



SCAM ALERT

TRAVEL SAFETY SUMMARY / BAJA CALIFORNIA

POLICE

Tourists often report bribery, false charges, and extortion, especially in Tijuana, Rosarito, Ensenada, and La Paz. To reduce risk: know local laws, carry limited cash, and document any incidents. Dash cams or recording interactions are very useful.

MILITARY CHECKPOINTS

Common and usually legitimate, these are conducted by the military to check for illegal activity. Soldiers are typically respectful, but some travelers report feeling intimidated. Carry ID and comply calmly.

PANHANDLING

Aggressive begging from adults and children is common in tourist zones. Avoid giving money directly; support charities instead, and stay aware of your surroundings.

CASH

Cash is essential in many parts of Baja due to limited card acceptance, especially in rural areas. Carry small denominations, and exchange money before crossing into Mexico to avoid poor rates and ATM fees.

RESTAURANTS

Some restaurants don't display prices, which can lead to surprise bills and inconsistent pricing. Always ask for prices before ordering.

TAXIS

Fake or overpriced taxis are a frequent issue. Look for official taxis, agree on fares upfront, or use ride-sharing apps like UBER for transparency and safety.

ATM SKIMMING

ATM fraud is a concern. Use machines in secure, well-lit areas, inspect for tampering, cover your PIN, and monitor your bank statements regularly. Or better: use cash.

PHONY TOUR GUIDES

Some fake guides operate without credentials and charge inflated fees or provide poor service. Book tours through reputable agencies, ask for ID, and read reviews.

“FREE” ITEMS OR SERVICES

Beware of “free” gifts, tours, or samples that later come with unexpected costs. Avoid street offers and clarify all terms before accepting anything.

BORDER AREA SCAMS

Scams near the border include fake officials, overpriced parking or shuttle services, and bogus immigration help. Know the official process, only pay at authorized locations, and use trusted transport and parking services.

