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Your Perfect Weekend in El Salvador: Discover Acantilados



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Acantilados ACANTILADOS

Yes, I did just put “perfect” and “El Salvador” in the same headline. Contrary to what mainstream media might blast across your screens, this Central American country is not all gangs and violence; it’s a magically beautiful, peace-loving place where in a single day you can enjoy breakfast at a black-sand beach, lunch at a resplendent volcano and dinner in a cosmopolitan city. But hey, media outlets, feel free keep the negative reports coming—because that means fewer tourist hordes and more Salvadoran serenity for the rest of us.

Get a taste of El Salvador by checking into its newest, most fabulous opening: Acantilados, the perfect place for a weekend (hell, I wanted to make it weeks-long) getaway. Here’s why.



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STYLE Its name—Spanish for “cliff”—is apt: Acantilados is practically carved into the precipices dangling over a frothing sea. The idea was to erect a hotel with chic city style in a beachfront setting, and Acantilados more than delivers, with minimalist flair, funky furniture made from recycled materials by local artisans, playful statement pieces and a color scheme swathed in sunset orange and ocean blue.

ROOMS Wood floors, pared-down décor and simple, comfortable rooms showcase

the main attraction, which you can take in by sliding your window open: a stunning Pacific Ocean vista serving up a symphony of serenity-inducing sounds.



Acantilados ACANTILADOS

EAT AND DRINK The menu for Acantilados's main restaurant, Fausto, might just weigh more than a Charles Dickens novel—its international offerings are that extensive. Think soups, pizzas, sushi, nearly half a dozen ceviche varieties, steak, seafood mains, tiraditos and an array of hard-to-find Peruvian specialties. Cocktail options are equally extensive; my favorites were the Avocado Spicy Mezcalita, made from mezcal, orange liqueur and spicy chili chiltepe, and the Martini Albahaca y Sandia, a concoction of watermelon, basil, and vodka.



Pupusas ACANTILADOS

DO On property, you can bask in mystical cliff-top vistas while doing laps in the divine infinity pool; get up-close-and-personal with the Pacific by soaking in oceanside sea pools; or learn to make El Salvador’s heavenly national dish by taking a pupusa making workshop at El Casco, a colonial-style house located at the hotel entrance that serves up Salvadoran food on weekends. But hard as it may be to tear yourself away from Acantilados, do so; the neighboring beaches are too lovely to bypass. Tourists go to El Tunco to surf, sip Pilsner beers, enjoy reggaeton music until the wee hours and eat pupusas by the dozen at a bevy of restaurants lining the streets. Locals, though, play football on the shores of San Blas, a black-sand beauty where I sipped coconut water, walked for miles, watched the sun set into a silky sea and landed in a family-run beach hut that served me Pilsners and shrimp stew.

Acantilados.sv/en/



Sal Y Luz SAL Y LUZ

LOCAL TIP Do not leave El Salvador without spending at least one night in San Salvador, perhaps the world's most underrated capital city. Stay at charming **Sal Y Luz** (sallyluzhotels.com), a seven-room boutique B&B featuring a tiny spa and loads of local flavor. If you lack the stamina to hike one of the nearby volcanos, drive up to **Boqueron**, park yourself at one of the quaint cafes or restaurants at the top and enjoy Chilean wine and local chorizo while ogling one of the most glorious views in the region. Then spend the afternoon with the Salvadoran hipster scene in **Paseo del Carmen**, in the Santa Tecla neighborhood, which is chock-a-block with colorful storefronts, cool bars and funky shops (Elsalvador.travel/en/).

I am: writer, globetrotter, professor, activist, culture-hound. Born and raised in New York City, with one foot fixed in the Caribbean and another in South Africa, I have written about travel, the arts and identity politics for the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Wall Str...

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