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## Hey Mexico, Happy Birthday

September 01, 2010

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This year is a big one for Mexico, as it celebrates 200 years of independence.

And if you love Mexico but want a break from the east coast 'scene', the west coast is just another hour or so by plane and a world away from Cancun's high-octane revelry.

On the Baja Peninsula, the Hotel Rancho Buena Vista, East Cape Los Cabos harkens back to the 1950s with a classic resort experience: no TVs, no phones, just plenty of relaxation. The Choose Your Own Adventure package, from \$560 per person (all prices U.S.) includes three nights accommodation in an oceanfront bungalow, three meals daily and a choice of two excursions, including a Sea of Cortez fishing trip, a Cabo Pulmo snorkelling trip or a zipline canopy tour to Miraflores. See [www.ranchobuenavista.com](http://www.ranchobuenavista.com).

And in Mazatlan, starting Nov. 1, Las Villas Hotel offers adventure on the links with a Golfer's Paradise package, priced from \$750 per couple with three nights oceanfront accommodation, four rounds of golf, dinner for two and daily breakfast. See [www.mazatlanhotellavillas.com](http://www.mazatlanhotellavillas.com).

### ST. LUCIA SAVINGS

You might think all Caribbean resorts are the same, but a few really stand out from the pack, and Jade Mountain is one of them. Set high on a hillside in St. Lucia, with sweeping views of the Twin Pitons, this upscale resort and romantic hideaway is famous for its spacious 'Sanctuary' rooms and private infinity pools, each one a multi-hued work of art. For travel Sept. 4 - Oct. 2, Jade Mountain is offering a free upgrade from its room and breakfast package to its all-inclusive program. Sister property Anse Chastanet, also on St. Lucia, is offering seven nights for the price of five, for travel now through Oct. 8. See [www.jademountain.com](http://www.jademountain.com) and [www.ansechastanet.com](http://www.ansechastanet.com).

### GREEK ISLANDS CRUISE

Variety Cruises' Early Bird Greece promotion offers savings worth up to 20 per cent for fares booked by Feb. 1, 2011, on sailings April 1 - Nov. 18, 2011. Three seven-night itineraries are available: Jewels of the Cyclades visiting Poros, Santorini, Paros, Mykonos, Kea and Sounion; Classical Greece visiting the Aegean Islands, Crete and continental Greece; and Aegean Odyssey with a stop in Kusadasi, Turkey. See [www.varietycruises.com](http://www.varietycruises.com).

### BEST BUY OF THE WEEK

Signature Vacations is taking 40 per cent off air and hotel packages to select Riu Resorts this fall, for travel from late October through Dec. 15. Lead-in pricing starts at \$495 per person to the Riu Merengue in Puerto Plata, for departures Nov. 2, 9, 23 and 30. See [www.signaturevacations.com](http://www.signaturevacations.com).

Kathryn Folliott is a Toronto-based freelance writer. Prices quoted are subject to change and availability.

Sunquest: Varadero, air and hotel, \$400 (Sept. 22). [www.sunquest.ca](http://www.sunquest.ca)

Air Canada Vacations: Honolulu, air and hotel, \$1,029 (Oct. 10). [www.aircanadavacations.com](http://www.aircanadavacations.com)

Nolitours: Punta Cana, air and hotel, \$399 (Oct. 1). [www.nolitours.com](http://www.nolitours.com)

Signature Vacations: Mazatlan, air and hotel, \$649 (Oct. 22). [www.signaturevacations.com](http://www.signaturevacations.com)

Transat Holidays: Orlando, air, hotel, WDW Magic Your Way base ticket, dining plan, \$749 (Oct. 22). [www.transatholidays.com](http://www.transatholidays.com)

Hola Sun Holidays: Cayo Santa Maria, air and hotel, \$438 (Sept. 24). [www.holasunholidays.ca](http://www.holasunholidays.ca)

Bel Air Travel: St. Maarten, air and hotel, \$568 (Sept. 17). [www.belairtravel.com](http://www.belairtravel.com)

Sunwing Vacations: Puerto Vallarta, air and hotel, \$395 (Oct. 8). [www.sunwing.ca](http://www.sunwing.ca)

Sell Off Vacations: Brussels, air and hotel, \$1,158 (Oct. 15). [www.selloffvacations.com](http://www.selloffvacations.com)

itravel2000: Riviera Nayarit, air and hotel, \$297 (Sept. 30). [www.itravel2000.com](http://www.itravel2000.com)

Sears Travel: Glasgow, air and hotel, \$1,007 (Oct. 16). [www.searstravel.ca](http://www.searstravel.ca)

WestJet Vacations: Four-night Nassau, air and hotel, \$719 (Nov. 6). [www.westjetvacations.com](http://www.westjetvacations.com)

Tour East Holidays: Korea, air, hotel, sightseeing (emphasis on UNESCO World Heritage Sites), \$4,299 for two (Oct. 16). [www.toureast.com](http://www.toureast.com)

Trafalgar Tours: 10-night Italy Bellissimo, hotel, some meals, transfers, touring, \$2,635 (Oct. 13). [www.trafalgartours.ca](http://www.trafalgartours.ca)