

The Eye

Beach, Village + Urban Living in Oaxaca
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Issue 58
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BETWEEN THE SECRETS HOTEL AND LA BOCANA, HUATULCO

Editor's Letter

“No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.”

Steve Jobs

Prince just died. People are shocked and saddened, they are covering their social media personas with purple and sharing their favorite 'Little Red Corvette' and 'Purple Rain' moments. It's nice. I am sure if Prince was alive he would be very moved by the outpouring of love and sadness from his fans. What doesn't sit very well with me is the outpouring of disbelief, the 'can you believe it' sentiment that seems to pervade their collective emotion.

Death is no surprise. When it will occur is the great unknown for each of us and it is interesting how our attitude and acceptance of this certainty affects so much how we live our lives. There are those who move cautiously through life; assessing risk at every turn and always making sure their insurance is up to date. Then there are those who jump into the great unknown of adventure with a sense of inner assurance that they will learn to unfold their wings as they fall.

It is the deaths of the bold that we find it so easy to mourn, their passing a reminder of our own mortality. In Rajasthan, India there is a gypsy tribe that celebrates death as one of the happiest events in their lives, while treating births with great grief. What do they know that we don't? How would you live your life differently if you knew when you were going to die? If you could confirm what was waiting for you on the other side, would you make different choices now?

Of course the goal of being alive is to live full lives with meaningful connection. I heard that if you die in Amsterdam without any friends or family left to attend your funeral, a poet will write a poem for you and recite it at your funeral. Lovely! We should all have poetry read at our funeral.

There is a difference between being reckless and bold. I think the challenge of living is to walk the tightrope between the two, preferably from a high building. May we all be bold enough to revel in this incredible experience and in the wise words of one who was so bold, 'to get through this thing called life'.

See you in July,

Jane

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The Eye 4



The Ten Top Causes of Death in Mexico

By Marcia Chaiken and Jan Chaiken

Mexico is known throughout the world for fiestas. And fiestas are times for eating wonderful food, lots and lots of high-calorie food washed down by beer or supersized glasses of colas and other *refrescos*. Even without a fiesta, typical comida corridas (lunch on the run) consist of three courses including dessert and a large pitcher of delicious flavored sugary water. So it should be of little surprise that the **number one cause of death** in Mexico is **diabetes**. Among 172 nations included in the World Life Expectancy data, Mexico ranks ninth in deaths from diabetes; in comparison the U.S. ranks 122nd and Canada 140th.



Coronary heart disease, which of course is also related to diet, is the **second most prevalent** cause of death in Mexico, while in both Canada and the United States heart disease is the top killer. And **stroke**, the **third most likely cause of death** in Mexico is also prevalent in the U.S. and Canada, respectively the number 4 cause in the U.S. and number 5 in Canada. Given these statistics, it's quite possible that the high rate of death from diabetes compared to the U.S. and Canada may be due to earlier diagnosis and treatment north of the border, since Americans and Canadians are also known to be eating far too much sugar and fatty foods.

Those who follow the media reports of drug wars in Mexico are not likely to be surprised that **violence** is the **fourth major cause of death**. Even though U.S. has a "wild west" reputation, and mass shootings appear to be frequent occurrences, violence doesn't even make the top 25 causes of American deaths and in Canada violence drops to the 39th cause. Among the 172 nations reporting causes of death, Mexico is relatively far from the top of most violent countries, ranking 15th in the world with El Salvador taking the dubious top honor and Japan coming in dead last.

Liver disease is Mexico's **fifth most prevalent cause of death** – maybe all those *cervezas* and margaritas are not as good for you as they taste. Although people in Iceland are least likely to die from liver disease, what exactly is there to do in Iceland during the winter other than watching the northern lights with a drink in hand?

The **sixth most prevalent cause of death** in Mexico is **lung disease**. Before pointing fingers and blaming horrid pollution and high rates of smoking in Mexico, realize that lung disease is the fifth major cause of death in Canada and fourth in the U.S.

Influenza and pneumonia rank seventh in the major causes of death in Mexico, not too different from its rank in the U.S. (10) or Canada (8), followed by hypertension, which is also a major cause of death north of the border.

People who say that driving in Mexico is taking your life in your hands are not exaggerating. **Road accidents rank number nine** as the instrument of death. Think of those youngsters you see careening around on *motos* in Mexico – no license or driver training required – haven't you wondered how they survive more than a few days? Still, it's better to be driving in Mexico than in Iran or Iraq – the leading countries in deaths by motor vehicles. The safest country to drive appears to be the Maldives. Of course, the low rate of deaths from road accidents may be due to the fact that cars are not present on most of those islands. The rate of motor vehicle ownership in the U.S. (over 400 per 1,000 population) is more than 38 times as high as in the Maldives.



Finally, the **tenth top cause of death** in Mexico is **injuries** other than road accidents. All the pesky rules and regulations in the U.S. meant to prevent injuries that are lacking in Mexico appear to be paying off, since such injuries rank 25th in the U.S. (in Canada, 19th). And the country in which injuries are least likely to be a cause of death is Singapore, which has rules and regulations that shape every breath and step of citizens and visitors.

In sum, while in Mexico you should eat plenty of the delicious fruits and vegetables; if you smoke, stop; limit your fat, sugar and alcohol; and if someone tries to pass you on the road, pull over and let them go by. All of us have to die someday, but why not at age 103 or so?

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in all human history.**

Where divergent religious customs merge... Death of an Infant in Oaxaca

By Alvin Starkman, M.A., J.D.

Daniel Perez Gonzalez was a beautiful baby. His parents Flor and Jorge thought so; my wife Arlene and I agreed. Few are able to share our certainty, though, because we were among the very few to see him alive. Daniel was born in a Oaxacan hospital. I welcomed him into the world along with Arlene, our daughter Sarah, and Daniel's grandmother, Chona. From the womb, the nurse passed our newest extended family member into three sets of anxiously loving arms---Chona's, those of his big sister Carmela, and then Sarah.

We have a long and colorful history together, my Jewish family in my previous hometown of Toronto and this devoutly Catholic family in Oaxaca. Chona is one of our many *comadres* and matriarch of her family. Not six months earlier, she and her grandchildren had shouted Mazel Tov at Sarah's Bat Mitzvah in Toronto. Over the years we have raised many a glass of mezcal at milestone birthdays; we have eaten matzoh together for Passover in Toronto; and we have welcomed many a Christmas, New Year's and Day of The Dead celebrations together in Mexico.

But it was Daniel's death that reinforced for me, through much laughter and many tears, the profound irrelevance of cultural differences in the face of universal rituals surrounding death.

On the day of his birth, it was easy to imagine that Daniel's life would unfold like Sarah's. At 8 pounds, and with a full head of black hair, the baby looked healthy. Like my wife's, Flor's pregnancy had been full-term. Like Sarah, Daniel was born by caesarian section; like Sarah, his mother's umbilical cord had been wrapped around his neck, causing respiratory distress and the need for time in an incubator. But we didn't worry, his father and cousin were both obstetricians with connections in the Oaxaca medical community. He would receive the best post-natal care available, and we would dance at his wedding one day. But then their paths diverged. After two days of life, we mourned little Daniel's death, beside his coffin in Chona's living room, with family, friends and *compadres*.

Between the birth and the death came a crazy-quilt of only-in-Mexico experiences that resonated with my memories of the mourning process my Canadian family had undergone when my father died a few years earlier.

Most Oaxacans accept that death hits you at home - literally. Daniel left the hospital in a white, ornately-adorned satin-lined coffin, bound not for a funeral home, but for the living room of the family compound. Once he was settled atop a table covered with fresh linen, with a large silver crucifix behind him, my *compadre* Javier and I were dispatched to the Central de Abastos market to buy white flowers. This was a far cry from the somber discussion of formal arrangements at Toronto's Steeles Memorial after my father's death.

In this passionate and expressive country, even death rites are incomplete without the drama of shouting and accusations. At the cemetery, I learned that Daniel was to be interred in a low tomb-like grave atop Tia Lolita, his great-great-aunt who had died in 1990, who was layered over yet another relative who had died in 1982.

But when we met with the head undertaker, *el presidente*, at Lolita's graveside only hours after Daniel's death, we were advised that annual fees hadn't been paid in ten years. Much shouting ensued, but in the end, after heated debate, *el presidente* had successfully "extorted", as was his right, thousands of pesos for arrears of government taxes and administrative fees-plus about 1000 pesos in the likely event that Daniel would require a *boveda* (literally a vault, the rebar reinforced concrete slabs designed to keep the grave's occupants in an orderly configuration). And we still weren't done. Only once Chona had presented sufficient historical documents to convince everyone that she indeed had the requisite authority to bury Daniel above Lolita, were the appropriate certificate and receipts issued.

Back at Chona's home, mourners had begun to arrive. Shortly thereafter Jorge and I dropped off 150 pastries, to be used to dip into the traditional hot chocolate served to those attending such gatherings. I then experienced another profound frisson of *déjà vu*. The notably slower pace of Oaxaca's *mañana*' society was gone. With efficient dispatch, Chona and family transformed the home into a grieving chamber, arranging for necessities such as chair rentals, and ordering attendees off to kitchen duty. There under Chona's roof I traveled back in time to my mother's kitchen, crowded with friends and relatives I hadn't seen in years, just after my father's funeral. I could hear my mother's friend Rayla organizing who would bring what meals into our home during shiva.

Then there were the inevitable tragicomic moments. When I gave my father's eulogy, I couldn't resist telling a story about him that made reference to a shared moment that involved passing gas. In Mexico, the black humor of death is even more visceral. When Chona and I went back to the cemetery to ensure that preparations for the burial were well underway, we found His Highness and his aide a half-foot down, at the top concrete plate of the vault---along with part of a human jawbone. Chona was outraged, and began shouting, "that can't be Tia Lolita!"

We came up with many theories for the mystery bone, all revolving around the amorous activities of the dead, none repeatable here. That kept us going until we finally came across the complete skull of Tia Lolita, still covered with the traditional fine head cloth to prevent mosquito bites. We ultimately concluded that a few years back someone else had been buried alongside Lola. Mystery of the extra jawbone solved.

Here in southern Mexico, multiple burials in the same grave, at times at different levels, and at times involving the removal of bones after several years of non-payment of fees, may occur. In any event, in return for a handsome gratuity, *el presidente* agreed to clear away a spot for Daniel's little coffin, and hide Lolita's head and any other remaining bones in a sack at one end of the grave opening. The funeral would take place the next day, not unlike the dispatch with which Jews bury their dead - but very different from the traditional adult Oaxacan death custom characterized by several days of prayer, visitation and other rituals prior to burial, similar in purpose and function to the Jewish period of shiva after the interment.

Later that evening back at the house, we listened to a cassette recording of nursery rhymes. Although in the Judaic tradition we are not permitted music during mourning, these tunes seemed appropriate. Arlene tenderly placed a small rattle beside Daniel, in accordance with local custom. A young woman led a 20-minute prayer, strikingly similar in nature to kaddish in a shiva home. Then more food - mole negro, tortillas and salsa - and more prayer. When the padre finally arrived, there was the obligatory humor about the clergy; someone joked that he had just shown up for a meal.

By the following afternoon, we were placing a bountiful display of flowers into the back of a pick-up. Javier and I took final photographs of the baby, and then Jorge placed his son into the back of a 1980s white stationwagon, for his final journey.

The cemetery ritual combined the continuing familiarity of my own Canadian experiences with Mexicana. A few soft prayers, a few handfuls of earth placed atop the coffin, and incongruously our two congenial cemetery workers placed the concrete slab back between the remaining portions of the lid to the vault, then mixed and applied cement to seal the boveda. Reminiscent of Jewish custom, Chona asked Javier and me to assist with the shoveling of earth, then invited everyone home for a large luncheon.

Back at the house there was no music. Idle chatter took its place. Eventually, once most of the people had left, and only the barren white altar and the slowly burning mourners' candles remained, Arlene and I decided to go downtown for a walk, sad and emotionally drained, but oddly comforted. After a Oaxacan funeral for a Catholic baby, I felt exactly the way I did the first time I walked outside after arising from my father's shiva.

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To Swim or Not to Swim... With the Dolphins

By Brooke Gazer

Recently a proposal has been put forward to develop a commercial aqua center in Chahue which would allow tourists to swim with dolphins. For many people this is a lifelong dream and the newly proposed attraction could bring high end tourists who are willing to pay for the privilege. But is this something Huatulco wants to be a part of? If the general public understood what it truly means to imprison dolphins, I believe that most would shy away from this attraction.



These mammals need more than space, they also require companionship of their own kind, the ability to interact in fluid, complex societies, which in many ways are similar to our own. Imagine being captured by aliens and torn away from your family—some are left behind, a few are taken with you; you cannot see each other but you can hear their cries. You are locked in a cell and there is nothing you can do. The mental, emotional and physical stress that a captive dolphin suffers can weaken its immune system, which makes it prone to disease, not to mention severe depression.

Like humans, dolphins are accustomed to interacting with other dolphins on their own terms, and, in their pod, they choose the dolphins with whom they prefer to associate. In a “dolphinaria” they are forced to entertain humans for hours on end. There is no choice as to who will be allowed to swim next to them or to cling to them. This contact can be stressful and damaging both physically and mentally. Abrasions to the dolphin's sensitive skin occur from jewelry, finger nails, a button or even the cord on a life jacket. Sun cream deposits can irritate their eyes. As a result of confinement, lack of proper social interaction, and various health issues, they can become depressed, giving up the will to live, or they become aggressive, are labeled a “bad dolphin” and dealt with accordingly.

The “research card” is not valid. Science is now able to study dolphins more effectively in their own habitat and only a tiny fraction of the money from ticket sales is funneled back into marine biology. Make no mistake, this is strictly a financial opportunity; these institutions have become multibillion dollar businesses. We need investment for tourism in Huatulco, but do we need this?

There is a movement to do away with the type of cruelty that is currently being proposed here in Huatulco. In February 2014, Virgin Holidays vowed to stop working with places that continue to capture whales and dolphins from the wild or import whales and dolphins taken from the wild. Several European and Caribbean countries as well as India have banned having dolphins in captivity. Many of us have chosen to live in our community because of its beautiful natural resources and covet our Earth Check certification for sustainability. With 5000 hectares of National Marine Park, Huatulco bills itself as an important “eco-destination”. Aside from the fact that is just wrong to imprison intelligent majestic creatures like dolphins, what would this do to our image as an eco-tourism destination? For those who are interested, there are ample of opportunities in Huatulco to see dolphins the way God meant them to be seen. Rent a local boat and spend a day on the sea.

You can help to ensure that there will only be free and independent dolphins living and thriving on their own terms along the Pacific Coast of Oaxaca. Below is link to a petition to the mayor of Huatulco to prevent this business venture. It can be signed and forwarded on line. Please take a moment to do it now.

https://www.change.org/p/no-al-delfinario-en-huatulco-estamos-a-tiempo-de-detenerlo-huatulcogob-dariopachecohux?recruiter=271449116&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink

While using any empirical tool for measuring intelligence among dolphins is impossible, they are believed to be second only to humans, even more sophisticated than apes. These majestic creatures have the ability to use tools; they form highly complex social networks with discriminating relationships, and have advanced communication skills including language. Traveling in pods which they remain in for life, they engage in cooperative hunting and child care with precise memory such as who owes them a favor, who is a friend and who is not. It has been proven that they possess emotions including joy, grief, frustration, anger, and love.

When you see dolphins performing tricks and stunts, or allowing humans into their tank to swim, do not assume they are enjoying it or doing it willingly. These enormous animals have furious appetites. An adult weighing 250 KG (550lbs) requires between 10-22 KG of fish per day. They are quickly taught that if they do not perform they do not eat and dolphins are nothing if not adaptable. Their smiling appearance is a deception of nature; it does not indicate a happy animal. A dolphin dies with a smile on his face.

On the topic of dying, a healthy bottlenose lives for an average of forty years in the wild, but five years is the average in captivity. A marine park cannot meet the complex physiological and psychological needs of a dolphin. With a high infant mortality rate for dolphins bred in captivity, their populations are not self-sustaining. Methods of capturing and transporting dolphins are extremely cruel, many are killed during the “hunt” and others die of shock and injury during transport.

Consider what it must be like for one of these highly intelligent social creatures to be placed inside a pen, even a nice one like the proposed lagoon in Huatulco. A normal day for a free dolphin would include swimming up to 100 miles, deep diving, frolicking, hunting, and communicating with family and friends he has known all his life. When the sea turns warm, as it does in Huatulco every spring, they dive to great depths where the water is cooler. They also migrate to cooler water, just as many of the “seasonal residents” of Huatulco do. Sea pens close to shore are shallow, become too hot, and cannot accommodate diving more than a few meters under the surface.

Did you know?

Capital punishment in Mexico was officially abolished in 2005, having not been used in civil cases since 1937, and in military cases since 1961

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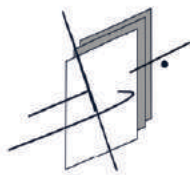
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An Adventure in Chiapas, Our Exotic Neighbour

By Jim Howard and Pat Burrell

We have been winter residents of Huatulco for the past four years and have enjoyed exploring our part of Oaxaca while we have been here. This year, however, we decided to travel farther afield and learn more about southern Mexico. Our neighbouring state of Chiapas was the obvious destination.

We were aware of the topography and history of Chiapas that had made Mexico's southeastern state seem mysterious, remote, and a bit intimidating. We imagined precarious mountain passes and dense jungle that harbored Zapatista guerrillas or Mayan drug lords.

Instead, we discovered a land of friendly people, bustling modern cities, and pastoral landscapes amid the colonial towns and pre-Columbian ruins. We felt safe and welcome as we crossed over the mountains from the Pacific to the Caribbean coast.

Much of this comfort level can be attributed to Arturo Martinez, our driver and guide during the four-day journey. Arturo is a tour guide licensed for all of Mexico and is based at the Camino Real Zaashila Hotel, where our condo is located. Besides taking us on local excursions over the past few years, Arturo also had escorted us around Oaxaca City in 2014, so we had a great deal of confidence in his services.

We quickly discovered that Chiapas is not so far away from Huatulco. Five hours on the road took us through the windswept Tehuantepec lowlands to the capital city of Chiapas, Tuxtla Gutierrez. We had sufficient time and sunlight left in the day to continue on to our first tourist site: the Sumidero Canyon. This dramatic gorge is accessible by taking a boat ride from the old town of Chiapa de Corzo to the entrance of the canyon. As we progressed up the river, we saw crocodiles lounging along the shoreline, often very close to where children were swimming!

After spending our first night in the modern city of Tuxtla Gutierrez, we asked Arturo to take us up to the *miradores* perched on the rim of the canyon. The views of the river thousands of feet below were more impressive than from a boat at the bottom. We recommend that visitors check out the *miradores* before, or instead of, taking the boat trip.

Our next destination was the charming colonial city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, nestled in a mountain valley 6000 feet above sea level. Once again we would point out how close this area is to Huatulco—we could have driven all the way to San Cristobal easily in one day. Yet, it is another world! The air is cool and the hills are green all year round. The colonial town centre is similar to Oaxaca City, but even more compact, with its colourful buildings and narrow streets easily accessible on foot. A number of streets, called *andadores* here, are closed off to traffic allowing comfortable strolling amid the shoppers and vendors. The place had the feel of a European town, with its churches, shops, restaurants and small hotels, but with the added richness of colourfully dressed native people going about their business. Our hotel, the Docecuartos, like many others here, was a charmingly restored historic home.



But Arturo had another treat for us, a thousand feet higher than San Cristóbal—the mountain town of San Juan Chamula. Here the locals have clung more consistently to their native culture. Most of the women wear distinctive woolen dresses and shawls. Most memorable, however, was a visit to the church in the town square, San Juan Bautista, where pre-Christian native practices coexist with Catholic ritual. Inside the church was a striking scene—absolutely no photographs allowed—the floor covered with pine needles and clusters of votive candles, ribbons strung from the ceiling to the floor, and small groups of worshippers sitting on the floor performing unfamiliar rites. One lady was clutching a chicken that we presumed was about to be sacrificed!

The next two days were focused on exploring Mayan ruins. Arturo had researched a relatively recent archeological discovery—the ancient city of Toniná—about two hours from San Cristobal on our route to Palenque. After traversing the high pine forests of the Sierra (where we saw hairy pigs!) and then descending the eastern slopes, we arrived in the farming area around the bustling town of Ocosingo. Arturo pointed out that this area was the birthplace of the Zapatista movement.

A few miles outside of the town in a pastoral valley, we spotted the top of the giant pyramid complex of Toniná, a Mayan city that rivaled and eventually conquered Palenque. Set on a hillside, Toniná is quite different from any other Mayan site that I have seen with its series of pyramidal structures rising up the slope. The archeological site is well managed and maintained, but whole areas remain unexcavated. We were assigned a local guide, Aristel, so Arturo became a fellow tourist for the afternoon. We were extremely impressed with Tonina and strongly recommend visiting this wonderful archeological site.

After a light lunch of quesadillas at the site, we continued our drive to Palenque, with a short stop at the impressive waterfall at Misol há. Without the stops, I would put the driving time from San Cristobal to Palenque at four to five hours. We overnighted in the busy tourist town of Palenque, saving our visit to the famous Mayan city for the next day.

Palenque certainly lives up to its reputation as a magnificent archeological site. It is set in the jungle at the foot of the mountains and exudes an aura of the exotic and mysterious. The palace is distinctive with its four-storey tower, and several of the temples have intact roof combs.



Unfortunately (for tourists) you can no longer enter King Pakal's tomb (the only occupied Mayan tomb ever found), but a high-tech reconstruction of it can be seen in the adjacent museum (and also at the anthropological museum in Mexico City). The only disappointment, for me, was that the resident howler monkeys didn't show up the day we were there!

Our final destination was just outside of Chiapas, Villahermosa in Tabasco state, a busy modern city a couple of hours' drive from Palenque. Our primary purpose for finishing the tour in Villahermosa was to catch a flight to Mexico City the next day. However, we also had one more tourist site on our agenda, La Venta, located 70 miles outside of the city. This was the site of a major Olmec settlement. The Olmecs were an ancient people most famous for the huge heads with negroid features they constructed hundreds of years before Christ. Luckily, we discovered before we set out that the majority of the artifacts, including the heads, had been moved to an ecological/archeological park right in Villahermosa.

The La Venta park was another delightful surprise for us. It turned out that almost all of the original heads were on display because the next day was an anniversary of the relocation. (Normally, replicas would substitute for the originals to help preserve them.) We wandered along well-groomed pathways with various Olmec sculptures (mostly heads) featured at regular intervals. The park also hosted local animals such as jaguars, birds, crocodiles, and yes, monkeys, in captivity, as well as badgers and coatis running wild in the trees. Despite a bit of light rain, we spent several very satisfying hours in this well-maintained park.



After a light lunch on the grounds, Arturo dropped us off at our airport hotel, and then headed home via the quickest route across the Isthmus. He reported that it took him only seven hours to drive home to Huatulco!

Arturo's speedy return underscores just how accessible the wonders of Chiapas are to residents of Huatulco. In four and a half days, we covered a lot of territory (driving about 750 miles) and enjoyed many different touring experiences. We ended the tour in Villahermosa, but a circular tour finishing in Huatulco would be quite feasible in a week or less. We highly recommend such a get-away to long-term winter residents of Huatulco. We are sure that Arturo Martinez and his colleagues at the Camino Real or other local tour agencies could provide a similar adventure at reasonable rates.

Rattlesnakes and Scorpions

By Kary Vannice

While most think rattlesnakes and scorpions bring only pain and death, it might surprise you to know that their deadly venom is being touted for its curative and potentially life-saving properties.

There's a growing body of medical research that has turned its hopes to venoms and toxins of the plant and animal world to cure many modern ailments. Advances in technology allow us to synthesize the venom from snakes, scorpions and other plants and animals in laboratories to use in treating anything from HIV to cancer to diabetes.

However, as "modern" as this approach to healing might seem, look back in ancient medical texts and you will find that this is not a new concept. Doctors and scientists as far back as 67 B.C. make reference to using snake venom to cure common maladies. Ancient Greek, Chinese and Indian cultures have been turning to the natural world for centuries to heal the sick and dying.

In ancient times, however, more often than not, it was likely that the venom administered killed more than it cured. Today, with the help of modern science, venom doses can be controlled, and even synthesized, to ensure the benefits outweigh the risks.

How does it work? Well, first one has to consider the venom itself, and what its intent would be in the natural world. Some venom is meant to paralyze its prey, some designed to break down tissue before being consumed, still others to clot the blood to stop the heart for a swift kill and in others, just the opposite is true, thinning the blood, so the victim quickly bleeds to death. This makes for a wide range of uses in the medical field.

So, it really depends on what the doctors aim to treat. In some cases, they use the venom to paralyze the growth of cancer cells to prevent them from spreading to other parts of the body. Some toxins are used to treat autoimmune diseases like lupus, MS and arthritis by shutting down pain receptor cells in the nervous system. Venom with anti-clotting properties has also been instrumental in improving blood pressure medication.

There are now dozens, perhaps hundreds of ways in which plant and animal toxins are being used (both in their natural state and synthesized) to treat and, hopefully, cure illness.

How can this possibly be? Well, it's all in the numbers. More than 100,000 animals are known to produce venom: scorpions, spiders, bees, lizards, sea creatures such as fish and octopuses, even snails. However, perhaps the really interesting thing about venom is how much the composition of the venom varies from location to location in a single species and even between birth and adulthood. So much so that, the composition of an individual snake's venom may even change with its diet.

So, it seems that the possibilities may be virtually endless when it comes to the curative properties of rattlesnakes and scorpions, and other unlikely saviors, all too often considered to be the harbingers of death.

In Case of Sudden Death

By Brooke Gazer

Imagine you have spent some time by the pool and as you walk into the house you find your spouse slumped in a chair, his color looks bad and he doesn't appear to be breathing. This is not a scenario any of us wants to contemplate, but living in a foreign country, it would be helpful to know what to do, should the unthinkable occur. If you are in Huatulco, who do you call and what can you expect to happen?

Unless you are positive your spouse, or whoever is in crisis, is not breathing, you should call an ambulance plus a doctor, if you have a relationship with one. There are any number of doctors in Huatulco, some of them associated with the major all-inclusive hotels. *The Eye* is not in a position to recommend any particular doctor, so if you arrive in Huatulco with a pre-existing condition, you should do some research. You want a doctor who has good English or a good translator on hand. You should be aware that the Mexican medical education system confers the title of "doctor" after four years of undergraduate education; in the U.S., that is when students enter medical school. To find a Mexican doctor with further medical education, you need a specialist (any one of whom can also serve as a general practitioner) who has graduated from a university.

If you call the Red Cross, they will send an ambulance with technicians who are trained to deal with emergencies and will transport the person to the appropriate hospital. The Red Cross charges between \$500 and \$1,000 mxn to transport a patient.

Obtaining top quality medical care in Huatulco under serious emergency conditions is difficult, and how to handle the situation is complicated. Sometimes the best course of action is to move on, via commercial airline if the patient can travel independently or by medical evacuation if not. *The Eye Lecture Series* will be addressing medical care arrangements in its first presentation in Fall 2016, and is preparing a booklet with essential advice and reference information; the booklet will be available at the lecture.

What Happens If Someone Dies

If death has occurred, the Red Cross will not move the patient; although you will not be charged, a donation (even a few days later) is much appreciated.

If the patient has died as the result of an **extended illness**, the attending physician (see above) can complete and sign a death certificate.

In the case of a **sudden unexplained death or accident**, the *Policía Municipal* must be called immediately. They will send a medical examiner and the body cannot be moved until he has assessed the situation to determine whether an investigation is necessary. Unless you have made arsenic tea or stab wounds are evident, this should be merely a formality of a few hours. It is likely however, that they will send the body to the coroner in Puerto Escondido where the cause of death will be officially determined and the certificate completed.

Once the death certificate has been issued and approved, the body would normally be sent to the local funeral home. At this point you are going to need to make some important decisions within a short time frame so here are your options:



You can have the body shipped home for burial.

The funeral home will contact the consulate of your country; several forms need to be completed and the funeral home will take care of all this for you. They will need a copy of the deceased's passport and immigration visa. According to international law, the body must be embalmed and shipped in a casket. The embalming and paperwork will take about 15-20 days, for which one of Huatulco's funeral homes, Funerales Díaz, charges \$36,000 mxn, plus the casket. A simple wood box is \$2,000 mxn, and a more elaborate metal casket runs about \$12,000 mxn. The largest cost here would be transportation and this depends on where you are sending it. There are both international shipping charges and an airline shipping fee; count on the airline fee being as much as, if not more than, a non-discounted ticket.

The body can be interred locally. You contact "Servicios Municipales" at the city hall to apply for a plot. They require a death certificate before they can assign a space. The cost is \$28,000 mxn, plus the casket, a stone and a small fee to dig the grave. Since there is separation of church and state in Mexico, you do not need to be Catholic to be interred in the cemetery in Huatulco. If you want to have the body interred in Mexico City, it can be shipped without embalming provided you act quickly.

Cremation. There is no facility in Huatulco, so the body would be sent to Salina Cruz. The crematorium requires copies of the following documents: death certificate, birth certificate, passport, immigration visa, and marriage license if applicable. There are three additional forms that need to be completed and signed by the next of kin and two witnesses. Again, the local funeral home will look after this for you. Cremation can generally be accomplished within two days and costs \$32,000 mxn. It is suggested that someone accompany the body to Salina Cruz, but that is not an absolute requirement.

If you are not a member of a local church, it is permissible to have a funeral, memorial service, or a wake (with or without the guest of honor present) in your home or in a rented hall.

This is an unpleasant topic and not something most people like to discuss. In the event of a sudden death, there is enough stress on the survivors without having to "second guess" what might be appropriate, so please consider the options and discuss this with someone you love.

Emergency phone numbers

Red Cross: 958 587 1188

Policía Municipal: 948 587 0675

Funerales Díaz: 958 587 2054, cel: 958 102 0060

Brooke Gazer operates an ocean view B&B in Huatulco,
www.bbaguaazul.com

From the Sublime to the Ridiculous, Death Pervades All Genres

By Carole Reedy

I was in a quandary when the editor and staff of *The Eye* chose death as the theme of this issue. What could I possibly say about death beyond what fellow cynic Woody Allen expressed so succinctly?

"I'm not afraid of death. I just don't want to be there when it happens."

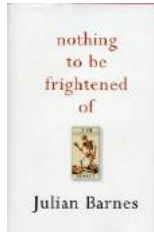
Thus, I began to research books on the subject. To my shock, no matter what the subject or genre, death stared me in the face, and not just in fiction or nonfiction selections or war or detective crimes, but also in books classified as adventure, action, comedy, drama, fantasy, history, philosophy, romance, politics, and science fiction. Death, it seems, is represented as much as life.

I chuckled at many of the titles: *Death Before Decaf*, *Death Comes Calling*, *Devoted in Death*, *Death Take a Trip*, *Relax: You Are Going to Die*, *Purity in Death*, *Survivor in Death*, *Origin in Death*, *Treachery in Death*, and the metaphysical *There Is No Death*.

Kidding aside, here are several fine pieces of literature in which death is the actual theme, not simply part of a plot or subplot. All, save one, are memoirs, and all belong to the sublime, not the ridiculous.

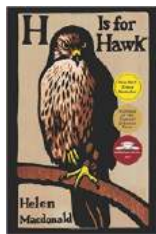
Nothing To Be Frightened Of by Julian Barnes

As always, Barnes plays with words and concepts to make a serious subject palpably funny, poignant, and utterly readable. Centered around his own family--father, mother, and philosopher brother--Barnes gives us a memoir that ponders the grand questions about the inevitability of death and our fear of it.



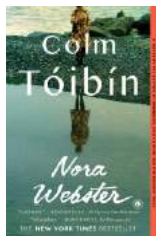
H Is For Hawk by Helen MacDonald

This recent bestseller memoir has received rave reviews from all of the distinguished publications worldwide despite the rather simple premise: a woman suffering the loss of her father looks to a hawk, and the training thereof, as a means of mending. As described astutely in the *New York Times*, the book "brings...a different kind of discovery: that grace resides in the most unlikely places - and that moving forward means leaving some things behind."



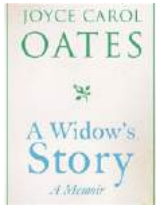
Nora Webster by Colm Toibin

I "discovered" Colm Toibin a few weeks ago when a friend lent me his latest novel, *Nora Webster*, which depicts the 1950s life of a widow in a small village in Ireland. Toibin's vision and understanding of women, loss, and family are incredibly genuine. The book came about after ten years of pondering and writing other novels, including *Brooklyn*, which became not only a popular novel, but a hit movie nominated for many prestigious awards. Memories of his mother as a widow, Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*, and Beethoven served as inspiration for this finely tuned compelling novel. One of his other novels, *The Master*, which delves into a few years of Henry James' life, also focuses on loss, grief, and failure.



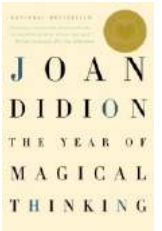
A Widow's Story by Joyce Carol Oates

When it comes to the art of writing novels and short stories, Oates is one of the shining stars of the 20th centuries. She has written more than 40 novels and numerous essays and short stories and won many prestigious prizes along the way. But a few years ago she took a break and wrote a memoir of the days leading up to and months following the unexpected death of her husband of many years, taking us this time on a journey of emotions that even she doesn't understand.



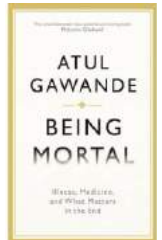
The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion

In *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Didion relates her contorted thoughts, imaginings, and reactions to tragedy in a book that was written during the year after the death of her famous husband, John Gregory Dunne. At the time, Didion was also struggling with the illnesses of her daughter, who died shortly thereafter. That story is told in a second book called *Blue Nights*. The one-woman theatrical production of *The Year of Magical Thinking*, starring Vanessa Redgrave, opened on Broadway in 2007 and has been playing since all over the world. The novel won the National Book Award for non-fiction in 2005 and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize for biography/autobiography.



Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande

This seems to be the book that baby boomers are reading these days, in light of the inevitability of aging and decisions to be made about death. Author and surgeon Gawande relates his experiences with patients, hospitals, the science of geriatrics, and nursing homes to give us insight into the process of dying. According to my reader friends, this is a book not to be missed.



To end this piece, ponder another Woody Allen quote on one of his favorite themes, life and death: "Life is full of misery, loneliness and suffering, and it is all over much too soon."



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Fishing Above the Volcano: The Seismic Coast of Oaxaca

By Deborah Van Hoewyk

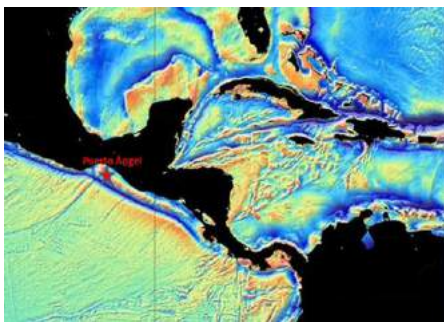
Word has it that the folks who fish the waters off Puerto Ángel really know how to find fish—tuna, red snapper, bonito, saltfish, and shark, along with lobsters, octopus, and conch. The fishermen go offshore, out to open ocean, over a shallow area with a well developed, multi-layered coral reef. Hmm. How did a reef get out there?

Well, first came an undersea volcano. This particular one—among hundreds if not thousands that form at the edges of tectonic plates as they struggle for position along the Pacific Coast—blew its top in 1803 and again in 1875. The records don't say much else. Given that volcanology was pretty much basic observation at the time, the volcano must have breached the ocean surface.

Remember Your Fourth-Grade Geography? Plates and Quakes?

If you spend a lot of time on the Oaxacan coast, you know it's one of the most earthquake-prone areas in the world. The prime mover in shaking the earth is those tectonic plates. Right off Puerto Ángel, the relatively small Cocos Plate has been trying to sneak under the North American Plate since time immemorial, probably 20 million years ago in the early Miocene Epoch. This “subduction” caused an unusual upheaval running crosswise under the major mountain ranges of Mexico, from Jalisco in the west to Veracruz in the east (most volcanic belts run within or parallel to mountain ranges). The upheaval pushed up volcanoes as it went, of which at least two are still active—Nevado de Colima (Jalisco) is just quieting down after three years of belching lava, ash, and smoke, while Popocatepetl in Puebla has been erupting since 2004. (Movement of the Cocos Plate caused the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, which killed over 5,000 people.)

The submarine volcanoes are created as molten rock (magma) escapes along fissures in the ocean floor. The great majority of fissures are located at the edges of plates jockeying for position—the plates are floating on the mantle of magma around the earth's



core and when they meet up, it's not cute. One slips under the other or they slip against each other, pieces break off; hence, earthquakes (*terremotos*), seaquakes (*maremotos*), the occasional tsunami, and . . . volcanoes!

At this point, the Cocos Plate is hemmed in by other plates, with the very large North American Plate to the northeast and the very large Pacific Plate to the west. The smaller Rivera Plate is on the northwest, and the mid-size Caribbean and Nazca Plates are to the east and the south, respectively. On the map below, the arrows indicate the direction of plate movement, and how many millimeters per year the plate is moving. Cocos is moving northeast, under the North American and Caribbean Plates, at 67 mm., or just over 2.6 inches, per year.



The movement causes minor, imperceptible quakes along the Oaxacan coast practically every day. Maybe every 8 to 10 years, there's a magnitude 5-6 earthquake like the one on April 10, with its aftershock on April 11. Magnitude 7-8 quakes happen every 70-100 years; a quake that size can generate a small tsunami. At 11:30 on May 11, 1870, five years before the submarine volcano erupted, there was a magnitude 7.9 earthquake with an epicenter in Pochutla.

The quake was accompanied by a loud subterranean noise that made “the stones leap from the earth,” Miahuatlán and Pochutla fell into ruin, there were great cracks in the fields and rockslides in the mountains. The earth was so hot you couldn't walk barefoot, and at the shore in Puerto Ángel, “the sand and the sea bubbled and boiled.” In Santa María Tonameca, west of Pochutla, most buildings were lost as well, but from beneath the ruins of the Catholic church, Tonamecans rescued a carved cedar statue of the Virgin of the Assumption, the town's patron saint. This was greeted as a miracle, and Tonameca hosts the largest festival in the area on May 11 to celebrate the Virgin's survival. Events last eight days, and represent a fascinating mix of pre-Hispanic and Catholic elements. There is a grand parade and a *guelaguetza* (dance festival with dances from the seven regions of Oaxaca), not to mention a rodeo, cockfights, lots of drinking (“ritual intoxication”) and fireworks.

The Making of a Submarine Volcano

It's not surprising that we don't have much information on the Puerto Ángel submarine volcano (technically, it's called the Submarine Volcano of Pochutla) and its reef, because it's hard to catch submarine volcanoes in the act (less than 4% of recorded volcanic eruptions have been from submarine volcanoes). And by worldwide standards the Puerto Ángel volcano would have been fairly small. However, several submarine volcanoes have been "born" in the 20th - 21st century, so the process has been well observed.

On November 14, 1963, a volcano breached the surface of the Atlantic just south of Iceland. And when it breached the surface, it was a sight to behold. It started more than 400 feet below the ocean surface, and the eruption was characterized by giant clouds of smoke and steam, extensive volcanic lightning, and fiery flows of lava.

Named Surtsey, after Surtr, a mythic Norse "fire giant," it sits on a fissure in the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (the boundary of the North American and Eurasian Plates). Surtsey continued to erupt for four years, pouring a lava "cap" over the surface of volcanic ash. Although the sea has reduced the island to about three-quarters of its original size, Surtsey's lava cap has protected it from being completely eroded, and it has developed plant and animal life.



Most submarine volcanoes never get that far, collapsing or being worn down into "seamounts." These have traditionally been mapped with bathymetry, profiling the ocean depths with ship-based sonar. A new effort using satellite technology to map the sea floor gives an even better idea of what the Puerto Ángel seamount looked like before the reef started to grow.

Researchers at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography at the University of California at San Diego have combined two types of satellite data that map "gravity fields." Combining the satellite data with other ocean sensing data, the researchers can identify thousands more undersea basins, mountains, and the ridges where plates meet and earthquakes occur (the edge of the Cocos plate along the Oaxacan coast has an "aura" of earthquake dots).

It works because satellite altimetry can produce precise measurements of altitude between the satellite and the surface of the ocean. Where a seamount rises from the floor of the ocean, its mass exerts a stronger gravitational pull, and surface of the ocean can drop as much as four inches, depending on the size of the mass. While seamounts were once thought to be merely navigation hazards, more recent exploration shows that they are "biological hotspots" for marine life. Their cone shape combines with ocean currents to push nutrients up towards the light, feeding coral, crustaceans, and fish.

If we think about how coral reefs form, one explanation for the Puerto Ángel fishing spot is that coral started to colonize the volcano while it was still above or near the surface. The coral wants to stay within sight of sunlight, so as the ocean collapsed or eroded the volcano back down below the surface (turning it into a seamount), the coral kept growing upward towards the light. There are three basic structures for coral reefs: build out from shore (fringing coral), create barrier reefs by starting from a fringing reef and joining individual reefs together, or by forming atolls, or circular reefs around a central lagoon. Charles Darwin proposed that atolls were formed when a submarine volcano subsided, leaving the circular reef to build on itself. In the case of Puerto Ángel, the reef went down with the seamount but kept growing upward toward the light, creating a terrific marine life habitat.

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The Under and Afterworld of the Ancient Zapotec People

By Julie Etra

The Zapotec people have historically occupied central and southern Oaxaca and part of the southern state of Guerrero, the southern part of the state of Puebla and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which is also part of Oaxaca. In pre-Columbian times, the Zapotecs were one of the most important civilizations of Mesoamerica, and today their descendants still comprise a large component of the population of Oaxaca. Zapotec is actually a náhuatl word "*Tzapotécatl*" (the language of the Mixteca or Aztecs) meaning people of the Zapote village, as they were conquered by the 'Aztecs'. They call(ed) themselves "*ben'zaa*" o "*vinizá*", people of the clouds.



Excellent farmers, the Zapotecs first settled in the Valley of Oaxaca in about 1400 B.C., establishing small villages based around rivers and sources of fresh water, cultivating chilies, squash, corn, beans, and chocolate, with corn providing the most sustenance to many villages. They therefore worshiped the gods of the sun, rain, soil, and corn to ensure an abundant harvest. While Teotihuacán flourished in central Mexico and with the Mayan cities in the southeast, the Monte Alban ceremonial center was the most important city in the Oaxacan region.

According to extensive archeological excavations of pre-Hispanic sites, particularly in Tehuantepec, burial practices varied enormously both in simplicity or complexity, and groupings. Some were simple, consisting of pits dug under the floor of habitations, to complex tombs with facades of intricate design and jambs and lintels with bas-reliefs, and large tombs with halls and multiple chambers. Some tombs had walls decorated with polychrome murals showing scenes of everyday life and ritual ceremonies. Other tombs contained riches such as jade from Guatemala, gold, silver, and turquoise, reflecting extensive trading in that part of the world.



Zapotec funerary urns were clay pots placed in tombs, most probably of the nobility. They were decorated with effigies of one or more of their gods or human beings depicted in a sitting position, guarding the burial site and intended to accompany, protect, and lead the dead through their journey to the underworld and eternal life. It was important that the dead rest in peace, and not wander aimlessly, while maintaining communication with those who still lived.

The Eye 16

The ancient Zapoteco people had their own god of the dead, or the underworld, *Pitao Bezelayo*. Although it is difficult to determine when this god first appeared in their culture, he reached the same importance as Cociyo, the god of lightning and rain. Pitao Bezelayo was also the god of masculinity, the father god, god of death, luck, and chickens, and protector of the land and crops. According to the Spanish-appointed mayor of Tlacolula, located just east of Oaxaca City (and currently well known for its vibrant market), sacrifices of adults, children, and animals were all commonly made to this god. He was married to two wives. Wife #1, Xonaxi Quecuya, Mother Death, was in charge of collecting the souls of the dead and was accompanied by insects that digest and decompose flesh (as in corpses). As a female deity she was always pregnant. Wife #2, Coqui Bezelayo had male and female attributes; his/her mother, Goddess of the Earth, Tlaltecuhтли, was born through a process known as parthenogenesis (without a male).



Pitao Bezelayo is sometimes represented as a skull, with hands shaped like pincers, ear ornaments, and a knife for a nose. Sometimes he appears as a skeleton with knees bent and mouth wide open, carrying a human femur in his right hand, and a sacrificial knife in his left. He also may be represented in the company of spiders and lizards, and frequently has an enormous phallus.

After Monte Alban, the Zapotec ceremonial center moved to Mitla, east of Oaxaca City, and the Hall of Columns was the gateway to the Underworld. The Zapotecs worshiped their ancestors and believed in the existence of an underground paradise, since previous generations clearly sprang from the earth. Pitao Bezelayo told the people to build the entrance to eternity in Mitla, where he was born.

The cult of Pitao Bezelayo was typical of the nobility during the Classic Period (350-850 A.D.), when the worship of ancestors was central to the Zapotec worldview. It continued through initial contact with the Spanish when the cult of death was at its peak at Mitla. This cult lasted well into the seventeenth century in remote indigenous communities of Oaxaca where Spanish influence was limited. Even after five centuries of conquest the veneration of the dead is still firmly rooted in the Oaxacan people, as expressed by the Day of the Dead celebrations.

Did you know?

The practice of burying the dead may date back 350,000 years.

Further Study Reading List

Check out these fun reads on a dark subject!

Compiled By Jane Bauer

Death Warmed Over By Lisa Rogak

You'll think you've died and gone to heaven when you sample the delicious fare laid out in DEATH WARMED OVER, a unique collection of 75 recipes typically served at funeral ceremonies, alongside descriptions of rituals and traditions from cultures around the world.

One part sociological study and one part cookbook, DEATH WARMED OVER explains the background and proper timing for such culinary rituals as passing a hen and a loaf of bread over a grave as dirt is shoveled onto the coffin, serving chocolate caskets and skull-shaped cakes at a funeral, and baking up a Funeral Pie to acknowledge the passing of a loved one.

Whether you've been asked to provide food for a funeral feast or wish to bring an appropriate culinary contribution for the extended mourning period, look no further than DEATH WARMED OVER. A unique cookbook that shows you how to incorporate long-standing ethnic and cultural traditions—from the Amish and Eskimo to Greek and Polish—into the planning of a well-rounded celebration of life. Features suggestions for ways to incorporate recipes and traditions into non-funeral parties or gatherings.

Undertakings of an Undertaker: True Stories of Being Laid to Rest

By Stanley Swan

Could these remains, yet to be identified, be one of the victims of Rochester's Genesee River killer? Did the mourner in the chapel with the casket and the deceased actually think there was an apparition present? Is it legal to bury a man with no pants? Would a man really drive his deceased wife to a mortuary instead of calling the authorities? Those ashes seeping from the fractured urn... imagined or real? The black cat visiting the deceased man's wake... a family friend or fiend? These are just some of the intriguing, unusual and funny stories to be found in Undertakings of an Undertaker: True Stories of Being Laid to Rest. Author Stanley Swan spent 37 years in funeral service, making notes from day one, and he has now penned them to paper and put them into print for others to see. Here you will read about the challenges facing those in funeral service—the highs, the lows, the personal sacrifices and the rewards. You will also experience all of the emotions encountered during the day-to-day business of taking care of a community's funeral and burial needs. Every story is true, as it really happened, with no embellishment, nothing left out...100-percent fact. Step into the world of funeral service, of which little has been written about over the last few decades. Funny, gut wrenching, chilling, unbelievable in many instances.



Funerals to Die For: The Craziest, Creepiest, and Most Bizarre Funeral Traditions and Practices Ever

By Kathy Benjamin

True stories that put the, er, "fun" back into funerals!

The hereafter may still be part of the great unknown, but with Funerals to Die For you can unearth the rich—and often, dark—history of funeral rites. From getting a portrait painted with a loved one's ashes to purchasing a safety coffin complete with bells and breathing tubes, this book takes you on a whirlwind tour of funeral customs and trivia from all over the globe. Inside, you'll find more than 100 unbelievable traditions, practices, and facts, such as:

The remains of a loved one can be launched into deep space for only \$1,000.

In Taiwan, strippers are hired to entertain funeral guests throughout the ceremony.

Undertakers for the Tongan royal family weren't allowed to use their hands for 100 days after preparing a king's body.

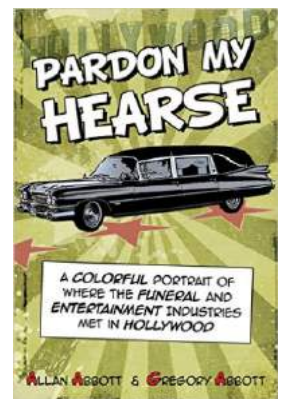
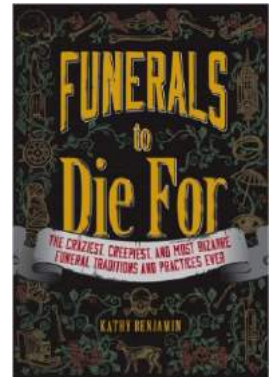
In the late 1800s, New Englanders would gulp down a cocktail of water and their family member's ashes in order to keep them from returning as vampires.

Whether you fear being buried alive or just have a morbid curiosity of the other side, Funerals to Die For examines what may happen when another person dies.

Pardon my Hearse

By Allan Abbott and Gregory Abbott

Even celebrities die—and he was the man who picked up the bodies! Allan Abbott ran the leading hearse, mortuary, and funeral services company in Hollywood and got an unprecedented glimpse of how celebrities really live and die. The Forrest Gump of the funeral industry, Abbott was everywhere celebrities died, from helping to prepare Marilyn Monroe's body for burial to standing next to Christopher Walken at Natalie Wood's funeral. Now in his memoir "Pardon My Hearse," Abbott tells the rags-to-shroud story of how we went from a young man with a hearse to the funeral driver to the stars—a rollicking, unexpectedly hilarious story of glamorous funerals, mishaps with corpses, and true-life glimpses of celebrities at their most revealing moments. "Pardon My Hearse" is an eye-opening look at secret Hollywood from the man who literally knows where the bodies are buried.



Calendar



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

May

Saturday May 7th

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

Saturday May 21st

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

Sunday May 29th

Encuentro de Cocineros - Local cooks gather with sample dishes to raise money for local charities.
2pm Santa Cruz 100 pesos

June

Saturday June 4th

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

Saturday June 18th

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

Sunday June 26th

Encuentro de Cocineros - Local cooks gather with sample dishes to raise money for local charities.
2pm Santa Cruz 100 pesos

Full Moons
May 21st
June 20th



Email Us
to list your event
on our calendar.
It's FREE!

TheEyeHuatulco@gmail.com

The Eye 18

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

Hiking

Weekly - Tuesday & Friday 9 am - November thru March Minimal cost for transportation
Oaxaca Lending Library- Pino Suárez 519
Hoofing It In Oaxaca (<http://www.hoofingitinoaxaca.com/>) 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 Teotitlán del Valle

Weekly - Thursday and Saturday - 9 to 5 pm \$750 pesos
Instituto Cultural Oaxaca
Travel, Learn, Fight Poverty. Fundación En Via (<http://www.envia.org/>) 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.
Instituto Cultural Oaxaca
Av. Benito Juárez 909

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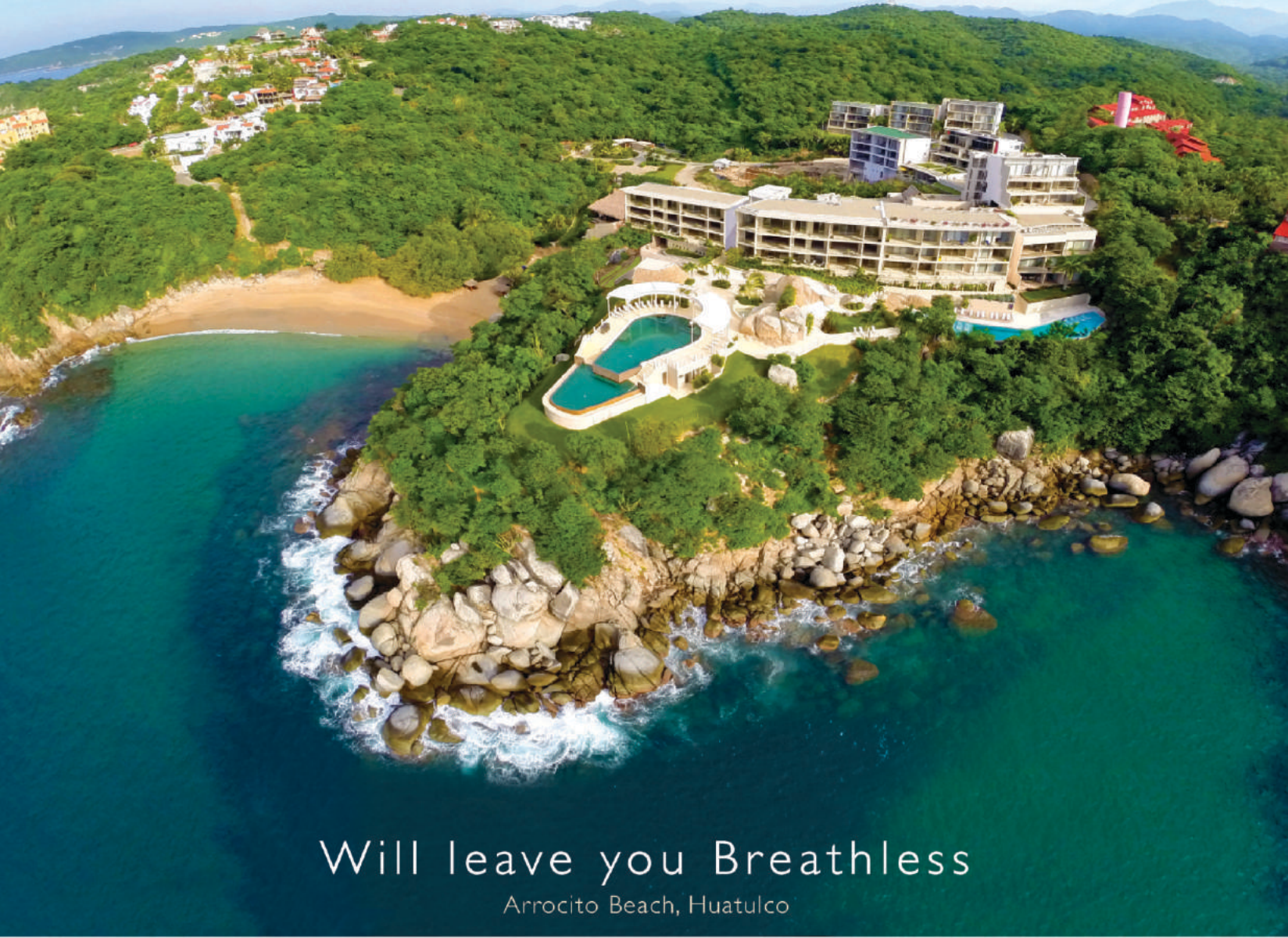
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