

THE TRIBUTE
Lakeside Golf & Resort Community

**PETAL TO
THE METAL**
*by Jeremy Shelby
& Rick Flores*

Special Section
**SUMMERTIME
DESTINATIONS**

**SUMMER IN
THE CITY**
*photos by
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SUMMERTIME
DESTINATIONS

MAGICAL MAHEKAL: *Paradise Found*

Nestled between the dense Riviera Maya jungle and Playa del Carmen's longest stretch of beach, spanning 920 pristine feet, lies Mexico's Mahekal Beach Resort, the only resort of its kind in all of Playa del Carmen – unlike other high-rise, corridor hotels, elevators are not found at Mahekal, and the buildings are not much taller than the palm trees surrounding them. With bungalow-style accommodations mere minutes from the sweeping, sandy beach, this authentic Mexican retreat embodies a Swiss Family Robinson feel, evoking raw luxury with high-end finishes and touches of Mayan culture.

Deeply rooted in tradition, the story of Mahekal dates back 50 years when a local Mexican family built six thatched-roof palapas on the beach for backpackers to rent. Every penny of profit was invested in constructing more bungalows, and over several decades, the family incrementally built more than 100 individual palapas. Since then, the property has evolved and grown into a collection of 196 bungalows complete with exceptional amenities, including four sparkling swimming pools, a seaside hot tub, a

Mayan-inspired Revive Spa and fitness center, Vida Aquatica Dive Center, five restaurants and bars – including Las Olas, Cocina, Fuego, Boli's and Itzi – as well as a Mayan Culinary Casita.

Guests of Mahekal – which means “magical” in ancient Mayan language – are greeted with crisp Caribbean scents, tropical weather, lush vegetation and colorful bougainvillea, and they immediately immerse themselves in the bohemian ambiance, which offers a transformative vacation where spirits rise freely.

With a variety of room types – ranging from Oceanfront Beach Houses, complete with private plunge pools or outdoor moon showers, to Treehouse Rooms that overlook the jungle with hammocks and open-air terraces – there's a different vibe for every type of traveler and price points to suit every lifestyle and budget. Plus with cascading trellises, lush greenery and verdant gardens, the only distractions at this authentic and intimate resort are the outdoors and each other. For this unplugged vacation experience, guests won't find TVs in-room, but with an ever-changing weekly calendar of on-property events ranging





semi-inclusive offering with breakfast and the choice of lunch or dinner daily, with rates beginning at \$240/night. The two rate options make it easier than ever for guests to dine on- and off-property as often as they wish without feeling guilty for missing something they have already paid for.

Of course, a vacation isn't complete without indulgent dining experiences, and foodies love the variety of fresh fare found at Mahekal. From the oceanfront, "Tulum style" wood burning oven restaurant, Fuego, to high-end "Land and Sea" dishes at Las Olas, epicureans sample a mouth-watering array of culinary creations throughout their stay including fresh, fish-to-fork specialties thanks to the new "Catch of the Day" program featuring locally caught fish directly

alleed experience not soon to be forgotten, Mahekal Beach Resort has just rolled out the "Moon Over Mahekal" escape as 2017 brings a number of superb sky-watching events - from full moons and meteor showers to solar eclipses, comet encounters and more celestial wonders. Just imagine, sitting on the largest stretch of beach in Playa del Carmen, dining al fresco, with an unobstructed view of a natural moon reflecting off of the Caribbean Sea or stargazing from your private moon shower. Mahekal has curated a truly dynamic experience one does not want to miss.

Highlights of the trip include:
"Moon Over Mahekal"

- Starting at \$439
- Available now - Dec. 31, 2017
- Private Ocean View Palapa outfitted



from tequila tastings and guacamole-making lessons, to live Mexican music and beach barbecues, and the heart of Quinta Agenda (5th Avenue) just two blocks from the property, guests will hardly be starved for entertainment. Besides, state-of-the-art WiFi is readily available (and complimentary), so streaming Netflix is an entirely viable option.

While not an all-inclusive resort, Mahekal is committed to accommodating discerning travelers' evolving needs, offering guests the flexibility to "vacay your way." When making a reservation, travelers may opt for the room-rate only European Plan (EP), starting at \$190/night, or select the Modified American Plan (MAP), a

from the ocean out front.

Another authentic offering at the resort is the Mayan Culinary Casita, which is situated within an emerald patch of jungle. The casita offers guests the opportunity to help native Mayan chefs prepare a gourmet feast. A stone path takes diners through the gardens to the casita, where a Mayan shaman is waiting to burn incense and bless each guest before entering. Feast on *tikin xic* and a lime-and-chicken soup while sipping *xtabentun*, a potent Mexican liqueur.

With such a wide variety of unique activities and breathtaking sights, Mahekal Beach Resort encompasses all that Playa del Carmen has to offer. However, for those seeking an unpar-

with an outdoor moon shower, private terrace and hammock for stargazing

- Star-tinis welcome cocktail
- Couples massage at Revive Spa VIP couples cabin
- Dreamy dinner on the beach under a star-filled sky
- Romantic in-room turndown services including sparkling wine and chocolate covered strawberries
- "Once in a Blue Moon" snorkel trip with Vida Aquatica Dive Shop

For more information or to book your stay, visit www.mahekalbeachresort.com or engage with the resort socially at [Facebook.com/mahekalbeachresort](https://www.facebook.com/mahekalbeachresort) or on Instagram at [@mahekal_beach_resort](https://www.instagram.com/mahekal_beach_resort).