

Updated April 2025

IMPORTANT! All of our guests, even if you have been to the island in the past, we have NEW INFO! Please carefully and completely read the following information to make sure your trip to Isla Mujeres is the best it can be!

TICKETS

We DO NOT mail out paper tickets for these events. You can print out your paypal receipt if you like but it is not necessary. We keep a guest list with us, so you do not need to bring tickets with you or take the chance of losing them. We will check everyone in from that list at the Welcome Party and provide your badge and lanyard.

Note: If for some reason you cannot make the trip, please contact us so that we can adjust the guest list...but don't worry, even though we cannot refund tickets, your tickets can be used at any future IslandFest or Island Showcase.

WHERE WE STAY ON THE ISLAND

If you have not already, please make your lodging arrangements. Our Host Hotel is Nautibeach Condos, both beach concerts and the pool party are walking distance from the hotel. Please book your condo DIRECTLY with Nautibeach at 1.888.428.8599 and **reference Songwriters Island**, we have all of the rooms blocked for this event. You will not find better accommodations at a great price in such a beautiful place.

We reserve all of the condos in the Nautibeach rental group to get a good, discounted rate. Once those are sold out, you still have some options at Nautibeach. If you do not book your condo in time to get one of our rooms, please contact the following owners for additional condo availability.

Keith Turner (condos 1, 7, 10, 18, penthouse 32)
kmxxx@aol.com

Katy Hochmayr (condos 5, 6, 9, 17)
katy@nautibeachcondos.com

Marla Bainbridge (condo 22)
marla@islamujeresvacationrentals.com

If the owner units are sold out, please try Expedia:
<https://www.expedia.com/Cancun-Hotels-Nautibeach-Condos.h4015554.Hotel-Information>

And if Nautibeach is full, please consider Ixchel Beach next door to Nautibeach:
<https://www.ixchelbeachhotel.com>

Email me at sdensler@songwritersisland.com for other options once these are all full.

Remember that when you book at Nautibeach, not only are you with the rest of the group, but when you book our block of rooms through the rental office, we get credit that pays for the musicians' rooms.

AIR TRAVEL

If you have not already, please make your air travel arrangements. You will fly into Cancun. Most of our guests will fly in on Wednesday or Thursday morning to make it to the welcome party on Thursday afternoon (or earlier if you want to spend more time on the island) and fly out on Monday or Tuesday afternoon. **Try not to book return flights early in the morning so you have time to get the ferry off the island, and then a cab to arrive at the airport 2 hrs before flight time since it is an international flight. If you do need to stay a night on the Cancun side of the ferry, we have friends that own a cozy and inexpensive AirBnB called Kiosco Folk, 2 blocks from the ferry. Talk to Daniela and Octavio at this link:**
<https://www.airbnb.co.in/rooms/21848603>

PASSPORTS

We know we don't have to say this, but we will anyway. Make sure you bring your passport. Even more important, check it now to make sure it is still valid on your travel dates, they want it to be valid for at least 6 months after your travel dates. Expedited passport fees are very expensive so be proactive.

IMMIGRATION & CUSTOMS

There is no longer a paper Tourist Visa card to fill in on your flight to Mexico. But you may need your boarding pass for your inbound flight, please do not lose it. Have your boarding pass and your passport in your hand when you get off the plane. Then walk to Immigration (just follow the crowd). Once you have gone through Immigration and they stamp your passport, they will return your passport to you.

Then, go through the duty-free area to the baggage claim area. After you have your baggage, go to the Customs area (Aduana in Spanish). Depending on which terminal you fly into, you may be asked to press a button. Green light - you pass through. Red light - they will look at your luggage or an officer may randomly pick you to have your luggage examined. Be honest about what you are carrying, and do not bring cartons of cigarettes, drugs, liquor, etc into Mexico. After you are through customs, it is time for transportation from the airport to the ferry.

TRANSPORTATION TO THE FERRY

You will want to book a transfer from the airport to the ferry dock **before your trip**, cabs can get expensive in Cancun. We have a private driver that is a personal friend that will have one of his guys pick you up in his van at the airport and drop you off at the ferry and the reverse on your return trip. His name is Lalo from Isla Fun Tours, and you can reach him on WhatsApp at +52 1 998 147 7503 or email at islafuntours@outlook.com or Facebook messenger at <https://www.facebook.com/eduardo.torresgarcia.5>

If you use Lalo, he will do his best to try and get you in a van with other guests coming to the shows so you can save money since you are paying for the van, not per person. If using Lalo, the one-way trip will be around \$50 plus tip split among ALL of the riders. Same for the return trip.

Special! If you use Lalo and have 8 or more people arriving together and the weather is nice, he will give you an option of a private boat to Isla Mujeres instead of taking the ferry for the same cost as the ferry!

If you prefer a transfer company, we have also had great experiences with USA Transfers, CARM, and Happy Shuttle.

<http://usa-transfers.com/transfers.html>

<http://www.cancunandrivieramaya.com/transfers/isla-mujeres.asp>

<https://happyshtuttlecancun.com/>

To make things simple for you, the van company (and Lalo) will offer to sell you ferry tickets, they are the same price as at the ferry dock so you can buy the package if you like to make it easier. When you book your transfer, make sure you are going to the Isla Mujeres Ferry at Puerto Juarez. It is cheaper and faster than the one at the Hotel Zone.

After you clear customs and immigration, you will go through the sliding glass doors and talk to NONE of the folks with the deals, they will be trying to sell you timeshares or high-priced taxis to the Ferry port. After you pass through that area, go outside and look for your transfer driver (look for your name on their sign). They will be tracking your flight and waiting for you. They will take you directly to Gran Puerto/Puerto Juarez, the ferry dock to Isla Mujeres. The taxi trip typically takes 20 to 30 minutes. If you are using a transfer company, you will pay for the round trip in US Dollars at this time and they will schedule your return trip with you. It's nice to tip your driver a few dollars when you are dropped off.

FERRY & BAGGAGE

When you arrive at the ferry port, if you did not buy tickets through your van driver, go into the ferry ticket office and buy your ferry tickets to Isla Mujeres for approx \$32 USD round-trip and get in line for the next ferry. (The trip takes 20 minutes and the ferries run every 30 minutes from 6 am -11 pm.) When you go through the line, they will scan your ferry ticket. Keep the ticket for your return trip.

Two ways to handle baggage: You may have a bellboy take it when you leave the shuttle. He will take your bags and safely stow them in the back of the ferry. Plan to tip them about \$1 USD per bag (or 20 peso equivalent). Or, you can take your own bags through the line and place them yourself in the back of the ferry.

CHECK-IN

There are two ways to get to Nautibeach. You can walk or take a taxi. If you decide to take a taxi, go out the front of the ferry building to the street. The taxi stand is to the left, and there may be a line.

If you decide to walk, ask one of the trustworthy “maleteros” (luggage guys) to take your luggage to Nautibeach in a tricycle. A tip of \$2 USD per bag is appropriate, but tip them at least \$5 dollars total, a little more if they carry your luggage up the stairs at Nautibeach for you. When you leave the ferry, take a left onto the main road. You will walk about 5 blocks along the ocean. When the main road curves to the right, keep going straight down the street with paving stones. Turn right at the guard shack, then proceed to the rental office which is down the path, turn right after the pool and you will see the office in front of you. You will check in at the rental office to pick up your keys and receive your bracelets for use of the pool and beach areas. If you have booked your room through someone other than the Nautibeach rental block, then please follow the directions provided by your rental agency.

WHILE YOU ARE HERE

If you need anything during your stay, please go to the Rental Office and they will assist you. Please do not feel bad about letting them know about anything you need during your stay (i.e., an English-speaking doctor, tour and activity information, light bulbs, leaky faucets, etc.) They are there to make your trip the best it can be.

Daily housekeeping is available at no charge, but tips are much appreciated. If you have a full cleaning, 100 pesos per cleaning is appropriate; just place it in the tip basket. You will get your pool/beach towels from the rental office.

****Please remember that each condo at Nautibeach is individually owned. Please do not move items from one condo to another, or leave items from the condo by the pool or beach (especially towels, silverware and other kitchen items)**

The pool, lounge chairs, umbrellas and tables around the pool and beach are for registered Nautibeach guests only. The lounge chairs and umbrellas behind Mayan Beach Club are available to everyone.

Each room has large dispensers of purified water in the condos for no extra charge. It is fine to use tap water for brushing teeth but use purified water for cooking and drinking.

Mexico uses the same electrical outlets as the U.S. and Canada.

Most of the condos have their own private internet line. Please look on the modem for the wifi name and password.

MONEY

Some Isla restaurants, taxis, and stores operate on a cash-only basis. The best way to handle this, is to convert USD to pesos. To get the best exchange rate, exchange dollars for pesos at your bank at home before you leave and then as needed at an indoor ATM at one of the banks on the island, the ferry port on Isla Mujeres (you may need your passport), or at the office at Nautibeach. Most places will take US Dollars, but most will not give favorable exchange rates so do not use US Dollars to pay for stuff. Many places are now taking credit cards also. If you are asked if you want to charge in dollars or pesos, the answer is always pesos. We use credit cards (best exchange rate) where we can and pay for everything else with pesos.

GOLF CARTS

Golf Carts have gotten expensive on the island. If you want a Golf Cart, you can book golf carts ahead of time, but we recommend that you wait and negotiate a better deal when you get to the island. There are plenty of rental places near the ferry port and you can also rent them right at Nautibeach although those are more expensive. Some people like to have one for the duration of their stay but if you are comfortable walking, you do not need one all of the time, consider renting one for a trip around the island on Saturday or get together with other guests and share one. We typically DO NOT rent a cart, there are so many very inexpensive taxis on the island, you can go from one end of the island to the other with up to 3 people for 150-200 pesos.

One last note, please read: The local police are getting tough on drinking and driving on golf carts. Seems that a lot of the folks staying in Cancun and coming to the island for the day have been getting a bit carried away and had several wrecks so they have instituted a no-tolerance policy and it is not cheap, so please no drinking and driving on golf cart, I wouldn't even have an open container to be safe. IT IS OUR RECOMMENDATION THAT YOU DO NOT RENT GOLF CARTS AT ALL. IT IS THE ONLY ISSUE OUR GUESTS HAVE HAD ON THIS BEAUTIFUL ISLAND. Take cabs, it is much easier, safer, and cheaper. Personal experience, trust us please.

OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO KNOW

Water Activities (snorkeling, diving, fishing trips, catamarans, private water ferry to/from the island, etc) – Call or WhatsApp Lalo or Ana at Isla Fun Tours at +52 558 492 5490 or <https://islafuntours.com>

TAXIS

Our favorite Taxi drivers on the island – Call or WhatsApp:

Yuri at +52 998 320 8628

Marcos at +52 998 489 8793

Alex at +52 477 114 7293

Luis at +52 998 222 4829

Milton at +52 998 158 6850

Jose Lara (late nights) at +52 998 409 8616

Our favorite massage (on the beach or in your condo):
WhatsApp Monica (Mooniik) at +52 998 347 2955

Concierge Services including shopping trips
WhatsApp Jules at +52 99 8161 6832

OUR FAVORITE BARS AND RESTAURANTS ON THE ISLAND

(*indicates cab or golf cart required)

Breakfast

Lola Valentina (Coconut French Toast)
Mayan Beach Club
Coffee and Churros (next to Lola Valentina)
North Garden
Café Mogagua
*Mango Café (Coconut French Toast)

Lunch

Mayan Beach Club
Lola Valentina
Isla Burger
Tacos de Humo
Snappers Sports Bar (love their Curry Chicken)
Mercado Municipal/Loncheria San Martin (across from Hotel Las Palmas)
*Aurora (Get the Jucy Lucy with the cheese inside)
*Skulls Landing (Crunchy Coconut Shrimp Tacos)

Dinner

Mayan Beach Club (ask them to put a table on the beach at sunset for you)
Lola Valentina (everything is great here, try the guacamole)
Xantolo (Delicious Mayan Inspired food)
Mariscos de Humo
El Patio
Javis Cantina (just amazing)
Grill Garden
Rolandi's (late night pizza and ice cream)
*Limon (Sergio cooks for you in his back yard, need a cab to get there, need a reservation)
*Rosa Sirena
Street Vendors at the end of Hidalgo St.

Coffee & Dessert

Coffee and Churros (next to Lola Valentina)
Marquesita street vendors (you can't eat just one)

Late night tacos!

Agave Tacos (next to Lola Valentina, get the Costras!)

Taco truck at the end of Hidalgo St (my go-to for late night tacos al pastor)

Bars

Lola Valentina

Xantolo

Mayan Beach Club

Romano Restaurant Bar

El Patio

*Soggy Peso

*The Joint

*Borracho Burro