

# MANZANILLO DOWNTOWN - A SELF GUIDED WALKING TOUR

Originally plagiarized from the internet, but updated to personal experience March 2018 by David R. Jennex



Mexico's busiest port, home to the Mexican Navy's Pacific naval fleet, and yet downtown Manzanillo (El Centro) has the pleasant atmosphere of a small seaside town and provides a relaxing and interesting way to spend a day that is authentically Mexican. Downtown is but a short distance from the enormous sailfish sculpture on the seafront.

As you come off the Cruise Ship Dock and pass the Fountain with the big Propeller (Fuente de Aguas Danzarinas), turn left on Av. Morelos (which shortly becomes Prol. Niños Héroes) to walk along the esplanade (Malecon de Manzanillo) which affords views of naval ships, fishing boats and small yachts. Bronze statues of sailors are moving testaments to the "men who go down to the sea in ships." The only easily accessible beach in the area – Playa San Pedrito - is about three quarters of a mile from the Dock along the Malecon – 20 to 30 minutes depending on your age. This Beach has the reputation of being the busiest and dirtiest in all the area. The next closest is about five miles on the other side of the harbor – Playa Las Brisas – 30 minutes by Taxi or about 2 hours walking.

If you turn right on Av. Morelos and follow it along until you can turn left at the traffic circle, you'll see the City Hall directly ahead of you across Calle Juarez. On the corner of Juarez and Madero you should be able to obtain a clear city map, and upstairs in the City Hall (Presidencia Municipal) there are free, clean toilets (Bring your own toilet paper and hand sanitizer!) Turn right on Calle Juarez and further along is a small city museum. However, with pesos burning holes in your pocket, the shopping opportunities on Juarez might draw you west again. It is advisable to window shop and get an idea of what is available and of prices before you turn left on Avenida Mexico, (use the crosswalk just past the gazebo – there's a sidewalk café on the corner) the main drag, also with very tempting stores and inexpensive internet offices, continue along Avenida Mexico for five blocks to Calle Cuauhtemoc (count the blocks on the right side of Avenida Mexico - on the corner is the Farmacia Guadalajara), turn left and head toward the central market - Mercado Municipal 5 de Mayo – four long blocks. This recently built market sells everything from fresh meats to seafood to vegetables to mysterious herbs to plastic toys and clothes for the most modest budget. Don't be surprised to see cow and pig heads hanging from hooks – restaurants boil 'em up to make "Tacos de Cabeza". The market has two levels and upstairs are small cafes with real Mexican food at real Mexican - not tourist - prices. The toilets (sanitorios) are on the main floor and cost 3 pesos - including toilet paper.

By now you may be feeling like having a beer or a meal in a quieter place than the market, so retrace your steps along Calle Cuauhtemoc and on the corner of Avenida Francisco I Madero you'll see a building with large Coca-Cola signs, inside are several small restaurants – I recommend the "Menuderia" for food and or a cervesa. Alternately, continue on to Avenida Mexico, turn right toward the port and on your left, you will see the 1940's Hotel Colonial, which is well worth a visit for its traditional architecture alone. You will find excellent food and libations here at excellent prices in the hotel's Los Candiles restaurant, with its cool courtyard and view of the goings on in the main street is popular with local Mexican businessmen and families. The restaurant's restrooms are a clean place to freshen up before continuing with your day in town.

The downtown souvenir stores and boutiques do not close at midday, so you can do some leisurely shopping or more exploring in the interesting hillside stairs of the side streets of the port.

Don't forget to take some "selfies" at the "Big Blue Fish Monument" on your way back to the ship.

