



## Rancho La Puerta

Tecate, Baja California,  
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**8/10**  
Telegraph expert  
rating

"Set in 4,000 acres of flower-filled gardens and encompassing Kuchumaa mountain, this peaceful health and wellness retreat – visited by the likes of Oprah Winfrey and Kate Winslet – has an attractive menu of activities, from yoga to sound therapy, and a meat-free menu. Rooms are colourfully and proudly Mexican."

Packages from  
**£3,200** per week

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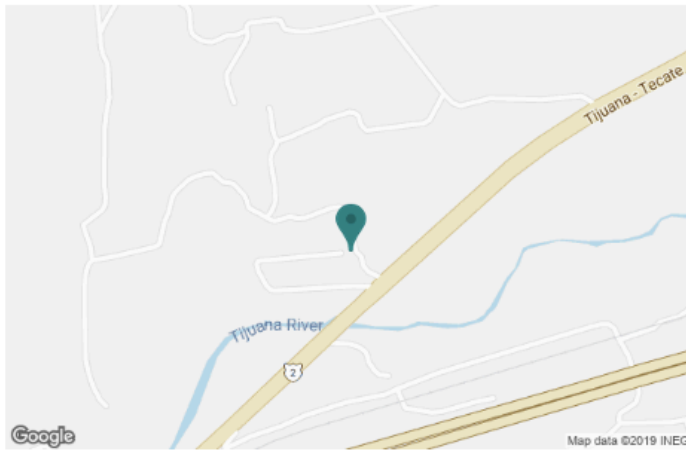
### Telegraph Review



By **Graeme Green**, TRAVEL WRITER

## 9/10 Location

The hotel is set across 4,000 acres of flower-filled gardens and the grounds take in 3,885-foot Mount Kuchumaa. It's a 40-minute drive from Tijuana airport or 90 minutes on a Ranch-arranged coach from San Diego airport in the US, via the border town of Tecate. Downtown Tecate is 10-minute drive, but you're likely to stay within the Ranch's borders.



8/10

### Style & character

Rancho La Puerta, which was founded in 1940, has proved popular with the likes of Oprah Winfrey, Kate Winslet and Jane Fonda. The secluded retreat has gardens galore, with fountains, female sculptures, agave, cacti and meadows bursting with wild flowers. A "digital noise-free environment" policy operates, with phones on silent and only a few select Wi-Fi areas. Health, fitness, relaxation and wellness are the order of the day. Guests (predominantly, but not exclusively, American women in their 50s, 60s and above) spend days in gym gear. Socialising is encouraged, with shared classes, game nights, movie nights and (optional) communal dining tables.



9/10

## Service & facilities

Extensive daily activity menus offer early morning hikes, yoga, Pilates and trail running through to the more novel (sound therapy, cardio drum dance and more). Friendly instructors are happy to give personalised fitness or dietary advice. The Ranch has 11 well-equipped gyms and four swimming pools, as well as tennis and pickleball courts. The spa is quite simple compared to more modern hotels but therapists are first class, skilled and professional; couples should go for the side-by-side Sacred Moments massage, or there's an indulgent Four Hands Massage.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Sauna
- ✓ Steam room/hammam
- ✓ Wi-Fi
- ✓ Fitness centre
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Spa
- ✓ Tennis court

8/10

## Rooms

Little red brick casitas or rooms come with their own quiet garden or deck. Inside, floors have chunky terracotta tiles and white walls. Mexican colour and heritage are celebrated with pillows brightly embroidered with flowers or animals, and blue and yellow Talavera tiles in bathrooms. There's no television and no Wi-fi – a 'sleeping bag' for mobile phones is provided, encouraging guests to disconnect.

7/10

## Food & drink

Apart from a little fish and dairy, meat-free meals largely consist of vegetables from the gardens, with dishes low in salt and sugar. Lunch buffets serve vegetable enchiladas or spanakopita, with salads, soups, grains, seeds and Mexican salsas. Dinner might be coconut-crusting tofu with rice noodles or rainbow (pasta-free) lasagna, with soups, slightly uninspired salads, and a little dessert such as lemon cheesecake. It's healthy and hearty, though meat-free food can be done with more style and creativity, especially at the Ranch's prices. Breakfast in the Dining Hall offers scrambled eggs, granola, fruit and more, with a more stripped-back buffet by the Villas Pool.

**Value for money**

Rancho La Puerta mainly sell week-long packages (though shorter and longer stays are possible). A seven-night package in an entry-level Flores room costs from US\$4,079 (£3,358) per person, including all meals, most fitness classes, activities, lectures and entertainment, as well as transport to and from San Diego airport. Free Wi-fi where available.

**Access for guests with disabilities?**

Not suitable.

**Family-friendly?**

Children aged under 14 are not allowed to stay.

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