

Playa del Carmen was  used as a launching point for the Maya to travel to Cozumel.

EDITOR'S FIND

IBIZA ON THE MEXICAN CARIBBEAN

Deceptively Euro-chic, the Blue Parrot is a sleek sophisticate with a techno-cool vibe — blink and you might be in Ibiza. For two decades this boutique beachfront hotel has seduced guests with its curvilinear architecture and minimalist décor. What makes this mod Mayan so magical? Perhaps it's the location — the best in Playa del Carmen, a sleepy fishing village just 42 miles south of Cancún and a ferry hop from Cozumel. It could be the exotic beauties lounging on wooden swings in the bar, or maybe it's the chichi clubbers: At moonrise, the Dragon Bar — a glitterati gathering place ever since being named one of the best beach bars by



Sandy chic: The Blue Parrot exudes both Caribbean cool and Mediterranean style — right down to the beautiful people lounging on day beds and swings at the Blue Parrot Beach Bar.

Newsweek magazine — is an in-crowd must.

Done in a clean white palette, the 23 luxury suites boast air conditioning, kitchenettes and flat-screen televisions, while the crayola-bright cushions on settees pop against the cool tiles and white stucco walls of ocean view and deluxe studios. Beach bums will relish beachfront rustic palapas.

If you've a yen to be cosseted, cozy up under a palapa at the recently updated Restaurant Blue, where former President Zedillo's chef, Juan Pablo, serves up fusion

food fit for a head of state. Try the tuna steak with a frisson of colorful vegetable shavings nestled next to polenta in citrus sesame sauce or fresh vegetable rolls with a delectable homemade peanut sauce. If swinging with the beautiful people until the wee hours leaves you the worse for wear, duck in for a spa treatment or a yoga pick-me-up on an ocean-view terrace.

Rooms are \$60 to \$246 in low season (\$75 to \$278 high). Call 888-854-4498 or visit www.blueparrot.com. — *Pamela Fisher*