



Suite at Viceroy Riviera Maya



Alicia Piazza with a real margarita

## THE SECOND RIVIERA

**I**F YOU WANT A QUICK JAUNT FROM MIAMI, I SUGGEST CANCUN. Just an hour flight and you are in Cancun in the Riviera Maya, Mexico, proving it doesn't take an entire day to go somewhere exotic.

I was in Cancun for a wedding and chose to stay at The Viceroy, a boutique resort with only 41 villas. Each one of the freestanding structures has a beautiful back yard and a plunge pool. The secluded, private villas are perfect for sun bathing, reading books and listening to music.

I have stayed at other Viceroy's and this one is by far the most unique—this one feels like a jungle. The green foliage of mature trees paths lead from the front of the hotel out to the beautiful beach, with verdant paths taking you everywhere; if you want leave the villa that is. The hotel has a wonderful outdoor bar and infinity pool that overlooks the ocean, it truly is relaxation at its finest.

If you want to stay in the comfort of your own sanctuary don't worry. Everything from massages, private dinners, hair appointments and more, which can be done indoors or out on your "private" property can come to you.

Sublime culinary experiences can be had at La Marea or if you're feeling a bit more casual at the Outdoor Coral Grill and Bar. I recommend the "Chef's Table" night in which the chef prepares a 5-star dining experience, making it easy to be adventurous and taste the chef's best and each course comes with its perfect wine pairing. I took two terrific, hour-long cooking classes: one on tequila and the other on guacamole preparation. Of course, I loved learning how to make my favorite cocktail from a handsome bartender while sitting right on the beach steps from the turquoise water. I learned a valuable lesson: traditional Mexican-style margaritas have no added sugars or syrups.

The hotel served as a paradise with so much to do... if you wanted to. Yoga, beach barbeques, ceviche tastings, candle lit beach respites, and walks on the beach. Best of all, it was a quick trip that was totally hassle-free, making Riviera Maya a nice option for Miamians to get away and decompress, without a long journey.