

# VITA



TRAVEL &amp; CULTURE

## An Exclusive Villa Of One's Own in Mayakoba

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In Mexico's luxurious Riviera Maya, beaches, jungles and privacy await, proving you really can have it all. —*Andréanne Dion*



### Stay

Tucked away between the white-sand beaches of the Riviera Maya and crystal clear lagoons surrounded by lush jungles, [Rosewood Mayakoba](#) is a tale of two vacations—one brimming with all the trappings of a resort getaway, the other an adrenaline-fueled tropical escape. But above all, the idyllic property set in the heart of Mayakoba—a gated enclave located 40 minutes south of [Cancún](#) International Airport that houses upscale hotels and a professional golf course—provides plenty of privacy. In the age of social media phenomena that have many of us flocking to the same crowded spots, a secluded oasis is the ultimate luxury.

Despite boasting 129 suites and standalone villas, private residences, four pools, a spa and a collection of restaurants and boutiques, there's hardly anyone in sight at the resort, save for the friendly staffers that criss-cross paths on bikes and electric golf carts, kindly stopping to share directions to the beach. With outstanding service and room to roam, relax and play, it's easy to see why members-only vacation club [Exclusive Resorts](#) chose Rosewood Mayakoba as the setting for its newest collection of four vacation homes in the Riviera Maya.

The boat that takes us from the open-air lobby to our private dock rounds a bend in the lagoon and our villa comes into view, looking positively palatial perched amid the greenery. We're the first guests to stay in the four-bedroom home (the other three will be available in mid-2024), and every surface gleams in the sun. A quick tour reveals that it's equipped with all the amenities needed for a true home-away-from-home experience, from bikes to get around the property to a laundry room to a fully stocked fridge, courtesy of our personal concierge. Inside, the furnishings crafted by Mexican artisans are artfully arranged. Outside, there's a private plunge pool surrounded by palm trees, an outdoor shower to rinse off and a dining nook, complete with an outdoor kitchen.

Settling into a sun-drenched lounge by the pool with a margarita in hand, any worries we might have packed in our suitcase quickly become a distant memory. Case in point: Despite our best intentions, our work laptop remains firmly shut for the duration of the trip.

Worry-free travel and spacious vacation homes are why busy people and families turn to a vacation club like Exclusive Resorts. With a skilled concierge taking care of every detail and access to over 400 residences across 75 destinations, the service takes the guesswork out of planning a getaway. Here's how it works: Members pay a one-time fee—starting at USD \$195,000 for a 10-year membership—plus annual dues based on the number of days they're planning to travel that year. At a flat rate of USD \$1,760 per night for stays at exclusive residences in some of the world's best resorts, hotels and cities (even during peak season), the annual dues often work out to be much cheaper than a traditional booking. Everything you can think of is customized based on preferences ahead of the trip, from ground transportation to activities to meals to the type of welcome drinks on offer.

### Relax

At Sense, the on-site spa, guests are given complimentary access to the pool, hydrotherapy circuits and sensory garden. Make sure to set time aside to meander through the verdant pathways, one of which leads to a hidden cenote.

We experience first-hand the perks of having a dedicated on-site concierge when we decide to indulge in much-needed self-care instead of the high-intensity activities scheduled for the day. After a steam and a cold plunge, we make our way back to our villa for an in-room massage. Once you've experienced the ease of a vacation designed just for you that can be adjusted to your every whim, it's impossible to imagine travelling any other way.

### Swim & Explore

After a spa day, adventure awaits. Start slow with a dip in one of the resort's many pools, followed by a stroll on the sugar-sand beach and a dip in the Caribbean Sea. The best way to get to the beach is to bike through dense mangroves and try to spot playful coatis, with their distinctive long snouts and raccoon-like tails, along the way, though you can also hitch a golf cart ride.

Snorkeling, scuba diving, paddle boarding, hydrobiking and kayaking are on offer at the resort, but we follow our concierge's recommendation and venture out for a private tour of the region's famed cenotes. Found in caves or enveloped by vegetation, the water-filled sinkholes are magical. Cool off with a dip, explore sculptural rock formations or zipline into the clear blue water.

### Eat & Drink

There's no shortage of great food options at Rosewood Mayakoba. We recommend starting the day at Casa Del Lago for a breakfast of chilaquiles or huevos rancheros with a stunning view of the lobby pool. Then, grab lunch on the beach at Aquí Me Quedo's La Cantina, where you can order shrimp tacos and frozen cocktails from a charmingly retro food truck. For date night, make your way to Agave Azul, a cozy spot that serves up a curated menu with Asian influences. To end the evening, hop (or bike!) over to Zapote Bar for delicious cocktails, top-notch people watching and, if you're lucky, an impromptu dance party.

And if you'd rather skip the reservations and opt for a once-in-a-lifetime experience, the [Exclusive Resorts](#) concierge team is on hand to make it happen, whether it's an al fresco beach dinner, a private meal at the villa or even a last-minute wedding. After a busy few days, our last night is spent in the best way possible—eating fresh-from-the-grill tacos whipped up by chef Diego and his team and homemade corn chips piled high with salsa and guacamole in our own lagoon-side backyard.