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REAL  
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top venues



CRUISE-SHIP WEDDINGS  
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WORLD'S  
BEST

# all-inclusives

IN MEXICO, THE CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

AUG/ST 2010

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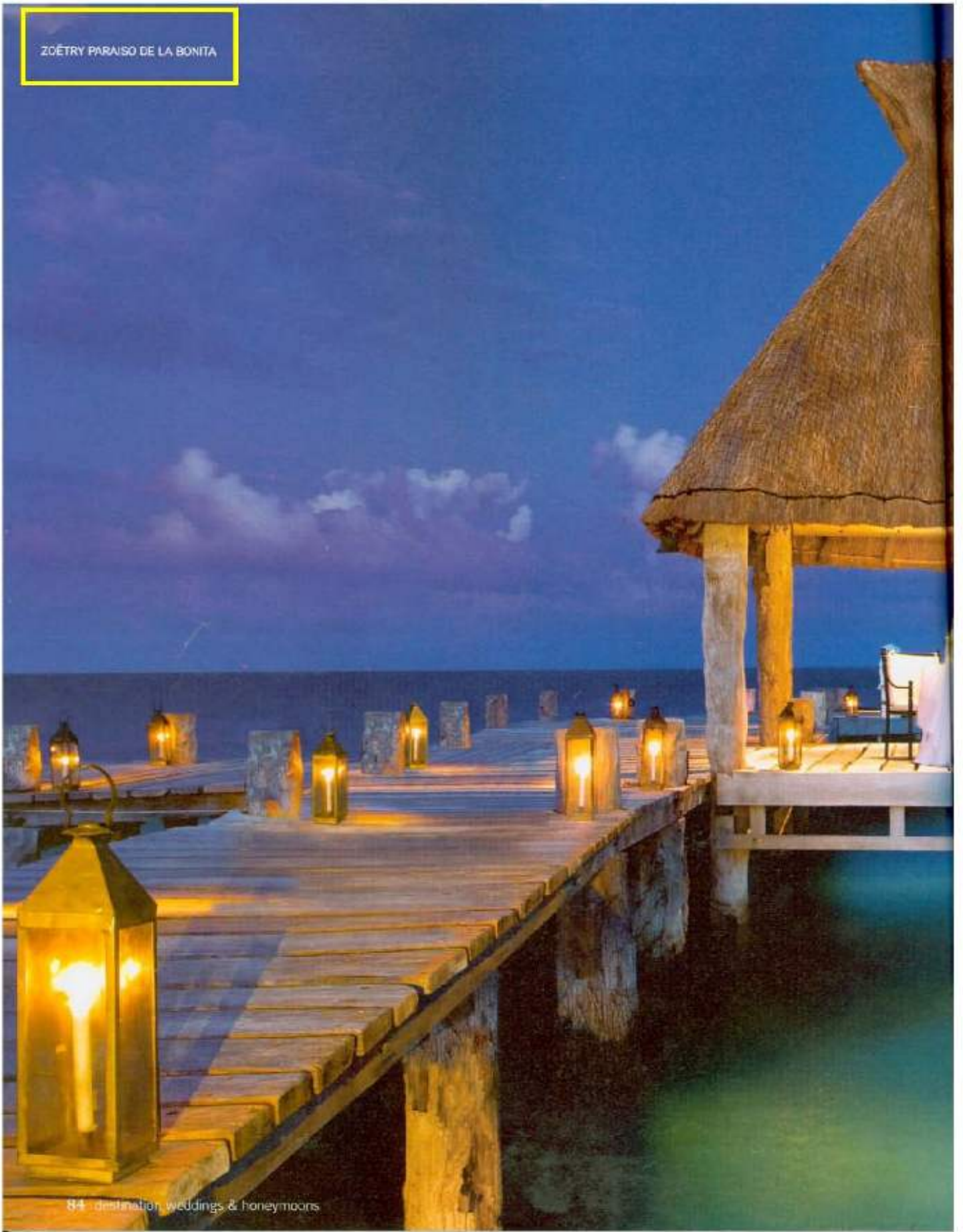


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84 destination weddings & honeymoons



# the *luxe* list

The term *all-inclusive* gets a bad rap. Yes, some fit the stereotype, with boxy rooms, watery drinks and lukewarm all-you-can-eat buffets. But just like the word *hotel* can refer to a Motel 6 or a Ritz-Carlton, *all-inclusive* can apply to places of all shapes and styles, with the top tier offering extras like gourmet meals, 24/7 room service, plush rooms — even plunge pools and stellar spas. We scoured the globe to find 10 all-inclusives that truly stand above the rest.

by Katie McElveen

july/august 2010 85

desire. When you want to explore, take a kayak trip around the island, or hop a water taxi to Ambergris Caye and cruise through the beach town of San Pedro on a golf cart.

➔ **SEXY EXTRAS** Few things are steamier than an outdoor shower, which comes in especially handy after a couples massage on your private sun deck.

➔ **TOP ROMANTIC MEAL** Your houseman can arrange lunch or dinner, complete with candles and a white tablecloth, anywhere you'd like; the entire island is at your disposal, and the menu is up to you too (though the chef will offer suggestions if you prefer).

➔ **DREAMY DO** Snorkelers and divers alike love Hol Chan, an underwater preserve that's just a 10-minute water-taxi ride away. At this 75-foot-long chink in Belize's barrier reef, you'll see tropical fish — gigantic grouper, silvery barracuda, sharks, sea turtles and graceful rays — in every hue, all within yards of each other.

➔ **THE FACTS** Doubles from \$995, including meals, activities and all beverages except wine.

## Grand Velas All Suites & Spa Resort

RIVIERA NAYARIT, MEXICO

This 267-room resort has picked up AAA's five-diamond rating four years in a row, thanks to touches like three fine-dining restaurants, top-notch service (think sushi delivered to your poolside chaise) and a beautiful three-tier pool overlooking Banderas Bay. Chic suites have separate sitting areas, marble baths and white-dressed mahogany beds draped with bright Mexican serapes. Need to de-stress from your wedding? Luxuriate with the signature Pearl and Moon treatment at the Balinese-inspired Grand Velas spa; it uses real pearls to give you a radiant shimmer. Golfers booking the Unlimited Golf Package get access to two 18-hole courses at Vista Vallarta Golf Club.

➔ **SEXY EXTRAS** We love the oceanfront terraces set with comfy daybeds for two. Upgrade to a penthouse-level Ambassador suite, and your terrace comes with an outdoor whirlpool tub.

➔ **TOP ROMANTIC MEAL** Musicians softly serenade you at Piaf, the adults-only French restaurant. Dishes like chateaubriand for two and an ethereal chocolate soufflé bring Paris to the beach.

➔ **DREAMY DO** Sip tequila while you learn to make Mexican specialties like duck carnitas, scallop ceviche, chipotle shrimp and decadent caramel flan at one of El Arrayan's gourmet cooking classes in Puerto Vallarta.

➔ **THE FACTS** Doubles from \$600, including meals, alcoholic beverages and non-motorized water sports. (Golf package exclusive of mandatory cart fees.)

HAMILTON LUND

## Likuliku Lagoon Resort

MALOLO ISLAND, FIJI

Likuliku means "calm waters" in the Malolo dialect, and here in the lagoon, you'll see them in every shade of blue imaginable. You'll find the above-water surroundings equally compelling: Choose from overwater or beachfront *bures* (bungalows) with amenities like king beds, complimentary Wi-Fi, spacious sun decks, blossom-filled foot-washing bowls and cookie jars that seem to replenish themselves. For pure relaxation, soak in the infinity pool that overlooks a white-sand beach. Or for a touch of adventure, follow the resort's hiking trails; after disappearing into the emerald mountains behind the resort, they lead past historic ruins to lookout points with remarkable views of neighboring islands.

➔ **SEXY EXTRAS** Guests are given a slinky sarong to wear (and take home). Each night, scented oil is warmed in your room, filling it with the romantic aroma of native flowers.

➔ **TOP ROMANTIC MEAL** You'll be whisked to a sandbar in the middle of the ocean for a picnic lunch for two; the boat waits at a discreet distance until you're ready to head back.

➔ **DREAMY DO** Fiji is one of the world's most beloved dive spots. Let an instructor lead you through psychedelic explosions of coral and tropical sea life, including rare giant clams and exotic cobalt-hued starfish.

➔ **THE FACTS** Doubles from \$766; overwater bures from \$1,285, including meals and most activities. ■

FOR MORE INFO, SEE THE 411 ON PAGE 117.

