



Nature & Luxury

Magic in Mexico's Riviera Maya

By Michael Roney

Just a short drive south of Cancún you'll find a very special place that is rich in natural beauty and atmosphere, coveted by the world's most discriminating travelers, and served by several of the top luxury resorts. Even its name evokes luxury, serenity and a magical splendor: the Riviera Maya.



MAYAKOBA RESORTS & SPAS

The heart of the Riviera Maya, known as Mayakoba, boasts unparalleled resorts with culinary delights and spa experiences infused with local culture and history. Consider some of your choices:

- **Rosewood Mayakoba:** Romance imbues this 1,600-acre luxury enclave that consistently wins international travel awards for its stunning canal-side location, inspired architecture, plunge pools and indigenous healing techniques.
- **Banyan Tree Mayakoba:** Asian and Mayan traditions meet at Banyan Tree's first property in the Americas, opened in 2009. Here tranquil and private spaces are immersed in nature, complemented by expert Thai massage and healing therapists.
- **Maroma Resort and Spa:** With whitewashed buildings set among verdant jungle and gardens along the beach, this Orient-Express property aims to unlock your inner energy and spirit, providing unique spa treatments based on ancient Mayan techniques; it even features a *temazcal* (similar to a North American Indian sweat lodge).
- **Zoëtry Paraiso de la Bonita:** Serene elegance and relaxation characterize this intimate resort with expansive sea and jungle views. Its world-renowned Thalasso Center incorporates ancient traditions such as yoga, tai chi and Mayan healing practices.



AMAZING GOLF

You can do much worse than hitting a golf ball beside a Caribbean beach surrounded by tropical wildlife, picturesque lagoons and, of course, the spirit of the ancient Mayans. The Riviera Maya's golf standouts include:

- **El Camaleón Mayakoba:** Host of the PGA's Mayakoba Golf Classic, this Greg Norman-designed 7,024-yard championship course at the Fairmont Mayakoba offers players an ever-changing terrain of jungle, mangrove and ocean.
- **Playacar Spa and Golf Club:** This championship 7,144-yard course challenges golfers with rolling fairways, archaeological sites, lush jungle and natural sinkholes.
- **The Jim McLean Golf School at Mayakoba** offers incomparable luxury accommodations and the number one golf school in the Americas, including cutting-edge video swing analysis and a 40-yard-wide putting green. ■



Was this the first suite
with an ocean view?

*"The Castle used to be
a lighthouse for Mayan
seafarers."*

Tulum, Quintana Roo.



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