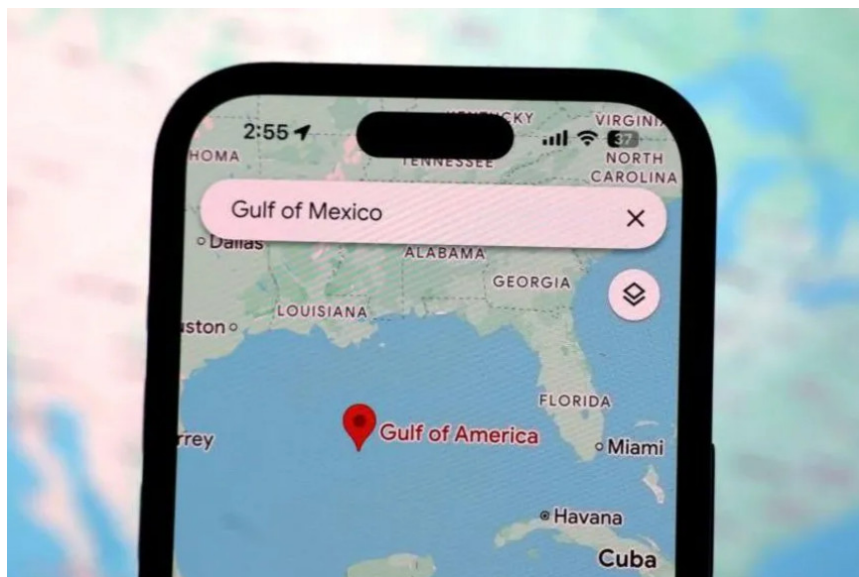




Google Maps blocks Gulf of America reviews after rename criticism



Google Maps has blocked reviews for the Gulf of Mexico, after criticism of its decision to label it "Gulf of America" for users in the US.

Clicking on the label for the Gulf in Google Maps now brings up a note saying "posting is currently turned off". Google also appears to have deleted some negative reviews left in the wake of its name change. The company has defended its decision, saying in a statement it "regularly puts protections on places during times when we anticipate an uptick of contributions that are off-topic or unrelated to someone's direct experience with the place."

Getty Images An iPhone screen displays a Google Maps app search for "Gulf of Mexico", with a pin on the Maps location showing the name "Gulf of America" below it. A map of North America is shown in a blurred backdrop behind it. Google Maps has blocked reviews for the Gulf of Mexico, after criticism of its decision to label it "Gulf of America" for users in the US. The tech giant updated the name of the location on Wednesday after President Donald Trump ordered it to be changed in official government documents.

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It also highlighted a 2023 blog post about how it tackles "policy-violating content", such as fake reviews, and the when it disables contributions or removes content to prevent abuse of its tools. Users on social media claim hundreds of one star reviews have been removed, and have accused Google of "censorship."

The most recent review left for the location result on Google Maps now appears to be from a month ago. So-called "review-bombing" has become a popular form of online protest against companies or businesses that appear in Google Search or Maps results. It said this followed a "longstanding policy" of reflecting name changes updated in official US government sources. The name would remain unchanged in Mexico and the rest of the world would see "Gulf of America" added next to its current name in brackets, Google added.