

Tulum, Mexico



Where We Stayed:

[Secrets Akumal Riviera Maya](#)

Adults only, all inclusive

Arriving

The resort is approximately **an hour and a half** from the Cancun airport so you will need to book a shuttle. We booked our shuttle through [Amstar](#). They stocked us with water before we left and advised us to let them know if we needed to stop to use the restroom on the long drive over.

We had a little bit of an inconvenience when we both landed in Cancun. My flight arrived an hour before Deidra's, so I made my way through customs and immigration and then waited for her before I left the airport so we could shuttle together to the resort. What we didn't know is that Cancun's terminals **do not connect, you cannot walk from one terminal to the next** like you can in other large airports and **they do not have an internal shuttle system. You have to ride an external shuttle.** It is free, but it can be confusing to find it/get there. There will be a lot of men and women trying to get you to taxi. Just ask where the airport terminal shuttle is and they will show you.

Once we figured that out, everything was a breeze. I hopped on a quick 5 minute shuttle over to Terminal 4 (I arrived at Terminal 3) and met Deidra and the Amstar driver there.

When we got to Secrets Akumal, we were greeted with **cooled towels** to refresh our hands and immediately handed a glass of **crisp sparkling white wine**. They took our bags and we were taken to check in where we got our keys and our welcome packets.

We were offered a booklet of coupons for discounts on different amenities, like massages and other spa services, however, in order to be able to use the coupons, you have to attend a breakfast with the hotel where they attempt to sell you on their membership program. We opted out.

After that we were taken to our room, but the first thing you will want to do before you get started is [download the app](#)! Everything you need to know is on the app. Restaurant info including hour and the menu, activities, you can order turn down service and room service, tours, excursions and more. They have pretty much thought of everything!

Each residential building (we were in building 9) has its own private concierge. Ours was lovely and so helpful. She gave us her number when we arrived and we texted her with anything we needed.

Accommodations

We booked a **double, partial ocean view** and the view was beautiful. The room was equipped with a full balcony, sitting area, jacuzzi tub, shower, separate toilet room and mini bar. It was so spacious and luxurious.

We ordered room service right away from the ipad in the room. You can also order extra linens, towels and toiletries right from the ipad. They also have a pillow and robe/slipper menu, which we took full advantage of. No extra charge.

Food

Room Service Breakfast

We did this half the time and then the other half we ate the buffet (more on that later) and the room service did not disappoint. Truth be told, we would get up early, order first breakfast and then go down to the buffet for round two..

Must order:

Fresh fruit plate

Fresh **orange juice** and **green juice**

Pastry basket (the sugared chocolate croissants were the best)

Hot coffee

Eggs benedict

Waffle with coconut

Chilaquiles

The Buffet at Market Cafe was out of this world. We went three times for breakfast and once for lunch. They had a different array of mexican breakfast cuisines, crepes, waffles, oatmeal, baked goods.. I could go on and never cover it all. It was delightful.

They do have a coffee shop on site, the **Coco Cafe**, but we only went once. The room service coffee with the fresh cream was all we needed!

Lunch

Most days, we lunched by the pool - I ordered a burger and fries or at **Seaside Grill**, right next to the middle pool.

Must order:

The shrimp ceviche

Baja fish tacos

The mascarpone mousse cheese for dessert. The dessert was like a crustless, light cheesecake with fresh berries. It was so good.

Pre-dinner every night **we ordered in room service coffee and cookies**. It was a lovely little tradition I planned to keep up when I got back home!

The first night we ate at **Portofino**, which was the Italian restaurant and it was excellent. They brought out fresh baked bread paired with olive oil and balsamic for dipping, however, they leveled up and put fresh grated parmesan cheese, right off the wheel, on top. It melted into the vinegar and oil and was to die for.

Must order:

Appetizers:

Carpaccio di Manzo (Beef) - this was outstanding. The beef was shaved so thin and paired so well with the other flavors. (If you are not a fan of raw meat, skip this one)

Carpaccio Frtutto di Mare (Salmon) - the same as above, Shaved so thin and I loved that it was paired with fruit. It was really unique.

Secrets Special - probably my favorite salad I had while I was there. Endive leaves with roasted apples and gorgonzola and caramelized nuts. It was delicious.

Mains:

Artichoke Cream Soup - this was divine. So creamy and rich.

Pappardelle with Lamb - this was the star. We raved over this, like an Italian beef stroganoff.

Farfalle Alfredo - a typical Alfredo but with bowtie pasta. It actually came out too hot for me and burned my mouth, so that was disappointing (Temp is very important when serving food, I don't want to have to sit and wait for it to cool to eat it!), but it was good!

We were so full and tired from traveling that we couldn't stay awake to wait for dessert, so we opted to go back to the room and order room service. We got the brownie and it was delicious!

The second night we ate at **Himitsu** (Japanese and sushi) and then went to **Bordeaux** (French) for dessert.

There was a wait this night for **Himitsu** (arguably because it is the best restaurant there) so we put our name in and received a pager to let us know when our table was ready. The pager reaches 100 yards so we were able to walk to the hotel lobby bar and order a drink while we waited. We ended up doing this every evening.

Must order:

Tempura Vegetable - dip it in the spicy sauce they give you! The batter was so light.

Vietnamese Roll - utterly unbelievable. This was probably my favorite thing I had the whole trip. I was so fresh!

Shrimp Gyoza - Second favorite thing. We ordered this multiple times.

Chicken Satay

Sushi:

Makizushi (tuna)

Ahi Tuna Sashimi

Masago California

Our appetizers and sushi were so light (the portions are small also) we ended up trying appetizers at Bordeaux too. We ate at Bordeaux for our meal on the last night.

Must order

Cheese Board (ordered this several times)

Cheese Souffle - delicious baked cheesy goodness

Cordon Blue chicken Supreme - classic chicken cordon blue with risotto.

Dessert:

Mille Feuille - our #1 fav dessert. A caramelized crunchy, but light pastry with layers of french cream and berries. We went crazy for this.

Pistachio Creme Brulee - This was surprisingly delicious as well! I don't usually love pistachio as dessert but I loved this.

Chocolate Fondant - Classic chocolate fudge cake with ice cream

We raved over their pastries and desserts. They have an unbelievable pastry chef on staff there.

We didn't make it to **Oceana** (the seafood grille) due to it being closed the night we planned to eat there.

We also had dessert at El Patio the second night we ate at Himitsu

Must order:

Mole Poblano - This was probably my third favorite dessert of the trip, a chocolate fondant with toasted sesame ice cream.

We ordered the churro, but it was not my favorite)

Favorite Drinks

Margarita rimmed with Tajin - this was my number one, they used orange liquor in their margs and it was mindblowing.

Spicy Margarita - same as above but with jalapeno

Mango Margarita - this was a fun twist, but super sweet.

Bloody Mary

Deidra's picks:

Spicy Marg

Mojito

Blue Hawaiian

Activities

We spent most of our time by the pool and it was truly perfect. They have three pools:

The quiet pool: Minimal music, no loud guess and full food/drink service.

The middle pool: This is where we spent most of the time. It's right next to Seaside Grille and has music and activities but it's not loud/obnoxious at all. One day they had rolled out a stone oven and made pizzas. Another day they had a Mexican street corn food truck and a cocktail making contest. It was just the right amount of relaxation and fun.

The party pool: We didn't spend any time here. The guests were louder and there were always activities like pool cycling and a live band. This is where the swim up bar is.

We made our way to the beach a few times and it was beautiful. There were plenty of beach chairs and bungalows, but you need to get up and get there early to reserve one. We noticed most people went out to watch the sunrise and reserved theirs then. They also have Balinese Beds you can rent for extra charge on the beach, but you honestly don't need them! We arrived later in the afternoon one day and there were no bungalows left, so they pulled two chairs into the shade under a palm and it was perfect.

Deidra went to the **gym** and to **yoga on the beach** one day and enjoyed it. You can sign up for classes on the app.

She also paid for a **private snorkeling excursion** one afternoon - \$30 for a one-on-one guided snorkeling tour to swim with sea turtles and nurse sharks!

They always have an **evening show** or activity going on, whether it's a themed buffet or a fire show. We grabbed a drink and watched the entertainment every night while we waited for our table reservation.

Tulum Ruins

We ventured outside of the resort one day to see the Tulum Ruins and loved it. It was extremely hot, and there is little shade in the park so keep the weather in mind when booking. The views were incredible and we thoroughly enjoyed the history. We called the concierge to book and they handled everything for us. Just told us where to be and when.

They will drop you off at the **marketplace** right outside of the park (it's a short walk to the ruins) so if you want to buy souvenirs, this is a convenient place to do so. I ended up coming home with Mexican Vanilla (for baking), a beautiful hand woven bag and a pair of emerald earrings. They will haggle with you, so don't pay full price!

Departing:

We called the concierge and requested a shuttle to the airport for our departure. They advised us to leave about 4 hours before our flight time and we were a little perplexed but VERY glad we did. Customs and immigration was extremely busy, so plan ahead for time. I had originally booked a flight out that was scheduled to depart at 8am. We would have had to *leave at 4am that morning*. I ended up changing my flight and leaving at 2pm. We left the hotel around 10. Gave us plenty of time to get breakfast, pack our things and get our COVID tests.

We went when you were required to be tested and test negative before returning to the US

