



The *Only* Thing Hidden
is the Beach:



Going *bare* in Tulum, Mexico

ARTICLE BY JENNY BLOCK

I admit—I was curious. **I HAVE ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT A NUDIST RESORT AND THE PEOPLE WHO GO THERE WOULD BE LIKE.** I don't know why. Just one of those things. Like wanting to see a foreign country, I suppose. Wanting to see another "culture." I began searching for a place to go and, to my surprise, finding a place to check out wasn't as easy as I would have thought.

Many of the places online looked like glorified versions of people's backyards, complete with above ground pools and camper hook-ups. Other places appeared to be more about freedom from sexual moirés than freedom from clothing. Then I found Hidden Beach in Tulum, Mexico. It looked like a perfectly lovely resort – it simply required, well, fewer luggages than most destinations.

The car pulled up to a large wooden gate and a uniformed guard greeted me at the door. "Bienvenidos a Hidden Beach," he said. "Welcome."

"Gracias," I replied.

"Right this way," he said. He led me to a pretty, round building that sat in the center of the resort. The lobby it turned out.

"Buenos dias," a young woman, in uniform, said. She came out from around her desk to shake my hand. "You are Jenny Block?"

"I am."

"Come, come...sit," she said. "Welcome." She handed me a cool cloth for my face and a chilled glass of champagne. "Now you relax." I did. Nothing seemed a bit unusual. There wasn't a naked person in sight. It felt like checking in at any other resort. Then a bellman gave me the tour as he guided me to my room. Things suddenly started looking a teeny bit unfamiliar.

"Here's the workout room," he said. "And the restaurant. Up there is the disco. And here's the pool and the beach." And there they were. Naked people. Some were wearing sunglasses and hats. Others had on sheer sarongs and flip-flops. Some of the men even had their, uh, equipment adorned with a flower or other accoutrement. And lots of them had tattoos. One guy had Betty Boop on his backside and another had a tribal design right above his—well, you know.

Every possible body type was represented. And they all looked like they just were kicking back and having a good time, reading or chatting or sipping fruity drinks. But they all looked, for lack of a better word, normal. They looked like my neighbors and friends. Not one of the visions that some of the other resorts had put in my head materialized. No one was shagging poolside and not a one of them looked like a70's throwback.

Once the bellman left me in my room, I unpacked and checked out my digs. It was a beautiful room with a giant jetted tub and a massive squishy bed complete with sumptuous white linens. The bathroom was equally as inviting with its oversize tile shower. It looked like a lot of high-end resorts. Except...for the view.

I walked out onto my balcony that looked out over the pool and onto the beach. I could see the staff, all in uniform, talking to and waiting on the guests, all of whom were naked but for an accessory or two. And yet, there was nothing strange about it really. The nudity appeared absolutely secondary. **PEOPLE WERE READING AND SWIMMING AND DOING WHAT PEOPLE ALWAYS DO ON VACATION. THEY JUST HAPPENED TO BE DOING IT, WELL, NAKED.**

Slipping out of my travel dress, I looked at my 5' 1", 110 pound frame in the full-length mirror. Just like any girl, I suppose, I have



my complaints. I would love a washboard stomach and I could do without the stretch marks. But I certainly didn't have any reason to be ashamed. So, I generously applied sun block – some to places that had never before seen sun block – grabbed my book and marched out of my room.

On the path to the pool, I passed several other guests. All naked or in some state of undress. Naked isn't required, but 100% of the people were naked 90% of the time. Some people liked to get dressed to workout or for dinner, for example. The staff, on the other hand, was always uniformed. That is, except for the two "activity directors" who once in a while bared it all in the pool or the hot tub. Usually because the guests egged them on. All in good fun, of course.

I found an empty beach bed, swinging under its palapa (you know, those pretty little huts with the palm-thatched roofs) and laid down to read my book. I felt totally comfortable and totally silly for being a bit anxious about my first foray into the world of nudism. And that was how it went, the whole week long.

No one seemed to act any differently due to the lack of attire. Sure, you put a towel down wherever you sit. It's an unwritten nudist law and one that I have to say I very much like. And close talkers are a little harder to get used to. But once I got over the initial, "Wow. She has amazing breasts" and "Hmmm. Didn't know a guy's package could look like that," I kind of forgot about being naked all together. Really.

The subject of other resorts came up a lot. People shared all sorts of horror stories about grimy places and resorts where group sex and swinging were *de rigueur*. So, I don't doubt that my positive experience had everything to do with Hidden Beach and its attentive staff, as well as the kind of guests it attracted. It was an affluent, mostly over-40 crowd. (Although there were about ten of us who ranged from 25-36.)

Some folks were new to nude resorts. Others were regulars who almost always vacationed nude. A couple of folks even said they go nude at home. Most of the people there were couples. Although singles were happily welcomed in. And it wasn't a pick-up scene by any stretch. Everyone seemed aware of how threatening that situation could be and there wasn't a doubt in my mind - no one was interested that. Everyone seemed to be there for the same reason. They simply like to be naked. No wonder really. It feels good. The sun and air on your skin. No clothes confining you. **IT WAS VERY, YOU GUESSED IT, LIBERATING.**

The resort had all sorts of summer camp-like experiences, including feeding the fish in the ocean and playing water volleyball. (Yes, it does look a little strange at first, but no stranger than seeing naked people play Scrabble.) But the highlight of the experience for me was the mid-week nude cruise. We took a huge catamaran to a private beach with the softest white sand. So soft in fact, that everyone on the boat trip laid down in it and exfoliated every inch (and yes I mean every inch) of our bodies. We also went naked snorkeling and sail swinging. It was a blast.

Now, being naked does have its hazards. During a game of ping pong, I somehow managed to "catch" the ball with my breasts, and, one morning, it did seem as if a fellow guest's, um, package was very near to becoming a part of my omelet. And dancing in the "disco" naked is a little odd. Let's just say it gives a whole new meaning to "shake your booty." But for the most part, it was simply lots of sunbathing (which feels so good in the buff). **FROM THE SUNRISE YOGA TO THE AFTERNOONS SPENT IN THE JACUZZI, IT WAS A LOT LIKE ANY OTHER RESORT VACATION SANS THE RESTRICTIVE SWIMWEAR AND PREENING FOR DINNER.**



AND THAT WAS PERHAPS WHAT I LIKED BEST OF ALL. NO "GETTING READY." FOR ME, BEING NAKED MEANT FORGETTING ABOUT BEING NAKED, OR CLOTHED FOR THAT MATTER AND (PARDON THE PUN) JUST HANGING OUT. ONE THING'S FOR SURE THOUGH. I HAVE GOT TO STEP-UP MY PING PONG SKILLS BEFORE I GO BACK...*