



Palo Verde smoothie

JOHANNA READ



TRS Coral food art

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Ocean Club ahi

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Vivo Resorts salad

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Hotel Xcaret tacos

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Grand Residences tarts

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Pacific Sands fish

BEN GIEBRECHT

ON THE BEACH *by* JOHANNA READ

BEACH VACATIONS are for sandy shores, turquoise pools and sun-filled activities, less so for the food. But who wants to end a day of snorkelling with dismal buffets of lukewarm overcooked pasta or eat pre-frozen burgers poolside? Instead, check out these beach resorts where chefs go out of their way to offer guests diverse menus, local ingredients, healthy choices and even molecular gastronomy.

PALO VERDE SUSTAINABLE HOTEL El Zonte, El Salvador

Olor de Mar is the beachside restaurant affiliated with this eco-hotel. Chef Carlos Burgos' creative menus highlight El Salvador's prime seafood and local fruit and veg. www.paloverdehotel.com

TRS CORAL HOTEL AND GRAND PALLADIUM COSTA MUJERES North of Cancun, Mexico

These all-inclusive sister resorts (one adults-only) have 13 restaurants between them, ideal for anyone who craves variety. Choose from Argentine barbecue with beach views, traditional Spanish, French steak tartare and foie gras, Indian tandoori, Japanese teppanyaki and more.

www.palladiumhotelgroup.com/en/costamujeres/trs-coral-hotel

OCEAN CLUB RESORTS Provo, Turks and Caicos

Ocean Club West has beachside Solana, featuring teppanyaki and sushi. A 20-minute stroll east on one of the world's most beautiful beaches is Opus, at Ocean Club East. It has the island's largest wine list, perfectly prepared classics, and local conch and lobster. www.oceanclubresorts.com

VIVO RESORTS Puerto Escondido, Mexico

On a beach favoured by turtles, Vivo Resorts' farm-to-table Ernesto's focuses on healthy Oaxacan food. Ingredients, even sesame seeds, come from organic farms next door to the resort and from the town's excellent public market.

www.vivoresorts.com

HOTEL XCARET MEXICO Mayan Riviera, Mexico

This luxury all-inclusive has ten restaurants. The standout is Mexican gastronomy restaurant Há, by the first Mexican chef to receive a Michelin star. Hotel Xcaret's Mexican cantina, Asian Xin-Gao and even Mercado's buffet impress.

www.hotelxcaret.com

GRAND RESIDENCES RIVIERA CANCUN Mayan Riviera, Mexico

This five-star resort serves traditional Mexican and Mayan dishes, plus international selections like ahi tuna, and afternoon tea with delectable pastries. Choose between an all-inclusive stay, dine à la carte, or invite the chef up to cook just for you in your own kitchen. www.grandresidencesrivieracancun.com

PACIFIC SANDS BEACH RESORT Tofino, BC

It's not hot year-round like southern beach resorts, but whether you're storm watching or surfing, Pacific Sands now has the Surfside Grill, the sister of Wildside Grill by chef Jesse Blake and fisher Jeff Mikus. The casual atmosphere belies the quality of the panko fish and chips and fish tacos. www.pacificsands.com