

Jan 30, 2006

Greetings!

We just returned from Cancun on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January. Actually we spent most of our time in Playa del Carmen where we purchased a townhouse. Our home there in Playacar was unharmed from Wilma! That's a good thing and says something about the construction techniques used there.

Playa is hopping! There are many hotels open for business and some still in the last phase of reconstruction so if you're planning on heading that way and not sure about Cancun, consider Playa del Carmen. Xcaret is five minutes away if you're into snorkeling.

We visited Cancun and spent a day at Royal Solaris. They have a part of the hotel up and running and the beach is coming along nicely. I took pictures of some of our shelter assistants, and you'll recognize them in the slideshow. You can go back to Royal Solaris, they're ready for you now! Presently, there is a beach, although not as big as it was. Their goal is to widen it to where it was originally, and it will be done by March. Also, the rest of the hotel rooms should be available by March as they are very close to complete restoration.

**Francisco, our shelter Manager,  
Mercedes, the Solaris Webmaster,  
and Jose, our DJ - Entertainer**



I can't say the same about much of the hotel zone though. There is still unbelievable work being done, and several hotels are at least partially ready to use. However, there is still a long way to go. Generally, all of the hotel zone will be useable by mid-summer, so you should call your hotel and confirm availability. It is looking good though, as most of the shopping malls are back to functional. I visited Riu Cancun, and they are up and running...look at the Gallery for images of the hotel.

We also visited our storm shelter, Hotel H, and took some pictures of the interior. It will bring back some (bad and good) memories once you see the slide show. The college students are back to school, so it's mostly functional there. Thanks to Sr. Macías for allowing us to take pictures.

We found a beautiful beach in Tulum, one of the best beaches I can remember ever seeing. If you are mobile (read: Rent a car), it would be very worthwhile to take a drive, about 2 hours south of the Hotel zone, to check this beach out. It seems like Wilma didn't even make it that far south as the trees are all intact. Ask me, and I'll send you directions.

Overall it was a great time, a few partial days of rain, absolutely beautiful weather, and aside from a few mosquitos, a perfect week. You NEED rest and relaxation, and Cancun is the place to find it. Book your vacations and by the time you're there, the Hotel Zone will pretty much be back to normal. And if you're impatient, consider Playa del Carmen or Tulum.

Enjoy! And plan your next R&R visit to Cancun real soon.

John and Sue Spina