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# One&Only Properties Are Known for Being So Luxe, You'll Want to Stay Forever — and Starting Next Year, You Can



**ROXANA POPESCU** JUNE 28, 2018

**Y**ou know that feeling when you're staying at a hotel so nice you start thinking, "If only I could just move here." Starting in 2019, Mandarin — a new \$1 billion luxury residential and hotel resort in Mexico's coastal jungle — will let guests do just that.

The development, an hour north of Puerto Vallarta on the Riviera Nayarit, will be anchored by two luxury hotels — one by One&Only and the other by Rosewood. Mandarin will also have privately-owned residences by each brand, along with a tantalizing array of equestrian, wellness, and aquatic activities, all spread over more than 600 acres.

The residences at One&Only Mandarinà were developed by One&Only Private Homes, the company's first-ever branded real estate venture, and will include 55 villas built on spacious lots scattered along the coast and jungle (there are 48 still available). Residents will get a corner of paradise all to themselves, while still accessing the fine restaurants, open air spa, and extensive equestrian facilities available to guests of the hotel — all included with the villa's purchase. In case that's not enough, villa owners also get several amenities reserved just for them, including in-residence private dining and spa services, one-on-one training sessions, personal shopping, and boat moorage at Mandarinà's jetty.

Award-winning architect Rick Joy, known for his sleek, earth hugging designs, aimed to bring the outdoors into the concept for the property's four-, five-, and eight-bedroom villas. Each one has huge windows, stucco walls, and concrete floors that incorporate soil sourced right from the resort, as well as Rosa Morada hardwood harvested from elsewhere in Mexico.



Because “experience” is the key word in any luxury hospitality venture these days, Mandarinà's residents and hotel dwellers alike will have plenty experiential offerings to choose from. There's a fire pit perched at the tip of a jetty, which can be reserved for sunset dinners. Kids will get to groom ponies and embark on jungle discovery adventures, complete with tree houses, hanging bridges and a butterfly sanctuary. Mandarinà will also feature state-of-the-art polo grounds, dressage and jumping arenas, and that staple of Mexican beach vacations: moonlit horseback rides along the water.

The biggest draw may be what nature, not humans, created: sandy beaches, mammoth cliffs and a dense, high canopy jungle. The property, about two thirds the size of Central



Park, sits on super-fertile volcanic land — making it green as far as the eye can see.

“You feel like you're somewhere in Thailand or Indonesia because of the lush vegetation and dramatic coastline that falls into the ocean,” Ricardo Santa Cruz, a founding partner of Mandarin, said in an interview.

Santa Cruz, a dual citizen of Mexico and the U.S. who worked in medical technology before developing hotels, said he's made it a priority to be a good environmental steward and neighbor to the locals. To help residents of Monteón, a town of a few thousand inhabitants just north of Mandarin, the developers invested \$3 million in infrastructural and cultural projects, including building a water treatment plant, a church, and a community beach club, he said.



This fits in with a broader trend among the region's hoteliers to promote balance, not just with yoga mats and surfboards, but as a development ethos — capturing tourist dollars while preserving natural resources and supporting local economies. Resorts up and down the coast have been getting environmental certifications, with initiatives like installing energy efficient elevators, helping protect sea turtles, and switching to biodegradable chemicals. Meanwhile, the government has been cleaning beach waters and restoring coral reefs damaged by tourists.

As the number of resorts on the Riviera grows, along with their footprint, the ability to strike this balance could mean the difference between selling a snippet of paradise today and allowing others to enjoy it tomorrow.

The villas at One&Only Mandarin, priced between \$4.5 and \$12 million, are on sale now and should be move-in ready late next year. For more information, visit [discovermandarina.com](http://discovermandarina.com).