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BY NORTHSTAR

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HOTEL REVIEW

Remastering a Classic

The iconic Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal has undergone a property-wide transformation — while maintaining its heart and soul

Kelly Rosenfeld

Looking out at the crashing waves of the Pacific Ocean, I took a sip of Champagne, then let a few flakes of black volcanic salt melt on my tongue. As instructed, I followed this up with another taste of the same bubbly ó which, amazingly, was now noticeably fruitier and less acidic.

My husband and I were enjoying The Art of Bubbly, a Champagne-and-sea-salt pairing experience offered at El Farallon, the stunning cliffside restaurant at the Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal. When I asked the restaurant's sommelier what had inspired the team to match a trio of Champagnes with a variety of salts, the answer was simple: They were

emulating the briny pop of caviar, a common companion to sparkling wine.

The experience served as an ideal introduction to what the resort's team does incredibly well: deliver luxurious experiences in thoughtful, unexpected and delightful ways.

New Look, Old Soul

Long a go-to spot for luxury in Los Cabos, the Waldorf Astoria recently gave guests even more to love by way of a multiyear, property-wide renovation. Work began in 2022, with the final phase ó during which the hotel closed to wrap the project ó completed from July to September 2025, before reopening in October.

Clockwise from top left: Guestrooms highlight local art; signature restaurant Don Manuel's; the resort has reopened after a renovation.

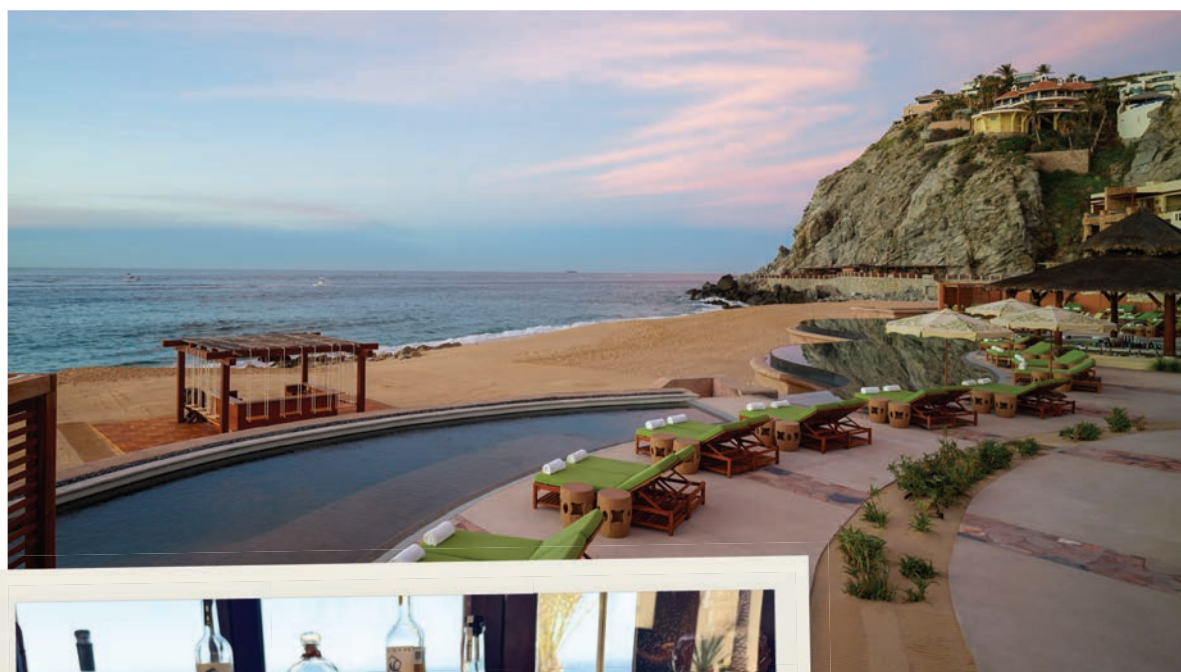
During the closure, all of the property's 112 guestrooms, suites (including beachfront options), casitas and villas were redesigned to brighten spaces, maximize comfort and highlight Mexican craftsmanship through art and decor.

Capturing the spirit of Mexico is imperative to the resort's team, which I learned before ever setting foot on the property. Prior to becoming a Waldorf Astoria in 2019, the hotel operated independently as The Resort at Pedregal. As I was told in a meeting with Peter Falke, director of sales and marketing, and Fernanda Alvarez, director of marketing and communications, once Waldorf assumed operations, it recognized two key factors that made the resort beloved by travelers: its authentic Mexican atmosphere and the outstanding service of its longtime staff. The goal became to maintain both, which it did successfully during the rebrand, and again during the recent renovation.

These priorities were evident from the moment my husband and I reached the resort. Travelers arrive via Mexico's only privately owned tunnel, which allows for easy access to downtown Cabo San Lucas, while maintaining a totally private and secure area for guests. Emerging on the serene Waldorf Astoria side felt like entering a whole other world.

Met at check-in by our butler, Ricardo, we were soon whisked away to our Two-Bedroom Resort Casita. Ricardo walked us through every feature of the sprawling, 2,395-square-foot space. Downstairs featured a large living and dining area, a full kitchen outfitted with Viking appliances, a laundry room, a primary bedroom with a massive bathroom, a guest half-bath and a huge patio with a plunge pool. On the upper floor, we had a second bedroom, a third bathroom and a balcony. (Three-bedroom,

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Get There With Aero

For seamless travel from Los Angeles, the Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal has a partnership with Aero, which offers semi-private flights bookable by the seat. Private terminals streamline both departures and arrivals, while in-flight amenities include elevated dining, high-end beverages and Starlink Wi-Fi. A special package offers preferred prices for flights and rooms.

Pedregal Collection label, a series of collaborations with wineries from around the world.

The renovation also introduced Neutral

Coffee Lab, an artfully designed space for coffee, tea, smoothies, juices and sweets, as well as the new Agave Study at Peacock Alley, a must-try in my book.

Taking place in an airy, lobby-adjacent bar space, the experience offers a tasting of five agave spirits ó ranging beyond traditional tequila and mezcal to *raicilla*, *sotol* and more ó paired with cheeses, fruits, chocolate and a fascinating sommelier-led discussion. The lesson in how artisanal spirits are produced around Mexico opened our eyes to a

whole range of local products and flavors, and was a highlight of our stay.

Wellness Traditions

The Waldorf Astoria Spa bills itself as *igrounded* in place ó an apt descriptor for a space that leans into Mexican folk healing traditions more than most other hotel spas I've visited in the country. Signature treatments here are inspired by the moon, the sea and the land, often leaning heavily on local ingredients and rituals.

Spa sessions begin with an herb-scented foot bath, perfumed by a bundle of rosemary, sage and other aromatics. I then opted for the Mezcal Infusion Therapy, which uses a mezcal-infused rub to improve circulation and encourage muscle relaxation, drawing on ancient techniques. The rub, which had an immediate cooling effect on my skin, was followed with a warm herbal poultice and a revitalizing massage. It was just one of many tempting wellness options on a menu spanning body and facial treatments, skin care and soaks.

Importantly, it showed the same profound respect for its location that I experienced all around the resort, immersing me in the culture, traditions and people that make Mexico ó and the Waldorf Astoria ó such a special place. ●



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3,252-square-foot casitas are also available.)

At every turn, Ricardo pointed with pride to Mexican-crafted furniture, artwork and decor features ó just a few of the standouts included a striking metallic sea turtle shell hanging above the bed, and a sculptural wooden carving serving as a centerpiece on the dining table, which turned out to be made from dried cactus.

Ricardo also arranged our daily afternoon delivery of fresh chips, guacamole and beer or margaritas ó another fabulous perk of casita life ó and was always on hand for other needs.

Focus on Food

The renovation also enhanced the resort's dining options, which were already a focal point for the team. As with its design, the hotel's food and beverage program leans heavily local, focusing on fresh Baja ingredients and embracing Mexican traditions.

Signature restaurant Don Manuel's has been refreshed, where we sampled the impressive breakfast buffet (spanning pastries, made-to-order eggs, tamales, quesadillas and more), plus an a la carte order of outstanding brioche French toast with berries and coconut sauce. At dinner, we tried out tasty dishes including beef *enmoladas* (similar to enchiladas) in *mole negro* and seared sea bass with *mole rosa* (the

locally caught seafood came highly recommended by our waiter).

Another night, we dined at El Farallon, where the Champagne Terrace offers some 20 varieties served by the glass, as well as tastings. For dinner, a multicourse menu comes with a soup of the day (ours was poblano pepper), an appetizer trio, a choice of entree (such as red snapper with curry and shrimp in coconut-cilantro sauce) and dessert, with plenty of extra add-ons available. Post-renovation, the terrace also now offers its Savor the Sea lunch, a Champagne and seafood pairing.

Our favorite meal was also a result of the refresh. Mar y Lena Steak Night, offered Thursdays-Saturdays, is a new dinner experience centered around an outdoor grill. The Baja-inspired menu features a variety of meat and seafood cuts, plus vegetables and other accompaniments, cooked over an aromatic wood fire. We devoured a warm and chewy flatbread, baked goat cheese with dates, a perfectly cooked ribeye and pressed potatoes in a delicious mojo sauce. The spread was accompanied by wine from the resort's private

Clockwise from top: The adults-only pool has been refreshed; two-story casitas offer plenty of space; the Agave Study experience.