

Sun always shining on Mexico hotspot

Cancun blessed with flawless beaches and attractions

It's a city synonymous with vacationing. It might as well come with the label "resort town."

This is Cancun – a Mexican town best described as a beach with an island in the center. Once a place where Mayan emperors visited for rest and relaxation, it now is a destination where millions of travelers visit annually in search of the same results.

The cosmopolitan-resort town is perched on the limestone shelf of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and is one of the most popular vacation spots in the world. Cancun breathes life into those eager to escape their daily grinds. Blue skies mesh with puffy clouds and a radiant sun to create the perfect getaway cocktail.

Luxury hotels populate the Hotel Zone, a seahorse-shaped oasis connected by a pair of causeways and flanked by the tranquil Nichupte Lagoon and the restless Caribbean Sea. People-watchers stroll the palm-fringed promenade that hugs the pure shoreline.

Cancun boasts 12 miles of beach that snuggle with turquoise waters and white sand. All are open to the public and make for a perfect walk. Guests can hike along the northern shore by the calming waters of Bahia de Mujeres or follow the Caribbean Sea on the eastern shore. Sand shares the appearance of talcum powder and doesn't



YES YOU CAN – Luxurious resorts line the coast, waiting to entertain guests in Cancun. *Image: jdross75. Adobe Stock.*

burn feet thanks to its limestone composition that doesn't absorb heat.

Cancun established its reputation as a resort town on the shoulders of Playa Ballenas, a magnificent white-sand beach. Boogie-boarders flock to Las Perlas, and Playa Tortugas is a popular public beach and a departure point to sleepy Isla Mujeres of Island

of Women.

One of the most idyllic spots in the Caribbean, Cancun is home to a turtle sanctuary, the remains of a notorious pirate's lair and the Cave of the Sleeping Sharks. Vicious Tiger sharks lay motionless 65-feet below the surface, a phenomenon caused by the cave's oxygen-rich water, which serves

as a narcotic on the soporific sharks.

Schools of dazzling blue neons hover around Cancun's clear waters among the rocks and piers. The otherworldly Underwater Museum features more than 500 life-sized figures in two locations.

Bargain for authentic Mexican handicrafts, silver and Maya-inspired art and designer clothing. Most open-air markets are located in El Centro, the downtown area. Mercados on Tulum Avenue is an ideal place to hone your bargaining skills.

Cancun's nightlife ranks among the best in the Caribbean. Visit a multitude of nightclubs, pubs and other establishments. See a show; perhaps Cirque du Soleil-style acrobats, celebrity impersonators or costumed dancers. The options seem endless.

Step away from the hustle and bustle and visit nearby Mayan archaeological sites, including El Ray that is located not far from the resort area. Chichen-Itza is about 120 miles southwest of the city and covers six-square miles. It's dominated by the Kulkulkan step pyramid, which functions as a giant solar calendar. During equinox, sunlight sends an image of a serpent undulating down the temple walls.

Beaches, resorts and good times are associated with Cancun. It's a trifecta that never disappoints.

Ice dams can lead to significant issues

AAA breaks down what they are, how they damage homes

Iceicles hanging from the roof might make a perfect setting for a painting – a winter wonderland, no doubt. But what if they are ice dams? Well, that's another story.

Ice dams form when warm air from inside your home melts snow on your roof. It refreezes at the eaves, creating a dam. As melting and freezing continue, water pools behind the dam and could eventually leak into your home, resulting in costly water damage.

Ice dams are a battle you don't want to fight. Protect your roof and your wallet by taking the necessary steps to prevent ice dams from forming.

Ice dams are a headache for homeowners. They look unsightly and can cause serious damage to your roof and house structure. Without proper insulation, warm air from inside the house leaks into the attic and melts snow on the roof.

This melted snow refreezes at the colder eaves – creating an ice dam – which forces its way under the shingles and finds holes in the roof decking. Suddenly, you have water dripping into your attic. You can avoid this nightmare by making sure your house is properly insulated. It could save you trouble and money in the future.

AAA recommends these steps:

- Increase attic ventilation through



WINTER PROBLEM – Ice dams form in a gutter, potentially causing serious damage to the home. *Image: soupstock. Adobe Stock.*

the use of soffit and ridge vents to help circulate air through the attic, ensuring a consistent temperature.

- Examine your insulation to make sure it's not blocking the vents and check its depth.
- Prevent heat from escaping into

your attic by ensuring all attic ducts are sealed and properly insulated, and any exhaust fans lead outdoors, not to the attic.

- Consult a professional if your attic is a living space, you need vents installed or insulation added.

It's important to take steps to prevent ice dams from forming in the first place. One of the best ways is to make sure your attic insulation is adequate and properly installed.

Keeping the bottom couple of feet of roof and gutters clear of snow can help minimize ice dam formation, but it's not a foolproof solution. If you do find yourself with major ice dams, do not attempt to remove them yourself or get up on your roof. Instead, call for a professional with experience in removing ice dams safely and effectively – just be sure to ask about their methods first, as chipping or sawing away at the ice can cause damage to shingles. Prevention is key when it comes to avoiding costly repairs down the line.

Don't let ice dams lead to winter blues. If you notice water damage or leaks coming into your home, acting quickly is key. Contact your insurance provider as soon as possible and review your plan's coverage for ice dam damage. While many policies have this protection, there could be exclusions, so it's important to double-check. With a little bit of research, you can keep winter worries at bay. Visit the U.S. Department of Energy for more information about how much insulation you need.