

GARZA BLANCA

RESORT & SPA LOS CABOS

| BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD

Garza Blanca Resort & Spa Los Cabos is located between Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo in Mexico. This luxurious resort boasts an eclectic array of expansive suites and residences, decadent cuisine, numerous activities, eight exclusive swimming pools, special spa indulgences and a hydrotherapy circuit.

THE EXPANSIVE OCEAN SUITE

My daughter Brittney joined me on a trip to the Garza Blanca Resort & Spa Los Cabos. We entered our spacious one-bedroom ocean suite to discover two full bathrooms, a kitchenette with a large refrigerator, a stovetop and a sizeable living room with a pullout couch. The king bed was plush with a cushy duvet and a wide assortment of six pillows. The en suite bathroom boasted an enormous closet, numerous shelves, a kidney-shaped soaking tub and a double sink. The gigantic shower area featured a rain showerhead and a hand-held sprayer, and the Japanese-style toilet sprayed water and included a dryer and warmer and cleaned itself. The view from our balcony was stunning. It overlooked the various pools and then spread over the teal blue sea.

THE DELECTABLE CUISINE

Garza Blanca is an all-inclusive resort with delicious food and tasty drinks. The options are considerable, varied and eclectic. Brittney and I savored our first bites near the pool. Our server Jorge was exceptional; he was pleasant and attentive. We ordered guacamole and chips and an octopus tostada with tiger's milk, creamy avocado, cucumber, mango and serrano chili from the beach restaurant. The octopus was tender, the combination of flavors was spectacular, and the vegetables were colorful and artistically arranged. We also ordered the Baja-style fish tacos with beer battered fish, chipotle mayonnaise, coleslaw, guacamole, pico de gallo and a shaved radish with lime. Everything was excellent.

We dined at the resort's Japanese restaurant Hiroshi for dinner and sat outside in the warm air to enjoy the light sea breeze. The service was superb. Our waiter offered exceptional suggestions. I started with the

Sunset cocktail made with gin, passion fruit, mango and white wine. It was sweet, fruity and ice cold, perfect for a balmy night. We ordered the suggested crunchy taco with marinated spicy tuna and avocado cream—it was perfectly seasoned fresh tuna with a crispy wonton taco shell and an avocado mousse.

As the evening progressed, staff lit torches along the railing bordering the restaurant. The flames from the torches rose high into the sky, and the backdrop of palm trees that swayed in the breeze created a mesmerizing setting. We listened to the waves roll in and crash on the beach and watched the sand glitter in the moonlight.

We finished dinner with a shared piece of coconut cake. It consisted of a thin layer of coconut cake, topped with a coconut mousse and finished with a coconut glaze and flaked sweet coconut on the sides. Blueberries, strawberries and a gelled apricot jam accompanied this flavorful yet not overly sweet dessert.

Another fabulous suggestion was the carajilli espresso, a popular Spanish coffee drink. It was made with a shot of decaf espresso (per my request) and an orange liquor mixed with more than 43 unknown spices. Shaken together, it created a foam on top, and was served over ice with a couple of espresso beans for garnish. The carajilli was magical with the cake and a magnificent way to complete the meal.

THE SPECIAL EVENTS

It is always fun to participate in activities or events held at resorts. One morning we attended a yoga class under the resort's signature orange tree. Orange colored trees are found at all Garza Blanca Resorts. According to the resort's credo, "To spot one means your focus shall shine through. We, in turn, are focused on your peace, happiness, and success; and through your visit, we all become more successful and energized as a result."

In the afternoon we went to a tequila tasting/cooking class at 3:00 p.m. where we met Chef Marco and Miguel. A lovely couple from Boston joined us, and we sampled two 100% blue agave tequilas, one blanco and one reposado. We learned how to make a delicious and attractive tuna ceviche during our class.





Suite butlers can make arrangements for various unique experiences, including mixology classes, beer and wine tastings, tequila tastings, breakfast buffets and dinners served on the beach or in the privacy of a suite. One evening Brittney and I had dinner on the beach. The setting was picturesque. Staff smoothed out the sand to make a patio-type setting, set up poles and strung up little lights. We began the night with bubbles. I had a green salad, and Brittney had a beet salad. The next course was a beef skewer with zucchini and tomato followed by shrimp bisque. The evening ensued with short ribs, chicken and a cake topped with Bananas Foster and ice cream and then ended with a glorious sunset.

We decided to sit at the bar near Blanca Blue before dinner on our final night. We ordered

the pork belly tacos recommended by Victor Sanchez, the food and beverage manager. The tacos were moist and delicious with a little spicy avocado mousse on crispy blue corn tortillas. We were especially delighted when a lovely flutist meandered through the bar and continued playing throughout the evening. Her music added to the room's beauty and made the evening's experience more opulent.

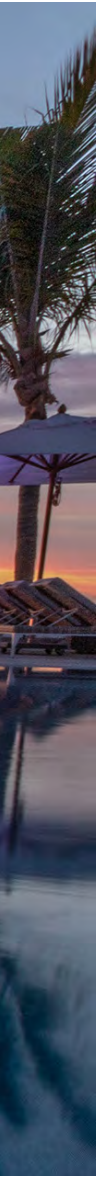
THE ROOFTOP POOL

There are numerous places to wile away the hours gazing at the beguiling views of the Sea of Cortez. One of my favorites is from the rooftop pool and bar. Brittney and I spent a fabulous afternoon sipping cocktails and sharing stories with several ladies visiting from California.

THE SPA

Spa Imagine highlights stunning ocean views from the ninth floor. Brittney and I thoroughly enjoyed our morning at the spa. I followed my first few minutes in the sauna, with the plunging shower, the foot bubbling Jacuzzi, and the metal bed with bubbles, ending with the vigorous waterfall that relaxed my shoulders and neck.

We both opted for a deep tissue massage after our hydrotherapy circuit. After we changed into our robes, the technician dried our swimsuits while we settled in the lounge room and looked over the Sea of Cortez. Our attendants gently placed cucumber slices over our eyes and a cold, wet washcloth.



Later, we moved to a massage room with two tables. We sat in chairs and put our feet into bowls while they poured warm water over our toes and gave our feet a gentle scrub. They left the room after towel-drying our feet, and we got onto the tables.

Araceli and Deisy were very skilled. They knew exactly where to apply pressure and how to pull the stubborn knots out from our sore muscles. After exceptional massages, we returned to the lounge to enjoy mint chlorophyll water and chamomile tea with honey. The tea arrived with delicious shortbread cookies and nuts.

The hydrotherapy circuit is one of the most comprehensive in Los Cabos. Personal chaperones always guide clients through timed stays in the vitality pool, cold plunge pool and high-pressure shower. Hydrotherapy is an immersive experience that helps calm the mind and relax muscles, the perfect preparation for a relaxing massage. All specialized treatments at the spa begin with a foot ritual designed to connect guests with the energy of water, encouraging perfect balance mentally, physically and emotionally.

Garza Blanca Resort & Spa Los Cabos is a special place for a long weekend, corporate retreat, family reunion or extended vacation. Book a trip to visit this five-star resort and enjoy the opulent rooms, tasty food, fun activities, exceptional service and magnificent spa. ◆

