

ALL IN ONE

With all-inclusive holidays enjoying a resurgence, Halima Ali rounds up some of the world's best, from luxury retreats to spa breaks

THE TERM ALL-INCLUSIVE used to conjure up images of travelers on tight budgets trapped in resorts among hordes of screaming kids eating tasteless food they had to queue ages for. Mercifully, this hospitality segment has undergone a makeover in the past 15 years.

Although the value benefits of the all-in-one pricing model remain, resorts now offer a much more sophisticated guest experience with amenities and services designed to cater to multiple consumer types within a single resort.

Club Med pioneered the one-price concept in Majorca in the 1950s, and the model has evolved to dominate resort areas in the Caribbean and Mexico, as well as several properties in Europe. It has also begun making inroads into Central America, South America, Asia and Africa.

The all-in-one pricing model tapped into the needs for many travelers new to international travel, with the US growing into the primary source market for all-inclusive resorts in the Americas.

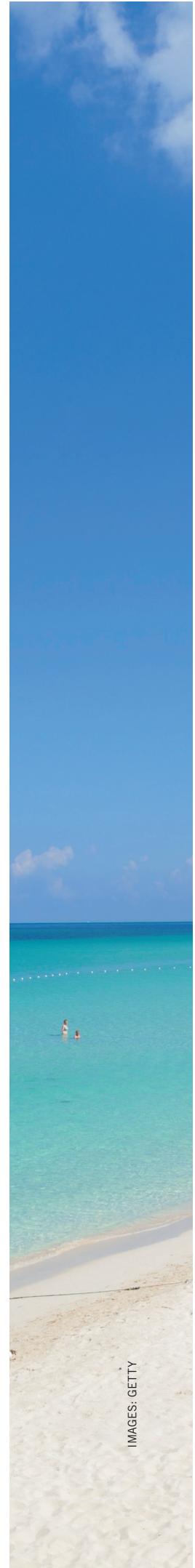
"All-inclusive vacations are *the* trend in travel," says Tom Carr, president of All Inclusive Outlet. "When I started in the travel industry we offered

fewer than 25 all-inclusive resorts. Now we have over 400 hotel offerings in our inventory."

What's more, the market shows no signs of slowing down. There's been notable growth at AMResorts — a subsidiary of Apple Leisure Group — which expects to end 2016 with a total of 40 all-inclusives, totaling more than 15,000 rooms. Spain-based RIU Hotels & Resorts has also added an all-inclusive on St. Martin to its extensive portfolio in Aruba, the Bahamas, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Mexico.

Even Hyatt, once considered too upscale for the all-inclusive model, is getting in on the action with the launch of the Hyatt Zilara adults-only resorts and Hyatt Ziva family resorts.

As for future trends, an increasing demand for luxury resorts featuring gourmet cuisine, VIP/preferred areas and experiential elements is expected to drive growth in the all-inclusive sector. Vacationers no longer want to be confined to resorts and will push for authentic cultural experiences and expeditions. Expect also to see a rise in upscale family-centric resorts, as well as premium wellness resorts. The all-inclusive has well and truly evolved.



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