



Where to Own a Ritzy Vacation Property? Exchange St. Barts for Tulum

Tulum emerges as a jetsetter destination



Playa del Carmen, Mexico, January 16, 2015. There are several glamorous hotspots around the world that are on the list of the jet-setting crowd. St. Barts has been on the glam list since 1960s, when Rockefeller bought land there and designated it as an exclusive vacation spot for the elite. Since then, the Caribbean island has been a playground for billionaires and fashionable vacationers. However, the heritage of exclusivity also comes with a price tag, making St. Barts' real estate extremely expensive.

For someone looking to own property in a glamorous international destination, whether for business or for personal pleasure, one destination is not equal to another in terms of real estate value and potential of making money on growing prices.

Looking at the list of the places frequented annually by the jet setters year-round - Tulum, Mustique, Paris, Gstaad, Ibiza, St Tropez, the Amalfi coast, Thailand, Sydney and Miami – Tulum, the Mexican Caribbean jewel with sugary sand beaches and turquoise waters, stands out as an emerging destination with comparatively low prices.

Tulum is beloved by many celebrities, including Cameron Diaz, Demi Moore, Sting, Drew Barrymore, Reese Witherspoon, Kate Bosworth, Sean Penn, Susan Sarandon, Jessica Lange and many others, including crowds of fashionable New Yorkers, jet-setting Brazilians and other South Americans.

Emergence of Tulum

For long time, Tulum was a favorite destination of hippie backpackers, till it started emerging as a spot where celebrities went to hide in rustic, wind and solar-powered beach bungalows, frolicking on some of the world's most beautiful beaches.

Eventually, the word started spreading, attracting more celebrities, followed by New York fashion crowd. Tulum developed into a curious blend of rustic, eco glamour, and emerged as an eco-chic destination.

Following the trend, hotels and restaurants started upgrading, new fancy shops opened and revival was noticeable in every area.

Real estate prices

Suddenly, real estate of the formerly sleepy Mexican Caribbean village was vibrant and very attractive. From 2012 till 2014 beach land prices went from \$75 USD for 1sq m up to \$150 USD, while in 2007 the price was only \$30-40 USD.

In 2012, the 1,000 sq m land in Tulum village was priced at \$31,000 USD; in 2013 the price went up to \$46,000 USD; in 2014 this land costs \$77,000 USD.

Still, the prices are very low compared to other main jet-setters' destinations. Comparing to St. Barts, where 1 sq m of land starts at \$930 USD, Tulum is a find with a future. Real estate experts unanimously agree that the time to invest in a luxury villa or a beach condo in Tulum is now.

What are other draws of Tulum that are marking it as a top spot for the well-established, compared to St. Barts? Here are some:

Proximity

St. Barts, if you are not arriving on a private jet, is more than 10 hours away from New York. Tulum, on the other hand, is a 3-hour flight away, and half an hour away from Miami (plus 90 min drive), which makes it a perfect weekend destination.

Walking, no driving

New Yorkers do not drive, and those from other places need to relax from driving. Tulum is joyously a no-drive place. You walk, bike or take taxis. St. Barts, Mustique and other glam destinations require driving.

More laid back

Tulum is more laid back than St. Barts. After all, if you escape a city you want to find yourself in a place where you can unwind, detox and rejuvenate. St. Barts has beautiful beaches, but it is hardly the place to be alone in nature and to relax – it's more about glam, parties, expensive restaurants, designer clothes and busy schedules. Tulum is fashionable, too. But Tulum's fashion is all about beach casual and relaxed. Besides, the beach town is known for beach yoga, spas, meditation and other shamanic Mayan relaxation techniques.

Green

Tulum is green and eco-chic. That means going back to basics, preserving nature, and wrapping yourself in feel-good atmosphere created by wind and solar-powered hotels and restaurants.

Culture

Tulum's famous Mayan ruins perched high on a cliff are a 5 min taxi ride away. Coba ruins with the largest pyramid that you can actually climb are 45 minutes away, and Chichen Itza is a couple of hours away.

Villa rentals are expensive: great reason to invest in real estate

Both in St. Barts and Tulum, rental villas are expensive, though St. Barts is still certainly taking the lead with about \$5,000 a week during low season and \$18,000 a week during holidays. Both destinations share one feature: hotel rooms are scarce. So for those thinking about an investment, a villa in both St. Barts and Tulum is guaranteed to bring income from rentals. Except that it is much more affordable to acquire one in Tulum. You can still find an amazing beachfront land of 5 acres for \$800,000 and build your lavish villa there for another \$200,000. The value of a finished villa will be about \$3 million.

Tulum is home to modern real estate agencies

Riviera Maya Property Consultants

(www.rivieramayapropertyconsultants.com) is a real estate agency in Tulum, founded by young expats from New York, London and Italy. Following the market demand and expanding real estate needs of international buyers, the company offers exclusive land selection, legal assistance, architectural services, construction, property management and even concierge service to its circle of clients, by creating a 360-degree customer experience.

Both St. Barts and Tulum are attractive destination for jetsetters. However, those looking for more relaxation, proximity and much lower real estate prices, are starting to invest in Tulum.

ABOUT RIVIERA MAYA PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

Riviera Maya Property Consultants is a company founded by professionals from the U.S. and Europe, with years of experience in project management, architecture, construction, high-level sales and marketing. Based in Tulum, RMPC has formed close ties with local land sellers, and offers land purchase for the best market value, as well as architectural services, construction and property management.

For more information, please visit www.rivieramayapropertyconsultants.com

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