



Quivira No 6 is a par 3 with what the course guide calls "oblivion" to the left of the green.

# The Seashores of Old Mexico

Dazzling views and breathtaking drops from tee to fairway

by Dan Vukelich



Quivira 5 and 6 holes shows the elevation change from tee to green on No. 5 and the par 3 6th hole off to the left.



If you're a jonesin' for a warm-weather golf getaway right about now but are worried about COVID-19, the Pueblo Bonito Resort in Los Cabos, Mexico, has you covered.

First, the run-down on COVID-19 situation in Cabo, followed by the low-down on the golf there.

The Mexicans take COVID-19 seriously. There is no such thing as a Mexican anti-mask movement, which has helped keep the COVID infection rate low in the tourist destinations in California Baja Sur. In the collection of towns that make up Los Cabos, the official reported infection rate in late January was 2.72 percent – a fraction of the 21 percent infection rate in Cook County.

Second, upon

arrival at the Cabo airport, visitors must fill out a form attesting that they have no symptoms and describing where on the plane they sat should they or someone else on the flight develop symptoms while in Mexico.

Third, everywhere you go there's some sort of disinfectant procedure. Shuttle drivers spray disinfectant on door handles, on seats and on the soles of your shoes. There are disinfectant-soaked mats you must walk across to enter a property. At Pueblo Bonito, guests entering the hotel have their temperature taken and they pass through a phone booth-like chamber that spritzes them with a light mist of disinfectant.

The really good

news, though, is that the Pueblo Bonito Resort anticipated the recent tightening of the CDC's COVID-19 requirement for entry into the U.S.

As of Jan. 26, all arriving passengers, including U.S. citizens, must produce proof of a negative coronavirus test taken within three days of their flight home. In response, Pueblo Bonito is offering a free COVID-19 test to all guests who stay for three or more days.

Now that is out of the way, here's why you should go. Let's start with the weather. February on the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula is uniformly sunny, with highs averaging about 80 and lows in the high 60s, low 70s. March is about the same.

The other – and most important –

reason you should go is that the Pueblo Bonito Resort is home to Quivira Golf Club, a spectacular Jack Nicklaus signature design. Quivira offers spectacular views as it rises from the beach to 400 feet above the azure waves where the Sea of Cortez meets the Pacific Ocean.

Some holes seemingly defy gravity while hanging out over the ocean. After you play four inland holes and take a 1,500-meter cart ride up the mountain, you arrive at No. 5, the first stunner. As you crest the last switchback and the tee box comes into view, the vertigo-inducing panorama announces in no uncertain terms that, yes, your Cabo golf vacation has officially begun.

To the left: the ocean and a sheer drop of 280 feet to the

rocky beach below. To the right: the mountain ridge rising higher still. To the front: a narrow ribbon of grass leading to an unseen green dangling some 85 feet below your lay-up spot in the fairway. From there, your approach shot to the putting surface is easily three clubs downhill. The crashing waves are 170 feet below the back edge of the green.

The par-3 6th is no less spectacular. The course guide says, “The tee shot must find and hold a long narrow green that drops off to a cavernous bunker and oblivion on the left.”

I’m pretty sure you’ll not find “oblivion” on many other scorecards.

Nicklaus’s routing to bring into play this ocean cliff and another like it on the back nine is

controversial. At the course’s grand opening in 2014, the Golden Bear acknowledged the criticism that, overall, the course might seem gimmicky. “I hope most people will think it’s the most spectacular golf course and the best golf course they have ever seen. And yes, some other people will say, *“You have got to be kidding.”*”

That’s an honest appraisal. A cynic might respond that Quivira is just a clown’s mouth or windmill away from goofy golf, but the result is a track that *Golf* magazine named “Best New International Course” in 2014. In 2016, *Golf Digest* gave it the magazine’s “Editor’s Choice Award” for best golf resort in Mexico or Central America.

A bonus: The course has four hospitality stations that offer anything from freshly cooked sliders to fish tacos, plus tequila, expertly made mixed drinks, wine, beer, water, and soft drinks – all of it on the house.

Pueblo Bonito operates several other properties in Los Cabos, including the Pueblo Bonito Sunset Beach, a family-friendly hotel, which is just up the hill from the Pueblo Bonito Pacifica, an adults-only hotel on the beach. I recommend Pacifica for a couples or buddies trip.

The resort is all-inclusive, meaning the cost of most on-property activities are included in the room rate, although golf is a separate charge that will set you back anywhere from \$233 to \$380 a round,

depending on the season.

A check of the resort’s booking engine for three nights in February or March for a garden-level room for two starts at \$506 a night. A larger room in the resort’s towers that comes with the services of your own on-call personal butler comes in at \$612. Not exactly cheap, but remember, the cost of all meals and beverages at any of the hotel’s five restaurants is included in the room price.

If you go, a note on airport transportation: The Cabo San Lucas International Airport is a good 45-minute ride from the resort. If you don’t need a car, the best option is to reserve a one-way shuttle from the airport for \$25 per person.

Before booking a round-trip shuttle,



Hotel-pool: The central swimming pool and the largest of the resort’s five restaurants.

be aware that shuttles to the airport don’t start running until mid-morning, so accounting for the shuttle ride and the two-hour advance check-in requirement, a morning return flight to the U.S. means you’d have to forego the shuttle and take a much more expensive cab

ride, which can run \$50 to \$60 one-way. And lastly, most major U.S. airlines serve Los Cabos from Midway or O’Hare.

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Quivira No. 9: The par-3 9th hole easily could make you think you’re on a course in Scottsdale.