Pesquero, and La Playita, will prepare your fish for a minimal per-person charge for side items.

## **Diving –**

For diving we recommend Aquanauts Dive Adventures. Their dive shop is now at the Marina at El Cid, about one mile south of town. Don't worry - they will pick you up in town! You can also contact them by phone or email – Crescent is from Canada and will quickly and thoroughly answer any questions you may have. Willy and Crescent are the owners. We all completed our PADI certifications with Aquanauts, and we cannot say enough good things about what a patient and thorough instructor Willy is. Diving has truly been a life-changing experience for us, and we continue to dive with them as often as we can. Highly recommended!

<http://www.aquanautsdiveadventures.com/home.html>

## **Crococun Zoo –**

Located on the main federal highway about 10 minutes north from Puerto Morelos. The taxi fare should be around 150 pesos. See a variety of wildlife, including wildlife, monkeys, deer, birds, and various reptiles, and of course HUNDREDS of crocodiles. It's a unique, interactive experience. Definitely take your camera!

<http://www.crococunzoo.com/>

## **The Little Mexico Cooking School (Since 2018-19 they are temporarily on sabbatical pending relocation)**

A unique introduction to local foods and their preparation taught by a Mexican chef. Learn to make tortillas, tamales, salsas, guacamole, and unique drinks! Hosted by Cat, who is an expat from Australia. Use discount code "Casa Toucan" for a 5% discount when booking online. <http://www.thelittlemexicancookingschool.com/>

## **Taxi –**

Taxis are readily available and very economical in Puerto Morelos. As you would anywhere, verify the fare before you get in the taxi to avoid any misunderstandings. You can call for a taxi at +52-1-998-871-0090. The dispatchers speak enough English to help you, and they know where Casa Toucan is located.

Taxis here are generally for up to four passengers. If you need a larger vehicle we recommend Gerardo, who is the brother of our gardener Enrique. He speaks some english and you can call him at +52-1-998-180-5777. Gerardo also offers private tours to Chichen Itza, Tulum, Coba, Shopping in Cancún or Playa del Carmen, night clubs, etc. He drives a very nice, spacious, comfortable van.

## **Mayan Ruins –**

We have numerous ruins within a convenient distance of Puerto Morelos. You can explore the Mayan ruins of Tulum, Coba, Chichen Itza, or Ek Balam. Tulum is the closest – about 1.5 hours by car/bus. Chichen Itza is the largest, and at Ek Balam and Coba you can still climb the pyramids. You have various transportation options, including a local rental car agency (around \$30-50 USD per day, insurance included), buses, and local taxis. You can hire a taxi for the day, and he will take you wherever you would like! A common day trip is a visit to Chichen Itza (get there early before the tour buses arrive), then to one of the large cenotes in the area, and then a trip to either the ruins at Ek Balam or to visit the city of Valladolid for culture, food, and shopping.

## **Cenotes –**

We have numerous cenotes located close to Puerto Morelos along the "Ruta de los Cenotes". Our favorite is Verde Lucero, which is about 15 minutes away by car. It is small, but never crowded, and usually 300 pesos per person for entry. Pack a picnic lunch and/or a cooler for drinks (we have styrofoam coolers in the pool house that you are welcome to use) and spend part of the day relaxing, swimming, and jumping/diving off the cliffs into the cenote. There are numerous other cenotes along this road offering various degrees of development and amenities. <https://www.facebook.com/cenoteverdelucero/>

### **Jardin de los Tejones –**

“Garden of the Tejones” is on the third street back from the beach, about 100 meters north of the square on the inland side of the street. It is just a vacant lot with trees. A tejon is also known as a Coatimundi – it’s a mammal that is a relative of the raccoon. They are cute and fun to watch, especially the babies. They generally gather here in this lot during cooler times of the day – mornings before 11:00 or so, and sometimes again in the late afternoon or early evening. Be careful – crocodiles have recently invaded the Jardin, so stay behind the fence!

### **Botanical Gardens del Dr. Alfredo Barrera -**

The Botanical Gardens offer a peaceful self-guided walk through beautiful plants and animals. It is common to see monkeys in the canopy overhead and various other types of life. Take comfortable walking shoes and enjoy exploring this peaceful place. Admission was 120 pesos at last report, and a taxi should cost 100 pesos each way. <https://www.facebook.com/jardinbotanico.ecosur>