

TLT-Adventure with a Side of Luxury, Please

Written by Written by: Marlene Montanez

Forget what you thought you knew about Costa Rica. A stay at The Palms Private Residence Club will open up your eyes.



I am not the outdoorsy type. In fact, my idea of the outdoors can be summed up like this: it's absolutely OK as long as a nice patio and cool cocktail are involved. So when an opportunity to visit the Guanacaste region of Costa Rica came up, I was a little conflicted. Sure, who wouldn't want to spend a few days on a sandy beach having tropical drinks accessorized with frilly umbrellas? But Costa Rica, I knew, was famous for something else—plenty of action and adventure. Could I really handle that?

From Phoenix, it's a quick five-hour flight to Costa Rica, the lush Central American country that's quickly becoming a hot destination for American travelers. And really, it's easy to see why: aside from plenty of Latin American culture, fantastic seafood, beautiful beaches and outdoor excursions, the people there are quite lovely and the country is safe to travel through. Lucky for me, a stay at The Palms Private Residence Club proved to be the perfect place to call home for my three-day stay offering the two worlds that I was craving—a bit of adventure with a side of luxury.

The Palms Private Residence Club is an experience in itself; it's the only property in Costa Rica on Playa Flamingo, a highly desirable beach because, well, it's gorgeous. The member-owned residence club has 32 two-bedroom luxury villas that can comfortably sleep six. And by comfortable, I mean 2,300 square feet of living space, Viking appliances, marble flooring and bamboo hardwood floors in the two master bedrooms. The large kitchen is perfect for gathering together or entertaining and there's an expansive patio on both the first floor and the master suite. In short, when it comes to comfort and décor, no luxury is spared.

At The Palms, your villa is literally steps away from the ocean (I could hear the waves crashing up on the sand through my window each night). But perhaps what's most appealing, other than the scenery, is the private villa atmosphere combined with resortlike amenities. The concierge will happily stock your villa with your requested grocery list prior to arrival. Need a massage? No worries, they'll come to your suite. Though if the weather is nice, I'd recommend having the masseuse meet you right on the beach.

A business center, fitness room and daily housekeeping are a few of the other amenities included, but the infinity pool and private dining options are two that must be taken advantage of. That tropical drink with the frilly umbrella I fantasized about? It was served up poolside after a day spent traversing the treetops on a zip-line canopy tour.



Yes, that means even I can enjoy the outdoors. And not just on a patio with a cocktail in hand. From zip-line tours to hiking, snorkeling, scuba diving, horseback riding and surfing, there are more than enough activities available to keep the entire family entertained. The concierge at The Palms will arrange the activities for you, and if you feel like staying behind and relaxing by the beach, that's always an option too.

For the avid golfer, you'll enjoy complimentary access to the 7,300-yard Mike Young-designed golf course as an owner at The Palms. There are also several other professional 18-hole courses to explore nearby.

Take advantage of the private chef available at the villas who makes a mean mojito, tasty ceviche featuring fresh seafood and other food items made to order at your request. He'll even come to your villa to prepare a meal for you and your guests.

For off-site dining around Costa Rica, the bilingual staff at The Palms is more than happy to suggest local spots. Two to try: The Langosta Beach Club, a lush tropical paradise which offers beachside dining, private cabanas and a private pool where you can easily spend the day lounging away. For a more intimate affair, try the fresh catch of the day at Papaya, a smaller, secluded spot at the charming Conchal Hotel. For dinner, be sure to make reservations in advance as the restaurant can accommodate about 40 guests per evening. For thrill-seekers or for those who get a thrill from umbrella-laden drinks, Costa Rica and its The Palms Private Residence Club offers the best of both worlds: adventure and luxury.

TO LEARN MORE

The Palms Private Residence Club
800.867.5762,
www.palmscostarica.com.

Villas at The Palms Private Residence Club are available for both fractional and full ownership. Whole ownerships start at \$1.2 million while fractional ownerships start at \$129,000.

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