

SFGate

Mexico vacations, no planning required

All-inclusive resorts with cattle-call buffets and indifferent service are still with us, but they're rapidly being replaced by architect-designed havens with vaunted international chefs and 3-to-1 employee-to-guest ratios. Golf, tennis, zip lines, climbing walls and even trapeze lessons have replaced conga lines and limbo dancing. And with deals to entice travelers back to Mexico multiplying like Tribbles, now is a great time to discover this new breed of all-inclusive.

Mind you, these places won't steep you in local culture, but the good news is that all-inclusives have stopped trying to keep guests inside their gates and are organizing forays out into the world to explore Mexico's unique history, flora and fauna. What still applies is the convenience and perks of an all-inclusive vacation: you'll pay less for what you get.

Best couples magnet

Superior deluxe with king-size beds and a huge, ocean-view Jacuzzi is the only room category at [Aventura Spa Palace](#) (Puerto Aventuras, Riviera Maya). Cool towels and champagne on arrival, a hydrotherapy spa, a refrigerator and bar stocked daily, a beautifully groomed beach, an expansive international wine list and impeccable service also endear it to lovers. And if you book a group of rooms, they'll provide the wedding for free — just bring your own cake and videographer. Also worth a look: [Excellence Riviera Cancún](#) (Puerto Morelos, Riviera Maya) and [Iberostar Paraiso Lindo](#).

Best for active vacations

Just south of the Cancun Airport, [Moon Palace Golf Resort & Spa](#) is in the midst of the Riviera Maya's panoply of day trips; unlimited outings to Chichén Itzá, the Wet'n'Wild water park, Tulum, Isla Mujeres, and favored snorkeling spots are included with a promotion lasting until Dec. 23. But couples, families and singles alike can keep plenty busy right on the property, home to a miniature golf, a climbing tower and a Jack Nicklaus signature golf course. And guests at any Palace resort can take advantage of other properties' pools, water sports and restaurants. The entire resort chain is offering a \$100 to \$400 airfare credit, depending on length of stay, through the end of the year and a \$200 golf and spa credit with at least three nights' stay, increasing to \$300 from late August through the end of the year.