

Hard Rock Riviera Maya and Unico 20.87

After arrival we proceeded to a private transfer by Amastar. For three or more passengers private would not come at an additional cost. For two it is a little more but still worth the extra. Hard Rock is about 45 minutes away from the airport but Amstar provided cold water and a great driver.

The check in process at Hard Rock is pretty efficient it only took a few minutes before we had room keys on our wrists and we were ready to go. The room was supposed to be the lead in category on the Heaven side of the resort (adult only) however we were upgraded to a Platinum Sky Suite on the Hacienda (Family side.) This is a fantastic room category to recommend for anyone who is hosting a bachelor (ette) party or a wedding or any other group. The room has two balconies one on the entry level and another 22 steps up. The upper balcony has seating for six, a Jacuzzi for at least that many and a fantastic view as well as a lavette so you could have a party up there!

The room itself was a great size with plenty of storage for clothing and luggage and fantastic Gilchrest and Soames Sweet Grass toiletries. Robes, slippers and lots of other little touches were nice as well. All rooms have an in room liquor dispenser and plenty of mixers in the fridge as well. A pretty extensive room service menu is also available into the wee hours of the morning.

In keeping with the Hard Rock theme there was plenty of entertainment to be had every night. The lobby on both sides of the resort had activities and there was a show every night. Some of it was pretty cheesy but it was a diversion. There was also the endless array of Rock and Roll memorabilia to explore and the Rock Shop was just one of several different shopping venues.

Dining is varied and for the most part pretty good. I tried the French and Brazilian restaurants as well as Frida the upscale Mexican as well as the Teppanyaki. There is no shortage of snacks by the pool with a sliders station, and a grill that offered a great variety of quick bites. Breakfast at the International Market had just about every single thing that you can think of with many cook to order stations. There is a twenty-four hour coffee shop that also offers desserts, salads and sandwiches. They greet you by saying Welcome Family at every venue and at the front desk. The staff throughout the resort was over the top gracious and accommodating. They do encourage guests to enjoy adult beverages-everywhere you look there are make your own margarita stations and breakfast includes a Bloody Mary and Mimosa station.

The beach is where this resort falls short. On both the Hacienda and Heaven sides of the resort the beach consists of a crescent shaped manmade lagoon where the water is blocked by rocks making it pretty flat water. There was a lot of seaweed but the staff worked tirelessly to remove it all day. This smooth water might be considered a plus for families with small children and I did see lots of younger kids enjoying kayaking etc. The number of activities for kids is seemingly endless. They set up a short zipline for them from the top of a tower that doubles as a slide that empties into the pool. There are also an obstacle course and water park on site in addition to kid's and teen clubs. Monkey walks are also available but you really don't have to go on a walk to see them. All of the families I saw seemed to be having a blast at this resort!

One advantage to staying here is the fact that their current program allows you to pay only 25% of the listed cost for any of the excursions, golf and spa options. My sister was very excited to try out the golf clubs she got for Christmas and it only cost her \$55 with the cart rental. The course is a Jack Nicklaus one and was reportedly a great place to play.

I would recommend this resort for those who like to golf , families with small children and clients who are not focused on the beach. It was a fun experience overall.

I also did a site inspection at UNICO. This is about as different from Hard Rock as you could imagine. The resort is a lot smaller in size and adult only. The atmosphere is very zen like and after the non-stop rock music the silence was deafening. The lead in room at this adult only resort is a swim up. The only difference in the room categories is the location unless you move up to a suite which was double the size in both room and balcony. The design draws from earth elements and is all in muted neutral tones with wood and stone accents. The resort also offers some really unique touches. Once you check in you can go down to the shop in the spa and customize the scent for all of the toiletries in your room at no additional cost. When you check in you get beach hats included in your room and each morning they have an artist on site to help you personalize them. The resort itself has a super relaxing vibe and they offer a holistic fitness system that includes Pilates, yoga and personal trainers. They have an active pool where you would be most likely to find activity and music into the evening hours but they also have a quiet pool.

For a smaller resort they have a good number of restaurants- five total. There are also five bars with unique mixology. The décor is beautiful in each of them and they offer locally sourced eclectic menus and craft cocktails. The only option that was actually open at that early hour was 20.87 where they serve breakfast buffet style. They also offer snacks by both pools and in room dining. This resort also offers Unlimited Inclusions so you pay 25% for spa, scuba, excursions and golf. Each room also includes a local host for assistance with dining, pillow menu, packing and unpacking and much more.

This resort is a great choice for couples or groups that want a quiet laid back resort where they can enjoy their normal fitness programs. Also great for foodies and gets good feedback for weddings and vow renewals. They offer a great wedding material to help you close the sale!