

Zihuatanejo has a very interesting history, according to legend; Zihuatanejo was a vacation destination for a Tarascan King named Calzonin. He would often travel here with his wives, helpers and a few bodyguards to enjoy the sun, sand and sea, thereby becoming the first known tourist.

This town of 40,000 and its neighbor, Ixtapa, being only a short drive from Mexico City, as well as a favorite port for several cruise lines, continues to be a vacation destination for Mexicans as well as travelers from various parts of the world.

During its colorful past pirates, such as Sir Francis Drake and Admiral George Anson, have used its port as a refuge from storms and more likely to lie in wait for the opportunity to attack the Spanish Armada and the merchant galleon fleet on their way to the Philippines.

Many traveling boaters spend the winter in its well protected bay, while enjoying the many amenities available such as dining, sightseeing, visiting ancient Mayan ruins, or simply enjoying the beach and the laid back lifestyle associated with this area.

By historical accounts, Zihuatanejo was a recreation site of a Tarascan King named Calzonin. Very often he traveled to the area with all his wives, helpers, and a few guards, to enjoy the sea. The sand and the sun. Unbeknownst to him, Zihuatanejo was maybe the first pre-Columbian tourist destination in America.

Originally Spaniards called the city "Ciguatan" and later added the ending of "ejo" to refer to a "small place". Consequently, in old Spanish books, maps, and documents, the city's is marked as Cigua, Ciguatan, or Ciguatanejo. About 200 years later, the name underwent its final change to Zihuatanejo, as it is known today.

Around 1575, many pirates landed in Zihuatanejo to use the bay as refuge from bad weather or to trade for supplies with the town people. The most common and profitable reason for their visits was to use the bay as a hiding place for attacks waged against the Spanish Armada and merchant galleon fleet on their way along the prosperous commercial route to the Philippines by way of Mexico. Among these privateers were Sir Francis Drake and Admiral George Anson.

In recent years with the discovery of many ancient ruins close to Zihuatanejo (including a big pyramid still underground). Many relics and carved stones in nearby Petatlan scholars are speculating that this area at

one time had a very important Indian civilization.

Until the early 1970s Zihuatanejo was a sleepy fishing village with only a handful of families and residents. It was then (and continues to be) a favorite getaway for Mexican vacationers and adventurous foreigners. Zihuatanejo's main attraction is its well -protected bay where traveling boaters often spend the winter months moored in its peaceful clear waters. The bay offers various beaches for relaxation, recreation, dining, or simply enjoying the abundantly beautiful scenery and laid-back local lifestyle. The main part of downtown Zihuatanejo (referred to as "El Centro" is still rather old-fashioned with narrow streets made of paving stones and where most people still walk to get around. The locals(and frequent visitors) still greet each other in the streets, causing a simple stroll around the block to sometimes take quite a while as they get caught up on the latest gossip(a favorite past-time.)

Matriarchies and various troubadours can usually be found at all the beaches and restaurants and will serenade you to romantic splendor. They can be hired for private events or simply serenade a loved one (an old tradition here). Their music fills the air like the scent of fragrant flowers. So please leave your boom box at home. Be sure to ask for the song (Zihuatanejo.) The pace in today's Zihuatanejo is very relaxed during the daytime and peaceful at night. Restaurants and water sports including fishing and scuba diving are there to complete a vacation.

The airport is located about 8 miles and 20 minutes from downtown and 15 minutes from Ixtapa.