

# CASA BUENA SUERTE



## **Casa Buena Suerte**

Hola and welcome to Casa Buena Suerte. We are very happy to have you here. Enclosed is some information about our Hacienda and the surrounding area. Please read these useful tips and enjoy your stay, and please sign our guest book.

Muchos gracias!

## About Casa Buena Suerte

### Staff

**Hugo** (pronounced UGO) is our caretaker and on-site manager. He speaks some English and he will make every effort to make your stay as delightful as it can be. Hugo can arrange massage appointments, manicures, or yoga instructions on the beach; just look at the menu and let him know what you would like. Hugo will also be happy to help with restaurants, day trips and most other requests.

Hugo and our house staff are here to keep the house clean, make your beds and prepare breakfast. They will make sure that the house and the beach are cleaned daily and make your stay here at the Hacienda comfortable.

They will also maintain the pool and make sure that you have fresh drinking water every day in both the main kitchen and our second floor "Cocineta." Please use the bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth.

Hugo has a cell phone for emergencies. (Sunday is their day off.)

### Continental Breakfast

Each morning, Monday through Saturday, our staff will prepare a lovely continental breakfast for you. Breakfast is offered at 8 a.m. in the main kitchen.

### Chef Service

If you have not selected one of our meal plans and find that you would like to have a chef prepare dinner at the villa, it may be possible for us to arrange a chef for you. In this case Chef Service may be provided when available at \$10-\$15USD per person plus the cost of groceries for the meal. The service would be for a minimum of 6 guests and ample notice must be provided.

### Tipping

Our staff works very hard to keep our guests comfortable and happy. It is customary and greatly appreciated to tip the housekeeper \$10USD or \$100 pesos per day for each room that is occupied. Of course, this is voluntary, so if you feel you have received good service, please be generous. Hugo is at your service throughout your stay and any gratuity you wish to give him and our other staff is also greatly appreciated.

### **No Smoking**

**There is no smoking allowed inside the Hacienda.** Please feel free to smoke outside. We have provided ashtrays for your convenience in the pantry.

### **Electricity**

We have conventional 110/220 electric power, equivalent to U.S. electrical power. On rare occasions the power may go out. Our generator will provide alternative power and of course we have candles in the pantry. Electricity is very precious here in the Riviera Maya. Please turn off fans, lights and air conditioners when you leave the house. Thank you

### **Kitchen**

Our kitchen and pantry are stocked with all the basics when you arrive. Please feel free to enjoy any of the beverages and food items you find. You are welcome to shop and fill the refrigerators in both kitchens and outside with any of your favorite treats.

Please feel free to cook in our kitchen and make yourselves at home. Our staff will be happy to show you how to use the purifying solution for fruits & vegetables. We ask that you please make sure that the refrigerator is kept closed and that the stove is turned off when not in use.

### **Television and Internet**

The television in the living room is equipped with a satellite receiver as well as a Bose CD/DVD player. Please use the Sky TV remote when watching TV. Bedroom Five has satellite TV and CD player with iPod dock. We are connected to a wireless Internet service that works on the main floor and most of the outside areas; please ask Hugo for the password so that you can log on.

### **Water**

As with electricity, water is also a precious commodity. There is treated, de-salinated water piped into the showers, faucets, and toilets in your room. We have to truck the water in from treatment plants, so please help us conserve local resources by using only the amount of water that you need. Even though this water is treated, **please don't drink this water.** For drinking and brushing your teeth, please use the bottled water from the water bottles in the kitchen and in the Cocineta on the second floor. All of the local restaurants use treated water as well and all provide bottled water for drinking.

### **Sinks and toilets**

The Riviera Maya has a very delicate environment, thus we have an "Eco Friendly" waste management system. It is important that you discard toilet tissue and any feminine products in the waste baskets next to the toilets. The baskets will be emptied each day. You will find that this is a common request in most establishments in this area. Thank you.

### **The Beach**

Please enjoy the beach in front of Casa Buena Suerte as well as the entire bay. The law in Mexico is that all of the beaches are in the “Federal Zone” and open to the public. So you may stroll up and down the beach as you wish. It can get rocky in some areas so it is wise to wear water shoes. We have provided plenty of lounge chairs for you to relax in, and a lovely beach palapa for shade.

### **Snorkeling and Day Trips**

There are several places for snorkel gear and day trips. At Turtle Bay in Akumal (15 minutes north) you will find many choices. Xel HA (Shell Ha) and Hidden Worlds are just 5 -10 minutes north, and Xcaret (30 minutes north) is a great destination for families with kids. There are also many Cenotes including one just south in Tankah Bay.

### **The Pool**

Swim at your leisure and please make certain that children are always supervised by competent adults. There is no lifeguard on duty, so swim at your own risk. Sometimes a sand crab may find it's way into the pool; they are more afraid of you than you are of them; you can fish them out with the skimmer or ask Hugo and he will take care of it.

The pool is just about 5 ft deep so **no diving allowed.**

### **Kayaking and Snorkeling**

We have three kayaks for your use. Use extreme caution on the water. You may snorkel in the bay but do not venture out to the white caps and beyond. There is a buoy on the far left that you may tie up to.

The area where the bay opens up to the sea, straight out near the break can be dangerous with strong currents – avoid this area. Stay closer to the shore for snorkeling.

Life jackets must be worn when Kayaking; they can be found in the closet (bodega) just outside the villa.

**WARNING: Please do not paddle straight out beyond the reef. The current is unpredictable and can change at any time. If the current does pull you out, go with it... DO NOT TRY TO FIGHT THE CURRENT, let it take you; you will end up a short distance away and you can walk back. Fighting the current can cause exhaustion or even a heart attack: please be respectful of the sea and always wear a life jacket. Thank you.**

### **Massage**

We have several massage therapists on call. Select from traditional Swedish massage, deep tissue, reflexology or holistic massage. If you would like a manicure or pedicure, we can arrange that here as well. Hugo can arrange the treatment of your choice, just make your selection from our menu and let him know. Please give him a range of preferable times.

### **Security**

Seldom do we have any problems at Soliman Bay, but please be aware of yourselves and your personal belongings at all times. Please use the safes we have provided in our suites; they will hold a large laptop as well as your cameras and iPods. **DO NOT LEAVE MONEY, PASSPORTS, OR VALUABLES LYING AROUND and ALWAYS LOCK THE DOORS and TURN ON THE ALARM SYSTEM** before leaving the house or going to bed. Hugo can show you how to work the system.

### **Emergency**

When you are in town, the number to dial in case of emergency is 066  
Local Medico: (984) 806-4616  
Local Ambulance: (984) 876-2250  
Hugo: (984) 137-2646  
US Consulate Office: (984) 873-0303  
Samantha Mason cell: (984) 807-8355

### **Doctors**

There is a doctor in Akumal (15 minutes north, towards Cancun) who speaks English.

Dr. Nestor Mendoza Gutierrez

Phone numbers:

(984) 875-4051

(984) 373-0764

(984) 873-1142

The nearest hospital where English is spoken is "Hospiten" in Playa del Carmen and they are affiliated with the Hospiten in Cancun. It is located on the main road, route 307, as you enter Playa del Carmen.

## About Soliman Bay

### **Caution: Local wildlife**

Please be careful while driving on the road, at any time of day, as there are many animals that live in this area.

If you walk out to the highway please, make sure there are no dogs following you. Dogs run free here and frequently follow hikers. Pets have been killed on the highway.

### **The Reef**

The Reef is alive and extremely fragile and sensitive to human interaction. Please be very careful and do not touch the reef, as this will kill it. Instead, enjoy the reef from afar, and if needed snorkel in deeper water so you do not have to stand on the reef, ground or rocks.

To the far left there is a buoy to tie up to. There is some very clear water in this area to swim or snorkel in.

Please be careful in the bay as there are indeed sea turtles, stingrays and other wildlife. It is wise to shuffle your feet to stir up the sand in the water to alert these sea creatures.

### **Some of our neighbors**

There are lots of Iguanas and small Lizards as well as Geckos in this area. These creatures are our friends so don't be scared of them. They help keep the bugs away and they are considered to be good luck (buena suerte).

You will also no doubt see our native Hermit Crabs scurrying about. They are the source of those bicycle tracks you see all over the beach. If you see any that may have fallen into the pool, please try and save them.

The land across the street is a protected mangrove replete with wildlife and birds. This land is a national Bird Sanctuary. You may see some of the lovely birds, but please do not venture into the mangrove.

If you happen to come across any unwanted visitors from the other side of the road, please alert Hugo and he will be happy to take care of this.

Also there are many dogs roaming about the bay. Most are very friendly and may want to stick around for a while, but don't let them in the house. Please do not let them follow you to the highway. We have lost several neighboring dogs this way.

## **The Surrounding Area**

### **Akumal**

Akumal is the nearest town to the north of us, just 10 minutes up 307 by car. You will find some lovely restaurants and a beautiful beach as well as a grocery store with all of the essentials including (one day late) American newspapers. Akumal is also the home of **Turtle Bay** a beautiful calm bay replete with sea turtles. There is a lovely outdoor restaurant at Turtle Bay so it's a great way to spend an afternoon...snorkel with the turtles and enjoy a snack and a local beer on the beach.

### **Playa del Carmen**

Playa del Carmen is a small city about a 40 minute drive north on 307. This is a hip lively town with plenty of great restaurants and shopping. Fifth Avenue is a walking street that stretches from one end of Playa to the other with lots of great shops and people watching. Our favorite place for a drink or lunch is **The Glass Bar** at 5th Ave and 12th street. It gets a bit touristy further south and further north it quiets down and becomes more local. Playa del Carmen also has a lot of nightlife, discos and bars and a lively beach scene. It is also home to Wal Mart and Sam's Club.

### **Playacar**

Playacar is a beautiful upscale community with 5 star hotels and a Wild Bird sanctuary. It's just south of Playa del Carmen.

### **Cozumel**

If you want to visit Cozumel, the ferry leaves from Playa del Carmen, at the end of Juarez Avenue at regular intervals throughout the day.

### **Tulum**

Just 10 minutes to the south of us by car is the town of Tulum with one of the most beautiful beaches you'll find anywhere. Take a left at the first traffic light and follow the road to the beach. You will find lots of great seaside restaurants and small resorts. Try **Mezzanine**, it's our favorite. Tulum is also the home of the only seaside Mayan Ruins. Don't miss them. You'll also find a supermarket and several internet cafés in Tulum. **La Zebra** and **OM** are also great places to enjoy Tulum for a morning walk, coffee on the beach Or an afternoon swim. There is also **Wind Surfing** on the north end of Tulum Beach for those who are a bit more adventurous.

## Restaurants

Just across the highway, is **Oscar y Lalo** where you will find fresh seafood and Mexican specialties. In Tulum, there are several choices: On the beach there's **Mezzanine** for delicious Thai & Mexican food. They often have a live band as well as great Friday night parties. **La Zebra** is a great spot for breakfast or lunch on the beach. Imagine afternoon cocktails on a sofa on the beach. **La Nave** is one of our favorites in the town of Tulum for the best (real Italian) Pizza this side of New York; you'll be amazed at what the pizza is like here in Mexico! Also try the **Argentine Steak House**—the empanadas are fantastic. **Nero Del Sol** also has authentic Italian Cuisine and great homemade pasta. In the next Bay, try **Blue Sky** for great seafood, lobster and Tony's specialties. Akumal has **Que Onda**, a little hidden oasis, **Buena Vida**, a funky beachside bar with great Mexican specialties; and **The Bakery** in Akumal has great baked goods as well as breakfast, lunch, dinner, and real Texas beef hamburgers.

Some restaurants require reservations, but are well worth the trouble. One is called **Posada Margherita** and the other is **Hechizo**, run by an Austrian chef and his Thai wife, a pastry chef. The menu changes daily and is recited at the table by the chef. **Posada Margherita** has a limited menu of fresh fish and Italian specialties. The owner is from Italy and his food delicioso. Hugo will be happy to make reservations for you.

## Dining In

All of the restaurants we mention are great, but sometimes you might just want to stay at our beautiful hacienda.

If you have selected one of our Meal Plans, you may enjoy indoor or al-fresco dining at Casa Buena Suerte. Enjoy fresh delicious meals and cocktails right at home.

Of course, always feel free to use our kitchen to prepare meals at any time. If you would like to barbeque, Hugo will light the BBQ for you. **PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO LIGHT THE BBQ** as we have a very powerful BBQ that requires special care in lighting. Thank you.

### **ATMs**

There is an ATM just next to the San Francisco Market at the second traffic light in Tulum. There is also a large HSBC bank with an ATM in the center of town.

### **Public Telephones/Internet**

There are telephones for local and international phone calls at the San Francisco Market as well as an internet café offering reasonably priced internet access. They are open from 8AM to 8PM daily.

### **Rental Cars**

Tulum has a Hertz, Alamo, and Avis agency. Their hours are 7AM to 8PM.

### **Newspapers and Maps**

In Akumal there is a small grocery store where they sometimes have the *New York Times*, *USA Today* and other papers. It's really hit or miss, so don't count on it but certainly try. In the winter months they generally have the newspapers a day late and in the summer they may not have them at all.

There are maps available at all of the Car Rental agencies in Tulum and in Playa Del Carmen and many of the grocery stores and bodegas have local newspapers as well.

You are welcome to use any of the maps and brochures we have on hand; please return them before leaving.

### **Cultural tips**

The Mexican people and the Mayan people are very proud and welcoming. Those who speak English will tend to say "yes" to just about everything, so please make certain that you speak slowly and that they understand you. The native people of this area are relatively poor so please be generous when dealing with them.

Driving on 307 can be very intimidating. Always keep to the speed limit and move to your right to allow cars to pass if they are on your tail. Be careful because cars sometimes stop in the shoulder lane and you never know when a car will be stopped there.

**“When making a turn move carefully to the retorno on the left and make your “U” turn with extreme caution.”**

Bare in mind that driving is relatively new here and most are first generation drivers; they are not as experienced as you might be so drive defensively.

The Grocery stores such as San Francisco in Tulum or WalMart in Playa del Carmen have “baggers” who are not paid by the store. It is customary to tip a few pesos for the bagger.

Restaurants sometimes include tip and many times do not. Leave 10%-15% for service if not included and a few pesos extra if included. Remember to ask if the tip is included.

Buena Suerte!

**Important note to all guests**

Casa Buena Suerte is situated in a rural natural area on the Caribbean coast. There are dangers on the beach, in the water and in the surrounding jungle and mangroves. The shoreline and reef are rocky and rough. The ocean can have strong currents at times and may be very dangerous. The ocean is unpredictable, and as such it is important to protect yourself and those in your party, as well as your belongings.

Please be advised that the owners of Casa Buena Suerte are not responsible in any way for any injuries, or loss of property, stolen property, or any other mishaps resulting from use of the buildings, facilities, beach, kayaks or any of the contents of the property herein.

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