

[*Staying Places*]

SUITE LUXURY

Nuzzling up to Nuevo Vallarta's long sandy beach, the **Grand Velas All Suites & Spa Resort** is no ordinary all-inclusive. Head and shoulders above virtually every other Nuevo Vallarta resort, it feels more like a classy grand hotel, where you can order whatever you like (including a bottle of Bailey's liqueur in your suite) without paying for it.

That grand hotel feeling first hits when you enter the enormous lobby and are welcomed with a lemon-grass-scented facecloth and cold hibiscus tea while being individually checked in.

You get a stronger sense after walking through its airy hallways, past fern gardens and koi fish lagoons, to your room. All accommodations are spacious one-, two- and three-bedroom suites measuring over 100 square metres in size. They feature deluxe touches like marble floors and bathrooms, teak furniture imported from Bali, and original artwork and sculptures.

Then there's the food. Azul (international), Frida (Mexican) and Lucca (gourmet Italian-Mediterranean) offer tasty waiter-served meals with premium wines. But try the foie gras, Chateaubriand and Grand Marnier soufflé at the French-inspired Piaf restaurant, and you won't want to dine anywhere else.

The service is the clincher though. The attentive staff go out of their way to cater to you, whether you're sunning by the three-tiered infinity pool, joining a free kayaking tour or Pilates class, or indulging in a complimentary hydrotherapy ritual in the lavish spa. That's when you realize that the AAA-Five Diamond Grand



Grand Velas All Suites & Spa Resort



Lobby



Lucca



Suite Gobernador 2 Recamaras

No ordinary all-inclusive, Grand Velas All Suites and Spa Resort in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico, feels more like a classy grand hotel, and an attentive staff provides the clincher—they go out of their way to provide great service to discriminating guests.

Velas All Suites & Spa Resort is an exceptional hotel – it just happens to be all-inclusive.

Add to that its location, within easy reach of old colonial Puerto Vallarta, but directly on Banderas Bay, a nature lover's delight. In winter, you can take a Zodiac tour to see humpback whales that migrate here to mate and give birth – the whales breach so close you hear their explosive gushes. In summer and fall, you can help rescue eggs laid on the beach by endangered sea turtles and return young hatchlings back to the ocean.

Just check first about group bookings if you want a quiet ambience; in the winter months, the Grand Velas is popular with incentive groups, which can be lively.

—JANICE MUCALOV