After staying in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, for four days, I secretly wished my flight to New York City would be canceled so my beachy Instagram content and I could live happily ever after. Sadly, that didn't happen, but a guy can dream.

I stayed at Mahekal Beach Resort, and not only was the location incredible, but everything else—from the hospitality to the bungalow-style accommodations—helped me relax immediately. As soon as I stepped foot in the lobby, I heard birds chirping, the waves crashing, and trees rustling. It felt truly magical, which in Mayan happens to mean "mahekal."

You might want to pack more than one outfit a day because there are just too many photo ops: I'm talking four sparkling swimming pools, a seaside hot tub, a spa and fitness center, five restaurants and bars...and even when you're standing somewhere random, it still makes for a gorgeous Insta moment.
1. FIRST UP, GRAB A DRANK (AND SOME FOOD).

Not once was I empty-handed by the pool, always sipping on delicious cocktails, like sweet tamarind-infused margaritas. The five restaurants across the hotel, which serve traditional Mexican and Latin American cuisine, each have different vibes so you and your palette will never be bored. (But *def* try the Chilean sea bass and duck risotto with truffle oil.)
2. GO POOL-HOPPING.

I obviously started at the oceanfront infinity pool that looks like it blends into the Caribbean Ocean, but you should also hit the swim-up bar pool (it’s perfect for lazy people like me). For a more relaxing, intimate moment, take a dip in the jungle pool. It’s a secluded area surrounded by trees and bushes, and if you look up you'll see hundreds of birds, like blue-crowned motmots and green jays. You might even catch an iguana or two chilling by the pool.
3. EAT ALL THE FRESH FISH YOUR HEART DESIRES.

No, I didn’t catch this myself—it was actually so heavy my arm was shaking. During this very special lunch a Mayan chef walked us through the process of prepping and cooking fish—in this case, bass with traditional Yucatan spices and techniques.
4. JUST TAKE IN ALL THE STUNNING SIGHTS.

The hotel has a bohemian vibe mixed with colorful accents and handcrafted touches: Think woven outdoor furniture, natural palapa ceilings, and hammocks everywhere you turn. It all feels luxurious yet authentic—10/10 recommend not looking at your phone while walking around, because gems are everywhere.
5. TAKE A TRIP TO THE SPA—YOU DESERVE IT.

Just when I thought I fully understood how Zen this place could be, I treated myself at the revival spa with a massage therapy session, and I haven't been the same since. The resort offers a large selection of treatments, but I went with the aromatherapy massage, which was super rejuvenating. I walked out feeling as light as a feather.
6. DIVE INTO THESE COOL CENOTES.

Psst—wanna fulfill your little mermaid dream? This is it. A cenote is a deep, water-filled pit created when the roof of an underground cavern collapses. All I know is that it's the most beautiful pit I've ever seen, and this is something you MUST do. Don't sit out just because the water's cold—you'll warm up as you swim. And yes, you'll see hundreds of bats inside the cave, but they're chill.

7. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR PICS!!

Capture as much content as you can, and don't let traveling alone stop you—the staff will help you ~find your light~. If you're on the extra side (hello, it me), you can also plan your outfits—like my lime-green pool moment—to match the hotel. You're welcome.