

January 2018



TO TULUM

Tulum has been on my "To Visit" list for awhile. So to Tulum, I finally went!

A lot of my jetset friends have made the trek already. And many of the hipsters who made **Punta del Este** cool, are migrating to this bohemian chic town in Mexico. Argentine visionaries have already planted seeds there as well as **Burning Man** "Burners" as they are called by those who are part of that tribe.



Tulum is perched on the furthest edge of the **Yucatan Peninsula** in the **Gulf of Mexico**. It's known for the Mayan ruins standing above the tropical coastline overlooking the turquoise blue sea, along with warm weather, sunshine and unique limestone cenotes which are natural underwater passages. Plus, the mystical Mayan spirit still prevails here and the jungle seems to reach to infinity. Here you can come to get lost or to rediscover yourself.



Real estate is booming....condo buildings get sold out the moment they hit the market.

The spot to buy is in **Aldea Zama**, a short bike ride from the beach. It's a haven of construction carved out of the jungle with lots of affordable choices, but one that especially caught my eye was **ArtHouse**.





I went just before Art Basel Week in Miami to see firsthand what all the Tulum talk was about.

I was actually going for the first “Planet Hope” celebrity golf charity event along the Riviera Maya at Mayakoba resort. I jumped on an American flight direct from **Miami to Cancun, Mexico** and touchdown was in less than 2 hours. The drive to Tulum was actually longer than the flight time. Your “Uber Spanish” won’t be needed as most people in Tulum speak English including taxi drivers (no UBER yet). And cash is king in Tulum so be sure to hit your cash machine in the U.S. before heading South of the Border to have dollars in your pocket (no need for pesos). And be prepared to communicate only by whatsapp as phone lines and internet don’t really work yet in Tulum. And many places have limited electricity and are run by generators. So ladies, blow dryers are frowned upon. But the good news is that all food is fresh and many dishes are cooked on an open fire made to order.



I arrived Thanksgiving weekend so all the beach hotels were booked. But that turned out to be a blessing in disguise for that is how I discovered the Aldea Zama ‘hood’. **Aldea Zama** is a unique private master planned community in the heart of Tulum, 5 minutes from some of the best beaches in the world.

I stayed at **Kasa Tulum** which is a condo hotel adding Phase 3 due to great demand. Here you get an entire brand new apartment

for the price of a hotel room on the beach. Even penthouses with rooftop private infinity pools at Kasa are less than the trendy beach suites. I cannot rave enough about the service at this property which was super friendly, helpful and knowledgeable, plus all staff spoke perfect English. Ahhh....it’s so nice to be out of Miami in Mexico where everyone here speaks English (how ironic, huh?). The Kasa welcome drink was a tasty fruity concoction. Later I graduated to a frozen passionfruit tequila cocktail that hit the spot. The food at Kasa was actually as good or better than many of the trendy places on Beach Road. For breakfast I had the most delicious huevos rancheros ever in my life cooked in a clay pot on a special kettle grill. I think buying



a condo/hotel unit run by the Kasa Tulum developer is a good venture. Occupancies are high and so are the owner splits at 70/30. Prices for a 2 bedroom with wrap around terrace furnished is \$249,000 and a 2 bedroom penthouse furnished with wrap around terrace and rooftop pool is \$449,000. Tulum is the new jetset hotspot and travelers are coming from all over so the demand is currently greater than the supply.

“Quintana Roo is Mexico’s fastest growing state. The hottest section is near Tulum, just down the beach from a massive Mayan fortress overlooking the Caribbean.” Wall Street Journal

Kasa Tulum Phase 3 Villas Las Palmas brochure:
www.ehopeinternational.com/VillasLasPalmasTulumBrochure.pdf

Kasa provided complimentary bikes which allowed us to explore Tulum in a healthy way. We biked to the ruins the first morning and then all the way to the end of Beach Road to get acclimated seeing where all the hip hotels and eateries were and funky shops. What caught my eyes first were the street signs with philosophical messages everywhere. Then Mother Nature sent three beautiful blue butterflies across our path, one for good luck for each of us. These are the little surprises you see when you are 'awake' on your journey around Tulum. Exotic birds also often fly by.



The penthouse is out-of-this-world filled with water prior to guest arrivals and overlooking the sea. The restaurant, **Kin Toh** sits high above the jungle and has seating pods perched like limbs on a tree. For those daring enough, you can plop down on a suspended overhanging net while enjoying some libations. There is a special spiritual center in the middle of the resort near the spa. And the boutique, **Zak Ik** is enterable sans shoes where you must duck down and go through a passageway similar to entering the trunk of a tree. The organic store design is gorgeous and so is the merchandise which has substantial price tags. The 'floors' throughout Azulik are twigs so ladies forget stilettos....let alone figure out how to navigate back to your room after imbibing on a few mescal cocktails. Azulik offers architectural nest-like living to the nth degree. WOW factor for sure!



We took a swing, not swim (<https://vimeo.com/250203665>) at **Esperanza Beach** (how nice of them to name a beach after me as Esperanza is Hope in Spanish for you gringos). Then we got a grand tour of **Azulik**, an earthy treehouse-like boutique hotel super romantic and rustic with a spiritual edge. It's probably one of the most unique hotel designs I have ever seen. That's a big statement coming from me who has been there, done that, just about everywhere on this planet. Kudos to the architect owner/visionary from Argentina.



When Monday rolled around, we moved closer to the action on **Beach Road** and nestled into **Nest**, a quaint beachfront place. I loved my circular room with a rooftop hammock. The small bar served divine drinks and delish guacamole including a pineapple version. Bikes were available for moving around Beach Road or daybeds for those preferring a more relaxing afternoon beachside.

I took a tour of the talked about [Be Tulum](#) and [Nomade](#) hotels nearby. And yes, they are where the scenesters stay. The Morocco meets Tulum hippy chic style was in overdrive at Nomade. I liked the communal tent where they held classes. The night I was there the topic was “Energetic Lovemaking”. Who wouldn’t want to learn more about that? Demystifying the Mayan Calendar was the topic the next night.



[Be Tulum](#) has a Michelin star chef at the helm of their [Ocumare](#) restaurant. It is the top of the food chain for sure in Tulum. Housed in a street-front cozy space fronting the trendy Be Tulum boutique hotel, it’s worth a step inside. I had the good fortune of experiencing a 7 course tasting with a local friend and we were both bedazzled! The orgasmic foodie fusion experience was magical. It blended the tastes of India, Morocco, Spain, Greece and Argentina in an artful presentation. And the cocktails were equally artsy in both design and exotic flavor combinations. Mezcalito, anyone?



I checked out [Yaan Wellness Energy Healing Spa](#) and checked in to their hot/cold thermal therapy areas followed by a Mayan meditation with energy healing. This place wins for most unique spa design with self-standing squares for treatment rooms. It’s well worth a visit for some ahhhhhh...time.

For shopping in Tulum, there are some funky boutiques scattered along Beach Road. Here are the ones that got a few of my U.S.



dollars: [RAH](#) for a unique yellow bikini with crochet trim, [Lolita Lolita](#) for some fragrant toiletries and incense, and [ZACBE Silverworks](#) for a ring designed by Gabriela Munoz inside the [Mayan Clay Spa](#) storefront.

Tulum is not a nightlife town like South Beach or Ibiza. But it is a place for foodies for sure. It is more relaxed with open-air restaurants and bars often with sand floors. [Gitano](#) is worth a drink or two and has a suspended disco ball outside. [Mur Mur](#) has a bar with swings and tasty delights from its outdoor oven. [Cenzontle Gardine Secreto](#) was our dining choice the first night in Tulum and it did not disappoint. Bread arrived to our table in little brown bags and after our amazing appetizers satiated us. By the time our pumpkin entrée came, we were full, but took a taste. Thumbs up for this spot! We bypassed the over popular places like [Hartwood](#) which always has a long line and missed having lunch at [Posada Margherita](#). But I did play tourist at Margherita taking photos of many artsy elements and a lone male soul doing yoga-like poses on the beachfront just for me!





Haring. Plus, there’s a hidden underground pool that used to be the drug hiding place. Rumor has it that both Pablo and the Mayans still exist to this day, hidden away somewhere deep inside the Mayan jungle never to be found.

Before leaving Tulum, I did a sacred chakra cleansing on the beach with a **Shaman**. There is always a lot of sage burning in this town, perhaps to ward off evil spirits. We also did a side trip to the **Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve**, Mexico’s largest protected reserve and a **UNESCO** world heritage site. Here we took a boat ride through the incredible nature environment. But first, my friend missed the posted warning sign and stepped into the quicksand. We almost lost her as she was rapidly sinking into Mother Earth. Luckily, our guide pulled her out just in time, and all that disappeared was a single Valentino sandal. May her future Prince Charming find it for her one day. Afterwards, we took a quick cenote stop for a swim in the caves with no casualties.



Casa Malca, the former mansion turned boutique hotel of drug dealer, **Pablo Escobar** was our next overnight spot. There is lots of quirky décor... like a couch hanging from the lobby wall to the outside entrance curtains made of wedding dresses. Oh, and ant art on the ceiling, plus, colorful hammocks from the current owners homeland of Colombia. The restaurant area has a strange, “Day of the Dead-like” doll collection and there’s a black and white wallpapered bar dedicated to graffiti artist, **Keith**



RIVIERA MAYA

Let the Celebrity Golf Games Begin Planet Hope Charity Hits Mayakoba Our Heads Hit Viceroy Riviera Maya

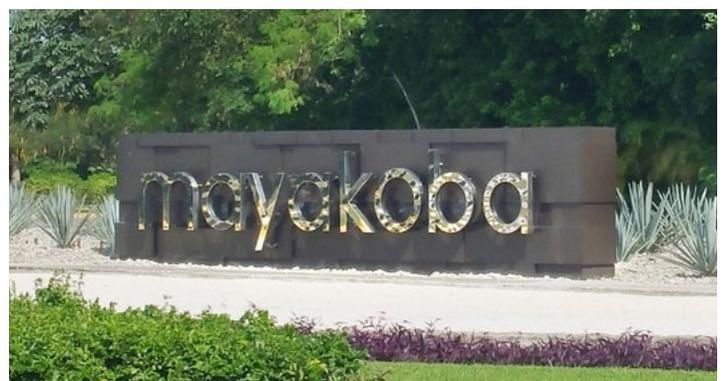
The long car journey from Tulum back to 5-star “civilization” landed us at **Viceroy Riviera Maya**. This was our ‘home’ for the weekend down the road from **Mayakoba Resort** which was hosting the **Planet Hope Celebrity Golf Riviera Maya Invitational** charity event benefiting underprivileged children. I’ve been to **Yas Viceroy** in Abu Dhabi that is an amazing industrial-like structure in the middle of the desert



with an F1 race track running through it. This Viceroy along the Riviera Maya is the polar opposite as a seaside refuge tucked amidst the tropical jungle. It’s a smaller more intimate adults-only property ideal for honeymooners. The 41 individual thatched roof villa suites each have their own outdoor jacuzzi with a waterfall and lounges to relax on.



Each villa also has a private outdoor shower, perfect for those wanting to try their “Aphrodisiac Shower Experience”. If you bring your furry friend, they even have a pet palapa. The staff could not be friendlier and includes a Soap Concierge who provides guests with fresh artisanal soaps in the scent and aromatherapy experience of your choice. The ‘Mayaterranean’ food was fabulous and my spa treatment ahhhhhazing.



Mayakoba Resort is like an entire eco-village unto itself, albeit a gated, high security, total luxury community, housing several 5-star hotel brands including **Banyan Tree**, **Rosewood**, **Fairmont** and **Andaz** suites and residences. Total integrity was kept when designing and building this resort which includes plenty of natural vegetation as well as animal and marine life on its premises like ‘monkeys’, exotic birds and even alligators as well as a huge expanse of beachfront property.



We were greeted with a welcome party the opening night of the Planet Hope celebrity golf charity. It was fun to spot the celebrities and get our Instagrammable photo opps. The weekend was filled with celebs paired with avid golfers on Mayakoba’s PGA course that winds through the cenotes and overlooks the sea. The **El Camaleon** club house is the centerpiece for the course. The next night we had a “White Party” at Mayakoba’s Andaz hotel with a charity auction. The final day was an awards ceremony in Mayakoba’s **El Pueblito**... and time to say our good-byes.



But before leaving we got a tour of the **Mayakoba Residences** for sale. These include **Rosewood villas** (priced from \$3.3 mil to \$6.3 for 2, 3 & 4 bedrooms fully furnished with hotel rental program available) and **Fairmont Heritage Place condo units** (priced from \$1.25 mil fully furnished with hotel rental program available) as well as **Fairmont timeshares** (priced from \$185,000 for 3 bedrooms to \$325,000 for 4 bedrooms fully furnished with Fairmont timesharing worldwide). Owners receive special privileges at Mayakoba’s 18-hole **El Camaleon** PGA golf course designed by **Greg Norman**.

Mayakoba Residences intro video:

<https://vimeo.com/203232297>

Rosewood Villas video:

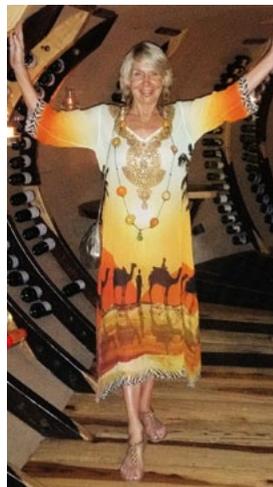
<https://vimeo.com/205200653>

Fairmont Heritage Place condos & timeshares video:

<https://vimeo.com/247971585>

Tulum & Riviera Maya Real Estate

If interested in a Tulum condo/hotel investment or a Mayakoba Resort condo/hotel, villa or timeshare, contact me for details. I can arrange visits for potential investors/buyers and give you private presentation tours. The price/value relationship in this geographic region is quite attractive compared to many other trendy resort destinations worldwide.



**Cheers,
Hope**

President, Hope International Global Marketing
Managing Director, Venegas International Group
Sports, Arts & Entertainment Division
Luxury Real Estate
Miami & Global Properties
+1.305.785.5501

www.hopemiamirealestateservices.com
www.ehopeinternational.com/HopeAd.pdf
www.ehopeinternational.com/HopeProfileSofiMagazine.pdf

VENEGAS
INTERNATIONAL GROUP

HOPE
INTERNATIONAL