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Issue 55  
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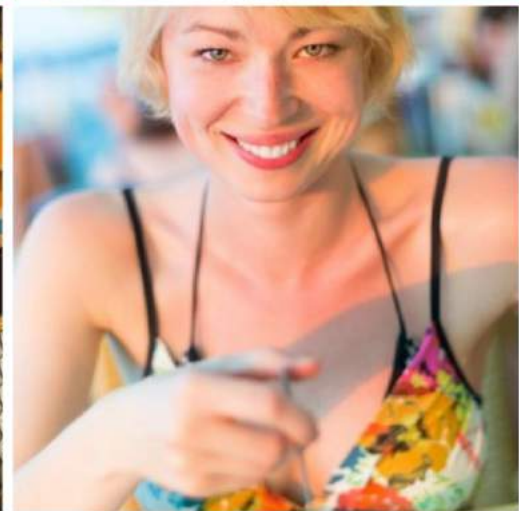


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# Editor's Letter

"I think a lot of people who feel as though they desperately want to be married oftentimes simply desperately want to have a wedding."  
Elizabeth Gilbert

When I was a little girl I did not dream of my own wedding, probably because as a family we never attended any. My two wedding experiences were getting up early to watch the Royal Wedding on a hot July day in 1981. I thought Diana was resplendent and beautiful, but I quickly got bored by the long procession. A few months later I tuned in for another wedding- Luke and Laura of General Hospital. I remember rushing home from school, setting myself up with a snack and plopping down on the couch. The Luke and Laura wedding episode was watched by 30 million viewers and remains the highest-rated hour in American soap opera history.



The wedding industry is big business. The average spent on a wedding dress is \$1,357 USD and the average cost of a wedding is \$31,213 USD according to The Knot, a US-based wedding planning site. As an adult I have had the honor of being part of dozens of weddings, both as a coordinator and as a caterer and I have grown to love weddings. However, the things I love about weddings are nothing you could buy. One of my most memorable 'wedding moments' was a mother-of-the-bride unsure if she would make a speech. I could see she was nervous but wanted to. I told her 'you will never regret saying a few words at your daughters wedding.' She got up and spoke elegantly from the heart. Afterwards she gave me a hug and thanked me.

I also love the vows. With destination weddings the officiant is often a family friend, lending a more intimate tone to the event. Recently during a ceremony the officiant asked everyone to raise their hands to the sky and send positive energy to the beautiful couple- it could have been a hokey eye-rolling moment, but it wasn't. I raised my hands too and I could feel the love and support between this couple and their friends and family who had come a long way to share this moment with them. I always enjoy hearing how couples met and bearing witness to such an important life event.

In this issue our writers explore weddings. Ironically the most cynical among them, about the unimportance of weddings, are those who have been married the longest.

Weddings are beautiful and special, but never because of the flowers, the dress or the staged Instagram photos. They are beautiful because they celebrate two people choosing each other. The joining of families and the promise of a future that has yet to unfold.

So don't dream about a Princess Diana or Luke and Laura extravaganza... dream about marriage; Sunday mornings with your husband or wife, travel, ways you can spend a lifetime showing the other person just how much you love them.

Jane

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**JUST AFTER THE SECRETS HOTEL BEFORE PLAYA LA BOCANA, HUATULCO**

# Traditional Oaxacan Wedding

By Brooke Gazer

In a small village like Copalita, where many of the workers in Huatulco live, it is assumed that when a fiesta occurs the entire village is invited. We all enjoy a party and if everyone is involved, it makes for a more cohesive community. This can become a major financial burden for those responsible for the celebration. When our maid's son was to be married the family considered it to be a huge social responsibility.

Traditionally in this region, it is the family of the groom that is responsible for the celebration. They are gaining a new family member, someone who will eventually contribute to the economy of the family unit. In the case of our employee the bride was from a different village so it was especially imperative that they demonstrate that the girl will be accepted and well cared for in her new home. Any degree of stinting on the wedding could be interpreted negatively.

Oaxacans have a generous nature and part of their tradition is that neighbors, friends, and relatives help out with the cost of events like weddings. Cases of beer are donated, someone may organize the music, and any number of details might be assumed by those wishing to help. Like any celebration however, the lion's share of the effort and expense ultimately falls on the family in charge. In preparation for this enormous event, our maid needed to take several weeks off work.

The fiesta was held in the garden outside her home in Copalita. In Mexico, the main meal is served mid-afternoon and this is when the festivities began. We were privileged to be invited, but since we had guests arriving in the afternoon we came rather late for the meal. When we arrived, our employee looked exhausted but she beamed when she saw us. She found us a place at one of the tables and served us a generous plate of traditional mole. She introduced us to several of her friends as "Mi Patrona" (My patron). I have tried to discourage this term but old ways die hard and this is what she calls me even now that she is retired.

Once everyone has eaten the tables were cleared away, and chairs were moved back, allowing an empty space in the center. This is when the fiesta ceremony began. The women of the groom's family passed little gifts out to all the ladies as the band began to set up. I received a small piece of pottery with the date glazed onto it along with a towel for tortillas, embroidered with the name of the bride and groom.

The bride and groom are escorted into the center of the room and seated under a "relago". This is a large cage covered in crepe paper with colored streamers hanging down.



Smartly dressed in a rainbow of colors, all the young single women come forward, each carrying a small clay pot. These young women sing a traditional song known as "Media Xhiga" as they dance around the newlyweds. One by one each girl breaks the pot at the couple's feet. Once all the pots are broken, each girl takes hold of one of the streamers and they walk in a circle around the seated couple. As they walk the crepe paper begins to unravel and confetti falls like rain over the couple. This ancient Zapotec custom originated in the Isthmus

of Tehuantepec, but is celebrated by many who are not necessarily Zapotecos.

Following this, the men are invited to form two lines. Two gourd pots appear and are placed at the feet of the bride and groom. The men place paper bills inside one or the other pot, one for the bride and one for the groom. At the end, they count it up and make an announcement. Apparently it is a friendly competition as to who brings in the biggest haul. Rick, clueless as to what was what, got into the wrong line tilting the scale in the bride's favor even though the party was in the groom's village. The previous night the party was at the bride's village and by the time of the second fiesta the couple are looking a bit worse for the wear but are making a huge effort to smile.

The band begins, drinks are passed around, and couples, including the newlyweds, begin dancing. There are several plants in the garden but the surface is packed earth. Noticing the delicate white lace trim on the bride's dress is trailing in the dust made me cringe just a little. Although she is unlikely to ever wear it again, my practical "gringa" sensibilities cannot help but worry that her dress will be ruined.

Dozens of little kids have gotten into the party spirit, giggling and tearing about. The piles of confetti that litter the ground are irresistible to these kids as they scoop it up by the handfuls and begin throwing it, everywhere... along with the dust that comes with it. Soon everyone has confetti and dust on their clothes, coating their skin, and in their hair but no one seems to notice. This is just part of the fun.

As the evening wore on the volume of the band increased. I could feel the bass of the speakers go right through me and it made my organs hurt. Our maid knew we had guests to look after in the morning and understood when we thanked her and said good night. She looked as if she might have liked to have done the same but the fiesta lasted well into the wee hours.

Although she needed another three days to recuperate, the party was considered an enormous success and her new daughter-in-law was appropriately welcomed into the family.

**Brooke Gazer operates an ocean view bed and breakfast in Huatulco.**

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# The Dilemma of What to Read Next

By Carole Reedy

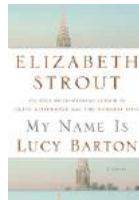
*...a book can reach out and embrace you like an arm and make you walk away from everything you thought you understood. Suzanne, from Widow Basquiat by Jennifer Clement*

Readers are always looking forward. What will we read next? The latest bestseller, the book recommended by a friend, a classic we haven't read yet that we feel we must, a book we want to re-read, the Pulitzer Prize winner, the latest by our favorite author, the biography of someone who just died, a travel guide, or essays about places we may visit in the year?

Among the plethora of new 2016 books, I've chosen just a few to add to your list (as if you need more!). The selections are personal, having nothing to do with quality, number of pages, favorable or unfavorable reviews, or any other recommendations. They are simply books that interest me, many by favorite authors I think may pique your curiosity. Happy reading!

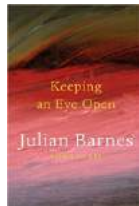
## **My Name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout**

It appears that the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Olive Kitteridge* has yet another success. Strout's latest has received praise from Publishers Weekly, which called it a "masterly novel." From Kirkus the author receives a starred review, the *crème de la crème* in the publishing world. And the New York Times Book Review gifted Strout with her first front-page review.



## **Keeping an Eye Open by Julian Barnes**

Since 1989 when he published *The History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, Barnes has been writing essays on art, mostly French art. His latest book is a compilation of essays and accompanying color photos about the art of Degas, Manet, Vuillard, Braque, and Cezanne, among others. Also to be published in 2016 is Barnes' new novel *The Noise of Time*, his first since winning the Man Booker Prize in 2011. Just 100 copies were published for the first edition, signed by the author. The book is a glimpse at the life of Dmitri Shostakovich under Joseph Stalin's reign, and it ponders the artist's place in a dictatorship.



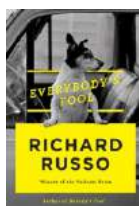
## **Frantumaglia by Elena Ferrante**

Readers of Ferrante's blockbuster series of four novels about the lives of two friends in Naples, Italy, may choose to delve into the mind of this most reclusive of authors, who has yet to reveal her true identity and shuns the press. Her latest book, with a publication date of April 19, is a series of essays about the responsibilities of writing and publishing, Italian politics, and her desire to remain in the background of her novels and success.



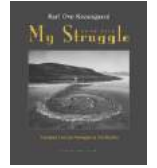
## **Everybody's Fool by Richard Russo**

Russo continues the saga of Donald "Sully" Sullivan in this follow-up to *Nobody's Fool*. Russo fans will look forward to the May publication date.



## **My Struggle, Book Five by Karl Ove Knausgård**

Books one through four of Knausgård's autobiography are bestsellers throughout the world and made the Norwegian (who now lives in Sweden) a household name. One in ten people in Norway are reading these books, which make up his life. The series is being translated into English one book at a time. Knausgård's autobiography has won countless international literary awards and been translated into 15 languages.



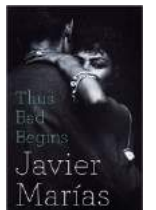
## **Zero K by Don DeLillo**

In the November 2015 issue of *The Eye*, Don DeLillo is the subject of the book column's lead story on the year's book prizes. His success? The National Book Award Lifetime Achievement Award. "There will be no better way to understand life in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century than reading the books of Don DeLillo," said Jennifer Egan in her introduction for the honor. Reason enough to add it to my list.



## **Thus Bad Begins by Javier Marias**

If you read this column regularly you know that Javier Marias is one of my favorite modern authors, along with Philip Roth and Joyce Carol Oates. As usual, Marias gives this book a title based on a Shakespeare quote. "I must be cruel only to be kind; Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind." Those of you who enjoyed his *The Infatuations*, *Tomorrow in the Battle Think on Me*, and *A Heart So White* will not be disappointed with this latest by the Spanish master. The Spanish edition *Así empieza lo malo* has been in circulation for more than a year.



## **Secondhand Time: An Oral History on the Fall of the Soviet Union by Svetlana Alexievich**

The works of this 2015 Nobel Prize for Literature winner previously hadn't been published much in English, so many of us are eagerly awaiting her selections written in the journalism/documentary style. This, her latest to be published in English, is due out in May. I have also seen it listed as *The Last of the Soviets*. The book is an oral history of men and women who don't normally get the spotlight and the speculation of what the fall of the Soviet Union and communism will mean to the culture of the country.



## **In the Café of the Last Youth and Young One, both by Patrick Modiano**

Here are two novels freshly published in English by the 2014 Nobel Prize for Literature winner, reputed to be two of his best.



# Gay Marriage in Mexico

By Marcia Chaiken

**I**n Mexico City and the States of Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Quintana Roo, same sex couples planning a wedding simply need to follow the same procedures as heterosexual couples (see the article in this issue).



In other States an additional step is needed. In June 2015, the Supreme Court of Mexico declared that all restrictions confining legal marriage to heterosexual couples were in violation of the Mexican Constitution. However, the laws in the vast majority of States in Mexico have not changed and still prohibit same-sex marriage. Therefore, to receive a marriage license, same sex couples need to hire a lawyer to petition the court in the jurisdiction where they are planning to marry for an injunction against the civil registry. Once a judge issues this injunction, the license must be granted by the registry. As of January 2016, using this procedure, same-sex couples have married in almost all States in Mexico.

## The Eye Lecture Series

Bringing articles to life, we have planned a lecture series; here's what's coming up.

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# The Perfect Wedding (Hah!)

By Marcia Chaiken and Jan Chaiken

**T**here really has never been a perfect wedding. Even the most traditional, carefully-planned marriage ceremony is likely to have a hiccup. Indeed, the more little details the bride and groom care about, the more likely one is to go awry. Fifty-three years ago, as the first notes of Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* announced that we were about to walk down the aisle, our six-year old ring bearer disappeared with the cushion holding our rings. Our friends and family were treated to a longer concert than expected as he was tracked down. "Well," he explained "When you gotta go, you gotta go." Yes, every wedding can have a hiccup, but some have a loud, explosive belch.



He delivered a homily that was filled with anti-Semitic rhetoric worthy of the Inquisition and long rejected by the Vatican. Fortunately, although they could have understood every word, our friends who were the *padrinos* were so nervous about every action they were assigned to take in the ceremony that they didn't pay attention. But the bride and groom turned bright red and looked very uncomfortable during the homily.

Many explosive wedding situations in Mexico involve beach-destination affairs hosted by foreigners who have spent

little or no time in the area they choose for their nuptials. They imagine romantic settings and are totally clueless about implications of tides, weather, and other natural phenomena. Brides have an image of their wedding that they formed when they were six-year-olds playing with their Barbie dolls and are not to be deterred even by local knowledgeable consultants. Of course, their mothers also have dreams of the perfect wedding for their daughters.

One slightly obsessive mother of the bride set out chairs covered with white cloth hours before the wedding on a Huatulco beach known by the locals for very high tides. In the interim before the ceremony, the tide rose and fell. The white covers turned mud brown up to the water mark.

Brides' demands to decorate themselves, the wedding party, and their beach venue with flowers that are not native to the area have led to floral disasters. One bride was at a restaurant the week before her wedding and one of the vendors walked in selling roses to patrons. The rose her groom selected for her looked perfect – so she paid the vendor to bring 10 dozen roses on the day of the wedding. That evening was the last time she ever saw the vendor. Another bride from out of the country also asked a friend to buy dozens of flowers brought down from the mountains from a market she had visited at a nearby village. Although the friend who had lived at the beach for many years explained that the flowers would have to be purchased at that market the day before the wedding since the market was not a daily event, the bride insisted that that was what she wanted. The beautiful flowers were purchased, carefully placed in tubs of water – and the next morning over half of them were dead. One bride's flowers actually made an appearance at the wedding and the bouquets looked lovely as the maids of honor and the bride carried them down the aisle. But before the wedding party reached the altar, ants and bugs of various species crawled out of the flowers and up their arms. The bride tossed her bouquet somewhat early, as did the attendants – but in this case no one wanted to catch the bouquet.

Themed weddings replete with costumes simply don't add to a beach wedding. One medieval theme clothed the members of the wedding in yards and yards of velvet. Those of us who live at the beach can tell you that we don't even want to look at photos of velvet, much less wear drapes of the heavy material. By the time the service started, the costumes appropriate for a Hollywood set were wringing wet. Our southern aunt always lectured that "horses sweat, men perspire and women glow." But even she would have agreed that the bride was sweating like a horse.

Weddings in Mexico are not exempt from problems. The presence of children at ceremonies is not unusual here, and the children are expected to be and commonly are very well-behaved. But we were told of a couple who had accumulated ten children between them and decided to include all their progeny in their wedding service. The affair turned into chaos. You really can't blame the youngsters. The ceremonies went on and on and the kids became fidgety. The boys started to give each other little shoves, and the shoves turned into fist fights. The girls were upset that the boys were fighting and started to cry. The priest tried to continue but, needless to say, children rolling around in the aisle kicking and screaming and wailing at the top of their lungs was somewhat distracting.

Some wedding disasters are unforeseeable clerical errors. In a village here in Oaxaca, the whole community had gathered in the church waiting for the ceremony to begin. The young bride was beautiful; the young groom was proud. The priest – well, the priest was nowhere to be seen. Thirty minutes went by and the congregation chattered quietly. An hour went by and some mean-hearted villager started the rumor that the priest had decided not to perform the marriage sacraments because of past behavior of the bride. The bride started to weep as her incensed father and brothers went to confront the priest. They found him in the local jail.

Far from refusing to perform the marriage rites, the padre had been so concerned that he might be late that he drove too fast in his car on the windy road to the church. Coming around a curve, he hit someone on a bike. The police chief, who was no lover of the Church, had gleefully arrested the priest. When the bride's father and brothers pleaded with the police chief to let the priest go, he agreed to allow him to perform the ceremony, but under armed guard.

Other clerical obstacles might have been anticipated. Friends of ours had a *boda* in the same cathedral in Guanajuato where the bride had taken first communion. Although she knew how very conservative the priest was, she decided to ask two American friends to stand as *padrinos* during the ceremony. Not only were these attendants not Mexican, but they are gay and Jewish. The priest's disapproval was evident from the expression on his face. He didn't have to say a word about them, but in a way he did.

Another theoretically dramatic entry of the wedding party envisioned by more than one bride is arrival by boat to the beach where friends and family are sitting in anticipation of the event. The one wedding we attended that involved boats also involved a retching bridesmaid whose face remained green throughout the evening. In other similar events at least one member of the wedding went overboard – in one case the bride.



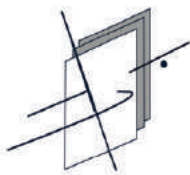
The most common cause of problems at Mexican beach wedding is the familiar failure to take into account the vagaries of weather and to have a backup plan. High winds have caused havoc with dresses, veils and even the wrap-around skirt of one officiant who was praying more for her skirt to stay down than for the couple she was marrying since she decided that the high temperatures called for no underwear. High humidity has turned elegant coiffures into masses of curls worthy of the 60's "fros". And sudden downpours have not only literally dampened whole events but provided the first real challenge of marriages. Our guess is that brides and grooms who stand puddle deep at the altar and manage to laugh are likely to be laughing together 50 years later.



Perhaps the worst obstacle to a happy Mexican beach wedding and in fact the basis for a truly tragic event is the tendency for members of the wedding and guests to turn destination events into an excuse for over-indulgence – hours in the sun, lack of sleep, and drinking far more than usual. Lobster red, reeling people really don't add to the ambiance. In the worst Mexican wedding event that has hit the news recently, the parents of the bride decided to express their love for each other in their ensuite jacuzzi. The father of the bride had a heart-attack and died, pinning the mother of the bride under the water where she also drowned. The perfect wedding turned into the perfect nightmare.



Some wedding dreams, no matter how bizarre, do come true. Very recently, a couple demanded to have a "traditional tequila burro" at their wedding reception in an elegant venue. We waited with great expectations to hear that the donkey had misbehaved and to receive a photo of the consequences. However, the four-legged guest of honor was very polite even when some guests who were feeling no pain, climbed on his back. But our bottom-line advice is, when planning your wedding, don't press your luck.



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# The Valentine's Day Oscars: Best Movie Weddings!

By Deborah Van Hoewyk

I know, I know, the Academy Awards won't be announced until February 28, and they are mired in less-than-loving controversy over the lack of diversity in nominees. But if we gave out awards on Valentine's Day for the best wedding scenes, we'd have a very diverse field of well over a hundred contenders and much more interesting categories.

## Best Wedding That Didn't Take Place

**The Graduate** (1967, Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft, Katherine Ross): The only nominee where we remember the characters by name ("And here's to you, Mrs. Robinson," "Elaine! Elaine!"). Feckless college graduate Benjamin Braddock graduates from college, does not go into "plastics," gets seduced by Mrs. Robinson, falls for Elaine, and drives the wrong way across the Golden Gate bridge to rescue her from marriage to a proper fiancée.



**The Runaway Bride** (1999, Julia Roberts, Richard Gere):

Roberts is the all-time champ of leaving grooms at the altar, and Gere is a newspaper reporter doing an article on this curious habit. Eventually, Roberts leaves Gere at the altar as well, escaping in a FedEx truck. Not to worry, they get together at the end.

**Sweet Home Alabama** (2002, Reese Witherspoon, Josh Lucas, Patrick Dempsey): Witherspoon heads home to Alabama to sign divorce papers so she can marry Dempsey, falls back in love with hubby Lucas, and jilts Dempsey (Doc McDreamy? How could she!) Later, Dempsey takes the bride away in **Made of Honor**.

**Sex and the City: The Movie** (2008, Sarah Jessica Parker and Chris Noth): Major wedding plans, with a bridal outfit that includes a turquoise fascinator upside Parker's head, fall apart at the ceremony because Noth (Mr. Big) gets cold feet after listening too long and hard to one of Parker's marriage-hating friends. Another they-get-together-at-the-end.

**And the winner is The Graduate**, for its cultural commentary on 1940s – 50s parents with 1960s kids, and the final scene in the back of the bus when Ben's laughing turns into that "What now?" expression, Elaine looks at him nervously, and then neither is looking at the other.

## Most Completely Raucous Wedding

**Monsoon Wedding** (2001, Naseerudin Shah, Vasundara Das, Parvin Dabas): As an extended family gathers for a traditional Punjabi Hindu wedding, the film includes the bride bedding a former lover, potential child molestation, complicated family relationships involving loans at the time of the India-Pakistan partition, dancing and singing galore, and an eventual double wedding—the arranged marriage of bride and groom, and a spontaneous marriage of a cousin and the servant.

**My Big Fat Greek Wedding** (2002, Nia Vardalos and John Corbett): Vardalos, in her early thirties, sees herself as a failure at being a good Greek girl, and her life in general as being plagued by bad luck and things that didn't work out. She works in the family restaurant, but one day has a fight with her father and decides to go out on her own. Naturally, she cleans up her act and attracts Corbett, who, uh oh, is not Greek. Eventually, they get married, and the wedding is a suitably chaotic, big fat family affair.

**Mama Mia** (2008, Meryl Streep, Amanda Seyfried, and a cast of putative fathers): Single mom Streep has never revealed just who the father of daughter Seyfried might be. Now getting set for her wedding on a Greek island where Streep has run a hotel for over twenty years, Seyfried wants to have her father give her away. After reading her mother's diary, she invites three likely suspects who appear in the diary at the right time. No spoilers about the dad here, but be warned—it's a musical, and Streep gets married.

**Bridesmaids** (2011, cast of many, notably Kristin Wiig and Melissa McCarthy): It's not that hard to pick this particular chick flick over the similar male version (*The Hangover*). Sex, raunch, misbegotten bachelorette party, runaway bride, this one has it all, and it's way more interesting and genuine than that guy version.

And the winner is **Bridesmaids**, for its high level of gross but character-driven comedy; maybe for the food-poisoning-just-before-trying-on-the-dresses scene, although that's a matter of taste. So to speak.



## It's All in the Family

**Father of the Bride** (1996, Steve Martin, Diane Keaton, Kimberly Williams; 1950, Spencer Tracy, Joan Bennett, and Elizabeth Taylor). Dad (Martin/Tracy) doesn't want daughter (Williams/Taylor) to marry the guy she's gotten engaged to after only three months. Dad creates a ruckus about how much the wedding is costing, and just about everything else about it. The wedding gets called off, but just for a while, and when it's all over, the father of the bride realizes his little girl is all grown up.

**The Birdcage** (1996, Robin Williams, Gene Hackman, Nathan Lane, Diane Wiest): Remake of a French/Italian film, *La Cage aux Folles* (1978). Williams and Lane are a gay couple who own a drag nightclub called The Birdcage. Williams' son Val wants to marry Barbara, the daughter of a conservative senator and his wife. Shenanigans play out as Val convinces Williams to play a straight couple with his birth mother as wife, name themselves "Coleman" so they don't sound Jewish, etc., etc. Could also be nominated in the Classic Farce category.

**Rachel Getting Married** (2008, Anne Hathaway, Rosemary Dewitt, Debra Winger): While often billed as a "comedy/drama," it's much more of a drama with wisecracks than a comedy. Hathaway has been let out of drug rehab for her sister's wedding. How the family copes with her presence and the resuscitation of the family tragedy that set her on the path to addiction occupies most of the film, but Rachel (Dewitt) does indeed get married.

**Jumping the Broom** (2011, Paula Patton, Angela Bassett, Laz Alonso): The uniting of uptown and downtown (NY) African American families at the uptown family's Martha's Vineyard estate for Patton and Alonso's wedding is rife with snobbery, reverse snobbery, intrigue and misunderstanding, a breakup or connection at least every four hours, and a lot of arguing about whether the couple should include the traditional African American "jumping the broom." It does.

All of these are worth watching, but since the idea is weddings, we have to hand it to **Father of the Bride** (either version) for its concentration on the feelings of the one member of the bridal party whose experience of this life transition doesn't get much attention.



## Predicting the Plot

**High Noon** (1952, Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly): The film begins with the wedding of Cooper, Marshal of Hadleyville, to Kelly, a Quaker pacifist. They're all set to move on to a peaceful life, but Cooper learns that a criminal he had put in jail has been released on a technicality and is headed for Hadleyville to do him in and wreak general havoc at, you guessed it, High Noon. After all kinds of machinations and bad behavior by the townsfolk, Cooper saves the day, throws his badge down in the dust in disgust, and leaves with Kelly to that more peaceful life.

**The Godfather** (1972, Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, Diane Keaton, and many more): Each of the Godfather movies is rife with rituals and family traditions, often used to provide background for fatal family activities. This first scene of the first Godfather movie serves to introduce individual characters, and the schizophrenic way of life of the professional and domestic families. Pacino, as Michael Corleone, makes his first attempt to assure Kay (Keaton) that the professional activities are his family—"That's not me."

**The Deer Hunter** (1978, Meryl Streep, Robert DiNiro, Christopher Walken, John Savage): The wedding at the beginning of *The Deer Hunter* reveals much about the personalities and lives of the three young steelworkers who are about to leave for Vietnam. The Russian Orthodox ceremony unites Savage and his girlfriend, pregnant by another man; tradition has it that if no red wine is spilled, the couple will have good luck for life. Alas, two blood-red drops of wine stain her white satin skirt.

And the winner is **The Godfather**, for the wedding's connection to the ongoing themes of professional (remember, they never said "Mafia") and domestic families.



## Classic Farce

**It Happened One Night** (1934, Claudette Colbert, Clark Gable): Colbert has eloped with a fortune hunter, but wedding has not yet taken place, her father is ticked off and sweeps her off to the family yacht, she jumps ship and hops on a bus back to the fortune hunter. Meets Gable, an out-of-work reporter, who offers assistance on getting back to marry the fortune hunter, really so he can write up the high-society story. But . . . they fall in love, out of love, mistake each other's motivations, etc. Pop agrees to let Colbert marry the fortune hunter, but finds Gable to be more admirable, pays off the fortune hunter and Colbert and Gable get hitched. Whew!

**Philadelphia Story** (1940, Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Jimmy Stewart): A classic for its collection of A-list actors, Hepburn has divorced Grant for his drinking, is poised to marry a "man of the people," agrees to let reporter Stewart attend the festivities and write about them, gets drunk and is carried out of the swimming pool by Stewart, which cancels her nuptials with the man of the people. Wedding's all set, so she remarries Grant.

**How to Marry a Millionaire** (1953, Lauren Bacall, Betty Grable, and Marilyn Monroe): The three stars play models who decide they will all marry millionaires. Despite the Sutton Place penthouse they get from a friend as the setting for their campaign, the first efforts go miserably awry. Grable and Monroe end up marrying regular guys, but Bacall is all set to marry a verified rich guy; of course, she's in love with guy who helps women with their groceries. He pursues her, but she's been giving him the brushoff all along. Eventually she realizes she loves him, he's at her wedding to the rich guy, and guess what, not only do they get married, but he's rich as Croesus!

And the winner is **It Happened One Night**, because it was the first film, and only one of three films, to win the five big ones—Best Picture, Best Director, Best Leading Actor, Best Leading Actress, and Best Screenplay. (The others are *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Silence of the Lambs*—nary a wedding in sight!)



# Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue....

By Leigh Morrow

The deep aching sound of the pink and white caracol traveled across the beach. Low pitched, and one long note, reminiscent of the sound of my uncle warming up his bagpipes on a cold Ontario winter day, signaled the start of the wedding, and the invitation for all things sacred, to join us. The conch blew three times, the first two short, the third, for weddings like this, long and sustained, symbolizing the union of a long life and a longer marriage. The Mayan Wedding Ceremony called K'aam Nikte' is highly spiritual, filled with beauty and reverence to Mother Nature. Love for Mayan weddings is the result of their simplicity, originality and deep meaning. Smoke from the steaming copals, gourds carved from these highly resinous trees, remind me of wizards' cauldrons in Harry Potter. Billows of aromatic amber began purifying the ceremony area for the couple, similar to North American natives, with juniper and sweet grass, smudging a newly acquired home. The perfume asks the Gods for understanding in this relationship. Drums begin beating, maracas pick up the tempo and a cabasa provides a kind of "beans in a shaker" noise.

The couple have prepared for their marriage, early this morning, in temazcal, a traditional bath, literally "the House of Heat". This is a sweat lodge of sorts, using 13 volcanic rocks, a powerfully good luck number in Mayan culture. As each of the 13 red hot volcanic stones are added, each rock is welcomed into the lodge, with the marking of an X and the participant's vocal greeting, "Welcome grandparent stone". In the dark cement circular dome, the intense heat, increased by pouring water on the hot lava rocks, produces a sauna effect. Sweating away the layers, the couple emerge to shower (ideally under a waterfall) and start their marriage ceremony purified, leaving all the past ills and hurt behind.



Standing before us, in full tribal paint and head feathers, the shaman, our Mayan priest, walks in a circumference around the couple, summoning in his Mayan dialect the four elements: water, earth, wind and fire, so that their presence may strengthen and bless this union for many years. The couple dressed in white, she with her special huipil and he, wearing a white linen Guayabera—both symbols of a new beginning, exchange coconut bowls of cocoa beans. Cocoa was believed to be of divine origin, the cocoa tree being a bridge between earth and heaven. Aztecs believed that consuming chocolate gave mortals some of Quetzalcoatl's (God of wind and learning) wisdom. Some ceremonies tie colored ribbon around the couple, signifying the seven colors of the rainbow and the seven rays of light. Grains of maize are offered to Mother Earth, blessing the couple with abundance and food.



Turns out our shaman was vegetarian, so we were spared the sacrificial slaughter of an animal – a turkey, chicken, goat or even a cow – yet, in traditional days, this butchering signaled the celebration to begin and the food preparation to start. The original banquet was large and varied, accompanied by stuffed cheese, wedding tamales, pickled turkey, chicken pibil (cooked in a barbecue pit), pok chuk (roasted pork) and pozol (a local corn beverage).

The music, wind and percussions instruments (which date back to pre-Hispanic times) or live classical violin or guitar music, often extended beyond the ceremony into the dinner celebration.

As the ceremony closes, we bless our friends' union by each guest dropping snow-white flower petals on their heads. Our newly married couple, at the edge of the ocean, strews the petals into the water, as an offering, asking the Gods that their dreams and hopes as a couple be fulfilled.

For love struck couples wanting to tie the knot, the pull of escaping the cold to exchange vows on a warm sandy beach, is an undeniable draw. Be it a traditional Mayan ceremony, (most grand hotels in Merida, Cancun and the Riviera Maya offer Mayan wedding packages) or a more Western version, the price of airfare and lodging can add to the cost of a wedding, but once here, the cost of food, liquor and flowers are all a fraction of the price at home. Plus you are having a destination wedding, which is a celebration everyone in your life can enjoy with you!

The first time I saw a beach wedding on the sand at San Agustinillo, it was just before sunset. The bride and groom were exchanging vows under a white gazebo at the edge of the water, and the soft linen material was lazily billowing in the light breeze. Rose petals carpeted the sand aisle, and paper bag candles had been placed strategically, forming a path behind the couple and their guests seated on an eclectic collection of wooden chairs, each with a white sash tied on the back. The bride had a simple hand bouquet of gorgeous white Calla Lilies, the same flowers I held for my wedding, and I thought how magical, the setting.

I think couples are attracted to a beach wedding as a venue because of its romantic yet playful attributes. There is a real sense of freedom getting married barefoot, in the soft sand, not in pinching high heels and a long train. Grooms can ditch the tux for a simpler casual yet polished look, and often are more relaxed and happy because they are in Bermuda shorts and a nice linen shirt. It's also a great place for those entering their second marriage (or third, etc.) as the formality of the church or synagogue is gone, and the emphasis is less religious but more spiritual. Often for the ceremony, the only music playing is the natural soundtrack of rusting palms and breaking waves.

The pictures are always so much better too. Blue or rose skies, depending on the time of day, long sweeping bays and outcrops, and the footprints in the sand as they walk hand in hand, for the first time as husband and wife, down the beach. You can also write the date in the sand, and use that as a cover shot for the wedding video! How cool is that! Guests can roll up their pants legs, take off their shoes, loosen their ties, or not wear them at all, and everyone seems more inclined to have a good time.

The reception is usually at the same place as the beach ceremony, so guests can just relax at one spot, versus the typical two venues- the church and the hotel or restaurant- which leaves guests with nothing to do for several hours, as the pictures are taken. This beach style, is much more flexible, and everyone is just enjoying the day, rather than waiting for the next event.

Piñata smashing can start the party, keeping any of the invited children happy, beverages can be served in coconut shells decorated with flowers, and tables can be adorned with local seashells and tropical flowers.

The other nice thing about a beach wedding is that the honeymoon (well, parts of it!) can be shared with the people you love. It's so nice for everyone to get a vacation while attending this celebration. I've always thought it's such a shame to go through the wedding, only to rush off on a honeymoon, getting such limited time to sit and get caught up with the people you love, the friends you cherish, who have traveled many miles to see you. The beach at San Agustinillo is just now being discovered (as is the whole area) with the new Mexican Government's tourist designation of neighboring Mazunte as Pueblo Magico, so I expect our secret beach to be widely chosen by couples for their wedding venue and receptions moving forward.

As the night dips and the music plays on, guests can take part in lighting large white paper lanterns, which are often used for making wishes for a New Year, or a new beginning, and a beach wedding is pretty idyllic for that, too.

**Leigh Morrow is a Vancouver writer who operates Casa Mihale, a vacation rental in the quaint ocean front community of San Agustinillo, Mexico. Her house can be rented for your wedding.**

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# Getting Married in Mexico

By Julie Etra

**A**t first I questioned whether there was a difference between two foreigners marrying, versus a Mexican marrying a non-Mexican, and then a Mexican marrying a Mexican. Not that much difference except for some paperwork. Most of time, according to my local sources, foreigners are here for the reception (party), for the setting, and for the novelty. However, if you want to be legally married here there are a number of required steps, and they don't involve finding the preferred religious institution, since legal marriages are performed by a civil judge; marriages by religious institutions or figures are not recognized. Via the Hague Convention, the United States has recognized marriages in Mexico since 1954.

Assuming you are a foreigner who wants to legally marry here, it helps immensely to have a wedding coordinator who will make sure all procedures are done legally and translations are correct. All documents, including the application, must be in Spanish.

People under the age of 18 may not get married in Mexico without parental consent; boys have to be at least 16 and girls at least 14 years old. Blood tests are required and they must be performed in Mexico, you CAN'T have it done elsewhere and bring the results. Although it varies from state to state, you may also need chest x-rays. These also have to be done in Mexico, within an acceptable time frame for completion of the required Marriage Application Form (whatever that time frame is). If you are a foreigner you will need copies of all travel documents (passport, visa or permanent resident card). Other requirements are copies of birth certificates and two witnesses. If either the bride or groom has been divorced you will need proof. Most places require that BOTH the bride or groom wait at least one full calendar year (starting from the date of final divorce decree) before re-marrying. However, in Quintana Roo, home to the popular destination resort of Cancun, **only** women who have been previously married may not re-marry for 300 calendar days following the date of the divorce decree unless during that time they have given birth or can prove, again with the proper certification, that they are not pregnant. Widowed? If either party is widowed, the death certificate of the deceased spouse will be needed as part of the documentation requirements. UGH.

Cost varies by physical location of the ceremony date, site in which it takes place, and date (day of week, holidays, etc.) The simplest and cheapest way to apply is through the Local Registry Office. However, it is FREE on Valentine's Day. How civilized! After the civil ceremony has taken place you will need to verify its legality by obtaining a certified copy of the marriage certificate (Acta de Matrimonio) in accordance with Mexican law, and only then will the marriage will be recognized.

Further, most foreigners would be shocked by the enlightened roles of Mexican men and women as expressed through the Federal Marriage Message (vows), of which the following is a rough translation: "Here lies the essence of the couple. You are making of yourselves a small engine, which will energize the world around you through your actions and through those of the children that you take the responsibility to invite into the world. You face each other eye to eye; you are two equals, with no duties, rights, or obligations which apply only to one of you". None of the obedience or death till we part stuff, if you can handle the paperwork.

The Eye 16

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# Blues on the Beach II

By Brooke Gazer

If you plan to be in Huatulco on February 25, mark this date on your calendar. The bi-annual **Blues on the Beach** concert promises to be an incredible event with **Jack de Keyzer** headlining the evening.

Jack is one provocative entertainer, soulful vocalist, guitarist and a world class songwriter. Bob Dylan once said "If Jack de Keyzer was from Chicago, New York or LA, he'd be famous". He performs an average of 150 shows annually, bringing audiences to their feet at major Jazz and Blues Festivals around the globe; we are fortunate to attract one of Canada's most awarded performers. De Keyzer is a two time Juno award winner and has earned seven Maple Blues Awards (Canada's national blues awards).

Sharing the stage with Jack de Keyzer, are an eclectic range of blues musicians: **Jerome Godboo, Charlene "Chuckee" Zehr, and Cheryl Lescom**. A veteran singer, Cheryl has been part of the Canadian music scene for over 30 years, both with her own band and as a backup singer for many of the greats. Chuckee offers a powerful performance both on keyboard and as a vocalist, with influences ranging from Bessie Smith to Janice Joplin. Toronto singer and Harmonica player Jerome Godboo mesmerizes audiences everywhere. Recently he captivated the judges in Memphis where he took home the Lee Oskar best harmonica player award.

This exciting lineup of entertainers will be backed up by the "Puerto All Star Band". Proceeds for this exhilarating evening of "Blues on the Beach" go to a most worthwhile cause, "Un Nuevo Amanecer", a nonprofit organization assisting local children with a variety of disabilities. (See the December 2015 issue for more about this worthy charity "What Happens to those Centavos"). For a sample of February's lineup go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/482278795271087/>

Brooke Gazer operates an ocean view bed and breakfast in Huatulco. [www.bbagugazul.com](http://www.bbagugazul.com)



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# What to do With an 11-Year-Old *Gringita* in Mexico City

By Carole Reedy

When you live in a metropolis such as New York, Paris, Shanghai, London, or Mexico City, you expect the annual procession of visitors: new ones curious about a grand old city and the usual suspects who return each year because they love the ambiance and energy. It isn't difficult for you as a host because you know their interests regarding music, art, food, and adventure, as well as their stamina and personalities. You have a history with them.



This year my granddaughter Carys (happily, rhymes with Paris) received a generous birthday gift from her parents: a trip with mom to visit grandma in Mexico City. After my elation wore off, I thought "What will we do?!" Carys is 11, active in five sports and super witty and smart, with a preteen's energy. I didn't imagine that hours roaming the Museum of Natural History, sitting through a five-hour Wagner opera, or lounging for hours at a sidewalk cafe would be her cup of tea. I started by asking friends with grandchildren of similar ages for ideas. And to my surprise (though I'm not sure why), Carys herself checked the internet for "fun things for an 11-year-old to do in Mexico City." Ah, my saving grace!

Together with her mother, Erin, an adventurous, satisfying, and felicitous five days was had by all. Here are a few specifics...

## SEGWAY GREENWAY TOURS

The most popular activity and tour of the week was one I knew nothing about. Carys found it on the internet. The Segway tours turned out to be a wonderfully fun way for her to see the various monuments and landmarks of the city (probably because she was having such a good time on the Segway scooter she didn't realize she was on a city tour).

The company provides three choices in Mexico City: Polanco and Chapultepec Park, Reforma, and Centro Historico. Each of the three sessions lasts from one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours. The guides are bilingual and exceptionally amiable. We were lucky to have Oz guide us through Chapultepec Park, pointing out significant historical statues and fun facts about the city, all while zipping along the sidewalks and lateral roads as well as off-road in Chapultepec Park itself at a leisurely yet quick pace.

Carys was so thoroughly enchanted that we called the next day and booked another tour. She says "It was so cool to see the city on the Segways. We got to see the park and the whole of Reforma in a couple of hours. I'd highly recommend it to anyone traveling to Mexico City, especially with kids!"

Erin, her mother, concurred, saying "I loved the time we spent in Chapultepec Park. At twice the size of New York's Central Park, it has so many enchanting areas to discover. The Segways allowed us to explore the part of the park near the small lake in an efficient and fun way. I think we could have spent each of our five days there and still not have seen it all. With a zoo, an amusement park, boat rides, museums, and a castle, it is definitely not to be missed!"

Segway Greenway tours are located at Homero 530 in Polanco, with a lovely café located adjacent for grandparents who prefer to sip a cappuccino or a tea (I recommend the cherry infusion) instead of riding the streets. Call ahead for reservations (5292 2414)

## TEOTIHUACAN: THE PYRAMIDS



About 40 minutes outside of DF lies one of the most spectacular sights in the Western Hemisphere: the pyramids of Teotihuacan. The history of its inhabitants is little known, but research continues to understand the culture that lived there about 2000 years ago. For active children,

the pyramids provide an outlet for energy while at the same time learning a bit of Mexico's history. I do not recommend a formal tour for children, but rather a stroll through the ruins with a small guidebook, highlighted by climbs up the pyramids. Carys ran up and down each one, including the challenging and ominous Sun and Moon. There are lots of interesting souvenirs to buy, our favorite being a whistle that makes the sound of the jaguar.

Carys relates the experience from her point of view: "My favorite part of the trip was the pyramids. I liked learning the history of them and I think it is strange that we still don't know much about who made them originally. I also liked learning that Mexico City used to have canals like Venice. I wonder why the Spanish got rid of them."

In order to conserve energy and for scheduling flexibility, from DF I usually hire a private taxi (I have a personal recommendation should you want it) that waits until you're ready to return. The Turibus runs daily tours to the pyramids, but of course you're at the mercy of their scheduling. There's also a public bus that leaves from Central Norte de Mexico, not surprisingly the most inexpensive way to go. Guides are available at the site should you wish a formal tour.



### BALLET FOLKLORICO

On the cultural front, the Ballet Folklórico is a must for young and old alike. Erin describes it as “an enchanting experience.” You may have seen folk dances before, but never like this. The colors, music, precision, and spirit of the dancers will energize your day. Their songs and dances tell the history of the Mexican people. Erin and I both recommend if you're taking children that you follow in our footsteps and attend the Sunday morning concert at 9:30am. The concert is two hours without intermission, a bit long for the little ones, but worth it. Other performances start at 8:30 pm on Sundays and Wednesdays. Another outstanding feature of the ballet is that it's held in the most beautiful building in Latin America--the Bellas Artes, located in centro historico, right next to Alameda Park. The curtain inside the theater is made of Tiffany glass, the seats are comfortable, and the ambiance unequalled. As Erin said, “It is the perfect setting for the ballet.”

Other cultural activities for kids are held at the Auditorio Nacional and the Lunario behind it. Mario Ivan Martinez combines songs and stories for all occasions, so if you can arrange to see him it is well worth it. The performances are given in Spanish, but Sr. Martinez has an international way with children, and he speaks perfect English besides.

### TURIBUS TOUR OF CENTRO HISTORICO

Ride atop the double-decker big red bus, touching the treetops through the zocalo, down Reforma Avenue to Polanco and back. The sun, fresh air, roadside flowers, and hustle and bustle below make this an excellent way to get an overview of the city's center. Turibus also offers excursions to other parts of DF and beyond.

Deciding where to eat is exceedingly easier with children than adults (who usually say generously, “whatever you suggest”). They love stopping for *elotes* and *churros* on the street. One thing about Mexico: there is never a lack of food or music. There are many Italian restaurants for the kids' favorite pasta dishes, as well as hamburger and taco joints.

In the course of five days, we barely touched the surfeit of things to do in the city. If you have more time, consider going to the Papalote Children's Interactive Museum in Chapultepec Park as well as La Feria, the amusement park located there. There is a Six Flags located south of the city. The Museum of Popular Art in the centro is a gem of a spot, and often on Saturdays and Sundays has special programs for children. My Mexican friends always recommend the floating rafts of Xochimilco as an enjoyable day, though I personally find it touristy and tedious.

One of the wonderful and generous things about Mexico City is the discounts offered for oldsters, youngsters, and students. Erin agrees: “I love that Mexico makes so many of its museums and monuments free to children under 12. It is wise to encourage youth to discover the history and treasure of their great country.”

The joy of small things intrigues us always. Carys loved the freshly squeezed *mandarina* juice I served for breakfast each morning, the Turin mint chocolates that awaited her on the coffee table daily, and my newly purchased piano on which she composed new tunes.

It's easy to have fun in Mexico City—even easier with an enthusiastic 11-year-old!

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# THE ART OF BEING HERE

## Art Show

By MJ Kelly

In the absence of the original art show organizers, Jim and Mary Spicka it was strongly felt by everyone participating, that the success and growth of the art show over the last 4 years mustn't take a sabbatical for fear of permanently disappearing. Hence the following was determined by a select group of volunteers, sponsors, artists and art aficionados. The 5<sup>th</sup> annual art show will open on Saturday, Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 at the Rubin Gallery in Santa Cruz. As a group we determined that the show would have fewer artists, a raffle consisting of a donated piece of art by each artist (the draw to take place 9:30 pm on the 20<sup>th</sup>), the show will run a longer term of up to 30 days and all artists must be in attendance on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> to participate. We are very grateful to Susana Rubin for the use of her gallery and have all agreed that a 30% commission will be directed to the *Pintando Esperanza Fundacion*, a very successful venture contributing to rural schools and to community sustainable industries.

Three successful photographers will be participating with their very original and unique styles; Giorgio Rollo, Kevin Spreitz and Oscar Guzman, clearly a show unto its own. Two sculptors as infinitely different as possible: Richard Saunders with very recognizable and realistic implements of society, and Don Robertson, whose sculptures are organically made with nature's. Armando Reyes, who brings creativity and vision within his utilitarian works combining the works of other artists both visually and through their music, will provide a perspective from the artisan world while providing perfectly balanced and lovely sound.

The five painters range from traditional to abstract impressionism, from young to retired. Huatulco's Rafael Ortega will exhibit with an intriguing and colorful expedition towards abstraction. Twelve year old Maria Steta, who naturally and uninhibitedly grasps the concepts and elements of design, will display her poised style. Mary Guzman is rediscovering her artistic talent, while fellow artist Ann McCleod is a well-known American artist from Arizona who has a wide range of skill, success and vision. MJ "Kelly" is loving her retired freedom to discover new impressions of life in large, colorful expressions using anything and everything in her current 'moment'.

We, as artists, are very grateful to our supportive public, benefactors, mentors and especially to our sponsors of this art show: The Eye Magazine, Bayside Real Estate, Café Juanita, Unlimited Vacations and Resort Real Estate Services. We recognize and celebrate the support of the Huatulco community for its inspiration and celebration of art as a natural component of life.

The Eye 20

THE ART OF BEING HERE  
GALA FEB 20 6:30pm  
GALERIA RUBIN SANTA CRUZ

RAFFLE OF 11 ARTIST WORKS  
IN SUPPORT OF PINTANDO ESPERANZA FUNDACION

MJ Kelly Kevin Spreitz Mary Guzman  
Rafael Ortega Don Robertson Oscar Guzman  
Ann McLeod Richard Saunders Giorgio Rollo  
Maria Steta Armando Reyes

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## Wild Wedding Tradition

If you happen to be on the Oaxacan coast at the end of June a day trip to the festival of San Pedro Huamelula is definitely worth it. The town celebrates its Chontal heritage with this annual celebration in which a small crocodile is dressed up as a bride and the local mayor marries her. According to tradition, the animal is a 'princess' and the wedding ritual will bring plenty of seafood for fishermen to catch along the Pacific coast.



# My Big Fat 80's Wedding!

By Erin Vig

I remember planning our wedding. I remember how important it was that the flowers were that 'perfect' shade of dusty rose, so as to match my 'perfect' bridesmaid dresses...all seven of them. I remember being immensely disappointed that the beige rental tuxedos didn't exactly match the beige in the flower print cover-up for the bridesmaids. I remember how important it was to have the cake topper couple match the image on the front of our invitations. All those little details that I stressed about and all the time, energy, and money that was expended for that one day. That one-day that I thought was to be the most important day of my life.

Today I hide the pictures of my 'perfect' wedding because frankly... dusty rose?! What was I thinking? Let's just say that my eighteen-year-old 'sense of style' was a bit suspect, but then it was 1980 so I'm sure that 'the style' of that decade has made us all wince when reviewing our 80's photos! I just happened to make sure that my 1980's style would be forever etched into my 'significant moments' photo album.

Thirty-five years later, I see exactly what that wedding day was and it really wasn't such a milestone. It was actually just a day to be the leading lady in an elaborate production. The years since have really been my show and there have been so many moments key to defining who I am as a person and demonstrating exactly what is important.

At the risk of sounding cynical, the entire concept of elaborate perfect/inspired/stylish weddings has been programmed into us and are nourished by a need to be special and unique. I say, be unique and have a quick, easy, stress free wedding and use that cash to go on an amazing and memorable trip! If you're one of those 'practical' people, put a down payment on a house (or BUY a quaint little one here) or better yet...help to build a school for a village? There you go...how many people do you know who have assisted in building a school? There is a unique legacy!



Yes, it's an important day and worthy of celebrating with our friends and family but the money, time, energy and stress involved in executing a grand show can be used for the part that matters ... the rest of your life!

Hey, don't get me wrong; I'm all for love and marriage and happily-ever-after but the important stuff comes after the wedding. The average annual salary of a 25-30 year old would be so much more beneficial in the pocket of the happy couple rather than dispersed to the over-inflated 60-billion-dollar-a-year wedding industry.

I love brides and grooms and the idea of romance, but realistically, I'm just not sure what else can be done at a wedding to make it more memorable or unique so as to stand out in the minds of the guests. Perhaps after over half a century on this earth and bearing witness to many weddings I have realized that trying to have the 'perfect' wedding is more trouble than what it is worth. As with so many other things in my life, I wish I knew then what I know now. I don't think any one of my 200 guests can recall anything about our wedding and I guarantee that no one remembers that the cake topper didn't match the invitations.

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# Calendar

February 2nd  
Dia de la  
Candelaria



February 5th  
Constitution day



February 10th  
Ash Wednesday



February 14th  
Valentine's Day



February 24th  
Flag Day



Full Moon  
Feb. 22nd



## On the Coast Recurring Events:

### AA Meetings:

English AA Huatulco, 7:30pm Remax Plaza, Every Wednesday  
English AA 6pm, Puerto Escondido Cafecito Rinconada, Every Thursday  
English Al-Anon 4:30pm, Puerto Escondido Cafecito Rinconada, Every Saturday

### Weekly Markets

Pochutla Market- Every Monday

Yoga- Drop-in, by donation classes. 7am, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Mansiones Cruz del Mar, Punta Santa Cruz, Huatulco.

The Eye Meeting- Tuesdays at 3pm, Café Juanita, Marina

Beach Volleyball, Mondays at 4:00 PM, Sunset Beach (by the waterfront Pemex Station)

Bingo-Every Friday Night at Camelot, Rotary Huatulco hosts Bingo Night 7pm



## February

### Saturday February 6th

Huatulco's Organic Market Santa Cruz 8am-2pm

### Sunday February 14th

5km Run for Love to raise funds for Mi Querido Viejo, 8am

### Wednesday, February 17th

The Eye Lecture Series- Learn about and taste mezcal!

Limon Bistro in Mansiones Cruz del Mar  
Punta Santa Cruz, 4pm-6pm FREE

### Saturday February 20th

Huatulco's Organic Market Santa Cruz 8am-2pm

### Saturday Feb 20th

The Art of Being Here Art Show  
Rubin Gallery in Santa Cruz, 6:30pm

### Sunday February 21st

Pochutla Kite Festival

### Thursday February 25th

Blues on the Beach Concert  
Latitude 15 Beach Club 8pm

### Sunday February 28th

Encuentro de Cocineros- Local cooks gather with sample dishes to raise money for local charities.

2pm Santa Cruz 100 pesos

The Eye 22

## Oaxaca City Recurring Events:

### AA Meetings (English)

Daily - Monday and Thursday - 7 pm  
Also Saturday at 1 pm - All 12 step groups welcome.  
518 Colon

### Religious Services

Holy Trinity Anglican Episcopal Church Sundays 11 am  
Crespo 211 (between Morelos and Matamoros)  
Liturgy followed by coffee hour. Information 951-514-3799

Religious Society of Quaker Friends Meeting, Saturdays 10 am Free

All are welcome. For more information and location, contact  
janynelyons@hotmail.com

### Weekly Markets

Etla Market, Every Wednesday  
Tlacolula Market, Every Sunday

### Biking

Oaxaca is More Beautiful on a Bicycle, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday - 9 to 10:30 pm Free, Meet in front of Santo Domingo Church  
Rental bicycles available at Mundo Ceiba, Quintana Roo 2011  
You must bring a passport or Oaxacan credentials. They have tandems, too!

### Danzón

Every Wednesday - 6:30 pm Free  
Alcalá and Constitución

A tradition imported from Cuba, the danzón is a stately dance with syncopation. The citizens of Oaxaca gather weekly to dance and watch the dancers.

### Ethnobotanical Garden Tours in English

Weekly - Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday - 11 am \$100 pesos  
Entrance Reforma and Constitución.

### Bridge

Tuesday Bridge Game at eMax Learning Center, Hidalgo 104, Jalatlaco, \$20 pesos, no partner necessary, starting at 12 noon.

### Baseball: Guerreros de Oaxaca

7pm weekdays; 5pm weekends when in town \$50 pesos for men in Centro, \$25 pesos for women  
Vasconcelos Stadium

Oaxaca's own AAA baseball team always includes a couple of players who had brief moments in the major league. Go for the baseball and/or go for the entertaining crowd. This is real Oaxaca! The season is April to August.  
Niños Heroes and Vasconcelos

### Garden Club

Monthly - 1st Wednesday Free

The Oaxaca Garden Club is dedicated to: learning, sharing and education about gardening, agriculture and nature, primarily in Oaxaca. It is achieved by regular meetings, field trips, outreach to the community and by parties. To receive the monthly notices of activities, send an email to [oaxaca.garden.club@gmail.com](mailto:oaxaca.garden.club@gmail.com)

### Hiking

Weekly - Tuesday & Friday 9 am - November thru March Minimal cost for transportation

Oaxaca Lending Library- Pino Suárez 519

"Hoofing It In Oaxaca" is a program of weekly hikes for adventurous gringos who hanker to explore this part of Mexico on foot. Individual outings fall into three categories: rambles through the open countryside in the Valles Centrales; visits to archeological sites in the area; and more vigorous hikes in the mountains surrounding Oaxaca City. The Oaxaca Lending Library is the rendezvous point for all of the weekly hikes. All information and a full schedule of hikes is on the Hoofing In Oaxaca website. Reservations required.

### Tour to Teotitlan del Valle

Weekly - Thursday and Saturday - 9 to 5 pm \$750 pesos

Instituto Cultural Oaxaca

Travel, Learn, Fight Poverty Fundación En Vía is a non-profit microfinance organization providing tours to communities around Oaxaca where participants visit women in need of small loans to improve their lives. 100% of the tour fees are given to the entrepreneurs as an interest-free micro loan.

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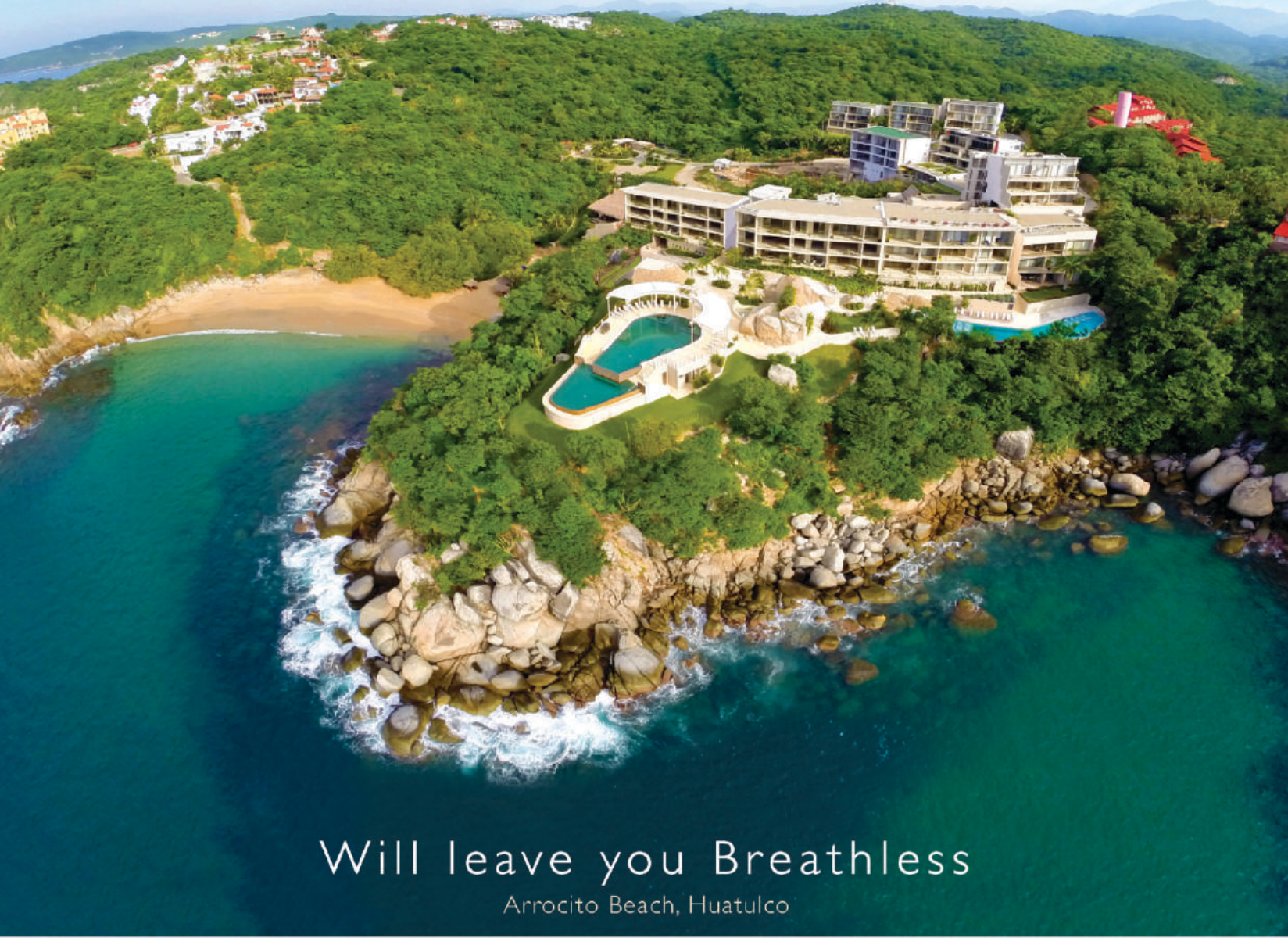
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