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GO >
DOWN THE
ROAD



TAKE HER THERE
Clockwise from left, the secluded coves of Punta Mita; the dining room at Babington House; and nouveau Southwestern at the Galisteo Inn

course anchored by the Four Seasons Punta Mita (fourseasons.com/puntamita). Pay no mind to Elton John, who has been rumored to fly in for birthday performances; there are far better distractions.

Let's start with the real reason you're here: sex...er, romance. Your 6,475-foot hillside Four Seasons Villa comes with Pacific views, use of the Apuane Spa, and plenty of comfortable horizontal surfaces. The slightly smaller, equally decadent Las Palmas Villas (laspalmaspuntamita.com) sit on the golf course, offer in-room massage, and send an entire staff of chefs to your bungalow to make breakfast.

Your first instinct might be to head straight for Nicklaus territory and his cruelly plotted Tail of the Whale, the infamous green that becomes an island at high tide (thus demanding a hole-in-one when the water's up). Avoid that ill-advised impulse and instead book her a surf lesson and massage. You get points for being thoughtful and can hit the greens tomorrow while she's being wrapped in seaweed. Then shed the city clothes and head for Punta Mita's still pristine oceanfront, where lava rock formations have naturally cordoned off the beach in quiet, quarter-mile crescents. Swimsuits—unlike sniffers of top-shelf tequila—are optional.

—STEPHANIE PEARSON



Other Quick Fixes:

1 Babington House, Somerset, England If London is the new New York, then Babington House is the new Hamptons retreat. Light up Cuban cigars on horseback, then reconvene at the Cowshed, a barn turned pleasure dome with swimming pools and a spa. Book the two-story country cottage for extra space. Doubles from \$365; babingtonhouse.co.uk

2 Rockwater Secret Cove Resort, British Columbia No need for zip-together sleeping bags at these new Japanese-inspired tent-house suites on the Malaspina Strait. After a short floatplane ride from Vancouver, find each other in the arbutus forest, then hit the Pacific in a tandem sea kayak. Doubles from \$307; rockwater-secretcoveresort.com

3 Amanvara, Turks and Caicos Singapore-based Amanresorts' first-ever Caribbean property is laid-back West Indies meets Zen Asia. After you get your fill of relaxation in one of its 40 minimalist, glass-walled, freestanding suites, just walk a few yards off the beach and you'll be floating above one of the best diving walls in the Caribbean. Doubles from \$1,000; amanresorts.com

4 Galisteo Inn, New Mexico Some of the best surprises don't need passports—and there's no better place to horse around than a 303-year-old stable. The Tack Suite at the Galisteo Inn, 25 miles south of Santa Fe, is a cowboy love shack with a nearby hot tub, massage therapist, and wine bar. Finally, a domestic getaway that feels exotic. Doubles from \$150; galisteoinn.com —S.P.

International Affairs

Women love well-executed surprises, especially if they involve a passport. So if you forgot to book that boutique hotel in Big Sur for your tenth anniversary, want to really impress your new girlfriend, or just need a sultry summer exit plan, it's time to master the art of the quick and painless international getaway. Best-case scenario: This bold move will jump-start a hot new connection or add fireworks to an old one. Otherwise, think of it as a sort of relationship Hail Mary—a last-ditch miracle play before the clock runs out. The trick is to have a few romantically bombproof options close at hand; start with Mexico, and program Punta Mita into your BlackBerry right now.

After a two-Scotch-and-sodas flight from L.A., you'll be picked up by Rafael, with his Elvis chops and guayabera shirt, at the Puerto Vallarta airport in a black luxury-model Suburban—the kind favored by politicians and drug lords. After a 45-minute cruise along the northern arc of Banderas Bay, he'll deliver you to Punta Mita (tinted windows and private beaches, yes; 25-cent cervezas and rotgut tequila, no). The gated, 1,500-acre, multi-property resort (puntamita.com.mx) sitting on a spear-shaped peninsula will ultimately be home to seven luxury developments. (Private hacienda on a \$7 million oceanfront lot, anyone?) For now, though, you have all you need: nine miles of sandy beach, three surf breaks, and a world-class Jack Nicklaus

