

Casa De Las Olas Tulum, Mexico



About your stay

By Deston S. Nokes, Jetsetter Correspondent

A vacation at this waterfront spot is equal parts romance and relaxation. With only five rooms, the intimate Casa de las Olas is all ocean, sand and sun. Studios and suites have full kitchens, so after days spent on the beach you can spend your nights at the restaurant down the road (there's no menu and only nine tables) or stay in and dine on your oceanfront balcony.

What we love

- Spacious rooms with canopy beds, luxury linens and ocean views;
- The feeling of having your own private white sand beach;
- Next door to the Mayan ruins of Tulum;
- Near the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, with wildlife and exquisite landscapes;
- Environmentally friendly without compromising comfort; and
- Fresh fruit and refreshments upon arrival.

What to know

- Suitable for families or couples;
- You must have at least a few dinners at Hechizo restaurant — but

- Staff can arrange dining, scuba, snorkeling and bonefishing tours;
- 45 minutes from the nearest town, Playa del Carmen; and
- Best for vacationers seeking a more remote experience.

Why to go

- *Beach Eco-friendly Romantic Travel.*

Jetsetter review

Getting away from it all means different things to different people. At Casa de las Olas ("house of the waves" in Spanish), it means enjoying the solitude of being at the end of the road on a white, sandy beach, awakening in a canopy bed and deciding whether to spend the morning dipping in the freshwater cenote, exploring the Mayan ruins next door or just lying in the hammock on the porch off your room.

This is the opposite of those mega beach resorts up shore. Casa de las Olas is remote bliss in the form of a five-suite villa. Each suite has a private entrance, so the space suits couples as well as families. Walking into the room, the sheer curtains of the kingsize canopy bed move with the ocean breezes — nature's air conditioner. All rooms have hand-painted tilework, tropical hardwood beam ceilings and Mexican and Indonesian furnishings, and some have a spacious and private ocean-view balcony.



The Master Ocean View Suite is a dual-level, 1,300-square-foot space with a full kitchen and family room.

Studios are perfect for romancing couples, but the suite — with fully equipped kitchens outfitted with a range, pots, pans, a coffee press, and a variety of cooking utensils — are great for families, who might opt to spend a few evenings in, with dinner on the private balcony. Also, the staff can recommend wonderful restaurants, such as the famous Hechizo, which is nearby. The restaurant's owner, Stefan, does away with menus and instead visits each of the nine tables to explain what he's creating on that particular night.

For those who want to cool off, there's the Caribbean Sea right outside or the freshwater *cenote*, an underground pool perfect for snorkeling and scuba, that is linked to the rivers that flow beneath Tulum.

For me, the best part of Casa de las Olas was doing nothing at all. The helpful staff made sure there were plenty of food, beverages and treats, and I could simply lie in my hammock gazing at the endless expanse of turquoise sea.



What to do

Walk on the Wild Side. Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve comprises 1.3 million acres of grass savanna, mangrove lagoon and white sand flats, and 70 miles of the second-largest barrier reef in the world. Casa de las Olas can arrange tours of the reserve's waterways and the Mayan canal systems. (www.cesiak.org)

Celebrate the Yucatan's Heritage. The Xcaret eco-archeological theme park is a must-see for young and old. Thirty-five miles from Tulum, it features shows, rides, animals and a wealth of activities. (www.xcaret.com)

Explore the “Floating City.” Tulum is the only Mayan city built on the ocean. The walled city also functioned as a seaport. (www.travelyucatan.com/tulum_mexico.php)

Eat at Carboncitos. Pay a visit to Playa del Carmen, and don't miss the area's best eatery (with the coldest beer), Carboncitos. (www.playa.info/playa-deals-80.html)



www.destonnokes.com