

LA TRAVEL

Inspiring Angelenos to Travel Near and Far

**CELEBRITY HONEYMOON
FEATURE WITH**

David Henrie

**THE EDITOR'S
GUIDE
TO**

Punta Mita

One on One with

Candace Cameron Bure

Actress, Producer, Author and Inspirational Speaker

This Season's Hottest Getaways: Ann Arbor, Nusa Penida, Playa del Carmen, Tri-Valley & San Juan

the / **zimmerman** / agency

(continued)



Magical MAHEKAL

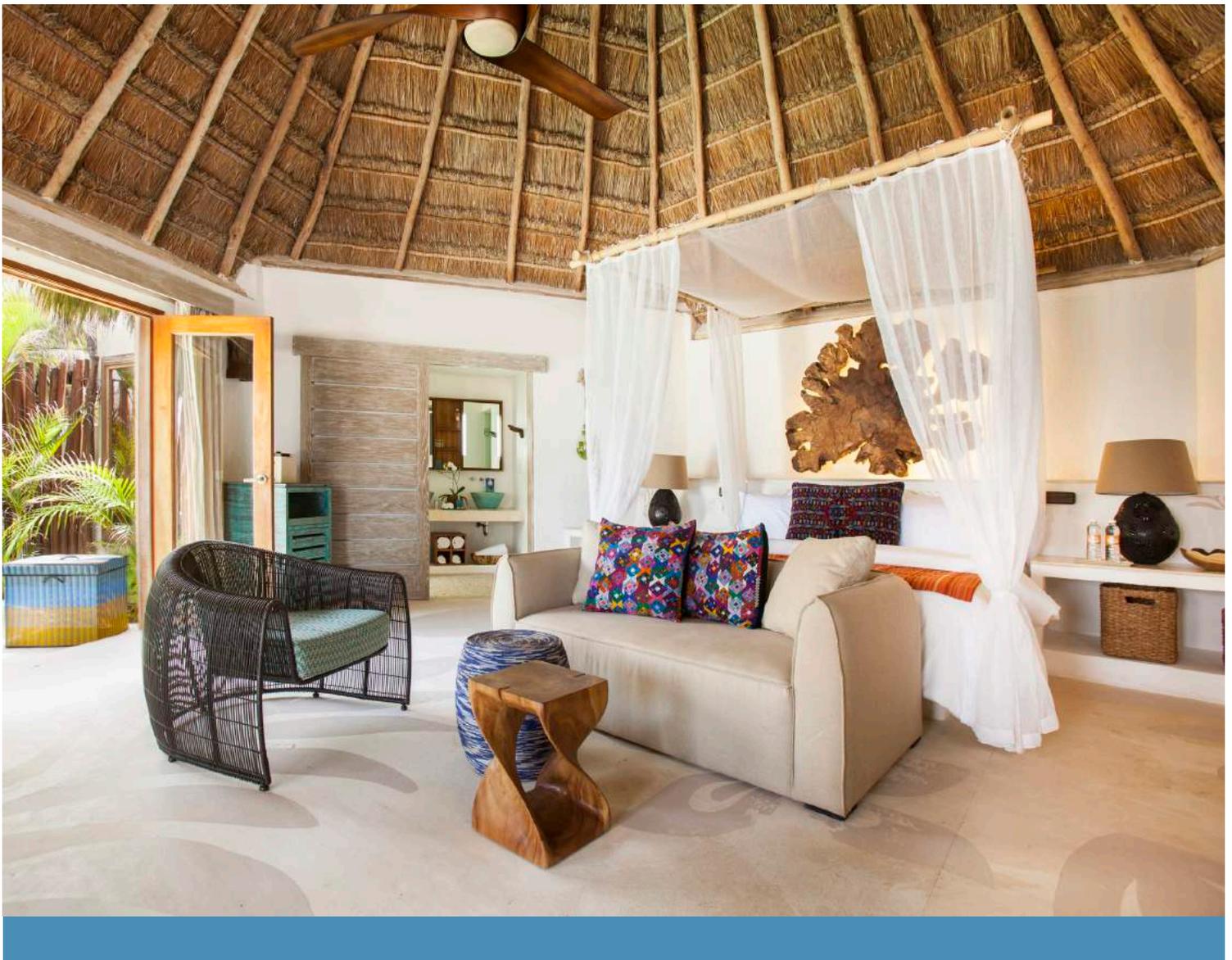
One thing we have noticed over the past few years is people around the world are really starting to gravitate towards more authentic travel experiences. How many times can you spend your valuable vacation days in a corporate setting with the same architecture, food and tourist driven activities? We don't know about you but we certainly love to visit an area that opens our eyes to new culture, trendsetting cuisine and diversity. Over the past decade majority of our travels have been to areas that offer just that, unique adventures that leave a lasting impression for years to come.

Most travelers that have visited Mexico over the past 30 years have spent a majority of their time in the ever popular resort towns including Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, Acapulco and Cancun. After Cancun became such a hot spot with its turquoise blue waters, white sandy beaches and illustrious hotel scene millions of tourists worldwide were exposed to the vacation paradise so much that expansion was only natural as time moved forward. In the past few decades Riviera Maya has come to the forefront and has definitely made its mark as one of Mexico's top destinations to visit.

The Riviera Maya stretches for more than 86 miles and is located in the middle of the northeastern coast of the Yucatan peninsula, in the state of Quintana Roo. This beautiful rugged coastline showcases blue Caribbean waters in combination with wild jungles, Mayan ruins and resort life. These key factors have brought a great deal of attention to the surrounding area transforming it to reign supreme as a trendy Mexican hideaway. As always when a new area is discovered the major brand named hotels jostle for supremacy and the area is flooded with tourists. Playa del Carmen is different in the fact that the Mayan culture is a main focus at most hotels and authenticity takes precedence here unlike it's neighboring cousin the ever famous beach town of Cancun. Mahekal Beach Resort stands out as a leader in this category which holds a lot of clout since the area is so focused on rustic Mayan jungle life and submerging guest experiences to become one with the locals. Situated right on the beautiful blue oceanfront of Playa

del Carmen, Mahekal Beach Resort is the perfect combination of luxury and culture so much that it has been among the top resorts in Riviera Maya area for almost three decades. With a total of 196 guest rooms ranging from upscale rooms and suites to palapa-style beach houses all bases are covered here. The main question to consider is do you want to be set back a bit in the jungle or would you prefer to be steps away from the beach? The choice is yours. A place where the jungle and ocean collide, Mahekal puts their best foot forward to ensure guests receive a luxurious and cultural experience throughout their stay.

Four different style pool settings invite guests to lounge the day away, all with separate areas and themes. Choose from the Fuego Pool, the resort's newest heated pool with hot tub included or the Treehouse Pool for a more serene environment surrounded by nature. Once you have explored those options soak up the sun





intimate and organic Mayan-inspired treatment. Guests can choose from a plethora of signature spa services to enhance balance between the mind, body and soul. The true Mayan spirit is alive at Revive, the moment you walk into the lobby you feel an inner peace come over and you begin to relax in the rich, natural setting. With over 2,500 square feet of utter bliss every detail has been planned from the indigenous styled décor to the aromatic scents and soothing music. The Spa uses 100% organic, local home-grown products that enhance the cultural experience that much more. Choose from a

at the Itzi Pool which is surrounded by chaise lounges and features several seats at a swim-up bar or spend the day in the heart of all the excitement at Las Olas Pool. There truly is something for every pool connoisseur here.

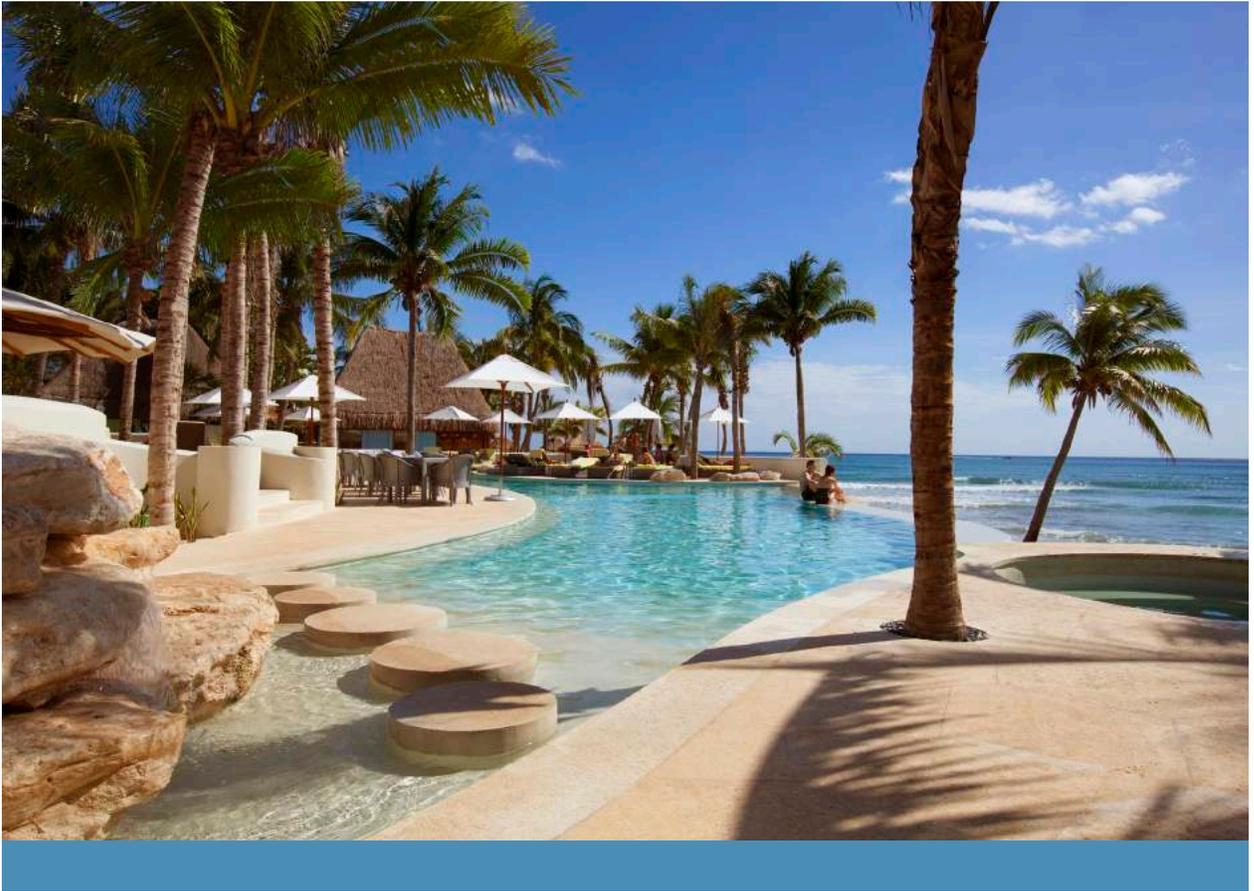
There are numerous dining options available on property from Fuego which features a “Tulum Style” wood burning oven to enticing regional specialties served beachfront at Las Olas. If you are in the mood for a little taste of everything then you cannot go wrong at Cocina which offers a warm and inviting atmosphere. The food is served buffet style and provides a variety of International flavors and cuisine options. Although all the dining destinations are incredible at Mahekal there is one that stands out amongst the rest when it comes to memorable experiences. The resort’s newest culinary addition Mayan Casita exhibits a bird’s eye view into the way the Mayan people used to prepare and consume their meals. An interactive and educational experience to say the least, guests watch and even join in as the Mayan chefs prepare traditional dishes from the starter to the main course. Fresh caught fish is secured right off the resort’s beaches and then filleted and prepared right before your eyes. The fish is paired with fresh vegetables including peppers, onions and tomatoes and then wrapped in banana leaves before being set into a heated pit oven under the ground. An incredible meal prepared by true Mayan people that even speak the ancient language is an experience that cannot be missed!

To increase your level of relaxation, stroll through the resort’s lush tropical gardens and submit yourself to Revive Spa for an

wide list of invigorating treatments like the Coconut Caribe, a full body exfoliation, the Mayan Cacao Massage and Body Wrap or the Rostro del Sol Reviving Facial. If you are looking to indulge book the completely private VIP therapy room which boasts a dedicated bath area, indoor and outdoor shower, a freestanding bathtub and private access to the artfully manicured Zen Garden. This option is perfect for couples or small groups seeking un-plugged privacy and intimacy in a carefree atmosphere.

When a guest is looking to explore and spend an adventurous day in or off property, a visit to Vida Acuática Dive Center is just what the doctor ordered. The center presents a plethora of activities on property as well as a number of adventure tours and experiences for guests





looking to venture into the surrounding area. On property guests can enjoy all the resort's watersports and since the area is world famous for snorkeling and diving this is something you definitely don't want to miss. Off property the hotel concierge will be more than happy to set you up with the perfect day out whether it is shopping and dining on the famous Fifth Avenue merely steps away from the resort or an adventure excursion a few miles away.

The one adventure excursion that stands out above the rest in the

area are the Cenote tours. Cenotes (say-NOH-tays) are found in only a few locations on earth so take the opportunity to behold the splendor of the unimaginable underground world of the Riviera Maya Cenotes. Snorkel through miles of underwater caves and you will be amazed by the overall clarity of the water as well as the never ending stalagmites and stalactites that jut out from the earth creating the most surreal underground excursion. The area is a haven for adventure-seekers looking for new challenges and places to explore. For millions of years, rainwater and run-off precipitation from the surrounding jungle have filled natural sinkholes, thus flooding the thousands of miles of caves that underlie the region.

If adventure is not your thing then a very unique and fun way to spend an afternoon is by taking part in one of the Mayan painting classes on property. Embrace your inner Picasso, with a cocktail in hand! Here you are provided with the all the tools to paint your very own Mayan masterpiece to bring back home so you always have a special little piece of Magic Mahekal!

