



Photos courtesy of *The Reef Resorts*

## The Reef 28 Unveils Beach-Chic Hospitality in Downtown Playa del Carmen

Written by *Merilee Kern*

*The Mexican state Quintana Roo is perhaps best known as the home of the venerable tourist city of Cancun, which is revered for beautiful white coral sand beaches, hot nightlife, and everything in-between. Thousands of tourists flock to this destination monthly.*

However, travelers would do well to take just a 45-minute ride by car from Cancun International Airport to check out what its sister city of Playa del Carmen has to offer. This Caribbean beach town, which is located on the easterly side of the Yucatan Peninsula, is growing in popularity since it boasts its own share of dreamy Riviera Maya beaches along with fabulous golf, bars and restaurants, shopping, and super-cool things to do like explore Mayan ruins or snorkel in the Cenotes caves and caverns.

What's also notable about Playa del Carmen is the emerging breed of luxury all-inclusive hotels

and resorts attracting jet-setters worldwide to this exotic paradise. Paramount among these is a sexy new adults-only beach-chic oasis called The Reef 28, which is the newest all-inclusive offering from the family-owned hospitality operation The Reef Resorts that opened in May 2018. According to Corrina Terenstra, The Reef 28's Director of Sales and Marketing, this particular hotel is a passion project for the owner and his family—and it shows in the painstaking design and décor details, and apparent attention to quality at every guest touch point.





Another noteworthy, this destination exemplifies that a hotel need not be sitting on top of the beach to be fabulous and in high demand. "This property manages to have the Caribbean feeling and atmosphere, while still being downtown, in the heart of everything," Terenstra notes. And she's right, as my own visit to The Reef 28 confirmed it's comfortable walking distance to the famous Mamita's Beach Club as well as a wide assortment of bars, restaurants, and the kinetic Quinta Avenida (5th Avenue) offering both world-class shopping and luxe boutiques in tandem with small indigenous shops replete with art and culture from the region. Guests can also shuttle to the two other nearby Reef properties in Coco Beach or Playacar to enjoy those beaches and all-inclusive amenities. Tours and excursions of every sort are also just a short drive away from the hotel. Indeed, The Reef 28's location provides amazing access to pretty much all that Playa del Carmen has to offer—the beach plus so much more.

Relative to what the hotel, itself, has available...it's much. First, The Reef 28 is a decidedly high-end luxury offering for discerning travelers who also prefer the warmth and personalized service that a boutique property can proffer. What I also personally adore about this location is its

authenticity. I've stayed at some resorts in Mexico where you would never know you're actually in the country, let alone one specific city or another. However, The Reef 28 reflects the area's authentic culture. Terenstra points out that the privately-owned property hires indigenous talent and that every detail is thought through and created by a detail-oriented native team. This certainly extends to its food and beverage program that includes Mexican chefs and cooks who add a delicious Mexican touch to most if not all cuisine.

And speaking of cuisine, this is another feature helping this property make its mark in the region among locals and tourists, alike. The hotel has two elegant on-site restaurants featuring fresh Mexican and Asian fusion flavors, Cachito and El Asiatico, as well as the more casual Ventiocho's that serves a wonderful breakfast, lunch and dinner buffet along with service that's second to none. These eateries defy what's expected of typically overwhelming all-inclusive fare. Rather, the restaurants boast inventive gourmet cuisine rivaling the world-renowned eateries peppered throughout Playa del Carmen. And no worries about those vacation calories as there's a rooftop fitness center as well for those so inclined.

Three bars are also resident—La Cantina Del Mezcal, Lounge Bar 28, and the stylish ARRIBA rooftop bar—where guests can sip and savor premium cocktails and even delight in al fresco breakfast or lunch with a view. The loungey ARRIBA rooftop is also especially noteworthy as here, the seductive infinity pool is surrounded by plush cabanas, loungers and other comfy seating while local DJs set a festive vibe while patrons socialize and soak in the sun or starlight. "We wanted to create a space that was more about connecting than escaping," Terenstra adds.







I would also be remiss to not mention the sleek and modern guest rooms and sophisticated hotel interior in general, which all takes inspiration from the colorful Caribbean and the unique characteristics of marine life. This is an all-suites destination, so every room is either a Junior Suite or a Master Suite. Conveniences abound, from hair irons to high speed Internet to in-room Nespresso machines and daily stocked mini bars. Other luxuries also allow for moments of intimacy and relaxation, like plush bedding, towels and robes to a bedside Jacuzzi and private patios or terraces in the Master Suites.

According to Mr. Montalvo, CEO of The Reef Resorts & Spa, "It was time to embrace what people really want from a vacation. Adults are

looking for their own adventures and their own way to feel a part of a genuine—even transformative—experience. At The Reef 28, they get to be a part of the party, the culture, the cuisine and fun that makes Riviera Maya Mexico's thriving Cote d'Azur." The property is designed to help guests move at ease from beachfront to rooftop bar lounge.

It's clear The Reef 28 has set its sights on offering a new kind of "all-in" experience in Playa Del Carmen." So leave the kiddos at home and escape to this romantic adults-only all-inclusive retreat where your own play-date in paradise awaits.

---

## ABOUT AUTHOR

*As the Executive Editor and Producer of "The Luxe List," Merilee Kern is an internationally-regarded consumer product trends expert and hospitality industry voice of authority—a travel, dining, leisure, and lifestyle expert who spotlights noteworthy marketplace innovations, change makers, movers and shakers. She reports on exemplary travel destinations and experiences, extraordinary events and newsworthy products and services across all categories. Reach her online at [www.TheLuxeList.com](http://www.TheLuxeList.com), on Twitter at [www.Twitter.com/LuxeListEditor](https://twitter.com/LuxeListEditor), on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/TheLuxeList](https://www.Facebook.com/TheLuxeList) and on Instagram at [www.Instagram.com/LuxeListReviews](https://www.Instagram.com/LuxeListReviews)*