

Having it All in Cancun...Really!

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Four luxury resorts in Cancun that are re-defining what it means to be “all-inclusive”



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The concept of an all-inclusive resort may not have been invented in Cancun (the prevailing belief is that all-inclusives started in Jamaica), but it's a concept this destination has thoroughly embraced. According to the Cancun Hotel Association 61% of the 147 hotels in Cancun are all-inclusive—many of them busy courting spring breakers with motel-like rooms, peeling pools, soggy chicken and plentiful beer.

Lately, however, some high-end all-inclusives have opened (or are about to open) and some luxe resorts that were not originally all-inclusive have switched to all-inclusive pricing. Spring breakers need not apply.

For the stressed but sexy: The adults-only, Miami-hip [Live Aqua Resort & Spa](#) switched to all-inclusive (aka “Cancun Limitless”) pricing in 2011. Guests, which have included Paris Hilton, get a hand massage as they're checking in. At tum down a small sand Zen garden is left in your room and your choice from five custom-blended aromatherapy oils is activated. Still not relaxed enough? Splurge on treatments from an extensive menu in the Aqua Spa start with a guided circuit through the sauna, steam room and hot and cool plunge pools just to get you in the mood. Rates from \$225 double occupancy including a \$50 spa credit.

For the partier: [ME Cancun](#) Resort opened in December of 2006 and on January 1, 2010 the resort went all-inclusive—or “Complete ME” as they call it since the owners believe “all-inclusive” sounds too down market for this energetic resort which provided the location for a season of “The Real World.” The ME Cancun is the first hotel in the ME group to go all-inclusive and, in true MTV style, it features more than the usual array of entertainment options including international DJs and live jazz. Want to party in private? Upgrade to the 9,757 square foot Real World Suite and invite all your friends. Rates from \$319 double occupancy including three meals per day and premium open bar.

For the perfectionist: [Le Blanc Resort & Spa](#) is one of only three all-inclusive resorts in the world which have earned five diamonds from AAA thanks to flawless features like 24/7 butler service, nearly one staff member per guest, Le Blanc beds with memory foam mattresses and Bulgari White Tea in-room aromatherapy—a scent that's exclusive to Le Blanc. Wine lists in the resort's restaurants only offer bottles from the around the world which have earned a rating of 90 or higher from Wine Spectator magazine. Rates from \$232 per person.

For the (golf) addict: The [Hotel Iberostar Cancun](#) (formerly the Beachfront Hilton Cancun) is undergoing a \$100 million reincarnation. When it re-opens on December 1, 2012 the resort will be all-inclusive and the only resort in Cancun with its own 18 hole golf course, though playing a round will cost an additional \$49-\$79. Rates from \$100 per person.

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In April of 2006, journalist Karen Catchpole and photographer Eric Mohl left their jobs and apartment in New York City and embarked on the **Trans-Americas Journey**, a 200,000-mile working road trip through all 23 countries in North, Central and South America. After many years on the road they are still nowhere near their goal of Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America where the road literally ends. Until then, their slow and steady overland exploration of The Americas continues.

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