



SERENE SPA / BANYAN TREE MAYAKOBÁ

MEXICO'S BEST

At the unique Mayakobá resort area just south of Cancun along the Riviera Maya, not only do you have your pick of three terrific hotels—the stunning **Rosewood Mayakobá** (where British billionaire Sir Philip Green recently hosted a multi-day birthday party that drew out Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Moss), the family-friendly **Fairmont Mayakoba** and the romantic **Banyan Tree Mayakobá**—a series of water taxis through the mangrove creeks makes it easy to enjoy the perks of all three at your leisure. Base your stay at Rosewood's 1,475-square-foot **Deluxe Overwater Lagoon Suite** (\$600 a night), offering unending views of the forest's sheltered natural beauty. Head to the Banyan Tree for an unforgettable **Royal Banyan** holistic treatment (\$380), enjoy a sunset meal at the Fairmont's beachfront **Las Brisas** and end your day with a tequila session at the **Agave Azul** tequila library back at the Rosewood. Hopefully, you can try all three beach clubs—we did, and found it impossible to pick a winner.

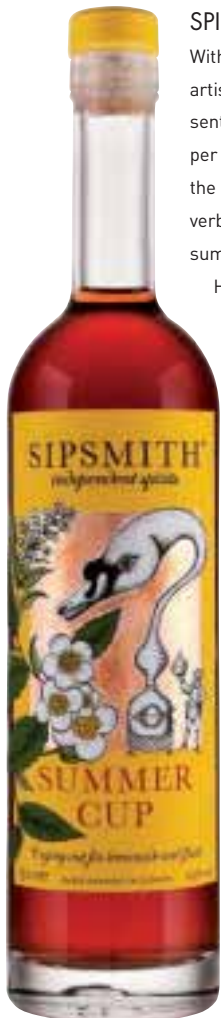
Contact: General Manager Dr. Graeme Davis, 52-984-875-8010; graeme.davis@rosewoodhotels.com; www.rosewoodhotels.com

SPIRIT OF LONDON

With this spring's release of **Sipsmith Summer Cup**, the artisanal London distiller offers its take on a quintessentially English fruit "cup" like Pimm's. Using its super smooth **London Dry Gin** as a base, Sipsmith infuses the spirit with hints of Earl Grey tea, homegrown lemon verbena and cucumber for the makings of a refreshing summer cocktail (about \$29 a bottle).

Housed in a small garage in Hammersmith, Sipsmith's custom-made copper still, cheekily dubbed **Prudence**, runs at capacity producing about 300 bottles a day. The company's 30-something co-founders, Fairfax Hall and Sam Galsworthy, obtained the first distillers license to be granted in London in nearly 200 years, then put Prudence to work in 2009. The duo traced one of the sources of the Thames River for pure spring water to produce its **Barley Vodka**, which they distill into London Dry Gin using ten botanicals. "It's all about process, and we control every aspect of it," explains Hall, who notes that they do not use the typical method of blending a concentrated product with neutral alcohol. "It is made in a small copper pot in batches of just a few hundred bottles, so it is incredibly smooth for a fantastic martini, while at the same time, it has a phenomenally intense flavor that can shine through a G&T."

Contact: Co-founder Fairfax Hall, 44-208-7412-034; fairfax@sipsmith.com; www.sipsmith.com



ROMAN MASTERPIECE

As far as pleasure palaces go, Rome has certainly seen its share. The city's latest addition to the temple of luxury is the newly restructured **Penthouse Villa Medici Suite** at **Hotel Hassler Roma**, the century-old *grande dame* of Italian hospitality that crowns the Spanish Steps. The seventh floor, 2,152-square-foot accommodation evokes Old World glamour without its overwrought design. Imposing architectural details—mirrored walls in the dining area, a wood-paneled sitting room, towering arches, commanding columns and floor-to-ceiling bulletproof windows—are softened with a neutral color palette and relaxed furnishings. The sultry master bedroom, a brew of Botticino marble and bloodred accents, boasts a large walk-in closet, 42-inch plasma TV and an equally sumptuous master bath with Jacuzzi tub and Amorvero amenities. The showstopper, however, remains the 524-foot terrace, with LED-lit parapet, fireplace- and dining table-equipped gazebo and unparalleled views of the Eternal City. Bacchus would be impressed (from about \$5,880 a night).

Contact: Owner and General Manager Roberto E. Wirth, 39-06-699-340; info@hotelhassler.it; www.hotelhasslerroma.com



PENTHOUSE VILLA MEDICI SUITE / HOTEL HASSLER ROMA