

2025

I TOOK
THIS!



TRAVEL GUIDE

BY CASEY HART

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

Hey my little wanderlust traveler! My name is Casey Hart and I LOVE to travel. I am over a decade into traveling and wanted to cover all the deets of everywhere I have been so that you can start having fabulous travel experiences where ever your heart may lead you!

These are just my experiences, there is not any incentive for me to create this from travel or hotel companies. I just want to make traveling a bit less overwhelming, simple, and give you lots of resources so you can travel like a seasoned pro, instead of a newbie making trip ruining mistakes!

-ACCOMMODATIONS/ ROOMS

WHERE, HOW I BOOKED, NEARBY
RECOMMENDATIONS/SIMILAR HOTELS

-FLIGHTS , BEST TIME TO BOOK

-THINGS TO DO:

ACTIVITIES, SIGHTS, MUSEUMS, MUST
DOS

TRANSPORTATION: TO AND FROM
AIPORT, RENTAL CARS, UBERS, ETC

-FOOD/ALL INCLUSIVE

COST: HOW TO DO CHEAPER, HOW TO
GO FANCIER

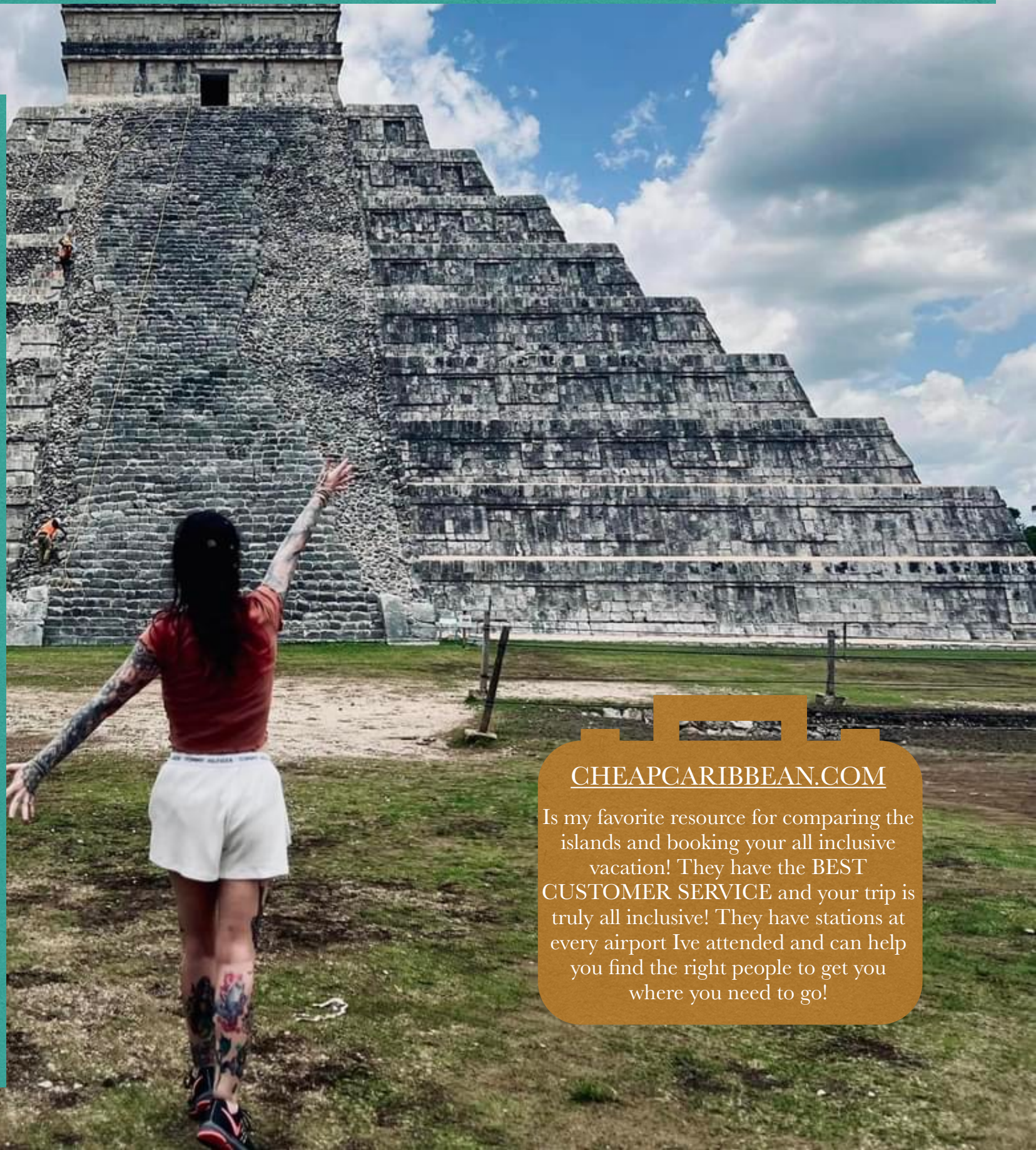


B. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL - what to know!

PASSPORTS BABY LETS GO!

When you decide to travel internationally, there's a few key differences you want to be prepared for especially when flying and handling transport.

1. You absolutely need a passport. I recommend getting this application started a year prior to your desired destination. There is the passport book at \$130, and card for \$30, the difference is the BOOK you can FLY, the card you can only travel by land or sea (like a cruise) so its recommended to get the book.
2. **Customs/Immigration:** When you fly into another country, you will have to go through customs and immigration which is an additional process at the airport. Expect longer times, agents questioning and searching your belongings, and declaring your travel intentions.
3. **Flying international:** When you arrive at any airport to travel internationally, you must visit the desk, check luggage, show passport, and expect longer waiting times. I arrive 3 hours early for international. When you arrive, ignore anyone that isn't your direct representative. There are scammers so beware!



CHEAPCARIBBEAN.COM

Is my favorite resource for comparing the islands and booking your all inclusive vacation! They have the BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE and your trip is truly all inclusive! They have stations at every airport Ive attended and can help you find the right people to get you where you need to go!

01 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC \$\$

BARCELO BAVARO-adults only all inclusive

One of the most affordable international options is the Dominican Republic! Similar would be Jamaica, Costa Rica, and Aruba (more expensive). Its a very tiny island, with the friendliest people, and man do they know how to party! Here you'll find good music, welcoming hosts, the best island vibes, and large infinity pools. The country is known for its famous locally crafted alcohol called Mama Juana and its a must for any wine enthusiasts (its made of rum, wine, honey, and tree bark with stuff from the sea, -crazy! If you want a easy, chill, and affordable tropical get a way this is your spot!

WHERE: Barcelo Bavaro-All inclusive adult only resort (they have a resort that's family friendly attached called "beach")

Booked on cheapcaribbean.com

6 nights was under \$2500 for 2 adults , resort, food, transport, airfare, and alcohol.

FLIGHTS: booked through this website, it creates a all inclusive price for you. I recommend it highly as its so simple.

APRIL/MAY SEP/OCT

Its HOT in the summer, so early summer or fall is best. Can book it within a few weeks-few months. Very easy place to travel

Enjoyment



All-inclusive: this means all your transportation, meals, drinks, alcohol, taxes and tips, and even most resort activities are included

This resort ROCKS: Its huge!!! Located on one of the TOP 10 BEACHES IN THE WORLD the crystal waters are a selling point enough. There are so many resort actives to do like 18 hole and mini golf, yoga, casino, dance club, water sports, and an insane amount of pools. We loved hopping around the resort (a lil tipsy) filling our day with crazy activities.

The rooms are real standard, nothing too fancy at all.

This is actually where we honeymooned and we loved it!

I recommend about a week, no less than 4 days because you will be having too much fun.

The Dominicans love to party, but they will poach at airports and some excursions for you to buy things. Just ignore, it feels rude, but trust me we learned some things the hard way.

This place is easy, affordable, and fun! It makes great first time international travelers really comfortable.

If you want to go fancier, I recommend nicer/more luxurious resorts. Breathless and Secrets are highly recommended



Garza Blanca Cancun

TALK ABOUT LUXURY!!!

If the DR looks nice, but your inner bougie is screaming for insta worthy videos and stunning first class, **THIS IS IT!** Butlers, crystal clear waters, brand new resort, top notch spa, first class service, service like royalty?!

WHERE: Garza Blanca Cancun- east coast Mexico. This one is attached to a sister resort called Villa De Palmar.

They have locations in Puerto Vallarta, Riviera Maya, and Los Cabos. They own a lot of the fanciest real estate in Mexico, and provide some of the most luxurious vacations imaginable. Celebrities regularly attend these resorts and even have properties on the beaches nearby so you know its nice!!

GARZA BLANCA- TAFER RESORTS

*we ended up buying a timeshare membership to this place and that signally effects our costs. If you attend here, they will want to offer this membership to you. You can decline, and its not meant for everyone. So far we love it!

FLIGHTS: I book for Mexico about a year in advance. Many of these resorts book out far and you want to plan accordingly. Many flights even have direct to Cancun and I believe its worth the cost! Similar demographically to the DR, I travel to Mexico in May or October.

Luxury



02 MEXICO- Cancun cont.

This place screams **LUXURY**. Marble floors, 5 star dining, butlers, first class service, its nuts.

For couples we have stayed in the junior suites, but for a family or group, the penthouse is what you want.

3 floors of huge open spaces, hammocks and balconies, and a huge private rooftop loft with a hot tub.

COST: Rooms average 400-2500/night depending on the suite All inclusive packages are around 150/pp (per person per day) *I do not pay this much, our membership cuts these costs significantly)*

Flights to Cancun are in demand so I book them at least 6 months in advance. The best time of the year is still early summer/early fall. This is a popular spring break destination, avoid April and May.

There are other beautiful resorts in Cancun for less expensive, located in the “hotel zone” of Cancun.

TO DO: the resort offers a ton of actives like water sports, yoga, culture enriching classes, and a stunning spa. Downtown Cancun is safe to visit and party, but always be smart and never go anywhere alone. **Chichen Itza is one of the 7 wonders of the world and is a must.**

I would book this directly through them by calling or online. Ive seen third party reservations not be accepted so its safer to go directly through the resort for everything, including your transfer from the airport.



You have to visit
Isla Mujeres!

A small island
filled with shops
and the worlds
best beaches!

03 MEXICO-Puerto Vallarta \$\$\$

Garza Blanca- PV

Liked Cancun, but want more privacy and some luscious jungle with powerful healing vibes? Puerto Vallarta is what you need. Located on the west coast of Mexico, just south of Cali, this place offers a different tranquility than Cancun. A more quiet and “home” feeling than Cancun or the more active parts of Mexico, this magical land welcomes you with warm serenity and is the text-book definition of a vacation.

WHERE: Garza Blanca Puerto Vallarta

This hidden gem is the best combo of beach and gorgeous jungle. Its tucked away from noise and hustle, and provides some of the most relaxing accommodations imaginable. You can nap anywhere here. There’s tons of cool shade from the trees, first class service, beautiful infinity pools, you seriously can’t go wrong.

This is my all time favorite to return- I call it my second “home”

FLIGHTS: not as popular as Cancun or Florida, the flights are affordable and can be booked within a few months. I still recommend 6 months-year for all things booking. Average 800/pp RT

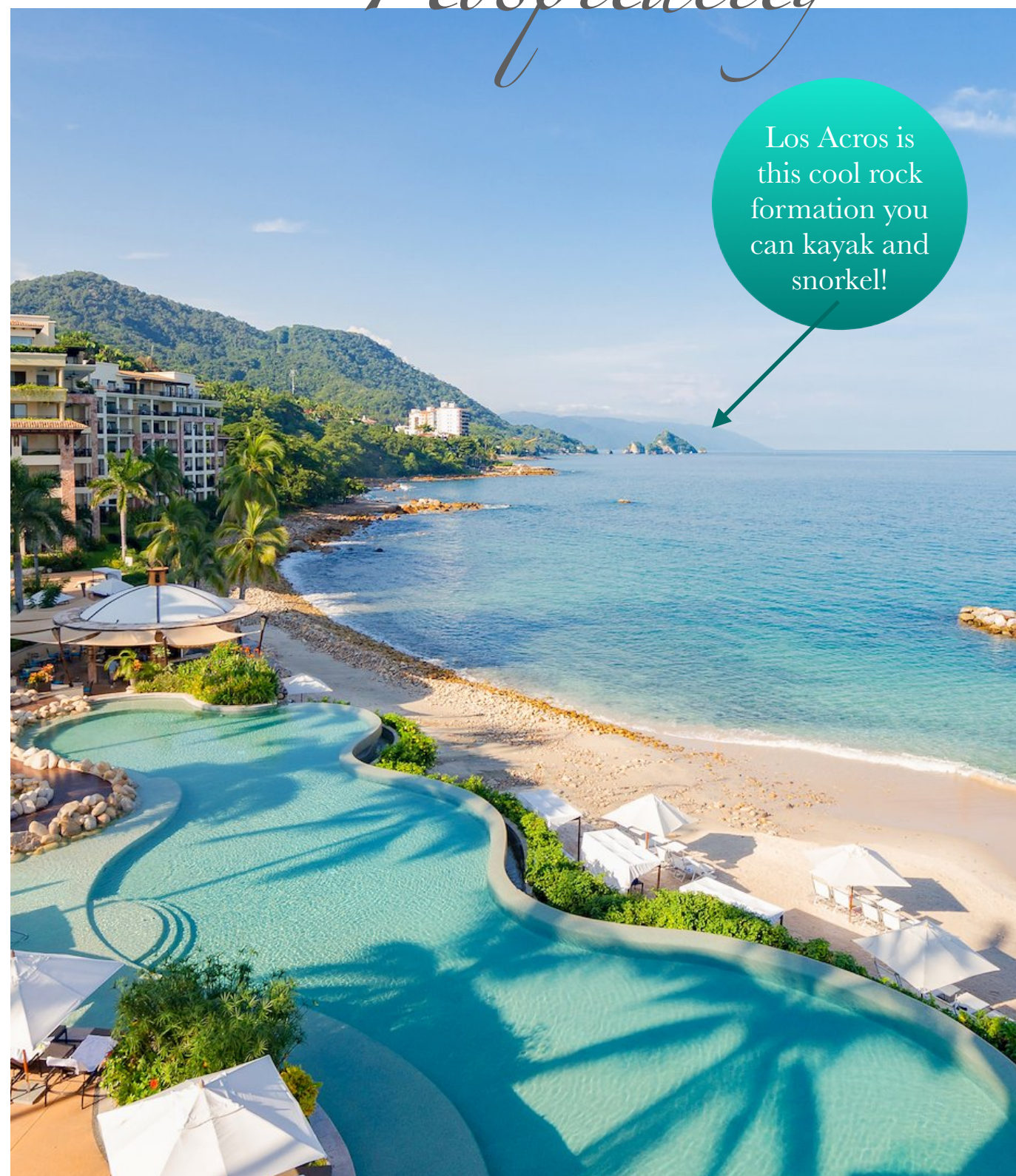
APRIL/MAY SEP/OCT again, its hot- October is sea turtle season and you can participate with the nesting its adorable!

Book directly through the resort via phone/website

Halloween is fun to attend here because of Dia de Muertos and the whole city parties!

Hospitality

Los Acros is this cool rock formation you can kayak and snorkel!



Garza Blanca PV

The main feature in PV is the **hospitality**. You will feel like family here, and be taken away by the authentic Mexican colors and music.

The rooms here are beautifully decorated bright colors and patterns, this elegant slice of paradise will sweep you off your feet. You can't go wrong here but our favorite room was the Junior Panoramic Suite

Luxurious open spaces, jungle paradise, hammocks on balconies, and comfort with top notch service

COST: Rooms average 250-1000/night depending on the suite All inclusive packages are around 150/pp (per person per day) *I do not pay this much, our membership cuts these costs significantly)*

Much more affordable and quiet, this is my preferred place to annually vacation.

PV has a unique city you HAVE to visit. Great culture, food, art and shopping. There are tons of resorts nearby you can't go wrong booking. Secrets and Hyatt Ziva are popular favorites.

TO DO: this resort has a beautiful natural landscape popular for kayaking, hiking, and exploring. Downtown is a must, taxis are easy and affordable.

*Want fancier? Hotel Mousi is a sister resort attached that elevates this entire experience! Rooms controlled by iPads, butlers, the whole thing!



The Island of the Gods

Off floating in the middle of the Aegean sea is the volcanic island of Santorini Greece. Greece has 5 major islands and this one is most famous for the blue domes and white washed homes. Seen in many movies, it makes for one of the world most top destinations for luxury, food, and stunning views. Small villages and vineyards sit on volcanic cliffs overlooking a crystal-blue sea, and breath taking sunsets end each day in a romantic golden glow. You will never want to return home as the volcanic warmth grounds your heart into her rich soil.

WHERE: Aesthesis Boutique Villas- booked directly through them. This was one of the most **EXPENSIVE** rooms on the island (about 1000/night) * we are not rich! we sold 20% of our stuff and did 18 months of sacrifice to do this trip*

There's **PLENTY** of accommodations for more affordable- [booking.com](https://www.booking.com) was a great resource to find a place, then call directly to book you'll get the best rate.

FLIGHTS: \$4k for 2, flew though Delta and Aegean Airlines. Wouldn't recommend Delta for this one, check your departing airports as many have cheaper options than your home one! Its a long journey and you will have to likely take a smaller plane or boat to Santorini. Prepare for this all to be costly.

Breathtaking



Santorini is unlike any other place on earth. You are literally staying on a (inactive) volcano! That's right, the ground you're walking on was once an erupted volcano with rich cool history, and even some archeological ruins of that eruption. Sulfur surrounds the air with the salty sea, the brightest most open sky you'll ever see, the architecture and textures **whisk you away into literal heaven.**

COST: Rooms average 400-2500/night depending on which part of the island and of course the luxury. You're not going to easily find a hotel it's all private villas.

This place has a high price tag especially at peak tourist season April-October. We went in December and **LOVED IT**. Best time to go and maximize the island I would say is October

Sunset cruises, archeological tours, black sand beaches, the most delectable and cultural food on the planet

ITS A ONCE IN A LIFETIME VACATION

TO DO: Akrotiri Archeological site (homes in volcanic ruin), sunset cruise, and a flying dress shoot is a must! (Around \$500!) Booked on santorinidress.com (photoingreece on insta)

I went to Santorini only for 7 days straight total for 2 was 12k. I'd recommend doing 2-3 days here, and a few days on surrounding islands. Be aware of seasons and transportation to and from those islands.



The Land of Fire and Ice

Also known as “the Capital of North Iceland” we adventured to one of the most northern cities where the mountains touch the aura borealis and the whales leap right from the oceans. You won’t feel like you are on earth any more. Volcanoes, glaciers, mountains, hot springs, and a population as a country under 400k, you won’t find a friendlier or safer place on earth. This place will make you rub your eyes in astonishment on the hour every hour, and leave a magic in your heart it feels like living in a snow globe on the north pole.

If I had to pick somewhere to go again tomorrow, it's Iceland.

WHERE: Akrotiri Iceland

(most people travel to Southern Reykjavik where blue lagoon is at- northern Iceland is a less touristy, more affordable, and I think the most magical little city on earth. Its charming port town has the friendliest safest atmosphere its unreal)

Yes, its cold. But not like Antartica so don't let it stop you. We went in November and it averaged 20-30 degrees F. To see the northern lights is more likely in Sept- March. To explore more comfortable weather head there in the summer. They have strange daylight so be aware of that when you choose to book. We averaged 5 hours of daylight daily!

FLIGHTS: surprisingly affordable, about \$500-800 pp RT! Booked through Iceland Air. They may not fly out of your home airport, so check other options.

We went as a group actually to a yoga retreat for 7 days. Most people do 10-14 and rent a car, travel the whole island.

Adventure



I TOOK
THIS!

Oh Iceland, it feels like Mars combined with Narnia. Every landscape takes your breath away, you'll have backgrounds for your phone for years, and stories of the north that sound like folktales to the states. SAFE, magical, and powerful, this place will embark you on a journey like you never imagined.

COST: We stayed in a airbnb, rooms average 150-300 a night. We had a travel agent though travelweavers who booked everything for us! Our all included price of excursions, food, flight, accommodations etc was about 4k pp.

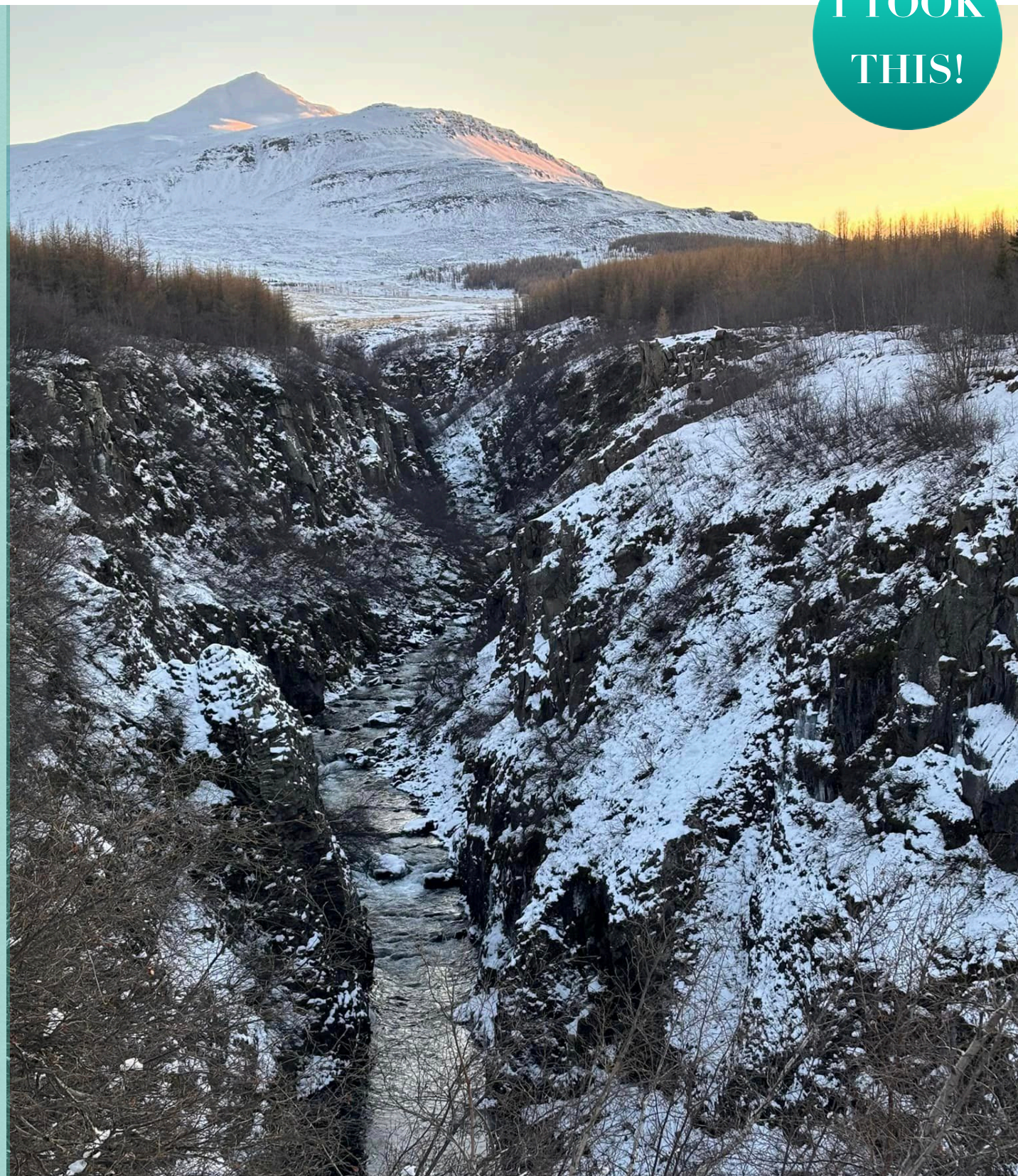
The food here is insanely expensive but freaking delicious. I still talk about everything I ate here. Fresh lamb, salmon, and Icelandic hotdogs are a must!

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

as unpredictable as a thunderstorm here, its an adventure to capture this rare beauty. But going in season helps! It does look different in person vs pictures but holy moly its nothing but nature and gods work at display.

TO DO: OH MY GOD EVERYTHING. We did a whale watching tour (saw a humpback fully breach!), 3 hot springs, Hrisey island, hiking in the mountains, this place will keep you out and on your chilly little toes!

*pack hand warmers, **WATERPROOF LAYERS**, and wool everything! You're gonna be wet and cold, but happy.



C. DOMESTIC TRAVEL

EXPLORE YOUR FRONT DOORS

The US has some beautiful places to explore and its high on my list to make these more my priority. A majority of my travel here has been for tattooing/conventions so its not as through or well-explored but I'll give ya my favorites anyway!

1. **PLANES, TRAINS, BUSES!** make sure you check all options! You should check into metros, greyhounds, train stations, and even just taking your car are affordable options to explore instead of the high cost of flying!
2. **ID, CARDS, ETC** You do need a valid state ID to book any ticket. Look into local laws about the required documents to travel. Alert your credit card companies **REGARDLESS** of international or domestic travel. I recommend buying easy travel bags like fanny packs and crossovers for on the go travel.
3. **GET YOUR GUIDE (APP):** One of my favorite resources to look into things to do, attractions, museums, etc for booking. Refundable bookings, reviews, and tour guides are all there to give you free help. Download the app and plug in your next destination for all the fun!



Southern Hospitality

Chattanooga is a precious little city on the southern line in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. It's known for its railway system so the theme here is trains! With super friendly people, 5 minute traffic everywhere, and small mom+pop owned businesses with unique and delicious menus, this place will charm its way into your heart.

WHERE: Chattanooga, TN- I have always stayed in a airbnb, although there's popular hotels and cute little cabins for rent!

COST: Super affordable place to travel, drive, bus, and trains are all common ways of travel. Rent a car or bike, this place is awesome to move about.

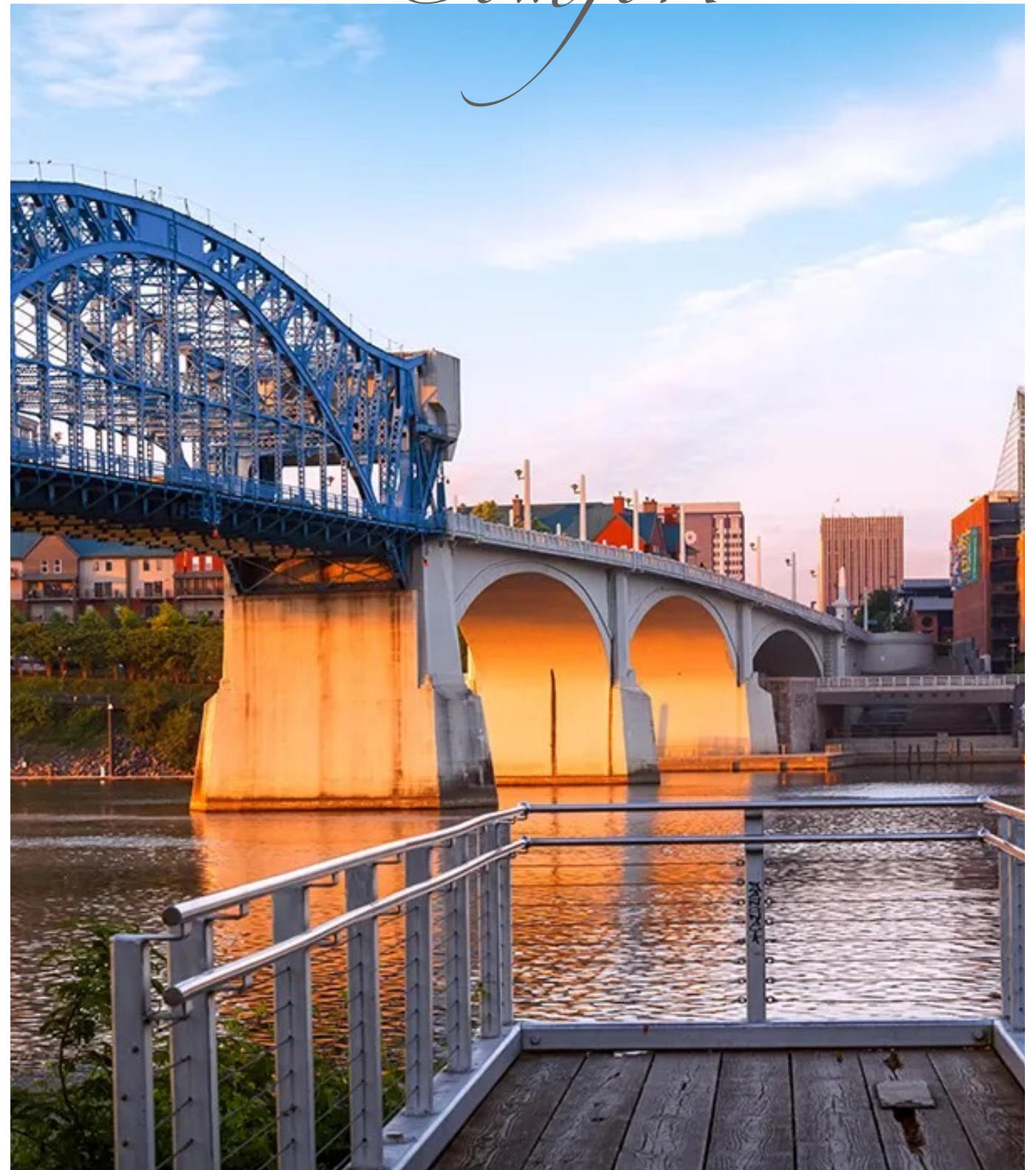
TO DO: This little town has tons to offer in arts, entertainment, and white water rafting. Ruby falls is nearby for water activities and cave exploring. Chattanooga is full of cute little coffee and sandwich shops, artisan desserts, ghost tours, and more!

Their aquarium is **AWESOME**. You have to visit. Rock City Gardens is nearby and is pure magic with high cliffs and waterfalls.

With a small airport, expect short lines and very easy travel!

I'd consider moving here, it's just that perfect.

Comfort



The Capital of the United States

At the center of this metropolitan haven is our Nations Capitol, Washington DC. I love taking a spring trip for 2-3 nights and walking through the museums, monuments, restaurants, elite clubs and lounges and more! Located on the Potamic River, this city has gorgeous views and iconic monuments that provide a postcard like landscape! See the constitution dinosaurs, and amazing art at the Kennedy Center

WHERE: I recommend looking into AirBnb's or some of the hotels downtown so you can easily walk around! The hotels are a bit costly, so we tend to get a small place to ourselves.

COST: D.C is affordable, just make sure you pay attention to events calendars as large events attract more people-meaning higher costs! We usually spend about 1000-1500 for a long weekend, on mostly lodging and food.

TO DO: Our favorites are museum hopping to the Smithsonian's, the largest group of museums in the world (21!) and they're free! We also visit the memorials and enrich our knowledge of our nations history! Its got delicious food too with stunning views!

Plan to do A LOT OF WALKING- its a busy city with lots of places in between to visit and parking can be expensive and hard to find, hard to manage with meters, so get them tennis shoes out!

Exploration



Low Country High Vibes

Giant moss tress, cobblestones streets, park squares and old victorian houses, Savannah makes for one of the most charming place to visit in the states! It has beautiful old architecture, graveyards, and is one of the most haunted places in all of the US! This town is the setting for the famous novel and movie “Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil”, and where the famous Forest Gump bench rests. I have been here over a dozen times, considered my education here, and its probably where I want to move for retirement. The southern charm and hospitality are surely to sweep you off your feet!

WHERE: I am fortunate enough to stay with family, but there are so many charming old hotels and airbnbs, just check for ghosts! (No joke)

COST: Super affordable place to travel, they have a small airport and lots of choices for lodging. I would expect to spend less then 1k per person for a 5 days.

TO DO: East River Street is the main hob of the city, filled with shops, restaurants, and so many actives including amazing river boats that usually host a dinner cruise. Ghost tours, horse and buggies, its like stepping back in time!

Guys, its hot hot HOT. Avoid summer time if it gets to you, you will be outside in the sun walking a ton. The fall and spring are a fun time to visit making it more comfortable and less crowded. Beware of the cobble stone streets, pack them tennis shoes!

Charm



Mini Romantic “Glamping”

Wanna go camping, but not spend an arm and a leg getting all the gear, setting everything up, and sleeping on the ground, yes I mean- GLAMPING (glamour camping)

I wanted to sleep romantically under the stars, turn off the gadgets, and have all the hard work already done for me and I found this sweet little set up just about 90 mins north of Baltimore. Its technically an airbnb, but man was it one of my favorite places to bring the husband, doggo, and kiddos (if you want)

WHERE: Conowingo Creek, Southern Lancaster PA

COST: This averages only \$100 per night, 2-3 nights is really easily, Id like to go a little longer next time!

TO DO: stargazing, short walks to the rivers, hammocks under the sun, fishing or a refreshing dip in the beautiful waterway, this place is the ultimate way of relaxing with nature. They have everything set up for you with this gorgeous queen bed, zippers to keep the bugs out, fire pit, and a dinning area that the hosts were incredible at setting up ahead of time.

This is also by the Susquehanna River where hiking and biking are common activities. The hosts were so friendly and accommodating we are always anxiously waiting to get away again!

[Link here!](#)

Getaway



Sunny California Paradise

Located on the west Pacific coast of California rests “Americas Finest City” and I completely agree. After only a few times, I have wondered if its possible to easily reside here on a rooftop condo overlooking the beach. Sea lions in La Jolla, sunset dinners, and the best zoo in America, San Diego is definitely one of my favorite places to visit again and again. Between the sunset cliffs, little Italy, and popping night life its hard to leave this little cali paradise.

WHERE: Ive always stayed at the Ayres Hotel, and can't seem to go anywhere else. There are tons of sweet airbnbs, hotels for all types, all with a little Spanish charm and colors-so you can't go wrong

COST: I would be prepared to spend your money here. Hotels can average 250-400 per night- but you'll wake up to the most stunning sunrises, fresh organic breakfast, and laid back service- its worth the price. Food is mostly organic and fresh which reflects in the cost. Expect 1500-2500 for a few days.

TO DO: You have to visit La Jolla, its just the coolest place. They have wild sea lions resting, swimming, and playing all for you to witness. The San Diego Zoo is literally world famous, catch the most breath taking sunsets at the Sunset Cliffs, and really gorgeous beaches. They have whale and dolphin watching tours, surfing, and cruises, soaking in amazing waters and sun. It gives you all the best Cali vibes you have always wanted.

Vibrant

