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A lush tropical jungle scene featuring a wooden walkway leading to a thatched-roof hut with a table and chairs. The scene is filled with dense green foliage, including palm trees and other tropical plants. Sunlight filters through the leaves, creating a dappled light effect. The hut has a rustic, natural feel with wooden pillars and a thatched roof. A small table with a bowl of fruit is visible near the entrance of the hut.

# MEXICO'S ROMANTIC HIDEAWAYS

IF MEGARESORTS AREN'T YOUR THING, RETREAT HERE. BY MARYANN HAMMERS



With its sunny weather, warm ocean breezes, soft sands and good values, Mexico is an obvious honeymoon destination. We scouted out some of Mexico's most romantic retreats, in the mountains, at sea, and in the city. Far from crowded hotel strips, these resorts are made for lovers.

### ESPERANZA, BAJA PENINSULA

This tranquil resort at the southernmost end of the Baja Peninsula is a favorite of celebrities. It's easy to see the appeal. At **Esperanza** ([esperanzasort.com](http://esperanzasort.com)), winding stone pathways circle palapa-roofed casitas, flowering vines climb up palm trees, and a cobalt-blue sea with frothy whitecaps dance over rocks.

**SUITE DREAMS** Each large, airy guestroom has a deep soaking tub (complete with a view of the sea), a king-size feather bed and a glass wall with a door that opens onto a large private terrace, which is furnished with a colorful hammock and a hot tub. Also on the terrace: a pair of binoculars, perfect for watching the whales when they pass by the hotel during the months of December to May.

**ESCAPE THE ORDINARY** Explore secluded coves; hunt for shells on the pristine beach; hold hands by the infinity pool; or wander over to the resort's pretty garden spa. The tequila-tasting class, held twice weekly, is always fun.

**ISN'T IT ROMANTIC?** Beach cabanas for two have full-size beds, as well

as butler and food-and-beverage service. Throw open the cabana's curtains to watch the sea; or close them for sheer privacy.

### HACIENDA SAN ANGEL, PUERTO VALLARTA

It could be a bit of a challenge to find the popular **Hacienda San Angel** ([haciendasanangel.com](http://haciendasanangel.com)). Nestled atop a steep hill on a narrow cobblestone street, the tile-roofed villas blend perfectly with the surrounding homes. But then you spot the small sign, pull the bell rope, walk through the heavy wood doors—and find yourself in an enchanting world of winding paths, lush tropical gardens, fountain courtyards, and secret nooks and crannies—every inch filled with Mexican colonial sculpture and artwork.

**SUITE DREAMS** Each of the hotel's suites is completely distinct but equally charming, including one with a hand-painted domed ceiling and another with wrap-around windows offering up vistas of the mountains, city, and sea.

**ESCAPE THE ORDINARY** Explore the city on foot. The resort is within walking distance of Puerto Vallarta's historic downtown, called El Centro. Also don't miss the mile-long El Malecon, the seaside walkway, and the vibrant Zona Romantica where you'll find bustling bistros, restaurants and galleries.

**ISN'T IT ROMANTIC?** After a night of slumbering on fine Egyptian