



Carnaval Mazatlán Draws More than 200,000 Visitors

MAZATLÁN SEES ONE OF ITS MOST SUCCESSFUL WINTER SEASONS TO DATE FROM CANADA

Written by Amanda Stutt—February 2013



Mazatlan welcomed over 220,000 visitors last week in celebration of the city's 115th annual Carnaval, held from Feb. 7 to 12. The Mazatlan Carnaval celebration is among the largest worldwide, third only to Rio de Janeiro and New Orleans, and brings together local and regional musicians, dancers and entertainers for a week-long, costume and culture-filled festival.



*Carlos Berdegue,
president & CEO, El Cid
resorts and VP,
Mazatlan Hotel
Association.*

HelloWestTravel.com caught up with Carlos Berdegue, president & CEO, El Cid Resorts and vice president, Mazatlan Hotel Association, to hear all about what the event offers tourists.

"This international Carnaval has been going on for over a century," he said. "It's a huge celebration. This Carnaval had several things that were unique - the invited country was Brazil, as Brazil's Carnaval at Rio is the biggest in the world. So the State government was able to bring a big group of Samba dancers, and 40 or 50 architecturally fixed cars to create different scenes."

Berdegue also said according to statistics, this year's Carnaval was the most successful to date, with data showing that more than 220,000 domestic and 140,746 international tourists attended, with 95 per cent arriving from Canada and the United States.

And during Carnaval, there was an approximate occupancy rate of between 85 per cent and 100 per cent in hotels with three-, four- and five-star categories in Mazatlan.

"This Carnaval is a big celebration for families...the government shuts down old Mazatlan and they have different cultural festivities - huge concerts with Latin artists, and the coronation of the Carnaval King and Queen," Berdegue said.

Berdegue said the Carnaval is a huge party that lasts for four days, often until the wee hours of the morning.

The Carnaval also leads to increased demand for air service to the destination.

In 2013, airline load factors on incoming flights to Mazatlan from the U.S. and Canada improved an average of 20 per cent. In December of last year, airlines reported high passenger load factors to Mazatlan, with Sunwing reporting a 90.52 percent load factor and WestJet reporting an 89.54 per cent load factor.

"It's been one of our most successful winter seasons from Canada, and the flights were fully booked - [airlines] are thinking of bringing in more lift to the destination, and increasing the cities they are going to be flying in from in Canada and the connectivity," Berdegue said.

**Note- all images courtesy of Mazatlan Hotel Association*

For more information, go to carnavalmazatlan.net.

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