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get your sexy on south of the border



FUN PLACES FOR
TWO & INSIDER
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Honeymoon

HACIENDA HIDEAWAYS

THESE COLONIAL ESTATES ARE HEAVY ON THE CHARM—AND EASY ON THE WALLET

Hacienda San Gabriel de las Palmas / Cuernavaca

History still echoes through the vaulted arches and gorgeously weathered walls of this old-world wonder, commissioned by conquistador Hernán Cortés way, way back in 1529. But along with the 16th-century wine cellar, you'll discover 21st-century diversions, like a game room, Los Mariachis bar, and nearby skydiving. Doubles from \$224 (year-round); hacienda-sangabriel.com.mx.

Hacienda Temozon / Mérida

Tick off all the requirements for a heavenly getaway: lovely gardens, petals on the bed, and dinners à deux in hidden corners. The experience you can't get anywhere else, however, is a mas-

sage performed in the "spa cave," a grotto created by a system of underwater rivers. Doubles from \$220 (low season) and \$280 (high season); thehaciendas.net.

Hacienda Xcanatun / Mérida

This 18th-century plantation has been resurrected as a swoon-worthy retreat, complete with carved-stone soaking tubs, exposed-beam ceilings, and freshwater pools. Doubles from \$260 (low season) and \$280 (high season), with breakfast; xcanatun.com.

Hacienda Los Laureles / Oaxaca

Explore the town's colonial sites, or practice ancient traditions without leaving your digs: Couples get steamy during sessions in the hotel's *temescal* (Native American sweat lodge), said to purify the spirit and eliminate toxins (like last night's extra shot of tequila). Doubles from \$210 (low season) and \$247 (high season); mexicoboutiquehotels.com. —Heidi Mitchell



Save extra room in that suitcase for souvenirs: San Miguel de Allende is famous for its fab galleries and craft markets.

why we heart San Miguel de Allende

GO ON, PAINT THE TOWN RED (OR BLUE...OR GREEN...) STROLLING THE STREETS OF THIS COLORFUL CITY

Even die-hard beach lovers fall for the jewel of Mexico's colonial interior, a hotbed of sexy new sleeps. Cafés line cobblestoned lanes, and with the sun bouncing off the pink-hued houses, everything—and everyone!—are bathed in a soft, romantic glow. Here are our must-dos for two.

- ◆ **STAY** The boutique **Hotel Matilda** brings swank appeal and big-name contemporary art to the city. Don't skip the spa, which has a Turkish-style hammam. *Doubles from \$319 (year-round); hotelmatilda.com.* If you're into traditional decor, bunk at the just-opened **Rosewood**, near Juárez Park, and share drinks at the rooftop lounge. *Doubles from \$450 (year-round); rosewoodsanmiguel.com.*
- ◆ **SEE** Close to La Parroquia church, Jardín Principal bustles with families, vendors, and tourists enjoying the dry mountain weather. A short drive away, the Balneario Escondido hot springs offer relaxing thermal pools and picnic spots.
- ◆ **SHOP** Once a working textile mill, **Fabrica La Aurora** now houses dozens of galleries and home-design stores. For silver jewelry, hit the artisan market in the town center.
- ◆ **EAT** The in-crowd noshes at **Hotel Matilda's** modern-Latin restaurant, which highlights ingredients from the nearby *Via Organica* farm. *Dinner for two, from \$75.* —Sandra Ramani

COURTESY OF STARWOOD HOTELS AND RESORTS (PATITO); GETTY IMAGES (OTHERS).

STIRRING THE POT

GET BUSY TOP CHEF-STYLE AT A RESORT COOKING CLASS

»» Boca Chica / Acapulco

Master sushi-maker Keisuke Harada adds Mexican flair to Japanese fare at this retro-cool hideaway, where guests study his fine art of fusion—tuna with fiery habanero oil or tempura hearts of palm, anyone? *From \$200 for two; hotel-bocachica.com.*

»» Ritz-Carlton / Cancún

At the beachfront Viking Culinary Center, pairs can whip up basics like red-snapper ceviche, enchiladas,

and margaritas; learn about local wines; or make like the master chef as he concocts a five-course feast. *From \$130 for two; ritzcarlton.com.*

»» Las Ventanas / Los Cabos

The "Men in White" program is our kind of date: Your guy steps up to the stove and (under supervision, of course) cooks dinner for you in the resort's secluded outdoor kitchen while you drink champagne! *From \$365; lasventanas.com.*

»» Zoëtry Paraiso de La Bonita / Riviera Maya

Learn to make the savory Mayan dish *tikin xic* (grilled grouper in a marinade of achiote paste and orange juice, wrapped in a banana leaf) using the catch of the day and fresh goodies from the garden. *Included in the room rate; zoetryresorts.com.*

—Rebecca Ascher-Walsh

take home a yum recipe from your honeymoon



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