



mayakoba™ EL CAMALEÓN



Somewhere in between the era when Greg Norman was the best golfer in the world and his recent gig as a U.S. Open commentator, the Great White Shark took a huge bite at golf architecture. Since 1987, in fact, Norman and his company have completed more than 95 courses in 33 countries, including Oman, Jordan, Croatia, Panama and the United States. Closer to home, Chicagoans may be familiar with Norman's acclaimed Royal Melbourne Country Club in the far north suburbs.

A man of many interests—including wine and a successful clothing line—Norman considers architecture one of his true callings. "Golf course design is one of my true passions and business and life," he says. "Each project presents me with the opportunity to work with a client to create a course with its own unique character."

Given free rein to design a course on the "Venice of the Riviera Maya" just south of Cancun in 2004, Norman and his team used every natural amenity availed them—from tropical jungles to dense mangroves to limestone canals to oceanfront property—to create the magnificent El Camaleon Mayakoba Golf Course. While the course's impressive length and sprawling bunkers provide ample challenge, the aforementioned limestone canals give the property the most unique hazards a golfer will encounter in a lifetime. The most memorable cenote (an ancient underground cavern) across the property is encountered on the 554-yard opening hole. While the penalties for finding this hazard are severe—both the loss of a stroke and the loss of a ball—there's something eerily cool about watching one's tee shot disappear into a cave. An amazing sight even if I never want to see it happen again!

Other holes across the course serve up more conventional if spectacular hazards



including an enormous bunker on the 131-yard No. 2 and a split fairway on the 360-yard No. 6. The Camaleon's ultimate challenge is the scenic 128-yard No. 7. Running alongside the Caribbean, the par-3 can play much longer due to strong breezes. Before you leave the hole, enjoy a sweeping view of Cozumel as well as the world's second largest coral reef.

El Camaleon Mayakoba offers two special distinctions: it is host to Mexico's only PGA Tour stop—the OHL Classic at Mayakoba—and it is home to Mexico's only Jim McLean Golf School.

Along with championship golf, the Fairmont Mayakoba offers four-star accommodations located on 240 acres of tropical forest and pristine Caribbean shoreline. Casita rooms feature private entrances, spa-style bathrooms and furnished balconies overlooking the sea, the canals, the tropical forests or a combination of the three.

The resort is a sprawling facility that provides BMW bikes to tour the property in style. Be sure to enjoy the ecosystem boat trip tour around the property. If you are fortunate enough to run into Alonso Ortiz, the hotel's ecology manager, be prepared for a formal education on the fascinating creatures that reside within the crystal clear lagoons across the acreage.

One of the hotel's sought-after offerings is its inclusive "Appetite For Luxury" package that includes luxurious accommodations, unlimited all-day dining and beverage service for two adults, access to all pools, both pool bars and the beach, gratuities and taxes, an on-property bird watching boat tour, access to tennis and paddle courses, bike access and on-property use of sea kayaks.

For more information on El Camaleon Mayakoba and the Fairmont Mayakoba, visit the course's website: www.mayakoba-golf.com.

