

Salud



Sojourn

In search of a wellness escape,
Haven Lindsey heads to Mexico to
detox, retox and repeat



OPPOSITE: Spectacular Jungle View Escape Terrace;
ON THIS PAGE: The WET pool.



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ying face down on the massage table, listening to the soft sounds of pleasant music in the Zen-like treatment room, I grappled ever-so-slightly with a decision to make. As the massage therapist worked out the kinks in my back that real-world reality had worked in, I needed to decide whether or not to close my eyes and succumb to the physical and auditory pleasures or keep them open to watch the brightly coloured koi swimming effortlessly below me. From the massage table, my small window to the world was positioned over the plexi-glass floor affording me an experience like nothing I had ever had.

I opted to watch the fish—who seemed to float in space below me the longer I lay there. Once I rolled over, I closed my eyes and let the darkness of the aromatic eye pillow escort me to that space of in-and-out delight.

And so it goes at W Punta de Mita where they take their mantra, “Detox. Retox. Repeat.” seriously and the memories made there don’t fade. If the sun, sand and cerulean blue waters are not enough for you to detox, the 4,000 square feet AWAY Spa, which could easily be a destination unto itself, offers ample opportunity. Purposefully built into the landscape and nestled around lush green trees, the

space was designed to resemble a cave, albeit a light and airy version.

A vibrant statement chandelier crafted from glass flowers in the colours of a Mexican sunset, signature spa scent and curated spa playlist heighten the serene scene. Plush modern armchairs and coffee tables tempt you to recline and sip the signature chlorophyll water and fresh beverages from the adjacent juice bar as you prepare for your custom treatment, performed with organic, natural and effective spa products from Babor and Eminence.

AWAY offers a full-service array of facials, massages and body and skin treatments and each room affords the guest the enviable opportunity of choosing to gaze down at the fish, up at the large palm leaves, or inward to reflect, unwind and, as the name indicates, get AWAY. Outside, guests can rest, relax and reflect on the secluded and spacious wooden relaxation deck built around a freshwater pool, complete with waterfall and a nearby labyrinth for walking meditation.

Located at the northern tip of the Riviera Nayarit, W Punta de Mita pays homage to the local culture and indigenous art throughout the quaint property. From a sunset-inspired colour palette to showing local Huichol artistry, the design elements of the hotel embrace the region’s vivid spirit. The guest rooms vary in size, style and location. Some seem to rise straight out of the jungle, some are ocean front – a number with private pools – and others are lakefront, positioned on the fresh-water reservoir. The rooms have a simple, laid-back beach décor including brightly coloured paintings on the walls of surfers and touches like headboards on the beds made of old surfboard—apropos consid-



ering the area, which is just being discovered by the rest of us, has been no secret to surfers from around the globe for decades.

It is the nod to local Huichol culture, however, that is nothing less than impressive. Few travellers outside this remote yet easy-to-reach area have the opportunity to be exposed to the brightly, hand-beaded designs of the indigenous people that have both religious and cultural significance.

Based on traditional native textile designs, the tiled runway or Camino Huichol—is a central nervous system to the hotel, leading guests on a journey across the hotel and branching off to restaurants, bars and pool along the way. Crafted from 751,184 tiles, the “runway” depicts characters from Huichol legends, like a coyote, scorpion and the blue deer, a revered God in the culture. Take your own vision quest through the space, from the entry, through the Living Room, across the Wet Deck, and then up and over the beach to the majestic ocean.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Cauliflower cream, gorgonzola cheese, mezcal pears with activated charcoal; Camino Huichol Walkway overlooking the WET deck; Huichol Welcome Statue; Oceanfront Haven Suite Plunge Pool.

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nce guests have taken the ‘Detox’ step, it is time to ‘Retox’. The most difficult part about this phase is deciding where and how. The property has numerous dining and drinking options although nothing can compare to Mesa 1—one of the world’s most exclusive restaurants. Mesa 1 has one table, one seating and one table of guests per night. It goes without saying that reservations are required for this select seven-course dining extravaganza guaranteed to be an experience you will never forget.

Spice Market is an easy way to “Retox” with fresh specialties from Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia and a personal favourite of mine and anyone who loves the combination of fresh and spicy global foods. Of the numerous restaurants on site, the hands-down, most popular kid in class is *Chevy-cheria* (everyone calls him ‘Chevy’). The al fresco restaurant, with its thatched roof and 1950s-era Chevrolet truck, is the place to enjoy ceviche like you’ve never had before. Punta de Mita is known for its ceviche and in addition to a daily special based on the catch of the day, the Chevy menu includes ceviche with shrimp and scallops, tuna and avocado, coconut and blended signature dishes that, much like the AWAY Spa, can easily be a destination onto itself.

After a successful ‘Retox’ there is only one thing left to do. Repeat. The W Punta de Mita is surrounded by picturesque towns and villages with shopping, dining and even a polo club that make for great day trips. But, if you never venture off the property and choose to instead, stick to the “Detox. Retox. Repeat.” theme, your trip will have been well worth it.