

SHAPE YOUR LIFE

SHAPE



5 Vacations You DESERVE to Splurge On

Overworked? Stressed? Pamper yourself with the amenities of a high-end resort—without shelling out cash right and left

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THE TERM "ALL-INCLUSIVE" USUALLY CONJURES UP IMAGES OF no-frills rooms; bland, calorie-laden buffets; and a raucous party scene. Sure, you can still find resorts like that, but the new breed of all-inclusives is distinctly upscale. At these luxe properties you'll enjoy gourmet cuisine, a more personalized level of service, and frills galore--think iPods preprogrammed with your favorite music and champagne upon

check-in. Want proof? The getaways here will make you rethink your standard pay-as-you-go vacation.

FIND YOUR INNER COWGIRL

Rancho de los Caballeros, WICKENBURG, ARIZONA

Ninety minutes from the Phoenix airport, this resort boasts 79 casitas decorated in a Southwestern style. Each has roughly hewn furniture and Mexican tiles, and many have traditional adobe fireplaces called "kivas." The draw of this 20,000-acre property, though, is its Wild West activities. Sign up for team penning and you and several other guests will use your riding skills to corral three cows into a small pen (a wrangler will help you). Not up on your horsemanship? Guides also lead two trail rides daily into the Sonoran Desert; they're grouped by ability, so you won't feel overly challenged or bored (all levels are welcome).

Wickenburg's landscape is just as easily explored by foot: An on-staff naturalist takes guests on a one-to two-hour hike each day. For an intense workout, tackle the nearby Vulture Peak Trail, a challenging four-mile round-trip route that winds almost to the top of the 3,658-foot peak.

At the spa Cool down after your hike by meandering through the outdoor, rock-lined labyrinth or relaxing with the spa's signature treatment, the Desert Ritual Body Exfoliation (\$75). You'll be scrubbed from shoulders to feet with rice imported from India.

Rates From \$4,312* for two for the Ranch Experience Package; sunc.com.

HIKE TROPICAL CAVES

Paradisus Punta Cana Resort PUNTA CANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

While a sprawling 689-room property may seem like the last place you'd receive personal attention, this resort's Royal Service upgrade provides that small-hotel feel. Choose this option and you'll have a butler at your beck and call, access to a private pool and beach area, and preferential reservations at all 12 on-site restaurants.

Let your butler unpack your bags while you explore the hotel's 96 tropical acres. Most of your time will likely be spent on or near pristine Bavaro Beach, where activities include beach volleyball, windsurfing, snorkeling, and horseback riding. To see a little more of the Dominican Republic, ask the concierge to sign you up for a multisport adventure in Los Haitises National Park, which is two and a half hours from the resort. Local guides from outfitter Cueva Fun Fun will drive you to their headquarters, where you'll saddle up for a 40-minute horseback ride through the jungle to the park. Next, you'll hike half an hour to an underground cave--called Fun-Fun--which you access through an opening in

the jungle floor. Rappel the 66 feet down (the guides help you) and wade through an underground river past stalactites and stalagmites

(\$120; cuevafunfun.net).

At the spa The resort's Yhi Spa offers a full menu of creative treatments, including the signature Gaia Spa clay body mask and scalp massage (\$140): After the volcanic and sea clays dry, tightening your pores, the therapist gently massages them off with help from water pouring out of several Vichy showerheads positioned over the table.

Rates From \$3,822 for two; paradisus.puntacana.travel.

MAKE LIKE A SNOW BUNNY

Brooks Lake Lodge & Spa, DUBOIS, WYOMING

Not far from Jackson Hole and Yellowstone National Park, Brooks Lake Lodge & Spa is the only collection of man-made structures you'll see in this serene wilderness area. The historic resort is surrounded by open fields, forests, and the mountains of the Absaroka Range, so there are gorgeous views everywhere you look. Indoors, the rustic, cozy rooms and cabins feature log-pole beds and walls and plenty of down comforters for those frigid Wyoming nights.

In winter, the five-mile road to the lodge is inaccessible to regular vehicles, so the staff will pick you up at the junction of Brooks Lake Road and Highway 287 (you can leave your car in a parking lot there). Ride in their snow coach, a van outfitted with tires with large treads, or--even better--send your luggage back with the staff and cross-country ski to the lodge (they'll provide the equipment).

With no televisions or cell phone service to distract you, you can focus on the outdoors instead. Get snowshoe and cross-country ski tips from the staff, then head out on the miles of tracks made by snow-mobilers that morning. Come back in time for lunch: You may be in the backwoods, but meals are served on china and linen-covered tables. You'll munch on fresh trout, elk burgers, and homemade soup and bread.

At the spa Soak away your kinks in the hot tub, then venture inside the 2,500-square-foot spa to check out the fitness room, dry sauna, and lounge. During winter, the 35-foot-high fireplace is always roaring. While you don't need a spa appointment to enjoy the lounge, it would be a shame to miss treatments like the Elemis Lime and Ginger Salt Glow scrub (\$135) and the deep-tissue body massage with essential oils (\$130).

Rates From \$2,329 per person, not including tips and snowmobile rentals;
brookslake.com

ESCAPE TO THE CARIBBEAN

Club Med La Caravelle, GUADELOUPE, FRENCH WEST INDIES

Many vacationers remember Club Med as a spring break destination where revelers exchanged beads for drinks and you were pressured to participate in group activities by hyper-energetic employees. Over the past few years, however, the company has been revamping its image, upgrading resorts into its "luxury collection." The 317-room La Caravelle was one of the first in the Caribbean to be renovated. It debuted two years ago with a new spa and remodeled restaurants.

Hit the beach early with a relaxing morning power walk to and from the village of Saint Anne, less than two miles to the east. Then figure out how you want to spend the rest of your day: Like most Club Meds, La Caravelle offers circus and trapeze classes, volleyball, windsurfing, dance instruction, snorkeling, and more (all free, naturally).

One piece of scenery that may catch your eye is Guadeloupe's towering volcano, La Soufriere. Take a day to explore this popular hiking spot and see where it last erupted, in 1977. Rent a car (from \$70 per day at Club Med's Hertz counter) or sign up for an excursion with a local guide up La Soufriere's slopes, which are often slippery from frequent rains (\$102). At the top, you'll see steam spilling from the volcano and get a panoramic view of the neighboring islands. On your way back down, look out for regional flora, including the Manchineel tree. Locals used its poisonous sap to taint their enemies' water supply.

At the spa Treat yourself to a Trancoso massage (\$120) in the sole "palapa," a thatched-roof hut, at the end of the spa's jetty. This specialty treatment combines deep-tissue massage with relaxation techniques, which are enhanced by the ocean breeze wafting through the curtains and the sound of water lapping at the pier.

Rates From \$1,500 per person; clubmed.us.

SET SAIL FOR RELAXATION

Regent Seven Seas, WESTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE

This luxury line is part of the new generation of cruises offering a true all-inclusive experience. Since one of the biggest guest complaints was getting nickel-and-dimed for extras, the Regent Seven Seas now includes gratuities as well as most alcohol in its rates. Other features bound to make you rethink cruising: spacious staterooms, each with its own balcony, and truly delicious food. In fact, if you don't see what you want on the menu (or if you'd prefer a lighter version of something on the list), the chef will make it for you.

The ship has a gym, a jogging track, a pool, and an aerobics studio, and it offers 10 daily classes, including yoga, Pilates, and Latin cardio dance. You can also get your exercise fix off the boat during stops: The Western Caribbean cruise takes you to Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize, so you'll have plenty of opportunities to dive and snorkel--Belize

does boast the world's second-largest barrier reef. All three countries are home to Mayan ruins that are open to visitors, but our vote for best off-ship activity is the Lost World Canopy and Rappelling Tour in Belize: You'll be hooked up to a zip line to traverse between five platforms encircling an enormous cave (\$99; rssc.com).

At the spa Spend some of your at-sea time enjoying a Renovateur Revitalizing Body Treatment. You get a body wrap, warm stone massage, and rejuvenating face treatment that utilizes small, cold pebbles (\$260 for 70 minutes).

Rates From \$4,995 per person; rssc.com.

* All prices are for a seven-night stay.