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*Our
FAVORITE
Local
BARTENDERS*

INDULGE

places

BY MERILEE KERN

GRAND VELAS RIVIERA MAYA RESORT

Perfection on the Yucatán Peninsula



While the all-inclusive resort industry has long suffered what I'll call an "image problem," particularly among the luxury travel set, the concept is not only single-handedly redeemed, but entirely elevated and profoundly redefined, at Grand Velas Riviera Maya. Located on Mexico's marvelous Yucatán Peninsula, the resort is set amidst a staggering 205 acres of paradise and protected mangroves, and replete with panoramic views of the azure Caribbean Sea. This family-friendly, pet-friendly, and eco-friendly resort is the only one in the Mexican Caribbean to receive the revered AAA Five-Diamond Award, and it is a Leading Hotels of the World-designated property.

Stay

There are 491 suites in total that range in size from a 1,184 square feet to 3,767 square feet. The Grand Class suite comes with its very own plunge pool on an expansive private terrace, as well as a bevy of high-tech conveniences. The amply-sized Grand Class suite bathrooms are a destination all their own, featuring a large Jacuzzi tub, separate floor-to-ceiling glass rain shower, and walk-in closet.

Service

Imagine having your very own personal butler while on holiday. At Grand Velas Riviera Maya, guests of the Grand Class enjoy their very own butler-concierge. The ratio of staff to guest is three to one and includes many multilingual, culturally diverse members. The resort is teeming with top-notch all-inclusive amenities, including 24-hour in-suite dining, a dedicated pool and beach concierge, an expansive children's pool and multiple infinity pools with swim-up bars, a Karaoke bar, live music at the lobby bar and sky bar, non-motorized water sports, fun activities, and valet parking. The state-of-the-art Life Fitness Centers offers cardio and weight training, Pilates and Yoga, and meditation.

Savor

Grand Velas Riviera Maya's crown jewel is its dining offerings. A virtual gastronomic voyage, each offers an upscale dining option focused on food and flavors from around the globe. *Cocina de Autor* is its signature restaurant that serves molecular cuisine that fuses classic and modern culinary techniques with science and technology to create an avant-garde food adventure. *Frida* offers Mexican fine dining that has garnered numerous awards for its fusion dishes, also winning the hearts of patrons with its margarita trolley. *Piaf* is a French restaurant that boasts a chef who is only one of 300 in the world to receive the title of "Maître Cuisinier of France." *Sen Lin* is an upscale Asian eatery that combines flavors from Japan, Thailand and Vietnam. *Lucca's*, a Northern Italian restaurant, serves up homemade pastas, specialty seafood dishes, and gourmet meats. The property also provides a selection of casual dining options.

Spa

When it comes to a vacation spa location, few exceed the first-class experience here. Boasting the region's largest spa, this luxury oasis tops out at a staggering 89,305 square feet of soothing space designed with one singular goal in mind: to ensure your utter enjoyment and relaxation. Named "Best Spa" in the world by *Virtuoso* and having garnered a *SpaFinder Readers' Choice Award*, visitors understandably have high expectations of this delight-driven destination. Simply stated, Grand Velas Riviera Maya is Latin American hospitality at its finest.

The Luxe List Executive Editor Merilee Kern scours the luxury marketplace for exemplary travel experiences, extraordinary events, and notable products and services. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/luxelisteditor>.