

## 9 Top Beach Bargains for 2017

 Roger Sands

U.S. News & World Report January 21, 2017

**Flee the icy winter conditions up north and retreat to these warmer, tropical hot spots.**

Each winter, snowbirds escape the icy conditions of the East Coast to relax and recharge at sunny, laid-back beach towns across tropical locales in the U.S, Mexico and the Caribbean. Leaving the dreary winter days far behind them, travelers seek azure waters, sun-drenched sands and swaying palms. And happily for those craving a reprieve from frosty temperatures, beach resorts are enticing sun-seekers with a variety of promotions and discounts. So, if you're ready to enjoy the surf and sand, and leave extra layers and inclement weather behind, slip away to these affordable beach retreats.

### **Fort Myers and Sanibel Island, Florida**

If you're looking to steer away from the crowds at popular Florida destinations, consider this affordable, off-the-beaten-path locale in the Sunshine State. Known for its world-class shelling, [Sanibel](#)'s waves catch incoming shells of all shapes, varieties and colors. And with more than 100 islands, outdoor enthusiasts can explore the area by water. Travelers can hop on a water taxi or rent a boat and sail to one of the destination's outer islands, from Boca Grande to the deserted beaches of Cayo Costa to the historic Cabbage Key Inn and Restaurant on Cabbage Key.

### **Miami**

[Miami](#)'s new boutique Room Mate Hotels beckons to snowbirds with budget-friendly rates at its Room Mate Lord Balfour and Room Mate Waldorf Towers properties, which are just steps away from South Beach. Room Mate Lord Balfour showcases a true South Beach-style aesthetic and contemporary furnishings. Plus, guests are able to take advantage of low rates starting at \$160 per night. Meanwhile, Room Mate Waldorf Towers, a renovated historic hotel, provides

unobstructed ocean views and easy access to some of Miami's top restaurants, with nightly rates starting at \$150 in January.

### **Playa del Carmen, Mexico**

Escape to [Playa del Carmen](#) in February for a sweet "after the rush" deal at The Thompson Playa del Carmen. With the promotion, you can book three or more nights at the property, which offers panoramic ocean views, luxury cabanas and a convenient location, all within walking distance of the beach. The package starts at \$279 per night and includes a dinner under the stars for two at the Beach House, a prix fixe dinner menu and a bottle of bubbly, exclusive pool access and transfers to and from Cancún International Airport, among other services and perks.

### **Negril, Jamaica**

Dodge chilly winter weather and experience authentic Jamaican culture and tropical scenery at The Cliff Hotel, a private enclave situated on 5 lush acres offering striking vistas of the Caribbean Sea and Negril Cliffs. The 33-room boutique property features a collection of suites, cottages and villas. Nestled on a beach, the property offers a variety of water activities, including cliff-jumping and snorkeling. Plus, the property offers requisite Jamaican hospitality, luxurious amenities and an inviting atmosphere for guests to immerse themselves in Jamaica's multifaceted culture and heritage. This winter, if you book a stay of four nights or longer, you can receive the fourth night for free.

### **Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

For a break from cold conditions across the country, retreat to the [Fort Lauderdale Marriott Pompano Beach Resort & Spa](#). With Boca Raton to the north and Fort Lauderdale to the south, the beachfront property offers an enviable location for exploring the best of southern Florida. The property's "Experience the Sea, Discover the Charm" package includes accommodations for four, plus tickets to ride the Fort Lauderdale Water Taxi. Room rates start at \$359 per night and require a two-night minimum stay.

## **Tulum, Mexico**

The Grand Bahia Principe Tulum offers a quintessential beach retreat with rooms starting at less than \$150 per night. Located along Mexico's Riviera Maya, the property's picturesque surroundings offer a tranquil backdrop. What's more, the property offers a variety of family-friendly activities, from an expansive children's water park to a Bahia Scouts kid's program. Plus, for grown-ups, the all-inclusive resort has five on-site restaurants and the luxurious Bahia Spa. If you're itching to explore more of Tulum, you can easily explore nearby ruins, check out nature preserves and unwind in a hammock at [Playa Paraiso](#).

## **Belize**

Naïa Resort and Spa, a new luxury resort on the Placencia Peninsula, is surrounded by tranquil lagoons and tropical surroundings on a private 200-acre reserve in southern Belize. Guests can stay at individual beach cottages overlooking the Caribbean Sea. What's more, the resort is home to three restaurants, each paying homage to Placencia's regional fare. Plus, Naïa Spa offers wellness-focused treatments such as Mayan cacao and spice wraps and Mystic Light cleansing rituals that are inspired by unique local Belize traditions. Best of all, opening rates start at \$295 for a Studio Beach House and affordable round-trip flights are easy to come by from top East Coast airports.

## **St. Lucia**

An all-suite luxury beach resort, [The Landings St. Lucia](#) is the perfect place to get off the grid this winter. With 85 spacious suites, a private yacht marina, a 7,000-square-foot Soleil Spa and top-notch gourmet restaurants, the property offers a high-end Caribbean getaway for a reasonable price. Best of all, there is a 40 percent room discount for stays between Jan. 3 and April 20, 2017, with free airport transfers on stays of five nights or longer and \$100 resort credit on stays that are seven nights or longer.

## **Hilo, Hawaii**

With special packages starting at under \$150, the Grand Naniloa Hotel lures guests to its 72-acre grounds, complete with a lush tropical landscape and beautiful coastal views. Located along the ocean, with stunning views of Hilo Bay and Mauna

Kea, Grand Naniloa Hotel Hilo occupies a historic site. The property features 388 guest rooms offering king-sized or queen-sized beds, as well as 19 spacious suites appointed with high-end amenities such as robes and slippers. Beyond the property grounds, you can enjoy recreational pursuits such as biking, fishing, snorkeling and hiking.