

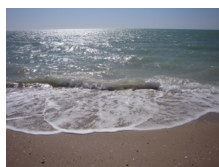
Puerto Peñasco is Waiting for You; What Are You Waiting For?

Written by Gretchen Corpe Ellinger

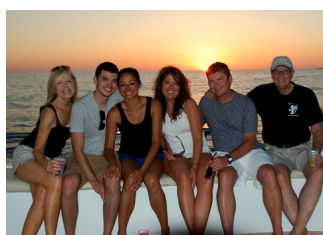
Just a 4 hour drive from Phoenix or Tucson, and a world away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, Puerto Peñasco, also known as Rocky Point, is worth a visit! The drive itself is a treat; regardless of your route, you will travel over roads in excellent condition through interesting historic places such as Gila Bend and Ajo or Sells and Why, Arizona, and some of the world's most beautiful desert scenery in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The Sea of Cortez lies at the end of the road, with its calm turquoise waters, wide beaches, and the town of Puerto Peñasco to welcome you.



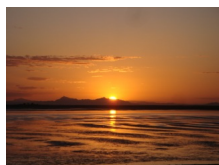
Where to stay? Rocky Point offers accommodations for every taste and budget. Rent a condo - there are many choices, ranging from very nice to luxury, on the beach and off, with a range of prices, depending on the location and size of the condo, and the number of people in your party. Many condo developments are self-contained, and once settled, you may not want to leave - restaurants, swimming pools, gyms, business centers and even shops are on-site. Or stay in a hotel, which abound in every price range, and are located both on and off the beach. Many have their own restaurants, or are in close proximity to local restaurants, and may also be found near shopping and local nightlife. Regardless of where you stay, you'll not be far from the sparkling Sea of Cortez.



Don't worry about language! In Rocky Point the language of friendship is spoken first, and regardless of the native language of the visitor, smiling communication is generally established. Spanish and English are the most common languages spoken in Puerto Peñasco, but people from around the world find their way to this wonderful village by the sea, and the occasional French, German, Portuguese and other languages may be heard. The friendly "Rockyportenses" will welcome you with wide smiles and open arms, regardless of your native tongue.



Don't worry about money! While the Mexican peso is the legal currency, US dollars are accepted nearly everywhere, and exchanging money is not necessary. Your best bet is to carry small bills - you will want dollar bills for tips and small purchases, and a supply of fives and tens. A twenty dollar bill is considered a large bill, and businesspeople often have trouble making change for larger bills. If you would prefer to have a supply of pesos for purchases, they can be easily obtained at one of the ATM machines, using your USA debit or credit card. As well, many hotels, gas stations, and larger shops will accept your card - ask before buying! Don't worry about safety! Puerto Peñasco has a long record of safety for tourists and citizens alike, and the route from the border crossing at Lukeville/Sonoyta to Rocky Point is well-traveled, with thousands of visitors each month making the trip without incident. Federal highway patrol and the Green Angels, who are rolling mechanic services, cruise the route and routinely stop to assist travelers with car trouble, flat tires, and the like. While not a necessity, the trip can be easily made from start to finish during daylight hours, allowing travelers to enjoy the incredible scenery.



A few small details before leaving home will assure that your trip is easy. While you need no visa or other special permits to travel to Puerto Peñasco, since it is located in the "free" zone of Mexico, you will need Mexico trip insurance for your car, which can be obtained online before leaving home, or at any of several insurance offices along the way. This coverage is necessary even if your regular insurance carrier covers you car in Mexico, because Mexican law requires that you have a Mexican car insurance policy. You will need your US passport or birth certificate to re-enter the US when you return. Some people like to arrange with their phone providers for cell phone coverage in Mexico for their trips. If you usually travel with your dog, be sure that your lodging allows pets, then be sure to bring your dog's record of current vaccinations, plus leash, enough food for your stay, and supplies for poo patrol. So what are you waiting for? Bring a jacket for cool evenings, sunscreen, hats and sunglasses for the warm days, and your sense of adventure! You may just fall in love with Rocky Point!