

A WORLD OF STYLE

WHERE TO SEE IT, SHOP IT, LIVE IT!

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16-PAGE
PULLOUT
GUIDE
**MEXICO
NOW!**

TRUTH IN TRAVEL / OCTOBER 2010

India

The Splendors
of Jaipur

Italy

LOVE AT A
PERFUME COUNTER

Rio

BEACHES, BIKINIS,
AND MORE!

Morocco

MAGNIFICENT MARRAKECH

New York

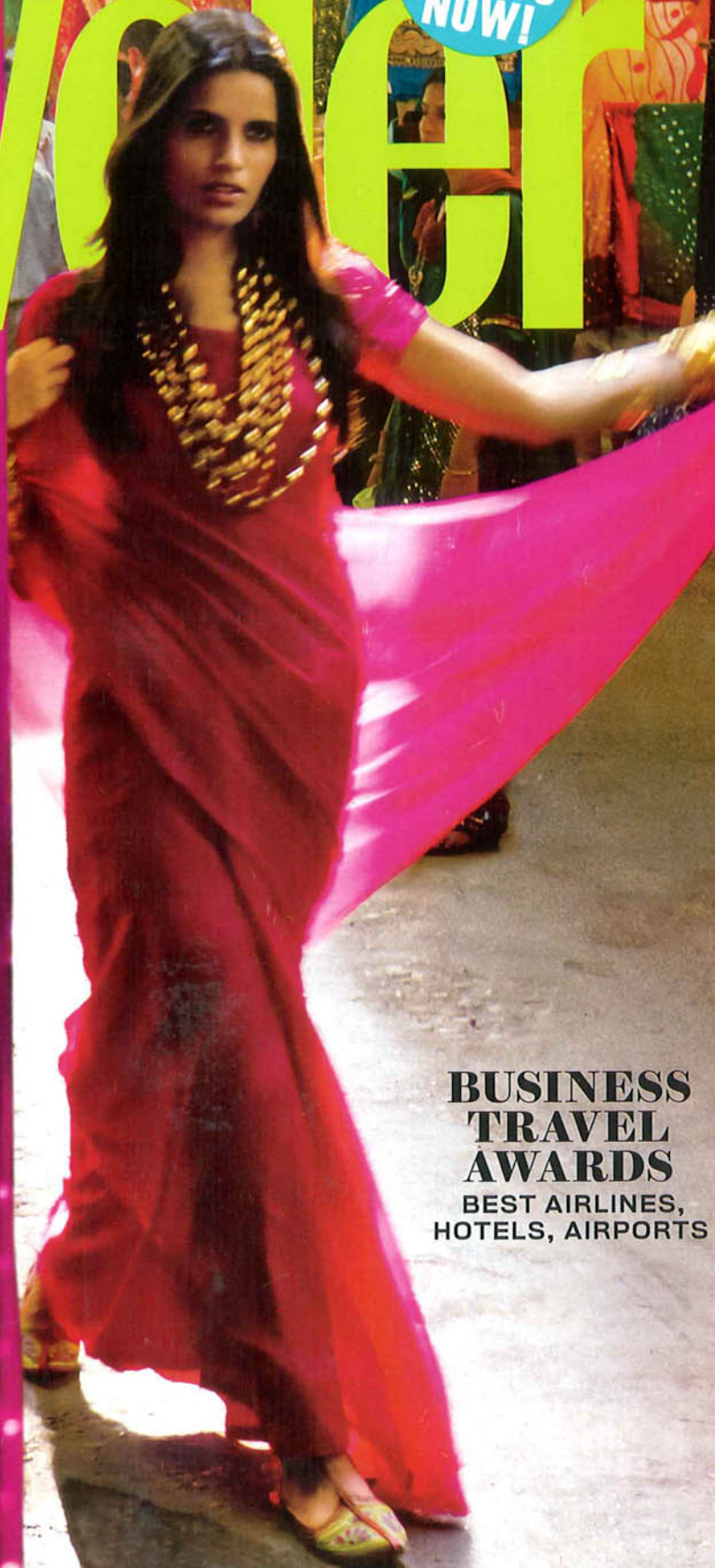
HOT SPOTS: AN INSIDERS' GUIDE

+265

FABULOUS HOTELS,
RESTAURANTS, GALLERIES, BARS,
AND SHOPS WORLDWIDE

**BUSINESS
TRAVEL
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BEST AIRLINES,
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SPECIAL
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TRUTH IN TRAVEL

Mexico's Moment

LATIN AMERICA'S MOST EXCITING
NATION IS BLOOMING WITH
AVANT-GARDE ART, SUBLIME
SNACKS, LUXE BEACH
HIDEAWAYS, SERIOUS SURF,
AND SEXY SOUVENIRS.
WE GIVE YOU THE SCOOP



MEXICO CITY
CALLING ALL
CONTEMPORARY-ART BUFFS
P. 86

OAXACA
THE GASTRONOME'S
MUST-GO
P. 88

BAJA CALIFORNIA
WHERE THE WILD
THINGS ARE
P. 112

MÉRIDA
COLONIAL-
ARCHITECTURE COOL
P. 114

The Beach-Off

Sublime sands and haute hotels have made the Mayan Riviera and Los Cabos top contenders for the country's best beach escapes. Girlfriend getaway? Big birthday? We present the options. Who wins? You decide



LOS CABOS



MAYAN RIVIERA

FAMILIES

Hilton Los Cabos Beach & Golf Resort

→ A swimmable beach, valuable real estate in these parts, and the Cabo Kids program—which keeps nippers occupied with scavenger hunts, cake classes, and movies—are the parent pleasers here. For grown-ups there's golf, tennis, and a spa offering hot stone massages (52-624-145-6500; doubles, \$179–\$209).



Rosewood Mayakobá

→ When not building sand castles, making piñatas, or practicing their sea creature origami, guests under 12 stay free in parents' rooms—and get a kick out of traveling from room to room in wooden boats on man-made lagoons. Horseback riding, yoga, and a venerable Rosewood Spa keep Ma and Pa out of trouble (52-984-875-8000; suites, \$454–\$1,250).



GIRLFRIEND GETAWAYS



One&Only Palmilla

→ When everyone's favorite Friend visits this luxe haunt with pals Sheryl Crow and Courtney Cox, staff call in the Mexican military to help them evade the paps. Jennifer Aniston isn't the only one getting the celeb treatment: Jaunts on the 43-foot Azimut yacht, ESPA facials, and a 700-label cellar make every guest feel like the one and only (52-624-146-7000; doubles, \$575–\$1,375).



Hotel Básico

→ This whimsical 15-roomer in Playa del Carmen's party zone breaks from the norm with converted petroleum tanks as rooftop pools, inner tubes as window blinds, and spare tires as decor. Hot young things gather at the Azotea Bar on the top floor—try the refreshing mojitos—while the industrial chic rooms, bathed in a sexy pink light, have Polaroid cameras for spontaneous snaps (52-984-879-4448; doubles, \$135–\$275).

BIG BIRTHDAYS



Esperanza

→ With just 56 posh suites (the smallest are 925 square feet) your intimate celebration won't get lost in the thrum, as former guests Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow can attest. Staff arrange whale-watching trips and golf outings at six nearby champ courses; Wednesdays bring beach BBQs. Wi-Fi-enabled laptops are on hand for those who can't unplug (52-624-145-6400; suites, \$675–\$1,125).



Royal Hideaway Playacar

→ A perennial Gold Lister, this 200-suite adults-only resort has Spanish colonial architecture, six pools, and a rare air of sophistication. Suites are divided into villas, some with a central courtyard and concierge, making them party perfect. Treat the birthday boy or girl to a seven-course meal at Las Ventanas—or go one better and reserve the Chef's Table (52-984-873-4500; suites, \$420–\$1,557).

SPA LOVERS



Las Ventanas al Paraíso

→ If it's good enough for Cindy Crawford, this Ayurvedic enclave is good enough for the rest of us. Flowering plants surround the solarium; a new music and incense menu lets guests personalize each treatment (the Nopal Detox Desert Wrap using a local cactus is our reco); and there are even pamper options for pets. But it's not all detox: Classes on tequila are also on offer (52-624-144-2800; suites, \$500–\$4,935).



The Tides Riviera Maya

→ Sexy, swank, and small (the diminutive Ashley Olsen is a fan), the Tides melds plush accommodations with rain forest surroundings. The circular spa focuses on Mayan rituals such as the temazcal stone purification ceremony, and, for aspiring breeders, a fertility ceremony begins with a shot of xtabentun (anise and honey liqueur) and ends with drums and chants (52-984-877-3000; villas, \$585–\$1,800).



HONEY- & BABYMOONS

Capella Pedregal

→ Huge suites carved into the cliffs where the Sea of Cortés meets the Pacific Ocean? Check. Sprawling views of mating whales to set the mood? Check. Private infinity plunge pools and one-touch fireplaces? Check. Lo máxima: candlelit dinner under the stars at El Farallón, perched on a bluff overlooking the cresting waves (52-624-163-4350; doubles, \$675–\$1,050).

Excellence Playa Mujeres

→ You'd never guess this haven was a half-hour from Cancún's hullabaloo. With private hot tubs, overwater hammocks, and dinner on the beach, it's made for vacays para dos—and you get a personal concierge to sort out that ruin rendezvous or snorkeling sojourn (52-998-872-8600; suites, \$675–\$1,125).

