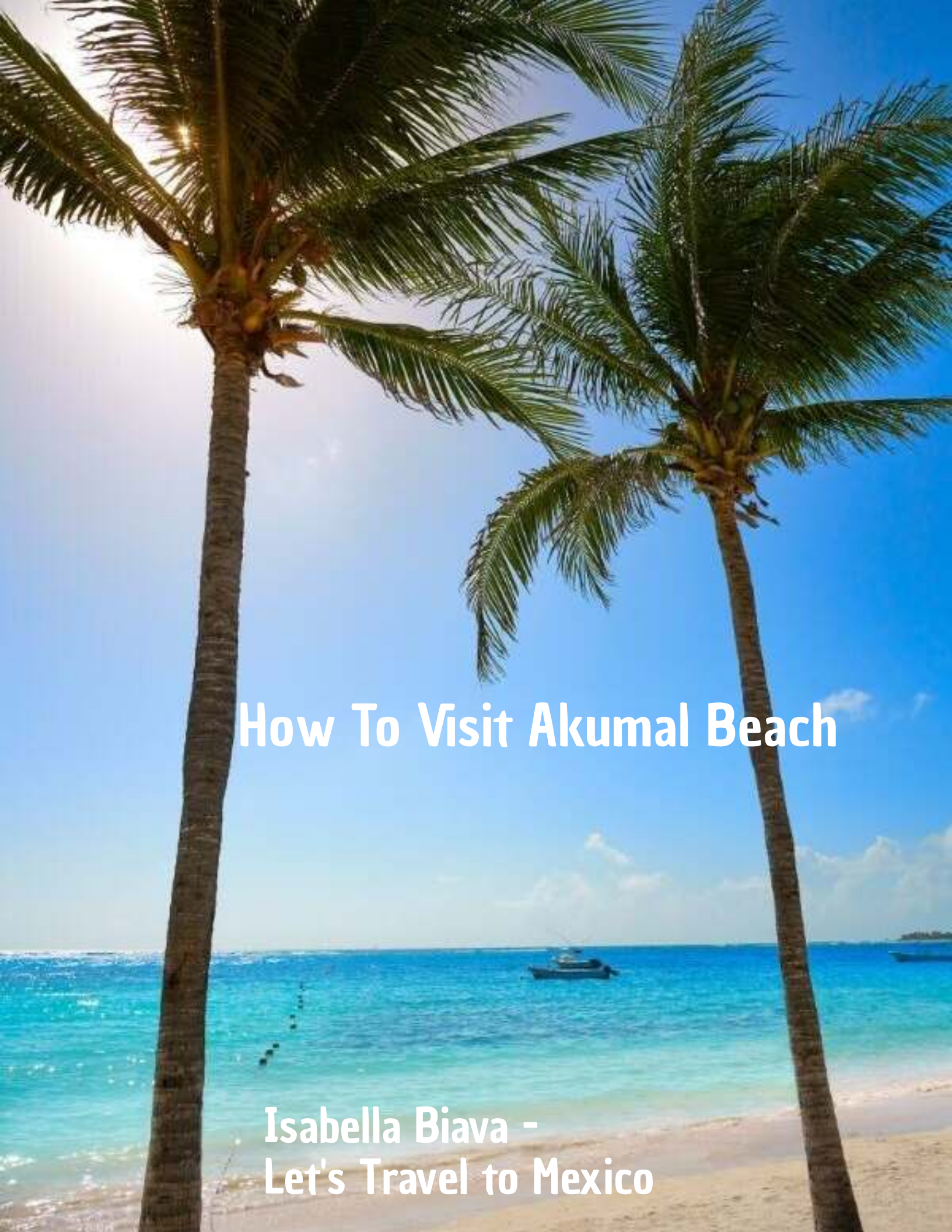




How To Visit Akumal Beach

Isabella Biava -
Let's Travel to Mexico

How To Visit Akumal Beach

Akumal is a small beach town on Mexico's Maya Riviera. Its name means "Place of the Turtle" in the Mayan language. If you go to the Akumal Beach or Playa Akumal, you'll see where it gets its name.

This beach welcomes thousands of visitors every year and is famous for swimming with the turtles in Mexico but also for its white sands, warm waters, and rich marine life.

Akumal Beach is extremely beautiful and worth visiting.

➤ *Do I need travel insurance in Mexico?* **Yes, you do!** I can never stress enough what a lifesaver it can be in unexpected situations. Although I hope I never need it, it gives me peace of mind to know that whatever happens I am covered. I have been using [Safety Wing](#) and I find it quite fair, covering a lot for its pricing level. Depending on your needs or you can compare different insurance companies on this useful site, [TRAVEL INSURANCE MASTER](#). Make sure you read carefully what's included before making the purchase. If you are undecided yet you can read my post on the [best travel insurance for Mexico](#) for more clarity.

Today, I'll take you on a trip to the beach and its surrounding area and show you what to do in Playa Akumal besides swimming with the turtle, including some of the best [Mexico snorkeling](#) spots,.

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11. Isabella, author, editor, and founder

What's special about Playa Akumal?

Playa Akumal offers tourists the unique experience of swimming with turtles in Mexico (please don't touch them though). You also get to see underwater coral reefs and other marine life.

The turquoise waters are very clear and swimming in them is a very enjoyable experience.

If that sounds like your gem, you'll have to get here very early during the day.

Only 200 people are allowed to swim in the protected turtle zone each day.

If you want to be one of those people, get here as early as possible and hire a guide to show you the best spots where you can swim with the turtles.

Although until a couple of years ago you could swim with the turtle on your own, now it's not possible anymore and you need to hire a guide to get to the spot where you are sure to see them.

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However, if you want to take your chance and avoid the guided tour, you can swim a little further east out of the marked area and you may be able to see them anyway. It's less certain but possible as the turtles are free to swim wherever they want.

The guide is only mandatory in a limited area that is well marked with buoys.

The turtles themselves are very used to swimming with human beings since they see thousands of us every year. It's quite a unique experience.

Just make sure not to go too close to them and please don't touch them. While they're not dangerous, you can easily cause harm to them.

There's also an abundance of other types of marine life that you can enjoy fishing with, such as barracudas, stingrays, and manta rays.

While the beach itself is easily one of the best parts of **Akumal**, the area around it is extremely beautiful as well. After all, you don't want to take a long trip just to visit a beach and then take a trip back to your hotel.

To the north, [Laguna Yal Ku](#) (which closes at 5 PM), and the famous Half-moon Bay.

To the south, you'll find Jade Bay, which has residential communities, tourist resorts, and other tourist attractions. The town and the whole area, in general, are surrounded by lush greenery and have all sorts of wildlife.

Now that you know *why* you should visit Akumal Beach, let me tell you some of the ways you can use to get here.

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How To Visit Akumal Beach

Getting to Akumal beach by car

If you're currently in Playa Del Carmen, I recommend [renting a car](#) and taking the 307 highway south. The drive should take you about 30-40 minutes maximum from both towns.

If you're in [Tulum](#) and have a car, you'll have to drive north on the 307 highway. It'll take you about 30 minutes this way too.

You may be interested in my detailed post about [renting a car in Mexico](#), and the one about [Driving in Mexico](#) for some tips while on the road, in case you are concerned or want to get some tips from a local.

Also if you rent a car, you are free to explore the surrounding area and check out the nearby attraction, such as the best cenotes on the Riviera Maya (Azul and Taak-bi-ha) or the nearby [Xpu-ha beach](#), one of my favorite [beaches in Mexico](#)!

Getting to Akumal by Taxi

If you don't have a car, you can take a taxi from [Tulum or Playa Del Carmen](#) directly to Akumal. Make sure to agree on the fare with the driver beforehand to avoid any unpleasantness when you arrive at the destination.

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Getting to Akumal by public transportation

If you have luggage and are planning to stay in the area, I don't recommend this option because the colectivos are often small and don't have enough room for your luggage.

Colectivos are the best option for you if you're just going to the area on a [day trip](#) and are on a budget. A "collective" (small bus) costs about 35-45 pesos per person.

Hotels near Akumal Beach

In case you decide to stay in the area (which you absolutely should), here are a few hotels you can choose from.

Las Villas Akumal

If you're looking for somewhere with a quiet atmosphere and great views of the Mediterranean Sea, then this beachfront hotel is the place to stay.

It's a great hotel for families and friends to stay in, as it focuses on giving you a feeling of home away from home. You can book villas, apartments, or rooms, according to your requirements.

Check rates and availability on [Booking.com](#)

Secrets Akumal Riviera Maya

[Secrets Akumal](#) is a 5-star all-inclusive, adults-only resort with multiple spas, pools, and different types of restaurants and bars. It's perfect for couples who are here on a honeymoon. You'll be living in luxury, and the food is delicious.

Check rates and availability on [Booking.com](#)

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Hotel SAK-NAJ

It's the perfect hotel for you if you're on a budget. It's situated within walking distance of the highway, so you can easily get colectivos, and the beach is only a 10-15 minutes walk away.

The staff and service are excellent and you'll get the best bang for your buck here.

Check rates and availability on [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com)



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The best time to visit Akumal Beach

You'll want to visit Akumal Beach between June and November, as this is the turtle nesting season and you'll maximize your chances of swimming with the turtles.

More specifically, September is when you're most likely to see the turtles.

Make sure to have plenty of [sunscreens](#) as you can easily get sunburnt, even when it's cloudy and even when you're under the shade.

If you're planning on staying until sundown and even later, keep a mosquito repellant with you.

As I mentioned earlier, only 200 people can swim with the turtles per day because it's a protected zone. So make sure to get here as early in the day as possible and reserve your spot.

You'll also want to hire a guide to show you the best spots where you can swim with the turtles.

If you're planning to stay in the area, September to November is also the best season because there aren't a lot of tourists in the area and you'll get the best prices for your rooms.

Not to mention it'll be much more peaceful at the beach.

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Kay Beach Club

Top tours to visit Akumal Beach

If you don't want to visit on your own because you are short of time or there are incredible tours that you can join from wherever you are staying, whether it is Cancun or Tulum or anywhere in between they will come and pick you up and take you to the most incredible places, including Akumal beach for swimming with the turtles.

Here I am sharing the top tours that I have selected for you.

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1. Half-Day Sea Turtle and Cenote Snorkeling Guided Tour



★ 268 Reviews - Duration 5 hours (approx)

► [Book the half-day Sea Turtle and Cenote Snorkeling tour now](#)

This is an incredible snorkeling tour that includes Akumal beach and a spectacular cave cenote, two of the most popular snorkeling spots in the area.

This tour last half-day and includes transportation, a guide, entrance fees, and snacks.

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How To Visit Akumal Beach

2. Tulum Ruins Private Tour with Turtle and Cenote Snorkeling



106 Reviews - Duration 7-8 hours (approx)

► [Book the private tour to Tulum Ruins with Turtle and Cenote Snorkeling](#)

This tour is perfect for those who have a limited time and want to see as much as possible in one day

- ✓ Tulum Ruins guided visit
- ✓ Swimming with the turtles in Akumal
- ✓ Cenote Dos Ojos guided tour

Also, the fact that's a private tour makes it even better as you have the guide all for yourself and they can tailor the schedule to your liking.

3. Swim With the Sea Turtles in Akumal



106 Reviews - Duration 1hr 15 min (approx)

► [BOOK NOW your tour to swim with the sea turtles in Akumal](#)

This is the basic Akumal tour organized by the Akumal Ecological Guide. You will meet your guide right there in Akumal and the price includes entry fees, equipment, and a guided tour.

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How To Visit Akumal Beach

Swimming in an area known for sea turtles and cenotes tour



★ 9 Reviews - Duration 5 hrs (approx)

► [Swimming in an area known for sea turtles and cenotes tour](#)

This is another tour that is perfect for snorkeling lovers! In fact, you will be swimming and snorkeling in the sea from Akumal beach to see the turtles and then you will be one of the spectacular cenotes on the Riviera Maya for more swimming.



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How To Visit Akumal Beach

What to wear in Akumal

Here you will find my [packing tips](#) for your day trip to Akumal

- ✓ Shorts and tank top (see below)
 - ✓ [Hat](#) (for the strong sun)
 - ✓ [Swimsuits](#)
 - ✓ [Beach towel](#)
 - ✓ [Snorkeling gear](#) – I know that you can rent it or if you book a tour it's included but it's much better if you have your own.
 - ✓ [Dry bag](#) for your belonging
 - ✓ [GoPro Hero10](#) for amazing pictures
 - ✓ [waterproof pouch](#) for your phone
 - ✓ [Mosquito Repellent](#) (eco friendly)
 - ✓ [Sunscreen](#) (eco friendly)
-

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How To Visit Akumal Beach

FAQ about Akumal Beach

Does Akumal have nice beaches?

Akumal Beach is the most popular beach in the area because of the swimming with the turtle activity, and it's very beautiful but also very busy.

However, you should know that Akumal is also the name of the town and it covers a more extended stretch of coast, which includes other amazing beaches.

Unfortunately, although the beaches in Mexico are public and free most of those beaches in Akumal are reachable by staying in one of those hotels such as [Sunscape Akumal](#) or [Bahia Principe](#).

However, I have a pro tip for you.

Bahia Principe has now opened a new beach club that's called [Kay BeachClub](#) for those who are not staying in the hotel. It's located on the spectacular Akumal Beach right in front of the Coral reef one of the [best places for snorkeling from Tulum](#).

It only costs 15 USD (300 MXN) to access but you can use the 15 USD as a credit for your food, which is great if you want to spend at least a few hours on the beach.

Is Akumal Mexico safe for tourists?

Akumal it's quite safe for tourists as it's a very busy and popular area.

However, some common sense use will not hurt, for example, knowing that you can't leave your personal belongings unattended.

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Is Akumal Beach free?

Akumal beach is free, just like all beaches in Mexico, but the local businesses have made it difficult to access.

To access the beach there are a few entrances. You can try to pass by the hotel by the arch and they may let you in for free if you don't use their facilities. Or further on beside the dive shop, you may find an entry door. Right before the parking lot, after the dive shop, you will find another beach entrance gate. There you pay something like 5 USD but you have the use of the lockers and bathroom facilities which may come in handy. I believe it's worth the price.

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Parking in Akumal Beach

You will find different parking lots along the beach road in Akumal. The first you find on the left is 20MXN per hour, but if you stay more than 3 hours you are better off with the next parking lot which is only 50 MXN for the entire day.



Can you snorkel off the beach in Akumal?

Some time ago vendors were trying to talk you into buying their snorkeling tours saying that it was mandatory if you wanted to see the turtles. Nowadays this issue has been sorted out, but, indeed, you can't swim in a certain area on your own. You will need to get a local guide for that.

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But you can snorkel off the beach in Akumal on your own and still find turtles hanging out even if you are not in the designated area because they are free.



Is it better to stay in Tulum or Akumal?

Well, Tulum is a very busy and much bigger resort town and I don't think they can compare.

It depends on what you are looking for. Akumal doesn't offer much in terms of restaurants and places to hang out. However, if you have a car rental it could be a peaceful destination to use as a base and then explore the surroundings by car. There are a lot of beachfront villas or hotels in the Akumal area that may be worth checking out.

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Can you walk along the beach in Akumal?

Yes, Akumal has different bays that are not connected. If you go to the Key Club that I mentioned before you cannot walk to Akumal beach where the turtles are because the beach is interrupted.

However, each of those areas has quite an extended stretch of beach for a nice long walk.

Things to do around Akumal Beach

Akumal beach can make a day trip by itself but you may want to use your day to explore other amazing places in the area.

One of the best places near Akumal is [Yal-Ku lagoon](#), located just a few miles passed Akumal beach along the same beach road, it's one of the best places for snorkeling in Mexico.

Along the federal highway, there are other interesting spots to visit, including some of the best cenotes of the Riviera Maya, such as [Cenote Azul](#) at 16 minutes drive, and [Cenote Dos Ojos](#) and [Taak Bi Ha](#) at 20 minutes drive.

Also, [Xpu-ha beach](#) is worth visiting.

If you are [staying in Tulum](#) and going back to your place you may want to check out [Casa Cenote](#) as well.

As you can see there are so many things to do in the area.

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How to enjoy Akumal Beach by respecting the environment

We live in a fragile environment which we are deteriorating just by existing.

However, there are a few simple actions that will help with its preservation and at least cause less damage.

Here are a few:

- ✓ Do not litter
- ✓ If you see some rubbish on the beach or in the water pick it up and put it in the first available trash bin
- ✓ Don't try to touch the turtles or disturb them in any way. Keep your distance.
- ✓ Don't feed the turtle. They are in their natural environment. If you start feeding them they will start relying on humans for food and they lose their natural instinct and ability to find it on their own. This is very important.
- ✓ Use a reef-safe sunblock or even better avoid putting sunblock before entering the water.
- ✓ If you see somebody who doesn't follow the above rules or is disrespectful in anyways let them know (kindly if you can)
- ✓ Don't be loud. Other people have the right to enjoy the beach
- ✓ Don't do anything stupid!

If you think of any other good rules, that I didn't mention please let me know.

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How To Visit Akumal Beach

MEXICO TRAVEL TIPS

Do I need travel insurance to travel to Mexico?

I would do it if I were you. You never know what can happen and know that no matter what, you will be covered with any expenses will give you peace of mind, and make your travel worry-free. You can check out [SafetyWing](#) which I have used and find it affordable and comprehensive and also [Travel Insurance Master](#) which is great because you can insert all your information and what kind of insurance you need and their system will pull out the best insurance for your need.

Can I drink tap water in Mexico?

No, you can't! Maybe in some areas or in some homes where they have installed water filters but to be on the safe side, I would say, never drink tap water in Mexico. Carry a [water bottle](#) with you and fill it up where you find available potable water sources. Most of the hotels have those.

Is it safe to drive in Mexico?

The short answer is: depending on where you are. Although in general if you stick to the main roads and don't drive at night you should probably be safe. In lesser tourist areas you should probably check the local news to stay up to date. Driving in the Yucatan Peninsula is easy everywhere, even at night, although I would still avoid it. I usually use [Discover Cars](#) because the site offers the options to compare prices among different car rentals and you can add their own full coverage. Read more on my guide on Renting a car in Mexico.

Will my phone work in Mexico?

It will probably work, especially if you have a European or US phone, but your roaming rates may be to the stars (check with your SIM provider). Even if have an affordable international rate, you will be much better off by buying a [Mexican SIM Card](#). It's cheap, easy to set up, and it will keep you connected with your friends, family, and, more important, google Maps so you will never get lost!

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Is it safe to travel to Mexico right now?

The short answer is, yes it is. However, there are parts of Mexico that are indeed troubled and you should avoid for now, and others that are super safe and easy to travel around.

Regardless of where you are you should always use some common sense rules such as, never flaunting expensive clothing, accessories, electronics, or money and keeping a low profile. Read more on my detailed guide on safety in Mexico. If you are traveling to a specific destination I have got you covered as well:

- [Is Cancun Safe?](#)
- [Is Tulum Safe?](#)
- [Is Puerto Vallarta safe?](#)

Do I need any vaccine to travel to Mexico?

No, there is no vaccine requirement (of any kind) to travel to Mexico

Do I need a visa to travel to Mexico?

If you are coming from the US or Europe you don't need a VISA to enter Mexico. Once you get in you need to fill out a form that you need to keep with you until you leave. If you don't have it you will pay a fine. Although the tourist visa for US and European travelers used to be 6 months long which you could easily renew by leaving the country for a couple of days and going back, nowadays they have been stricter. You may be asked how you would sustain your living and other similar questions. Sometimes they even ask you to show your credit cards. It seems odd but they can do that. If you intend to stay longer than a usual couple of weeks' vacation time, just be honest and explain your plans. If you are not from the US, check this site to see if you need a visa

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