



Adventure Cities Destinations Travel Interest

Adventure in Puerto Vallarta

January 12, 2022 Kwin Mosby

Fun travel ideas for LGBTQ travelers who want to explore adventure in Puerto Vallarta beyond the beaches and bars.

Puerto Vallarta is known as a popular tourist destination for LGBTQ+ travelers, especially during the winter when the Bears converge on the coastal beach town for the annual event, BeefDip. PV is known for the Malecón, the scenic pedestrian walkway lined with restaurants, bars, shops, and street vendors that sell everything from handcrafted bracelets to spicy *chapulines* (grasshoppers).

However, the coastal city has more to offer queer travelers beyond the Malecón and the gayborhood of *Zona Romántica* (Romantic Zone). It's also a surprising destination for travelers seeking unique cultural experiences and adventure.

Editor's Note: *Those who travel are strongly encouraged to check local government restrictions, rules, and safety measures related to COVID-19 and take personal comfort levels and health conditions into consideration before traveling.*



La Caletas

Las Caletas Day Trip

Touted as Mexico's "Garden of Eden," *Las Caletas Beach Hideaway* is approximately a 60 to 90-minute ferry ride south of Puerto Vallarta. Depending on the season, you may catch a glimpse of a random dolphin or two swimming alongside the ferry, or at a distance, see a whale breach for air.

LGBTQ travelers can visit the family-friendly island in Banderas Bay. It was discovered by famous film director John Huston, who made it his private home for many years. And for about \$150 per adult, guests will receive a gourmet lunch and have access to several activities, including snorkeling, stand-up paddleboarding, scuba diving, and ziplining. For Queer families, a Teen Adventure Cove and Kids Adventure Park are also onsite options to keep children occupied.



And no matter the age of a guest, everyone can experience a personal encounter with the animals that live in the eco-park. I mean who wouldn't want a one-on-one connection with a bird of prey or a sea lion, right? Don't worry – animal trainers are close by for guests' safety. Of course, I jumped at the opportunity to make my arm a perch for a bird of prey.

I also had my first experience parasailing. My equally adventurous travel colleague, Terri, was up for it, too. The thrilling view high above Banderas Bay is amazing and I highly recommended it.

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Fat Joe, Remy Ma - All The Way Up (feat. French Montana, Infared)

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An amazing first-time parasailing experience with my new travel colleague @terrimccollin! So much fun! #travel #puertovallarta #lascaletas #mexico

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Las Caletas features lowkey activities such as a clay modeling class, mezcal tastings, and a cooking class. In addition to a local chef showing us how to make delicious seafood paella, guests, myself included, also learned how to make a variety of traditional staples of Mexican cuisine, including Pico de Gallo, and for my group, to make learning how to make guacamole.

Before heading back to Puerto Vallarta, guests wrap up their day trip at Las Caletas with a gourmet lunch, which includes some tasty tacos that included a variety of vegan-friendly toppings.

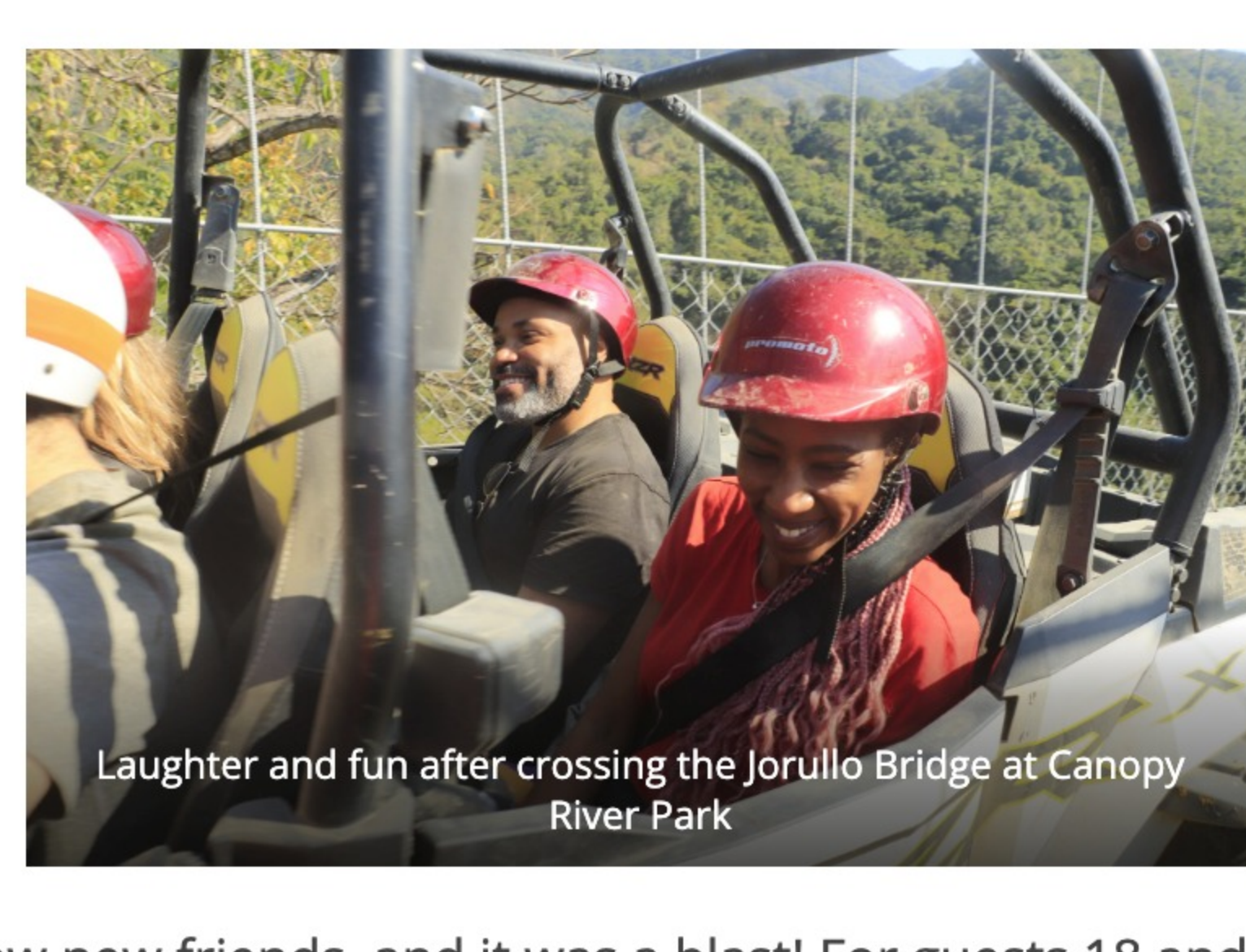


At night, Las Caletas transforms into a popular destination because of its spectacular show, "Rhythm of the Night – Savia," written and directed by Gilles Ste-Croix, co-creator of Cirque du Soleil. Guests enjoy a gourmet candlelit dinner and watch performers bring the birth of the Aztec civilization to life with spectacular acrobatic skills, pulsating rhythms, vibrant dancing, and amazing costumes.

Canopy River Park

If adrenaline-pumping fun is your thing, then you should consider a trip to *Canopy River Park*, a locally-owned coop business located about a 30-minute drive south of Puerto Vallarta. Thrill-seekers can indulge in a 2-hour canopy tour that includes an 11 ziplines circuit, ending with a refreshing dive in the water.

Most visitors have access to the park's onsite amenities, which include the brand-new infinity pool. Although ziplining is the activity that rakes in the most money for the park, ATV and RZR tours also attract visitors.



I was lucky enough to experience the latter with a few new friends, and it was a blast! For guests 18 and older, the guided RZR tour allows eager participants an immersive jungle experience on dusty back trails that offer stunning views of the Sierra Madre Mountains.

A qualified guide leads the ATVs or RZR's around the park in a single-file line, safely navigating the motorized vehicles past oncoming traffic or *caballeros* trying to wrangle cattle to one side of the road. Groups can take a break for a swim at "El Salto" waterfall, or closer to the end of the tour, I recommend taking a shot of liquid courage (tequila) before crossing the Jorullo Bridge, a 1,542-foot-long suspension bridge – the longest in the world!



Kwin sitting on RZR after tour at Canopy River Park (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Canopy River offers guests adventure packages, such as the River Expedition which includes ziplining, rappelling, a hike along hanging bridges, Tarzan lines, and more! After a day of fun, sample the eco-park's brand of tequila in a tasting – their macadamia nut tequila was my favorite! There's also an onsite restaurant that serves up an amazing spread of meats (pork, beef, chicken, etc.), vegetables, and sauces to make your tacos.

Don't leave Canopy River without ordering one of their margaritas made with fresh fruit. Their strawberry margarita – made with fresh strawberries – was the perfect way to end a fun RZR tour. I left Canopy River Park dirty and grimy, but I also left with a few unforgettable memories.



Spread of food for lunch at Canopy River Park (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)



Strawberry margarita served in a coconut (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Disclosure: The author traveled as a guest of Visit Puerto Vallarta, but all opinions expressed are entirely his own.