

## Escape to paradise: Puerto Escondido lovely and laidback

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More from Sarah Doktor

**Published:** March 16, 2018

**Updated:** March 16, 2018  
11:22 AM EDT

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**Vivo Resorts, a gated community of condominiums and private villas has two private pools, an open air spa, a newly renovate beach. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK**

A lot of people dream about running away and living in paradise.

As I sip on a strong black coffee and watch the sun rise over the mountains with waves crashing against the shore, I think to myself, this certainly fits the bill.

Paradise, in this case, is the balcony of a two-bedroom condo in the centre of Vivo Resorts, a gated community outside of Puerto Escondido in southern Mexico's Oaxaca state.

After the coffee, I decide to take a stroll along the white sand beach before the sun gets too hot.

I walk to a large tree branch sticking out of the sand, which I'm told is the 1.5-mile marker. It's the only thing you can see for kilometres. Vivo Resorts, a collection of luxury condominiums and private villas development along Palmarito Beach for 19 km.



**A panorama view of Vivo Resorts in Puerto Escondido, Mexico. The resort is the only development on the Palmarito Beach for 19 km. (SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK)**

The secluded, empty stretch of beach was one of the things to initially attract Micky Murray and his wife. They were among the first group of owners to invest in the property about a decade ago.

The Alberta couple had travelled extensively, but they were looking for somewhere serene to retire. They found it in Vivo.

“There’s more beach than you can walk and more ocean than you can see,” Murray says as he stands by the infinity pool, pointing out a whale breaching in the water nearby.

While the location may have initially attracted the couple, the community and atmosphere here are what kept them.



**Vivo Resorts, a gated community of condominiums and private villas has two private pools, an air spa, a newly renovated clubhouse and a spectacular beach. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK**

“The people are great. The community is very friendly and caring ... There’s always something to do,” he said before leaving the pool.

Not long after, as the sun hits its peak, the bartender at the pool’s swim-up bar suddenly blinks. It means one of two things: Either he’s spotted another whale or it’s happy hour! Either way, it’s a great time to be at the resort.

## The resort

Vivo Resorts is the passion project of Canada’s two-time Olympian and world champion alpine skier. Murray searched far and wide for a development location. Puerto Escondido was the only one that made it onto his must-have list.

Vivo offers all the amenities of a five-star resort, but with the privacy of home. There are currently 100 units available, and the resort is expected to be completed in 2025.

plots for 114 private villas on the 30.5-hectare beachfront property, but it's really only the beachfront that has been planned.

The condos themselves are open concept breezy spaces with sleek modern finishes. The walls are open to a balcony overlooking the two club pools and offer both beach and mountain views.



Inside one of the private condos at Vivo Resorts. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Vivo recently opened its newly renovated \$7-million clubhouse. With more than 4,925-sq-m, it is the centerpiece of the resort. It features a spa, fitness facility, lounge, kids club and general meeting rooms and event spaces. Vivo's farm-to-table restaurant, Ernesto's, occupies the ground floor of the clubhouse and offers authentic Oaxacan cuisine.



A passion fruit and mezcal cocktail at Vivo Resort's Ernesto's restaurant is the perfect happy hour libation. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Vivo is almost ready to expand again with plans to break ground on a new cluster of condom which will nearly double its capacity.

If you're not in the market to own property in Mexico, don't worry! Vivo offers a variety of va including an all-inclusive option.

For more information, visit [www.vivoresorts.com](http://www.vivoresorts.com).

## The locale

Puerto Escondido is not as overly commercialized as some other popular Mexican destinatic town offers an authentic Mexican experience.

Vivo Resorts is about a 15-minute drive from town, and guests have access to a shuttle servi

You can buy freshly made tortillas, local produce, meats, cheese and almost anything else y town's Mercado (market).



A woman slices fruit in the Puerto Escondido Mercado (market). SARAH

There are several different beaches in Puerto Escondido, each with their own perks.

Carrizalillo Beach is nestled in a secluded cove that protects swimmers from the ocean's ha



**The clifftop Espadin Restaurante just outside of Puerto Escondido, Mexico, has great food and stunning views of Carrizalillo Beach. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK**

The best view of Carrizalillo's turquoise water is from [Espadin Restaurante](#). The restaurant has a lovely selection of dishes and one of the best margarita's I've ever had. After lunch you can walk down the 160 stairs that lead to the beach. Meanwhile, Playa Zicatela is a surfer's dream. The expansive stretch of white sand beach has become a destination for surfer's around the world thanks to the famous Mexican Pipeline waves. A row of restaurants and lounges line the main strip beside Zicatela. We enjoyed a sunset beachside dinner at [Fresh Restaurant and Lounge](#), where the burrito must have weighed over 2 kilos.

Just down the way is La Punta. It has a similar bohemian, surfer atmosphere, but is a bit safer.



**A surfer walks down the road near Playa Zicatela. The spot is famous for its waves dubbed the Mexican Pipeline and its annual surf competition. SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK**

## Things to do

There are plenty of activities in the area to keep Vivo visitors busy during their stay.

We went on a guided boat tour of [Laguna Manialtepec](#), an incredibly beautiful and ecological drive from the resort. The 7-km stretch of freshwater is surrounded by mangroves and lush species of birds call the area home. Our guide helped us spot a variety of hawks and pelicans.

We stopped for refreshments (fresh coconuts) on a stretch of sand that separates the fresh saltwater ocean. During the rainy season, the waters overflow and provide the perfect environment for bioluminescent algae to flourish, giving the lagoon a glow-in-the-dark effect.



**Salt water from the Pacific Ocean and fresh water from Laguna Manialtepec is separated by a stretch of sand. (SARAH DOKTOR/POSTMEDIA NETWORK)**

After our tour we had lunch at the La Puesta del Sol restaurant. You'd be hard pressed to find tastier empanadas.

Vivo offers a number of other excursions including a horseback riding tour, a sea safari, surf and botanical garden tour.

## Vivo Foundation

The [Vivo Foundation](#) supports a local orphanage, funds youth sports and is the main sponsor of a sea turtle sanctuary.

Every year thousands of baby turtles are saved and released in the sea. During nesting season, the resort partners with a local turtle sanctuary to save thousands of endangered baby turtles. Turtle releases are held a couple of times a week. Anyone is welcome to grab a coconut husk filled with baby turtles and help them make their way to the water.



**Guests at Vivo Resorts near Puerto Escondido, Mexico, can participate in a weekly turtle release. The resort partners with a local turtle sanctuary to save thousands of endangered baby turtles.**

About a dozen people show up on the third day of our trip to cheer on the babies as they scur



Guests watch baby turtles make their way into the ocean during a weekly turtle release at Vivo Resorts near Puerto Escondido, Mexico.

We all clap as the last little one disappears into the water. Then the conch horn blows: Time

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