

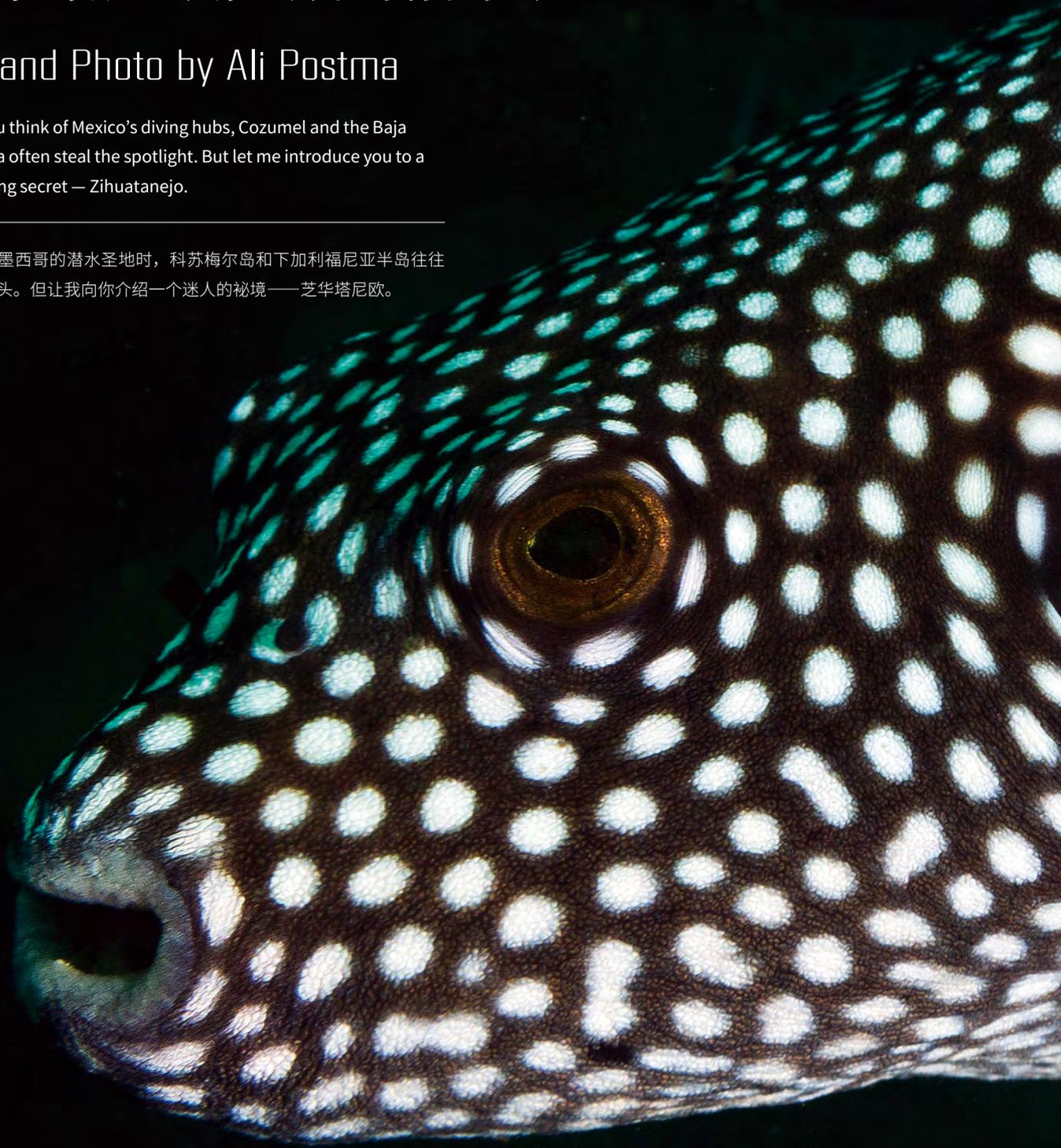
The Hidden Dive Gems of Zihuatanejo

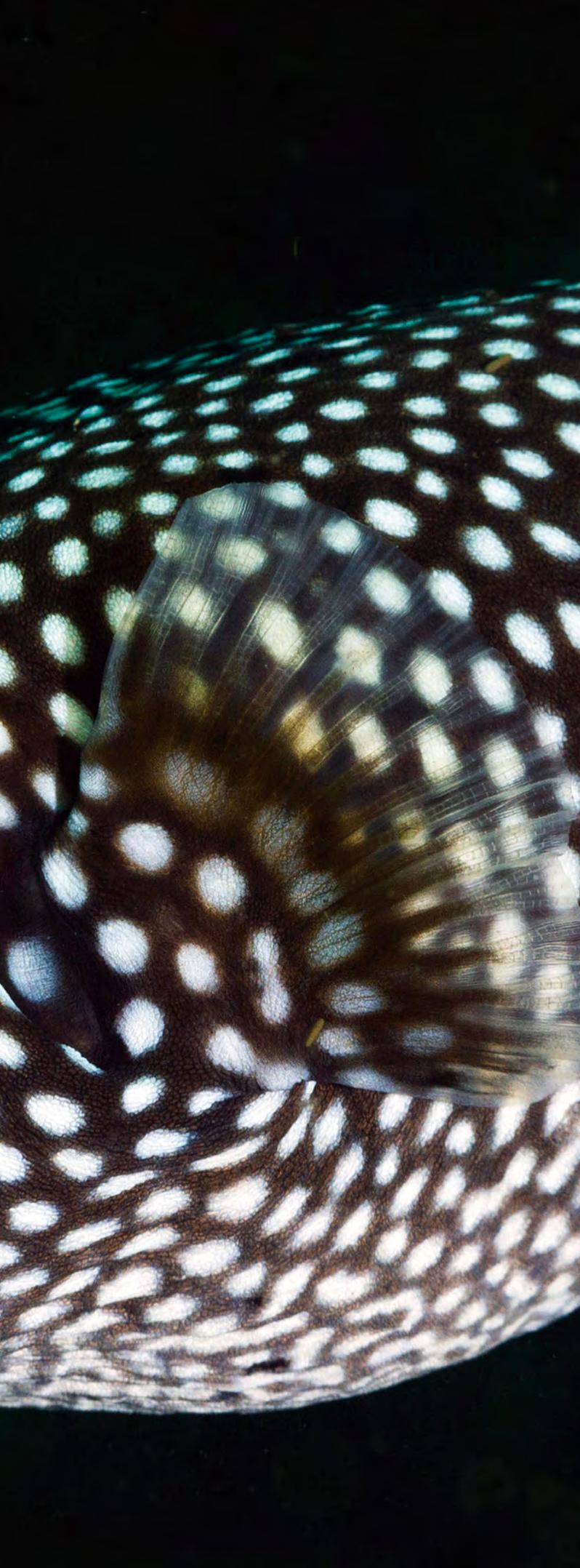
芝华塔尼欧隐藏的潜水瑰

Text and Photo by Ali Postma

When you think of Mexico's diving hubs, Cozumel and the Baja Peninsula often steal the spotlight. But let me introduce you to a captivating secret — Zihuatanejo.

当你想到墨西哥的潜水圣地时，科苏梅尔岛和下加利福尼亚半岛往往会抢尽风头。但让我向你介绍一个迷人的秘境——芝华塔尼欧。





Nestled along the stunning Pacific Coast of Mexico, Zihuatanejo is a tropical paradise that effortlessly marries the allure of a traditional fishing village with the comforts of a vibrant seaside resort. This picturesque town, often referred to simply as 'Zihua' by locals and visitors alike, boasts pristine beaches fringed by swaying palm trees, where azure waters gently lap at the shore. Zihuatanejo's charming cobblestone streets are lined with quaint shops, open-air markets, and a mouthwatering array of seafood restaurants offering the catch of the day. With a rich history dating back to ancient times and a laid-back, welcoming atmosphere, Zihuatanejo captivates travellers and divers alike seeking both cultural immersion and a thirst for the salty sea.

Within a mere 24 hours of touching down at the charming Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo International Airport, my husband Joey and I found ourselves aboard a dive boat, sailing into the welcoming, albeit tumultuous, embrace of the Pacific Ocean. As our boat pattered from the harbour, I took in the exotic scenery. We cruised past vibrant fishing vessels gently swaying on floating buoys. Zihuatanejo's landscape, with its graceful crescent shape, lush green hillsides, and beautifully designed properties cascading down rugged mountainsides, framed the golden sand beaches that lived up to their online acclaim: tranquil, sheltered, and embraced by blue waters.

坐落在墨西哥迷人的太平洋海岸线上，芝华塔尼欧是一个热带天堂，轻松地结合了传统渔村的魅力与充满活力的海滨度假胜地的舒适。这个风景如画的小镇通常被当地人和游客简称为“芝华”，拥有被摇曳的棕榈树环绕的原始海滩，湛蓝的海水轻轻拍打着海岸。芝华塔尼欧充满魅力的鹅卵石街道旁林立着古色古香的商店、露天市场和一排令人垂涎的海鲜餐厅供应着当日的新鲜渔获。拥有悠久历史的芝华塔尼欧自古时就存在，以悠闲友好的氛围而闻名，吸引着寻求文化体验和对咸海渴望的游客及潜水员。

在抵达迷人的伊斯塔帕芝华塔尼欧国际机场后仅仅 24 小时内，我和丈夫 Joey 就登上了一艘潜水船，驶入热情但波涛汹涌的太平洋怀抱。当我们的船从港口缓缓驶出时，我欣赏了异国风情。我们驶过色彩缤纷的渔船，它们在漂浮的浮标上轻轻摇曳。芝华塔尼欧的景观以优美的新月形状、翠绿的山坡和沿着崎岖山坡层迭而下的精美建筑物为特色，其金色沙滩配上蔚蓝海水，完美呼应了网上的赞誉：宁静、避风、环抱于湛蓝海水中。



However, my reverie was short-lived. Venturing beyond Zihua's protective bay, my dream of Caribbean-style, picture-perfect waters was shattered. The ocean welcomed us with white-capped waves that playfully rocked our dive boat, while the water beneath was teeming with plankton, shimmering in shades of emerald green and brown. Doubts about the quality of our impending diving experience began to creep in.

At the Morros de Chato dive site, our captain anchored in a relatively calm spot and we completed equipment preparations. With my mask secure, regulator in place, and gear meticulously fastened, I backrolled off the boat, mirroring my dive partner Joey. Deflating my BCD and descending from the surface, I inhaled sharply into my regulator, striving to find my equilibrium. Up, down, swoosh! Up, down, swoosh! It felt as if Joey and I had been thrown into a rhythmic washing machine.

Fortunately, as we descended deeper along Morros de Chato's rocky escarpment, the relentless wave action gradually subsided. This welcomed respite lifted my spirits. I had been so consumed by the turbulence that I had neglected to appreciate the wealth of marine creatures around me. The water pulsated with life. To the left, a joyful school of blacknosed butterflyfish performed a captivating underwater ballet before my eyes. Their vibrant yellow tones beautifully contrasted with the emerald sea as they darted from rock to rock, feasting on algae and marine growth.

To the right countless grunts, chromis, and the occasional jackfish gracefully manoeuvred through the water. Then there was my personal favourite, the guineafowl pufferfish, an Indo-Pacific gem. Adorned with navy blue bodies and intricate white spots, they presented a delightful spectacle, bobbing along in a playful, almost comical manner.

While I was engrossed in this underwater extravaganza, a sudden movement caught my eye as a moray eel stealthily slipped behind a rock. My attention shifted to what initially appeared as a barren rocky bottom, only to unveil a treasure trove of hidden wonders. Magnificent constellations of sea stars peppered the seafloor. They were so abundant that they rivalled the brilliance of a night sky. Where the sea stars lacked scorpionfish, sting rays and nudibranchs filled in the gaps. What commenced as a challenging adventure in unexpectedly turbulent waters transformed into one of the most species-rich dives I had ever embarked upon.



然而，我的遐想是短暂的。当我们冒险越过芝华的防护湾时，我梦想的加勒比海风格、风景如画的海水被粉碎了。大海以翻滚的白浪迎接我们，戏谑地摇摆着我们的潜水船，而水下则充满了浮游生物，在翠绿和棕褐色的色调中闪闪发光。我们开始对即将到来的潜水体验质量产生怀疑。

到达莫洛斯特查托潜点，我们的船长定锚在一个相对平静的地方，我们也完成了装备的准备工作。我稳妥地戴好面罩、将调节器就位，并仔细固定好装备，然后模仿我的潜伴 Joey 从船上向后背滚入水。将 BCD 排气后，我从水面下降，深深地吸了一口气，努力寻找平衡。上升、下降、哗啦啦！上升、下降、哗啦啦！感觉就像 Joey 和我被扔进了一台有节奏的洗衣机里。

幸好，随着我们沿着莫洛斯特查托的岩石悬崖逐渐深入，无情的浪涛逐渐平息。这令人欣慰的喘息让我的精神振奋起来。我之前被那股湍流困扰，以至于忽略了周围丰富的海洋生物。水中充满了生命的脉动。在左边，一群快乐的黑背蝴蝶鱼在我眼前表演着迷人的水下芭蕾舞。它们鲜明的黄色调与翠绿的海水形成了美丽的对比，它们在岩石之间迅速穿梭，享受着藻类和海洋生物的大餐。

在右边，无数的鲷鱼、雀鲷和偶尔出现的鳗鱼优雅地穿梭于水中。然后是我个人最爱的珍珠鸡河豚，是印度太平洋上的瑰宝。它们拥有海军蓝的身躯以及精致的白色斑点，以一种俏皮、近乎滑稽的方式摇摆着，展现出一幅令人愉悦的景象。

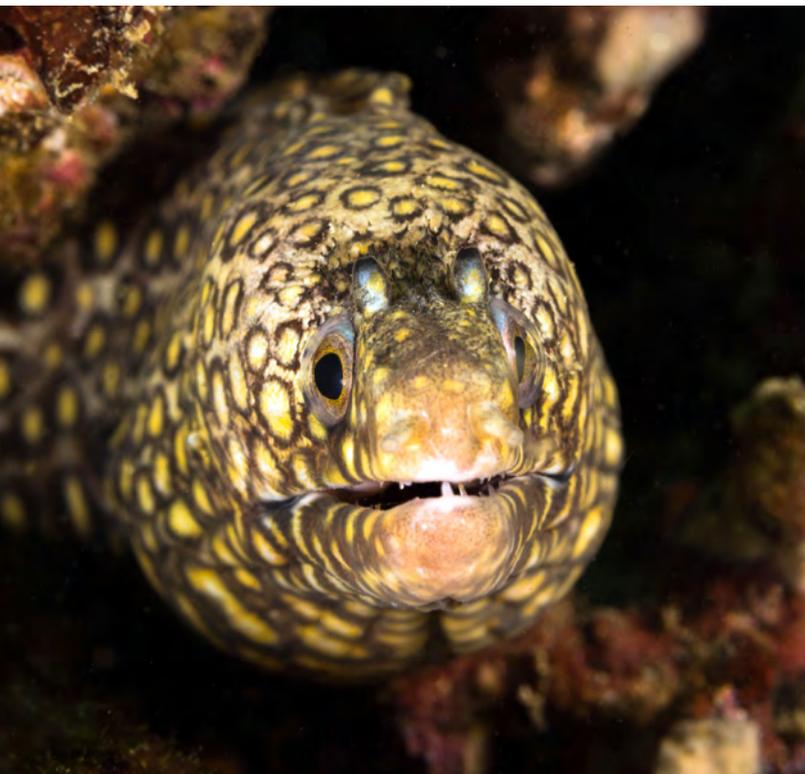
当我全神贯注于这场水下盛宴时，一个突然的动静引起了我的注意，一条海鳗悄悄地滑入岩石后面。我的注意力转移到最初看似贫瘠的岩石底部，却发现了一个隐藏了许多奇观的宝库。壮丽的海星群点缀着海床。它们的数量如此之多，以至于可以与夜空的光辉相媲美。在海星缺乏的地方，鲉鱼、刺鲀和裸鳃类填补了空缺。一开始是在意想不到的汹涌水域中展开的挑战性冒险，后来成为了我所经历过的物种最丰富的潜水之一。

Following a brief surface interval and a change of location, our group eagerly prepared for another plunge. Once again, we submerged into the depths of Zihuatanejo's aquatic wonderland.

Many of the species from the previous dive reappeared at the bottom of the Solitary Rock dive site. Silly deflated pufferfish, serious-looking snappers, and bashful Moorish Idols were among the captivating creatures we encountered. The ocean seemed to possess a wisdom of its own, treating us to a cornucopia of marine life.

Midway through our second dive, a shimmering sight in the distance seized my attention. Was it the sun's whimsical dance on the water's surface? As we approached, an expansive school of chere-chere grunts came into view, appearing to dance gracefully in the gentle swell. The sight of several hundred fish moving in perfect harmony over the uneven seabed and along the rocky wall eclipsed the rest of the underwater landscape.

Unexpectedly, this mesmerising display was interrupted by the graceful flapping of a spotted eagle ray. Emerging from the depths, this majestic creature joined our underwater soiree. With the arrival of this unanticipated guest, the grunts scattered in confusion, attempting to regroup for safety. It was a scaly symphony of underwater mayhem.



经过短暂的水面休息和地点转移，我们的团队迫不及待地准备再次潜入水中。我们再次潜入了芝华塔尼欧水下仙境深处。

在孤立岩潜点的海底，许多在上次潜水水中出现的物种再次出现了。我们遇到的迷人生物包括傻呼呼的泄气河豚、表情严肃的红鲷鱼和羞怯的镰鱼。大海似乎拥有自己的智慧，让我们尽情欣赏海洋生物的丰富多样性。

在我们第二次潜水的过程中，远处闪烁的景象吸引了我的注意。那是太阳在水面上的奇妙舞蹈吗？当我们接近时，一大群广阔的鲷鱼映入眼帘，它们仿佛在柔和的波浪中优雅地舞动。数百条鱼在不平坦的海床和岩壁上完美和谐地游动，使水下景观的其余部分黯然失色。

出乎意料的是，这令人着迷的表演被一只雪花鸭嘴燕魃优雅的一拍打声打断了。这个雄伟的生物从深处冒出来，加入了我们的水下晚会。随着这位不速之客的到来，鲷鱼们惊慌失措地四处逃散，试图重新聚集在一起以求安全。这是一场水下骚动的鳞甲交响乐。



If encountering an eagle ray and witnessing a breathtaking fish school weren't sufficient thrills for one dive, we ventured into the shallows, where two peculiar-looking elasmobranchs, later identified as guitarfish, revealed themselves. Having never laid eyes on these extraordinary creatures before, they had the body of a shark and the flattened head of a stingray. Joey and I had the privilege of observing them undisturbed on the seabed, capturing stunning images from close range. These masters of disguise permitted us to approach reasonably close before swiftly darting away. Our second dive in Zihuatanejo was concluded with a 15-foot safety stop.

As our dive boat sped back to the harbour, we caught sight of distant waterspouts. Humpback whale season was gradually drawing to a close in Zihua, and we were fortunate enough to witness a few stragglers making their way north to the frigid waters of Alaska for the summer.

Perhaps over the next few days of diving, we will be privileged enough to glimpse one of these magnificent creatures beneath the waves. For now, Zihuatanejo has been a fulfilling dive

destination that has offered captivating macro marine life, unforgettable encounters, and an insatiable thirst to dive once more into its waters. **EZ**

如果一次潜水遇到燕鲛和目睹令人惊叹的鱼群还不够让人激动的话，我们冒险进入浅水区，在那里两只长相奇特的鳐鱼（后来被确认为犁头鳐）现身了。我们以前从未见过这些非凡的生物，它们拥有鲨鱼的身体和刺鲛扁平的头部。Joey 和我有幸在海底不受干扰地观察它们，近距离捕捉了令人惊叹的影像。这些伪装大师让我们能够在迅速逃离之前相当接近。我们在芝华塔尼欧的第二次潜水以 15 英尺（约 4.5 米）的安全停留结束。

当我们的潜水船快速返回港口时，我们看到了远处的水柱。在芝华的座头鲸季节逐渐接近尾声，我们很幸运地目睹了一些落后的座头鲸向北游向阿拉斯加的寒冷水域度过夏天。

也许在接下来几天的潜水中，我们也将有幸一睹这些宏伟生物在海浪下的惊鸿一瞥。到目前为止，芝华塔尼欧一直是一个令人满足的潜水胜地，这里提供了迷人的宏观海洋生物、难忘的邂逅以及再次潜入其水域的无尽渴望。|



Zihuatanejo



Getting There 交通

Travellers can reach Zihuatanejo by flying into the Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo International Airport, where they can easily arrange accommodations and transportation. All diving excursions in Zihuatanejo are conducted by boat, with dive outfitters typically offering pick-up services from accommodations or arranging waterfront meeting points.

旅客可以飞往伊斯塔帕芝华塔尼欧国际机场抵达芝华塔尼欧，在那里可以轻松安排住宿和交通。芝华塔尼欧的所有潜水游览均乘船进行，潜水运营商通常提供住宿接送服务或安排海滨集合点。

Language 语言

In Zihuatanejo and in Mexico the primary and most widely spoken language is Spanish. However, due to its popularity as a tourist destination, you'll find that many people working in the hospitality and tourism industry in Zihuatanejo, especially in hotels, restaurants, and shops, also speak English to varying degrees.

在芝华塔尼欧和墨西哥，主要且最广泛使用的语言是西班牙语。然而，由于它作为一个受欢迎的旅游胜地，你会发现许多在芝华塔尼欧旅游业工作的人，特别是在饭店、餐厅和商店，也以不同程度的英语交流。

Visa 签证

United States, Canada, and the European Union, do not need a visa to travel to Mexico for tourism purposes. However, visa requirements can change, and it's crucial to verify the current visa requirements before your trip. Travellers typically receive a tourist card (FMM - Forma Migratoria Múltiple) upon arrival by air, which allows for a stay of up to 180 days for tourism purposes.

美国、加拿大和欧盟的公民无需签证即可前往墨西哥旅游。然而，签证要求可能会发生变化，因此在旅行前核实当前的签证要求至关重要。旅客通常会在搭乘飞机抵达时收到一张旅游卡（FMM），该卡允许以旅游目的在墨西哥停留最多 180 天。

Electricity 电压

Zihuatanejo and the broader country of Mexico use electricity with a standard voltage of 127 V and a frequency of 60 Hz. The power outlets in Mexico typically accommodate plugs with two flat parallel pins (Type A) or plugs with two flat pins and a grounding pin (Type B).

芝华塔尼欧和墨西哥整个国家使用的电压标准为 127 伏特、频率为 60 赫兹。墨西哥的电源插座通常可容纳两个扁平插脚（A 型）的插头或具有两个扁平插脚和一个接地插脚（B 型）的插头。

Currency 货币

The currency used in Zihuatanejo, is the Mexican Peso. While many places in Zihuatanejo and throughout Mexico do accept major credit cards, it's advisable to have some Mexican Pesos in cash for small purchases, local transportation, and in case you visit places that may not accept cards. Most places will also accept USD.

芝华塔尼欧使用的货币是墨西哥比索。虽然芝华塔尼欧和整个墨西哥的许多地方都接受主要信用卡，但建议你携带一些墨西哥比索现金用于小额购物。当地交通以及以防你到访可能不接受信用卡的地方。大多数地方也接受美元。

Dive Operator 潜水业者

Scuba enthusiasts can explore the underwater wonders of Zihuatanejo with the dive outfitter Dive Zihuatanejo. Scuba diving in Zihuatanejo typically costs Mex\$ 1,690 or US\$ 90 for a 2-tank dive. These rates include all essential equipment, boat transport to the dive sites, the guidance of an experienced in-water divemaster, and snacks during the surface interval. Discounts are available for multi-day dive packages.

水肺潜水爱好者可以与潜水运营商 Dive Zihuatanejo 一起探索芝华塔尼欧的海底奇观。在芝华塔尼欧进行一次双气瓶的水肺潜水费用通常为 1,690 墨西哥比索或是 90 美元。这些费用包括所有必要的设备、前往潜水地点的船只交通、经验丰富的水下潜水长的指导以及水面休息时间的点心。多日潜水套餐可享折扣。

