



HACIENDAS OF THE YUCATÁN

A rich and diverse heritage

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A series of arches makes a curvaceous statement at Hacienda Santa Rosa.

The first haciendas—residential/commercial estates with a focus on farming, ranching or mining—were built in the early 1500s. The hacienda system was the economic backbone of rural Mexico for hundreds of years, reaching its peak during the henequen boom of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. After the Mexican Revolution of 1910, many haciendas were deserted and left to decay. Now, thanks to a resurgence of interest in preserving the past, they are being sought out and restored.

While haciendas vary in appearance depending on when, where and for whom they were built, those in the Yucatán share certain characteristics. Included are a mix of Mayan and Spanish influences; buildings constructed of stacked rubble stone, often salvaged from Mayan ruins; open *portales* designed to provide shade and invite breezes; and lofty rooms with high beamed ceilings and cool tile floors. Buildings were single-story, and rooms were arranged in a contiguous pattern with aligned doorways for maximum air circulation.