

The Eye



Beach, Village + Urban Living in Mexico

February 2024

Issue 135

FREE

IN THIS ISSUE:

THE DARK SIDE OF DIGITAL DATING

**THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF THE
HUATULCO GOLF COURSE**

MARRY ME IN MEXICO





Layne Ulmer Karla Mendez Mike Leon Lindsay Harder Erin May Brent May Lech Guzmán Hector Cisneros Bryan Paschke Mario Devcic

UNDER CONTRACT

Res Conejos

Oceanfront Villa #48210
\$1,950,000 USD
 Luxurious 4,531 ft2 oceanfront villa, 4bdr & 3 bth, with beach access and expansive infinity pool.

NEW LISTING

Tangolunda

Golf Course Villa #49988
\$1,250,000 USD
 Modern luxury villa boasting 5,242 ft2, 4 bdr + 6 bth with infinity pool, jacuzzi and outdoor kitchen.

NEW LISTING

Arrocito

Ocean View Huatulco Villa #50855
\$1,100,000 USD
 Beautiful 6,297 ft2 ocean view villa with 3 bdr, 4 bth, infinity pool, BBQ area & steps to the beach!

SOLD

Arrocito

3 Bedroom Beachfront Condo #45602
\$949,000 USD
 Direct beach access 2,745 ft2, 3 bdr, 3 bth condo with multiple pools, gym & on-site restaurant.

NEW LISTING

Arrocito

Ocean View Luxury Villa #50955
\$825,000 USD
 4,664 ft2, 3 bdr, 4 bth ocean view villa with pool, palapa roof, open living concept & steps to beach!

FOR SALE

Arrocito

3 Bedroom Beachfront Condo #50258
\$649,000 USD
 2,012 ft2, 3bdr, 2 bth ocean view fully furnished condo with direct beach access & multiple pools!

FOR SALE

Bocana

Bocana Beach House #43337
\$638,900 USD
 3,643 ft2, 2 bdr, 3.5 bth steps from beach w/pool, rooftop plunge pool & outdoor living spaces.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Zipolite

Pelicanos Aragon #51033
\$483,000 USD
 1,445 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth ocean view villas with infinity pool, plunge pool & access to Aragón Beach!

FOR SALE

La Mina

Casa Amanecer #45349
\$399,000 USD
 2,153 ft2, 2 bdr, 1.5 bth fully furn ocean view villa w/ expansive terraces & easy access to La Mina Beach!

NEW LISTING

La Mina

Ocean View 2 Bedroom House #50862
\$399,000 USD
 1,292 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth fully furnished home, spacious terraces & walk distance to La Mina Beach.

SOLD

Arrocito

2 Bedroom Beach Villa #45066
\$379,900 USD
 1,948 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth ocean view villa with private rooftop, plunge pool & steps to Arrocito Beach!

FOR SALE

Puerto Angel

Oceanfront 2 Bed Penthouse #50599
\$379,000 USD
 2,056 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth oceanfront fully furnished penthouse with expansive terraces and pool.

FOR SALE

Mirador Chahué

Ocean View Chahué Lot #49446
\$309,000 USD
 Build your dream home on this 8,937 ft2 ocean view lot located steps to the beach!

HOT!

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Arrocito

Punta Gaviota Starting at \$279,000 USD #51486
 2 & 3 bdr renewed ocean view condos with kitchen appliances pool, on-site restaurant & steps to beach!

FOR SALE

Sektor K

2 Bedroom Central Condo #46456
\$233,000 USD
 904 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth condo with private plunge pool, kitchen appliances & ocean view rooftop.

FOR SALE

Arrocito

One Bedroom Arrocito Condo #45555
\$233,000 USD
 697ft2, 1 bdr, 1 bth fully furnished condo with swimming pool, gym & steps to Arrocito beach!



MX (+52) 958.587.4543 | BaysideHuatulco.com

Vacation Rentals ✨ Property Management ✨ Residential & Commercial Real Estate

VISIT US AT ONE OF OUR LOCATIONS! BLVD CHAHUE | BLVD BENITO JUAREZ

Editor's Letter

"The day the power of love overrules the love of power, the world will know peace."

Mahatma Gandhi

What is love? This is something that humans have been asking for years. We seem torn as to whether to hold it up as the highest of emotions or as a frivolous undertaking.

Is 'love' what is depicted by grand gestures and romantic films? Or is it something that builds over time by the routine and comfort of a long marriage? If love is everything, why do we hesitate to accept it as a justifiable reason for turning your life upside down?

What if romantic love isn't 'the thing' we are meant to aspire to, and we have gotten it wrong from too much Jane Austen and John Hughes? Romantic love as we know it only began to appear to be named in the 1500s- prior to that, relationships were mainly transactional for survival and to expand one's wealth.

I recently started following an IG account about a German farmer who cuddles his chickens, goats, cows and sheep to a soundtrack of new age and classical tunes. It is very soothing- I can feel my nervous system relaxing as the animals nuzzle into him. What if love is what you transmit to each being you come into contact with? If that is the case what does your love look like?

Does it spread out freely in smiles to the person helping you in a store or bringing you coffee or cutting you off in traffic? The best advice I have gotten for getting annoyed with strangers has been to move through the world with the assumption that everyone is doing so with good intention. This has saved me countless grumpy moments.

If you are a regular reader you already know about my concern for the migrants that are crossing our paths. This morning there were about a hundred people of all ages and shades of skin. I rode past in the comfort of my car, on my way to a job I love and the very least I could do was allow love to flow out of me, to offer a water, to make eye contact. We often exchange 'que dios te bendiga' which I love, even though I don't consider myself religious. Lately a few have responded with 'te lo pago' with their hands in prayer, this means they will pay it forward and my heart swells with gratitude at the love that can spread from acts of kindness.

Maybe love isn't that complex. Perhaps it is as simple as seeing another and knowing there are no others.

See you next month,

Jane

Valentine's Dinner



Tangolunda
Huatulco, Mexico

February 14th
6pm and 8:30pm

Welcome Cocktail
Shrimp Crostini
Carrot Ginger Soup
Spinach Salad with Strawberries and Goat Cheese
Filet Mignon with Mushrooms and Red Wine
Chocolate Cake

700 pesos/ person



Reservations:

958100 7339/ 958 105 1671

email: chiles.chocolate@yahoo.com

Eye Team

Editor: Jane Bauer

Copy Editor: Deborah Van Hoewyk

Writers: Jane Bauer, Jan Chaiken, Marcia Chaiken, Julie Etra, Tania Guzmán, Randy Jackson, Brent May, Brooke O'Connor, Carole Reedy, Deborah Van Hoewyk, Kary Vannice

Cover Image: Laura Alcalá

Photography/Art: Various Artists

Distribution: Renee Biernacki, Maggie Winter

Layout: Jane Bauer

Opinions and words are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of *The Eye*.

We welcome submissions and input.

To get involved send us an email.

TheEyeHuatulco@gmail.com

In This Issue

Editor's Letter
By Jane Bauer
Page 3

The Dark Side of Digital Dating
By Kary Vannice
Page 6

How Puerto Escondido Is Redefining Design Trends: The Evolution of Real Estate
By Brent May
Page 8

Marry Me in Mexico
By Brooke O'Connor
Page 10

The Uncertain Future of the Huatulco Golf Course
By Randy Jackson
Page 12

Love, Telenovela Style
By Deborah Van Hoewyk
Page 14

I ♥ Axolotls
By Julie Etra
Page 21

Literary Illusions: The Sundry Faces of Love
By Carole Reedy
Page 24

Love and ¿Marriage?
By Jan Chaiken and Marcia Chaiken
Page 28

Sergio Valadez Estrada:
A Visionary's Lasting Legacy in Art
By Tania Guzmán
Page 30

www.TheEyeHuatulco.com

The Eye 4



EXPERIENCE THE BEAUTY OF Vacation Rental Travel

After more than 15 rewarding years at the helm of a vacation rental company in Huatulco, my passion for this unique form of travel has only grown. Being an avid traveler myself, I have relished spending time in homes and condos around the world, getting to explore new cities, beach destinations, and rural escapes while living like a local.

But I understand that departing from resort-based travel can be intimidating. There are a lot of what-ifs, how's and unknowns: where do you purchase groceries, how safe is it, how do you get around, who do you ask for help...all of the things that are at your fingertips in a resort setting but a little more obscure in a vacation home.

My Huatulco Vacation addresses traveler worries through our extensive concierge program, providing unwavering support from the planning stage to the culmination of your stay. For us, it's about removing the concerns and offering the comfort of knowing you're not alone. With that support in place, you can enjoy the exclusive opportunity to see behind the doors of some of the most unique and luxurious properties on Mexico's southern coast.

I've always found it an interesting perspective to realize, much like guests, homeowners also face a lot of unsettling unknowns. Who is going to rent my property? What happens if they damage something? What kind of insurance do I need? Where and how do I report my earnings? I experienced some of these fears myself as a vacation rental property owner. Despite owning and operating this business, I too worried about how people would treat my home.

My Huatulco Vacation addresses these concerns head-on with our comprehensive screening programs, rigorous ID checks, and dedicated advisors to handle ever-evolving insurance, legal and tax requirements for our owners, offering invaluable peace of mind. With that support in place, you can relax and enjoy both the supplementary income and the joy of reading reviews written by your appreciative travellers from around the world.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank everyone who has entrusted their vacations and properties to My Huatulco Vacation over the years. It has been an amazing experience.

I have forged enduring relationships with guests and owners and have immense gratitude for my team of employees and partners who have shown me true dedication, commitment and friendship. This incredible journey has been made possible because owners and guests alike were willing to "open the doors" to new possibilities. As we usher in 2024, my hope is for a continued wave of opportunity, travel and inspiration for us all.

Happy Travels,

Judy Baker Campbell,
Founder of My Huatulco Vacation

MY
huatulco
VACATION



GUESTS

Check out our portfolio of Huatulco vacation properties



OWNERS

Book a meeting with My Huatulco Vacation to discuss how we can help you save time & earn more.



Advertisement



The Dark Side of Digital Dating

By Kary Vannice

“Modern love” – can you even engage in it without a username and password? Hardly. In today's world, love, the finding of romance, and even love's tragic end are all largely taking place via digital devices, text messages, and even emojis.

Swiping and Mental Health

Platforms like Tinder, Bumble, and Match are fundamentally changing the way people meet, connect, and fall in love. Current tallies estimate that over 360 million people use online dating apps. While these apps provide opportunities to connect with potential partners, reducing relationships to “swipes” and expressing affection through emojis is taking its toll on our mental health.

According to the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, there is a direct link between using dating apps and experiencing loneliness, dissatisfaction with life, and a feeling of exclusion from the world.

The simplicity of swiping right desensitizes us to genuine connection and leads to a perception that relationships can be easily attained, but easily discarded as well.

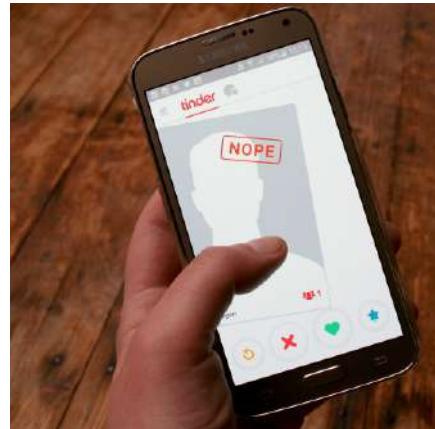
Psychotherapist Denise Dunne pointed to the problems in her interview with TRMW Magazine, an online, multi-platform culture site. She said, “These apps are designed around appearances, non-emotional online communication, and they are mostly about ubiquity and endless promise.”

Statistics show that digital dating contributes to increased anxiety, self-esteem issues, and a heightened fear of rejection. Online daters now have to contend with catfishing (being played by a fake online profile), harrasment, and the commodification of relationships.

The ease of creating curated profiles and posting filtered or fake photos leads to questions about authenticity and trust. There's even a new AI software called LoveGPT that, while designed to help shy and unpracticed online daters “enhance” their romantic communication, is now being used by scammers to create false online profiles and produce instantaneous flirtatious and enticing responses to naïve potential victims.

Relationships: Authentic vs. Disposable

Love and romance have always been the two best proving grounds for emotional acuity and resilience. But it takes trust to be vulnerable and authentic, which requires deeper emotional connection than some digital media offer. Reducing the initial stages of a relationship to a swipe right reduces relationship expectations. Many online daters become accustomed to quick digital interactions and can find transitioning to deeper, in-person connections challenging.



The casual and disposable way most dating apps approach matchmaking often presents potential partners as a simple set of statistics to be tallied rather than a whole human being with hopes, desires and emotional needs. It reduces people to 2D images, lists of likes and dislikes, and anyone within a 40-mile radius rather than as complex emotional beings

seeking love and connection.

Online dating allows, and almost invites, daters to treat connection and romance like online shopping, browsing through “merchandise,” and selecting commodities to try out at home. Interactions become transactional rather than meaningful, often leading to a lingering sense of emptiness and deep sense of hopelessness. As an article on *Medium*, an online site that presents human stories and ideas, put it, “Dating apps are educating a whole generation to relate to love like an Uber.”

Indeed, young people are most at risk of suffering from mental health issues around online dating, and it's also becoming apparent that this approach to finding love is weakening their emotional resilience and ability to create lasting relationships.

Studies also show that the emphasis on quick judgments and lack of face-to-face interactions hinders the development of empathy. Without empathy, it becomes challenging to develop meaningful emotional connections that are vital to intimacy and healthy relationships.

And, with so many casual encounters so readily available, it's easy to prioritize short-term gratification over the effort and investment required for longer-term commitment. This shift in mindset not only hinders personal growth and emotional fulfillment but also undermines the stability and strength of lasting partnerships.

Despite this dark side of digital dating, *Statistica*, the online data analysis and forecasting platform, states, “Online dating has grown in popularity in recent years, and this trend is projected to continue. By 2027, it is estimated that there will be 440 million people seeking love through online platforms.”

Given that this trend shows no signs of slowing down, and app developers are unlikely to address these issues, ultimately, it's up to users to change their approach to dating by prioritizing meaningful connections, viewing potential partners as real human beings rather than commodities, and fostering lasting love rather than fleeting encounters.



Escape to the coastal haven of Huatulco, Selva del Mar seamlessly blends luxury with nature, offering meticulously designed spaces adorned with warm tones and natural finishes. Wake up to the gentle embrace of the Pacific Ocean, with each day beginning with breathtaking views from the comfort of your own sanctuary. Located on the Quinta Avenida, just minutes away, Santa Cruz Beach invites you to enjoy the soft sands and crystal-clear waters, offering a slice of paradise at your doorstep.

APARTMENTS STARTING AT \$5,885,000 MXN

*commercial spaces starting at \$2,730,000MXN

CONTACT US

+52 958 106 5850
frances@blueresidences.com.mx
[@selvadelmar.mx](https://www.selvadelmar.mx)
[blueresidences.com.mx](https://www.blueresidences.com.mx)



BLUERESIDENCES



Selva del Mar
 5a. Avenida Huatulco

How Puerto Escondido Is Redefining Design Trends: The Evolution of Real Estate

By Brent May

In recent years, Puerto Escondido has emerged as a rising design destination, captivating investors, architects, art patrons, visitors and design enthusiasts. Nestled on the Oaxaca Coast between the Sierra Madre del Sur mountains and the Pacific Ocean, Puerto Escondido is undergoing a remarkable transformation, showcasing innovative and forward-thinking designs that are redefining the local real estate market and beyond. From sustainable building practices to the integration of natural elements, Puerto Escondido is setting a new standard for architectural excellence. In this article, we will explore the evolution of real estate in Puerto Escondido and how it is influencing design trends.



A Fusion of Tradition and Modernity

One of the defining characteristics of recent real estate projects in Puerto Escondido is the seamless fusion of traditional Mexican architecture, contemporary design elements and local materials. Architects and developers are embracing the rich cultural heritage of Oaxaca and integrating it into their projects. Traditional techniques and materials, such as palapa roofs, handcrafted clay bricks, colorful tiles, and artisanal finishes, are combined with modern design aesthetics to create visually stunning yet low impact and minimalist buildings. This blend has nuanced the overall sense of place and authenticity in the real estate developments of Puerto Escondido.



Sustainable Building Practices

Puerto Escondido is at the forefront of sustainable building practices, with a strong emphasis on environmentally friendly design and construction techniques. Architects and developers are incorporating energy-efficient features, utilizing renewable materials, and implementing innovative water management systems. Buildings are designed to maximize natural ventilation and lighting, reducing the reliance on high energy cooling and lighting systems. Furthermore, sustainable landscaping practices are used, promoting native plant species and water-conserving techniques like gray water recycling and recuperation. These sustainable initiatives not only reduce the environmental impact of the real estate developments but also create healthier and more livable spaces for residents and visitors.



Integration of Natural Elements

The natural surroundings of Puerto Escondido serve as a constant source of inspiration for architects and designers. Real estate developments in the area integrate with the coastal landscapes, tropical vegetation, pristine beaches, and stunning ocean views. Open floor plans, expansive windows, and strategically placed outdoor living areas allow residents to “just be” in the natural beauty of the Oaxaca coast.



Infinity pools, rooftop gardens, and terraces provide uninterrupted views of the Pacific Ocean and create a seamless connection between the built environment and the natural world. The integration of natural elements not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the properties but also creates a sense of tranquility and well-being.

Embracing Minimalism and Contemporary Design

In response to the demand for clean lines and simplicity, contemporary and minimalist design principles have found their place in Puerto Escondido's real estate landscape. Architects are creating sleek, uncluttered spaces that prioritize functionality and emphasize the use of natural materials. The same minimalist design principles allow for greater airflow. Neutral color palettes, minimalist furnishings, and expansive views contribute to a sense of spaciousness and calmness. This design approach allows residents to focus on the beauty of the surroundings from the comfort of elegant interior spaces.



Living the Mexican Dream

Puerto Escondido is undergoing an important evolution in real estate design, redefining trends and setting new standards for environmental, social and economic sustainability. Through the fusion of tradition and modernity, minimalist and contemporary design, sustainable building practices and the integration of natural elements, this rising design destination is captivating investors, residents and visitors.

Beachfront Living

Marinero Beach
2 & 3 Bedrooms
Private Plunge Pools
Direct Beach Access
Centrally Located
Rental Revenue



Starting at \$289,000 USD

Marry Me in Mexico

By Brooke O'Connor

Mexico has an old-world romanticism emanating from every corner. It calls to people's hearts for destination weddings—particularly people with Hispanic backgrounds or tourists who hold fond memories of sun-laden holidays on azure waters. Yet, like most things in the modern world, the wedding industry has become more industry and less authentic.

What are traditional weddings like, and how would you know your wedding will be authentically Mexican? First, if your wedding is in Mexico, it **is** a Mexican wedding. The next thing to ask yourself is how traditional you want to go. Prehispanic? Modern traditional? Gringo modern? Let's examine what those mean.

Prehispanic Weddings

You will never get an “authentic” prehispanic ceremony. When the Spanish invaded, most of the books were burned, and the native population was forced to forgo public ceremonies. What is left of the old ways has been passed down through oral traditions and human memory. If you ever played the telephone game where one person whispers something in the next person's ear, and then that person whispers into the next person's ear, you know by the time it gets to the last person, it's never the same thing. Imagine that, with the whispering lasting hundreds of years. Moreover, there were any number of prehispanic civilizations; a prehispanic ceremony in Oaxaca will most probably draw on Zapotec traditions, while a wedding in Mexico City will incorporate elements from the Mexica, and in the Yucatán and Chiapas it will draw on Mayan customs.



Regardless of origin, what we have left of the prehispanic ceremony is beautiful. In general, it begins by welcoming the four directions, the four elements, the spiritual guardians of the place, and the energy of the sky (or sun) and the earth. Various offerings may be placed on a table, a mat, or an altar. Then permission is requested for the betrothed to be allowed to join their energy in that place.

English Language Alcoholics Anonymous
Every Thursday at 10:30 a.m
Cafe Casa Mayor, La Crucecita

Zapotec tradition has the groom blindfolded to represent how the two really don't see each other until they become one. The bride and groom sit with their backs to each other, illustrating how they come from different places and don't know each other. The elder who officiates walks them through the counsel of how two become one in spirit, the couple faces each other, and the groom is unblindfolded. The couple can say a few words to each other, and then they are tied by the hands with a rope or a cloth, symbolizing their binding as one.

Mayan traditional weddings will be held in the Mayan language. If you want an interpreter, you can have as many as you like, with as many languages as you like. They have similar practices to the Zapotec, emphasizing connecting with the earth and everything around you.

Modern Traditional

This is where Catholicism meets culture. Much like godparents, “sponsors” called *padrinos* and *madrinas* help pay for and organize the wedding. These are usually family friends who have known the couple for many years and give advice. There can be multiple sets of padrinos and madrinas, which helps with the financial burden of a festivity that usually lasts two days. The wedding only takes about an hour, and the rest is for the party.

Instead of the ancient tradition of being tied by the hands, many couples will have a lasso tied around their shoulders in a figure eight, representing their union. The lasso will have a crucifix in the middle, and a blessing is spoken over the couple.

After a blessing and the exchange of rings, the groom will present the bride with *las arras matrimoniales*, which is a collection of 13 coins. This represents his ability to provide for the family and his commitment to the relationship. Then the padrinos will present the couple with a white Bible and rosary, which the officiant will bless.

The more traditional Catholic weddings include a bouquet of flowers for the Virgin Mother Mary and another for Jesus.

In some areas of Mexico, there will be a wedding parade after the ceremony. People take to the streets to cheer on the couple and sing with a mariachi band. It's typical to start drinking at this point – and then on to the reception!



Gringo Modern

You could get married on the beach, barefoot under an arch of seaweed, or incorporate any of the traditions above. After all, it is your wedding. However, there are some things to think about.

Your passport, immigration status, and marriage permit must be in order. Here is a link to everything you need:

<https://embamex.sre.gob.mx/hungria/index.php/en/consular-services/marriage-in-mexico>

In addition to the national requirements, there may be local requirements for the area in which you want to be married. Make sure to complete all paperwork and never gloss over steps, as Mexican bureaucracy can be very complicated and frustrating if not followed precisely.

Also, consider your guests. Will they want to trek into the jungle of mosquitoes to live out your dream of an ancient wedding rite? Or would Grandma feel better in a luxury hotel with a waiter bringing her margaritas?

As more people look to return to their roots, and DNA tests from companies like 23andMe are helping people identify their ancestral origin, it's tempting to want to return to the "old ways." Rest assured plenty of people are willing to let you pay for that privilege, so make sure you know what you're asking for and understand all parts of the ceremony you'll participate in.

Not Every Wedding Ceremony Is for You

Did you know someone has to marry an alligator in Oaxacan Chontal and Huave indigenous communities? Since pre-Hispanic times, there have been weddings between humans and alligators. The marriage between human and beast is a plea for rain, good crops, and enough fish.



As a nod to Catholicism, the female alligator is dressed in pretty white lace, like a virginal bride, and represents Mother Earth in the ceremony. She is wed to a male leader in the community – most recently Victor Hugo Sosa, mayor of San Pedro Huamelula, a bit west of Salina Cruz – and is then carried around town to be adored by all. Yes, the groom is expected to kiss the bride, and the community cheers wildly when that happens. (Photos show that her jaws are tied shut, and the last one was actually a caiman, not quite as fierce as an alligator.)

Though you probably won't be roped into marrying an alligator, read the fine print of any venue you choose.

Any package wedding destinations will have exclusions and add-ons. Make sure everything is in writing before handing over any money, and be clear on the refund policy for bad weather, pandemics, or other issues.

Divorce

With all the hoops you'll have to jump through to be married in Mexico, you'll have plenty of time to make sure you're making the right life choice. However, things happen.

If the mezcal has worn off after the sunburn fades, and you realize you would rather have married the alligator, take heart. US and Canadian residents can get divorced in their home country even if they were married in Mexico.

Then, you can return to the beautiful beach and live out your favorite Jimmy Buffet song in peace.



We are in Tangolunda!

Tel: 958 105 1671



Tuesday 8:30am-4pm

**Wednesday- Sunday
8:30am-10pm**

**Our Sunday brunch is the loveliest way to
end the week!
Sundays from 9am-3pm**

Dinners Wednesday - Sunday

Do you have your Manta Raya?



Manta Raya Beach Blankets are handwoven on a pedal loom in Huatulco, Oaxaca. Made of 100% cotton, they are ideal for picnics, home decor and as a top cover for your yoga mat.

Available at :
Café Surf (Santa Cruz)
Sea Soul Beach Club (Chahue)
Café Juanita (Tangolunda)

Yellow (Plaza Chahue)
La Verduzca (La Crucecita)
Casa del Sol Spa (Sector N)

Information WhatsApp +52 958-585-219

The Uncertain Future of the Huatulco Golf Course

By Randy Jackson

In an earlier article in *The Eye*, "[Bahías de Huatulco: Three Important Developments](#)" (December 2023), I wrote about the proposed conversion of the Tangolunda golf course to a national park. Although the federal government's announcement to convert this to a national park has not been withdrawn, there has yet to be an official decree to make the golf course into a natural area. The uncertainty looming over the fate of this crucial tourist asset for Huatulco stems from the clash of egos between the Mexican president and the billionaire owner. There have been strong reactions against the conversion to a national park, and uncertainty reigns over the future prospects of the golf course in Huatulco.

Background

The golf course in Tangolunda is known as *Las Parotas*, named after the majestic parota trees that enhance the beauty of the course. Established in 1991 under the administration of the federal agency FONATUR (*Fondo Nacional de Fomento al Turismo*), the golf course sustained operations until 2012, despite accumulating a reported loss of \$26 million mxn (\$1.5 million USD) over the preceding six years.

In an effort to mitigate economic losses and bolster tourism in Huatulco, FONATUR then opted to lease out the golf course. The objective was to attract third-party investments with the aim of elevating the golf course to a professional championship level. Grupo Salinas's *Producciones Especializada SA de CV*, chaired by Ricardo Salinas Pliego, head of TV Azteca and Grupo Elektra, secured a ten-year lease for the golf course on August 21, 2012. To acquire the concession, a payment of \$500,000 USD was made to FONATUR, coupled with an ongoing fee amounting to 10% of the golf course's income. Leasing out the Tangolunda golf course marked a pivotal transition in its operations and future prospects.



The Golf Course during the Ten-Year Lease

After extensive redesign under the famous Mexican golf architect, Agustín Pizá, the course reopened in 2014. The improvements to the greens and fairways were impressive. It has been raised to a first-class professional level, and is the only professional golf course in the state of Oaxaca. The course is a public course, made somewhat exclusive by the high cost to play golf there. The economic viability of the golf course is not publicly available. Anecdotally it seems there are few players, yet social media reviews generally give it high praise citing the beauty and challenge of the course and the high quality of service.



During the tenure of the lease there has been some controversy, focused principally on two issues: (1) water use, and (2) lack of tournaments that would help promote Huatulco.

The water use issue was reported in the Mexican press around August of 2022. The controversy centered around the golf course refusing to use greywater from the sewage treatment plants for irrigation. This was something the golf course had done during the years of FONATUR operation. Also, the greywater use was listed as one of the environmental sustainability practices that helps Huatulco qualify for the Earth Check award (Earth Check is a global evaluation group for sustainable tourism; Huatulco has been awarded Earth Check Certification each year since 2005 up to and including 2023).

The golf course water controversy was compounded by the fact that it now uses potable water for irrigation while Huatulco overall is at or near its potable water capacity. However, not reported in any of the news articles on this issue was the fact that the golf course had drilled its own water wells for irrigation and have not been using the potable water supplied by FONATUR, which is the source of the drinking water for Huatulco. Nevertheless, the golf course is using ground water at a rate of 350,000 liters per day. (Note: As I reported in "[Huatulco's water system: In Survival Mode?](#)" [December 2022], FONATUR produces 15 million liters of potable water per day from nine wells near the Copalita river).

The second issue cited against the operation of the golf course under the ten-year lease is the fact that the company operating the golf course hasn't properly promoted it, which would aid in the promotion of Huatulco overall; the example cited is the failure of the course to schedule any professional golf tournaments.

Golf Course Fees

The fees to golf at Tangolunda are, to quote social media reviews, “*muy caro*” (very expensive). The [Las Parotas website](#) lists the fees for 18 holes: Mon-Thu, \$2,700 mxn (\$160 USD); Fri-Sun \$4,000 mxn (\$235 USD). There is a discount for locals. Although this is an expensive activity, affordable by few, the costs are not out of line for such a golf course.

To provide a comparison, on the website of the [top 100 golf courses in Mexico](#), the Tangolunda golf course is listed as 49th. The top listed golf course on this website is Diamante Dunes in Cabo San Lucas. Its greens fees are listed at \$320 USD for 18 holes. For the golf course Vidanta Nuevo Vallarta in Nuevo (Puerto) Vallarta, one up from the Tangolunda golf course on the list of best 100 courses, the cost is \$195 USD.

Conversion to a National Park

With the expiry of the golf course lease in 2022, the current President of Mexico, AMLO (Andrés Manuel López Obrador) announced the golf course would be sold for \$600 million mxn (\$35 million USD), allowing Ricardo Salinas Pliego the first option to purchase it. Then on October 12, 2023, AMLO stated there were no purchase offers from Salinas Pliego or from anyone else and the Tangolunda golf course would be converted to a national park. This surprise announcement needs to be understood within a political context, the personal animosity between left-wing AMLO and conservative Ricardo Salinas Pliego.

According to the news site [Infobae](#), on November 2, 2023, in his normal morning news conference, AMLO took several minutes to blame Ricardo Salinas Pliego for “leading a campaign against him.” AMLO accused Pliego of not paying taxes owed amounting to \$25 billion mxn. Furthermore, he claimed that Salinas Pliego's news organization (TV Azteca) inflated the number of deaths from the Acapulco hurricane for political purposes.

Salinas Pliego responded the same day saying that AMLO was abusing his power because his tax case was before the courts and AMLO was linking victims of the Acapulco hurricane to his (Salinas Pliego's) organization in order to deflect political pressure on the president. The two have had public spats over private planes and educational textbooks as well.



The Healing Sanctuary Institute
Medical SPA / SPA Médico
Where the technology and well-being coincides

Appointments / Citas:
+52 958 117 7759
info@thsi.mx
www.thsi.mx

- Vaccine recovery treatment
- Pain management treatment
- Ondamed and NLS Frequency treatment
- CellSonic VTFP 25KV pulse treatment
- FlowPresso Lymphatic drainage treatment
- Ozone, Wellness IV, Foot Detox, Nutraceuticals

Prevention is Power!
Av. Mitla 303, Mz18 Lt3-4, Local 8 y 9, Col. Santa Cruz, 70987 La Crucecita, OAX, MEX

The Current (Uncertain) State of the Golf Course

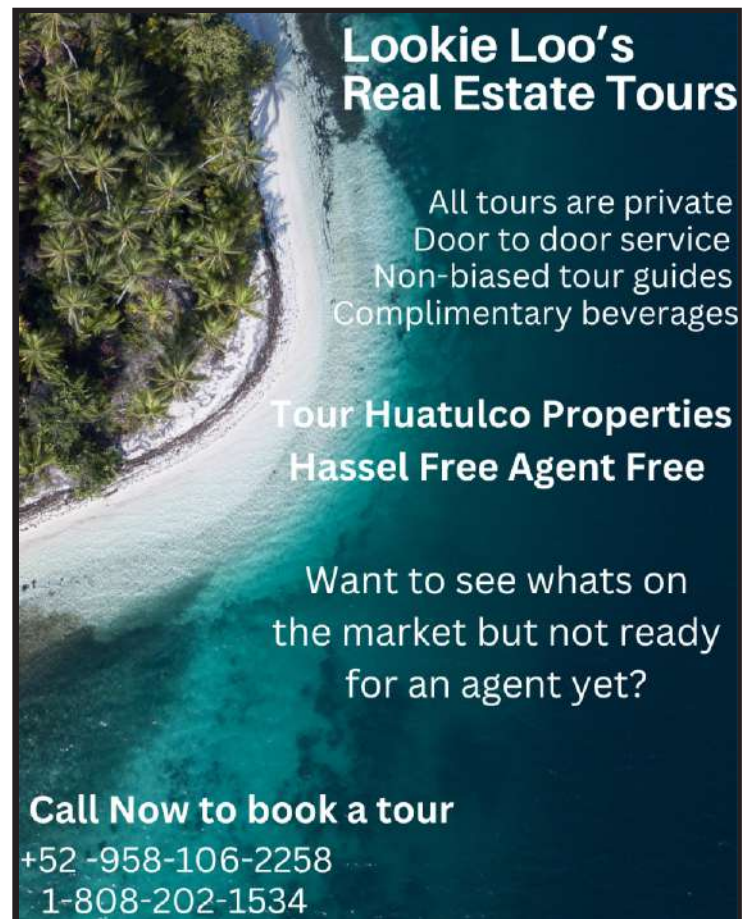
The Tangolunda golf course continues to operate normally under the ownership of Salinas Pliego, regardless of the political rhetoric. And the story is not over. There have been official protests against the conversion of the golf course by a number of Huatulco area business organizations. At the Oaxaca state level, the chamber of deputies has approved a motion asking for the Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) to refrain from declaring the Tangolunda golf course a Protected Natural Area.

Moreover, when Oaxaca governor Salomón Jara Cruz announced there would be investigations into the legitimacy of some of the real estate transactions in Huatulco carried out by FONATUR during previous administrations, he added that the Tangolunda golf course, despite the announcement to convert it to a national park, was tied up in litigation over the extension of the original ten-year lease. Because of this litigation, no change can be made to the golf course.

Then on January 15, 2024, we learned that Jara Cruz has accused a particular FONATUR executive with corruption by extending the ten-year lease without authorization. Salinas Pliego has responded by saying all regulations have been followed and his company has the lease extended until 2027.

So perhaps when thinking about the future of the Tangolunda golf course, the best advice might be from historic New York Yankees coach Yogi Berra, who famously said “It ain't over till it's over.”

For contact or comment, email: box95jackson@gmail.com



Lookie Loo's Real Estate Tours

All tours are private
Door to door service
Non-biased tour guides
Complimentary beverages

Tour Huatulco Properties Hassel Free Agent Free

Want to see whats on the market but not ready for an agent yet?

Call Now to book a tour
+52 -958-106-2258
1-808-202-1534

Love, Telenovela Style

By Deborah Van Hoewyk

When we first arrived in Huatulco, in the winter of 2004-05, we stayed in a long-gone B&B in La Bocana and ate in the next-door restaurant, Los Güeros, which is still there. It was a quiet, magical place – apparently, however, not magical enough for the family that ran Los Güeros, as they gathered every night to watch a TV suspended from the ceiling. Sparsely lit by circular fluorescents, the blue-painted restaurant seemed to pulsate to the flickering movement on the screen.

The family was devoted to *telenovelas* – prime time, melodramatic, soap operas. Immensely popular in practically all Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking countries, telenovelas are “maxi-mini-series”; unlike U.S. soap operas, they almost always complete their story arc in less than a year, often less than six months. The shorter duration doesn't keep telenovelas from having complicated plots rife with reversals and revenge, drama and deceit, usually driven by love, be it forbidden or happy-ever-after, or maybe both.

Telenovelas also differ from U.S. soap operas in that they are set in a social, political, and economic framework; they acknowledge poverty, factory layoffs, class differences and conflicts. Indeed, doomed love between an honorable-but-struggling young woman and a wealthy man is a favorite theme, especially in earlier telenovelas. (Don't worry, they usually get together in the end – think Cinderella!)

How Did Telenovelas Come To Be?

The direct ancestor of the telenovela is the *radio-novela*, and the ancestor of the radio-novela was born in Cuba, in a 19th-century cigar factory. *El lector de tabaco*, the tobacco reader, read many things to the cigar-makers, but among them were novels, presented chapter by chapter, day after day. It was thought to entertain the workers, to relieve the tedium of factory work and ensure they would show up to hear more.

Cuba made its first attempt to win its independence from Spain in the unsuccessful Ten Years' War (1868-78); cigar makers and workers who fled the war moved to Mexico, specifically the state of Veracruz, ideal for growing tobacco, and Florida in the U.S. The tobacco reader came along. Soon there were readers in textile and other factories as well.

Once the *lectores* began to include labor issues in their readings – seen by some historians as leading to the labor movement (a story for another time), they were on their way out. Factory owners did not like having their workers educated on what they saw as socialist, communist, or anarchist themes. Mexico banned *lectores* in its factories, although whether that was a total ban is unclear. In the US, the tobacco factories in Ybor City, part of Tampa, staged multiple strikes – the live readings ended with the strike of 1931 - but there are still *lectores* in Cuba today.

Radios Replace the Readers

As soon as radio became available, it, too, was put to work in factories to entertain workers. In her doctoral work at the Free University of Berlin, researcher Hanna Müssemann studies “every-day media,” and has confirmed that radio broadcasts, and then radio-novelas, were intended to entertain factory workers, among other audiences, and to keep workers coming back for “the rest of the story.”

Radio arrived in Mexico at 8 pm on September 18, 1930, when station XEW began broadcasting from the Olimpia Cinema on Calle 16 de Septiembre, right off the zócalo (main square) in Mexico City. Intended for broadcasting music, XEW also produced theatrical works on the weekend; when XEW put out its first radio-novela in 1932, they followed in the steps of the tobacco readers, and broke up the French novel *The Three Musketeers* (Alexandre Dumas, 1844) into 15-minute segments.

That there was a cliff-hanger element to the radio-novela was made quite clear when XEW writer Vicente Leñero put together guidelines for creating radio-novelas: the plot should have “mild suspense” (*suspensos suaves*) before commercials, “disturbing suspense” (*suspensos inquietantes*) for the end of the episode, and “frightful suspense” (*suspensos tremebundos*) at the end of the week.

XEW's radio-novelas didn't really take off until March of 1941, when they put on *Ave sin nido, la vida apasionante de Anita de Montemar* (*Bird without a Nest, the Passionate Life of Anita de Montemar*). Anita de Montemar is a student at a nunnery who falls in love with Carlos Miranda, an engineer who handles the mechanical needs of the nunnery. Carlos and Anita marry, only to discover that Anita cannot have children. Carlos's old friend Carlota is experiencing hard times, and gives her daughter to Anita and Carlos to raise. It turns out, of course, that Alicia is actually Carlos's daughter with Carlota, and Anita, destroyed, leaves her family. There you have it – the first radio-novela and all the themes that will become the telenovela: obstacles to love, love realized, poverty, deceit, illegitimate kid, and love in ruins.





THAI PEI
ASIAN FOOD

Huatulco's Best Asian Food

Open 2 pm - 9:30 pm
Closed Tuesdays

Calle Gardenia near Macuitle
La Crucecita
Tel: 958 117 9193
Facebook: Thai-Pei Huatulco
Instagram: thai_peihuatulco



with the success of *Bird without a Nest*, XEW began broadcasting five radio-novelas a day; enormously popular, they were the mainstay of Mexican broadcasting through the 1950s. Radio-novela casts included major stars from the big screen (the 1950s was the “Golden Age” of Mexican filmmaking). As in the US, they were sponsored by domestic products, mostly soap. The sponsors were particularly happy when a soap opera delivered a moral ending that listeners could apply to their own lives.

From the Radio-Novela to the Telenovela

Radio-novelas continued to be produced up until 1983, even though a more congenial medium – television – had arrived. Television actually started in Mexico on August 19, 1946, a mere 16 years after the country's first radio broadcast. Not that it was an auspicious start – Guillermo González Camerano, an electrical engineer, broadcast the first television signal from his Mexico City bathroom. Nonetheless, on September 7, an experimental television station had started broadcasting artistic programming and interviews. In 1950, XHTV, Channel 4 in Mexico City, became the first commercial station in Latin America. As other stations formed, they joined together as Telesistema Mexicano; in 1973, Telesistema joined with Television Independiente de México to create Televisa, which became the world's largest producer of Spanish-language television content, including, of course telenovelas. (Televisa is now 45% of TelevisaUnivision, the largest U.S. producer of Spanish-language content.)

The very first telenovela was created in Brazil in Portuguese in 1951. *Sua vida me pertence* (*Your Life Belongs to Me*) contains the first on-screen kiss seen in Brazil. Relatively simple by current telenovela standards, it offered fifteen episodes, broadcast twice a week, and followed the story of a developing love affair between a young woman and an older man. In 1952, Cuba's initial offering was *Senderos de Amor* (*Paths of Love*), which involved a repressed spinster who was in love, did bad things, and represented the evils of urban life as opposed to the morality of the countryside. The next year, Cuba and Mexico collaborated on *Ángeles de la calle* (*Angels of the Street*), in which a kindly grandma helps out street urchins (said urchins apparently were a popular theme at the time).

The Mexican Telenovela Industry

Mexico finally got going on its own when, on June 12, 1958, Telesistema started broadcasting *Senda Prohibida* (*Forbidden Path*), sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive Mexico. There were no poor-but-innocent heroines in this one – the great Silvia Derbez played Nora, who had been small-town poor and suffered for it, but was now an ambitious secretary who falls for her married boss, and despite his very nice wife and cutie-pie son, suckers him out of big gifts and fancy jewelry, which leads to his financial ruin. The 30-episode telenovela ends with Nora in her wedding dress, crying before a full-length mirror, her plotting unrewarded in the end. Silvia Derbez received hate mail, threats, and people waited outside the studio to curse at her and even attack her for being so evil. (*Senda Prohibida* was remade [*refriteado*] in 2023, with an emphasis on Nora's creating conflict between boss father and now-grown son.)



Televisa went full-on into telenovela production, with 3 more productions in 1958, 8 in 1959, 239 titles in the 1960s, and another 550 through 2019. During and following the 1970s, the melodrama increased, sex (and sometimes nudity) appeared on screen, and crises like murder, incest and drug addiction began to appear. On the other hand, the Cinderella-type stories also appeared with increasing regularity.

One that's got it all? *Los ricos también lloran* (*The Rich Also Cry*) tells the story of Marina, thought to be poor but swindled of her inheritance, who is asked to live with a wealthy family. She falls in love with the spoiled son of the family, and he with her, but he marries someone else; there's a hit man, a fake pregnancy, a gangster, robberies and murders, a psych ward, real adultery, adultery misunderstood, a lost child, an adopted child – it just goes on and on through 248 episodes, all crammed into the four-plus months between October 16, 1979, and February 29, 1980. There is, of course, a happy ending. *Los ricos* is considered the first “global telenovela,” dubbed into 25 languages and sent off to Russia, Poland, Greece, Serbia, Japan, as well as English, French, and Portuguese.



Reflecting Culture, Shaping Culture

Recently, the academic community has turned its attention to telenovelas, which had generally been dismissed as “simply another example of the ‘mind-numbing’ mass-media programming” driven by copying American capitalistic and consumerist tendencies. That notion didn't last too long, and now we have detailed analyses like *Mexican Screen Melodrama: Unraveling Mexico's Sociocultural Expectations and Ambiguities* by Sofia Rios Miranda (2020), which looks at social change in Mexico and “Mexico's ambivalence around socioeconomic background, race and religion, gender and worth, family and duty.”

Telenovelas are used, both indirectly by shaping the way people look at the world, and directly by imparting “public service” messages, as educational tools. A good example of indirect “education” would be how they shape the audience's ideas about gender (telenovela heroines generally have light complexions, and their dress and makeup reflect upper-middle-class European standards). Health agencies have promoted more direct messages: *Encrujiada: Sin salud no hay nada* (*Crossroads: Without Health, There Is Nothing*), a telenovela about Alicia, a psychiatrist who dies of colon cancer. The series, created in 2012 for the Hispanic population in California, emphasizes the importance of early detection of cancer. There have been telenovelas designed to change attitudes toward homophobia, drug addiction, and domestic violence.

Huatulco Salt Company

handcrafted sea salt for cooking



Available at Café Juanita, Chiles & Chocolate and the Huatulco Airport

www.HuatulcoSaltCompany.com

Romancing the Narcos

And then there's the *narco-novela*. The 1970s were not just the time when telenovelas reached their height, it was when drug cartels became part of the fabric of everyday Mexican life. Popular music, with its *narcocorridos* (drug ballads), and narco-dramas in film and novels began to show people caught up – willingly or not – in the social and political violence brought by drug production and distribution.

The first narco-novela was a 2006 Colombian production, *Sin tetas no hay paraíso* (*No Boobs, No Paradise*). Catalina has a very small bust, which she believes is keeping her from marrying a rich drug lord, so she becomes a call-girl to pay for the breast implants that she sees as her path out of poverty. Needless to say, things do not go well – after participating in all manner of corrupt and murderous narco activities, Catalina arranges her own assassination to escape her misery.

Narco-novelas show drug lords with some admiration, and government and law enforcement as corrupt, inept, and underhanded. Like *Sin Tetas*, most narco-novelas have made some effort to portray the drug trade in a negative way. That gets a bit lost in the shuffle by the time we get to *La Reina del Sur* (*The Queen of the South*).

La Reina del Sur and El Chapo

Based on the 2002 Spanish novel by Arturo Pérez-Reverte, *La Reina del Sur* is the story of Teresa Mendoza, a Mexican woman who becomes the most powerful drug trafficker in southern Spain. Season 1 was produced by Telemundo, NBC Universal's Spanish-language TV network, with other partners. Seasons 2 and 3 have been made by a Telemundo Global Studios – Netflix partnership. To date, there have been 183 35-minute episodes; there's no indication there will be a Season 4. Teresa is played by Kate del Castillo, who started out in telenovelas, notably *Muchachitas* (Young Girls), a 1991 Televisa hit.



Yes, *that* Kate del Castillo, who arranged an interview for the American actor Sean Penn with Joaquín Archivaldo Guzmán Loera – El Chapo – the former head of the Sinaloa cartel. In 2012, del Castillo tweeted “Today I believe more in El Chapo Guzmán than I do in the governments that hide truths from me ... Mr. Chapo, wouldn't it be cool if you started trafficking with the good? Let's traffic with love, you know how.” Two years later, El Chapo's lawyers contacted del Castillo to explore putting the drug lord's life up there on the big screen. They gave her a special phone that could text El Chapo.

So ... she texts El Chapo to set up a meeting with Penn, El Chapo checks out Penn, and by October 2015, everyone is good to go. Except ... the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency had already tapped all of El Chapo's communications, including Castillo's “special phone,” and the Mexican marines were going to take out El Chapo at the same time as the meeting.

Bad weather stopped the marines, Kate del Castillo thinks Sean Penn took advantage of her, Mexican authorities investigated del Castillo to a fare-thee-well, Sean Penn planned to write an article for *Rolling Stone*, not make a film about El Chapo, the Mexican government was humiliated when the story came out – sounds like a narco-novela, ¿no?



Beautifully styled, organic, functional, and timeless spaces that cater to your lifestyle on the coast

BOOK YOUR INTERIOR DESIGN CONSULTATION

+52 958 186 9348
solcreativedesign.com



SOL CREATIVE
DESIGN

Cocktail Class

Thursday, February 8
5-7pm
*Nixta

Beyond the margarita!
Join culinary expert, Jane Bauer, for these fun and informative classes that will elevate your cocktail skills and introduce you to Mexican spirits.

We will be making 3 different cocktails and pair each with a light snack

Classes are held at Café Juanita
Cost 800 pesos

Reservations:
chiles.chocolate@yahoo.com
Whatsapp +52 958 100 7339





ALMA

YOUR ARCHITECTURAL SANCTUARY

RESHAPING HOW YOU EXPERIENCE HUATULCO

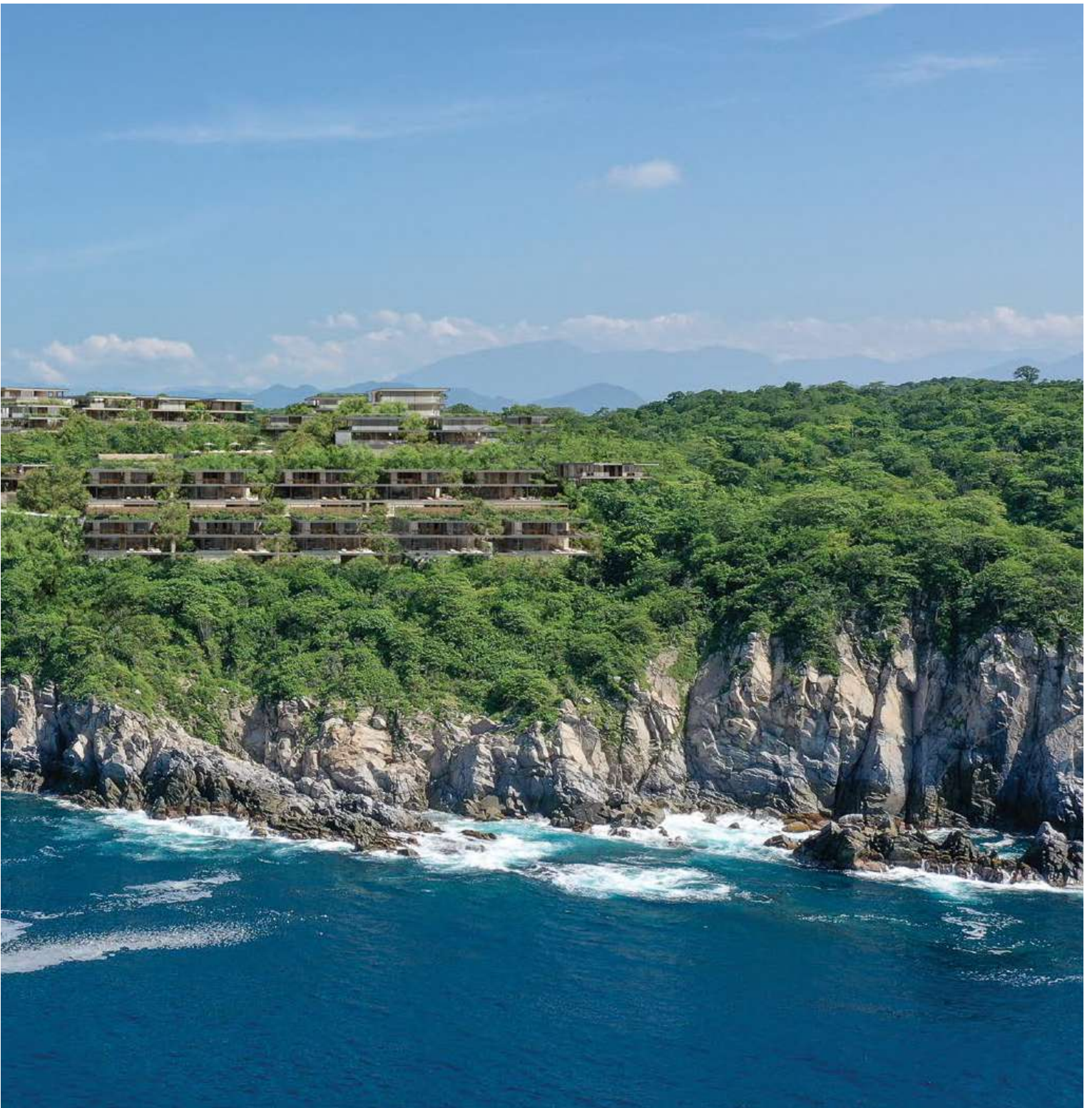
OCEANFRONT COMMUNITY | BLEND OF ARCHITECTURE AND NATURE
ENHANCED INTIMACY | 2 TO 4 BEDROOM VILLAS & CONDOS



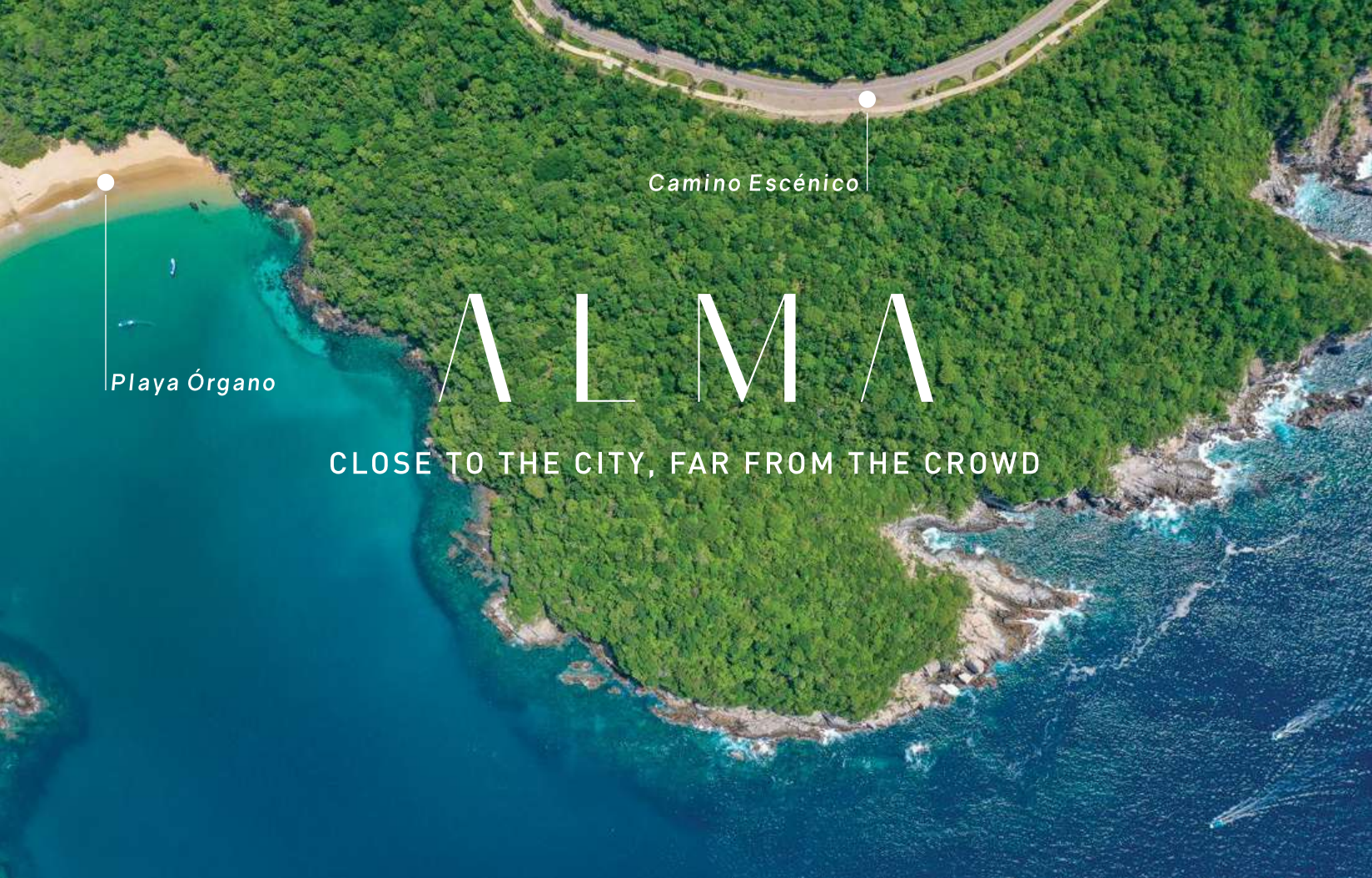
Exclusively offered by Resort Real Estate



DESIGNED BY RENOWNED MEXICAN ARCHITECTS
JJRR/ARQUITECTURA & MÓDICA-LEDEZMA



Set amongst the lush landscape of Huatulco, ALMA embraces visual integration, low height, low density, sustainable design, and an elevated living experience. With perfectly framed ocean views, ALMA calls to those in search of a balance of nature and architecture.



ALMA is **embraced by Playa Órgano and Playa Violín**, nestled between the National Park and the Lighthouse. **It boasts jungle trails to virgin beaches**, impressive sea views, **300 meters of oceanfront (1,000ft)**, along with miles of biking lanes, sunrises and sunsets.

While **feeling completely secluded**, enjoy a short **4-minute nature drive** to the conveniences of **Santa Cruz**, and an **8-minute drive to La Crucecita**.

Huatulco's first sector dedicated to **modern architecture integrated into nature** will **forever remain quiet and preserved**, due to the recent **National Park extension** as well as **low density and low height** regulations. Bike, walk, jog or drive into town easily via a scenic road in perfect condition, all while relishing the silence of a **one-of-a-kind neighbor: Huatulco's National Park**.

INQUIRIES: w.alma-huatulco.com

I ♥ Axolotls

By Julie Etra

The first time I saw the salamander called axolotl(s) (*Ambystoma mexicanum*, aka ajolote) endemics of the remnant lakes of the Valley of Mexico and now confined to Xochimilco, was in Xochimilco at one of the tourist 'museums' along a main canal.

The pinkish creatures on exhibit are commercially produced, and not native to the polluted waters of Xochimilco, the wetland system in the heart of Mexico City. and they exhibit the pinkish color of domestication. Wild populations are brown/tan with gold speckles and an olive undertone. This critically endangered species lost most of its habitat centuries ago due to the draining of the valley by the conquering Spaniards, with Xochimilco now a vestige of its former self. Axolotls have a lizard-like head, described as "friendly-faced," surrounded by feathery gills, four legs, and a tail. They range in size from 6 to 18 inches.



Why is it so important to "bring back" the wild axolotl? For the same reason preserving all species is important – genetic variation. As noted below, the axolotl is very important to biological research, as it is one of the few animals that can regenerate lost body parts. Commercial breeding technology reduces genetic variation, thus weakening the organism's ability to adapt. This affects the animal's ability to survive in the wild, and to respond to changes introduced in research.

Physiology and Morphology

This rather large salamander has a number of physiological features that make it unusual. Although it is one species of tiger salamander, it is unique in its "neoteny," a zoological term that

means the retention of juvenile features into adulthood, that is, the axolotl never undergoes metamorphosis, for example, the process of a tadpole changing to a frog. The axolotl's gills remain external, and they retain their tail fins. Unlike other salamanders this one never makes it to land, completing its life cycle entirely in the water.

Cute, But Critically Endangered

The axolotl is only found in the wild in the waters of Xochimilco. A 2003 study by the Mexican Academy of Sciences found an average of 6,000 axolotls for each sq km of Xochimilco, about 1,020,000 axolotls; by 2015, it was down to 36 per sq km, or about 6,120. A more recent study found fewer than a thousand in all of the 170 square kilometers of Xochimilco.

The ancient Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, now Mexico City, was founded in the early 1300s CE on an island in Lake Texcoco. Texcoco was connected with four other lakes in the Valley of Mexico, one of which was Xochimilco. After the Spaniards conquered the Aztecs in 1521, they drained much of the valley, leaving Xochimilco a vestige of its former self.

Habitat for the axolotl was sharply reduced but still existed up until about the 1950s. Since then, habitat degradation has accelerated as rapid urbanization has changed the distribution, movement, and management of water systems in the Valley.

In addition, the water system has been degraded by pollution from urban runoff and uncontrolled development, raw sewage, agricultural waste, and land use conversion, and has been reduced by drawdown of lake levels to supply water to Mexico City and the surrounding environs. Today, most of the water in Xochimilco's canals comes from a water treatment plant in nearby Cerro de la Estrella, but supplies are inconsistent.

Predation is also a factor in the axolotl's decline. Carp and tilapia were introduced in Xochimilco in the 1970s in an effort to increase food supplies; unfortunately, they prey on axolotl eggs and young. Loss of shade cover and food – they eat mollusks, worms, insect larvae, brine shrimp, other small crustacea, and small fish – also continue to accompany loss of habitat.

The axolotl is important for research because it has can rapidly regenerate parts of itself, making it useful for studying the potential for tissue regeneration in humans. In just a few months, they can regenerate not just their tails, but their skin, muscles, bones, blood vessels, central nervous system, heart, and brain.

What other animals can regenerate body parts? In fact, quite a few. Other species of salamanders can regenerate their tails; starfish can regenerate their "arms" and their bodies from arms; sharks regrow their teeth throughout their lives. The Mexican tetra, a fresh water fish, can regrow heart tissue. Many lizards, including iguanas, skinks, anoles, and geckos, can regenerate their tails. But none of these can do as much as the axolotl.

Despite remaining juvenile all their lives, axolotls reach sexual maturity at 17-27 months and can breed several times a year. Because their habitat is entirely aquatic – that is, no drought conditions – they can generate more offspring per breeding event (salamanders do not reproduce well, often not at all, under drought conditions). After the courtship dance, the female axolotl takes up the sperm capsule deposited by the male. Fertilized eggs are laid individually on aquatic vegetation.

The Axolotl in Mythology

The axolotl loomed large in Mexica (the Aztec group that built Tenochtitlán) mythology, and they were included in their art and creation myths. The name axolotl (from the Nahuatl *atl* = “water” and *xólotl* = “monster” or “dog”) means water monster or water dog, and is the aquatic form of Xólotl, the Aztec god of fire and lightning and the twin brother of Quetzalcóatl (the feathered serpent deity).

According to Aztec legend – and there are many versions of each legend – when the sun was created, it did not move. Each god was supposed to sacrifice a body part to make the sun move and to begin life, but Xólotl did not want to sacrifice any part of himself. To hide from fellow gods (would-be assassins), Xólotl transformed himself into a variety of plants and animals, including the xoloitzcuintle, the hairless pre-Columbian dog. The axolotl was his last camouflage before he was captured and killed.

The Axolotl in Literature

An obscure short story, written in 1954, was brought to my attention by a good and extremely literate friend from Pluma Hidalgo. “Axolotl” is by the French-Argentinian writer Julio Cortázar (1914-84), and was published in his 1956 collection *End of the Game and Other Stories*. The story is told by a lonely man visiting the aquarium at the zoo (*ménagerie*) at the Museum of Natural History in Paris. He becomes fascinated and obsessed by the axolotls and eventually believes he has been transformed into one of them. Although I read it in English, I found it to be dark and depressing, and overly descriptive. (Available through the University of Kentucky at www.ambystoma.uky.edu/teachers_materials/axolotlbook/AxolotlByJulioCortazar.html.)

Another read is *Axolotiada: Vida y mito de un anfibio mexicano* (*Axolotiada: Life and Myth of a Mexican Amphibian*), by Mexican anthropologist Roger Bartra Murià (2011). An anthology of works about the famous amphibian, the book includes texts from the Mesoamerican codices to the work of authors such as Cortázar, Satoshi Tajiri, Aldous Huxley (“A Fetal Monkey”), Primo Levi (“Angelical Butterfly”) and Octavio Paz (“Salamandra”), among others, along with graphics from street graffiti to the scientific illustrations of landscape painter José María Velasco and the murals of Diego Rivera.



Axolotls for the Laboratory

The majority of commercially-bred axolotls in the world today trace their ancestry to a shipment of 34 axolotls from Xochimilco to Paris in 1863, delivered to the zoo at the Museum of Natural History, the very place that inspired Cortázar to write his strange tale. The amphibian is easy to breed in captivity and prolific. Animals were then supplied to various labs throughout Europe for research purposes.

Axolotls came from Europe to the US in 1935; five of those eventually made it into the hands of Dr. Rufus R. Humphrey, who bred more at the University of Buffalo. When he retired in 1957, Humphrey and his axolotls moved to Indiana University (the axolotls arrived in Bloomington by truck). When the head of the Indiana lab retired in 2005, the US axolotl collection relocated to the University of Kentucky and became the Ambystoma Genetic Stock Center (AGSC), but the genetic material has apparently bottlenecked from inbreeding. Thus the importance of saving the wild axolotl population in Xochimilco.

The Icon

The salamander has become so popular that in addition to being kept as pets, it recently won a 2017 contest to develop an “emoji pack” to represent Mexico City. There’s a Frida Kahlo axolotl, a Mexican flag axolotl wrapped in a snake, etc., etc.

If you look online in Mercado Libre or Amazon Mexico, or pretty much anywhere, you’ll find multiple axolotl accessories, particularly for children – charms, stuffed animals (*peluche*), coloring books. There are tee shirts for adults, not to mention beer (www.monstruodeagua.mx/)! In 2022, the Bank of Mexico issued a new 50-peso bill with a depiction of the now iconic salamander among the chinampas of Xochimilco on one side. On February 1, 2023 (National Axolotl Day in Mexico, in case you were wondering), the Chapultepec Zoo opened Anfibia, the Axolotl Museum and Amphibian Conservation Center, dedicated to the amphibian’s remarkable history and efforts to preserve the species.

Axolotls as Food

The Mexica fished and consumed axolotls – they were a supposed mainstay on the banquet tables of Aztec kings. And how did the Mexica prepare them? Pretty simple. First, the “hairs” (presumably the gills) were trimmed. Then the guts were removed, the remaining carcass washed and dried, seasoned with salt and dried chiles, wrapped in corn husks, and finally steamed. Provecho!

Some Xochimilco natives grew up eating axolotls in a type of tamale, combined with fish and vegetables.

I find this particularly interesting since the skin, in particular, of most salamanders, including other tiger salamanders, is toxic. Contact can numb some parts of the body, starting from the lips, tongue, the whole face, then going down to the arms and legs. Numbness can be followed by dizziness, muscle weakness, excessive drooling (no kidding), and finally to paralysis of the respiratory muscles. Axolotls, however, lack the skin glands that secrete the toxic mucus that protects against predators and poisons those who eat the skin.

Saving the Axolotl

Recently, serious efforts have focused on an ecosystem approach, restoring habitat at a very small scale. To support a native, successfully breeding population requires that you restore water quality and reduce, if not eliminate, any introduced predators. The revival of the ancient, traditional system of chinampa farming in the floating gardens of Xochimilco is the key to preserving the axolotls. For more on the chinampas, see my article "Chinampas, Calzadas, and Aqueducts," in the February 2023 issue of *The Eye* (<https://theeyehuatlco.com/?s=chinampas>).

Political will, accompanied by active participation by the chinamperos, is obviously essential as symbiotic restoration of traditional farming provides the needed habitat.

In late 2023, *The New York Times* ran an article, "What It Takes To Save the Axolotl," describing the comprehensive, albeit painstakingly slow and incremental, approach being implemented by the government and a team of biologists and farmers. High-quality sanctuaries are being recreated in isolated waters to support axolotl growth and reproduction while limiting predatory attacks by exotic fish (<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/05/science/mexico-axolotl-biology.html>).

In the early 2000s, the Mexican government had approached Dr. Luis Zambrano, an ecologist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), to survey the declining population. His UNAM lab is home to 150 axolotls from wild bloodlines. In 2017 he released 10 animals into an artificial lake on the campus to observe their behavior and collect data. This research continues. In addition to Dr. Zambrano, another team headed by biologist María Huitzil is studying the animal's microbiota e.g., bacteria, fungi, viruses etc.; an additional group of researchers is being led by Dr. José Antonio Ocampo.

Dr. Zambrano recently released 12 animals in bamboo cages lowered into excavated soils in the artificial lake. The keys to creating successful isolated refuges are surprisingly simple and elegant: semipermeable volcanic rocks filter the water and block predators (the rock is readily available given the volcanic activity in the area), and vegetation provides habitat. Revived techniques of organic farming are becoming more accepted by some chinamperos, thus reducing contamination. Carlos Sumano, a UNAM agronomist, has for the past 11 years personally promoted traditional farming methods on his own chinampas.

And what happened to the 12 axolotls Zambrano released? After two months one of the 12 had died "of causes yet to be determined, and a pump had to be installed to improve oxygen levels in one canal. 'But that's all part of the experiment, right?' Dr. Zambrano said. The rest of the axolotls were fat and happy."

For more reading:

"A Tale of Two Axolotls"
(www.academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/65/12/1134/223981)

"Axolotls in Crisis: The fight to Save the 'Water Monster' of Mexico City"

(www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/dec/04/axolotls-in-crisis-the-fight-to-save-the-water-monster-of-mexico-city)



Sector M, Vialidad 7
(behind Coppel)
Tel: 958 583 4996
Breakfast/Bakery 8am - 1pm
Argentine Grill 1pm- 10pm
Closed Mondays



Your place to meet!

Proud supporter of the third annual
FOOD BANK & SAFE SHELTERS

Fundraising event
Giving from the heart



Nourish and Shelter
Families in Need

Plaza San Carlos Sector T.
February 16th, 2023

- ◆ Live music
- ◆ Food
- ◆ Drinks
- ◆ Games of chance
- ◆ Silent auction



Tickets will be on sale starting
Saturday January 20th
at the organic market

WE need you because THEY need you.

Literary Illusions: The Sundry Faces of Love

By Carole Reedy

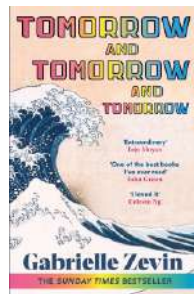
What else is love but understanding and rejoicing in the fact that another person lives, acts, and experiences otherwise than we do ... ?
— Friedrich Nietzsche

Love wears many faces. The first that comes to mind is often romantic love, but equally powerful is the affectionate love of friendship. There is also the enduring love of long-term relationships, as well as familial love and the usually damaging obsessive love.

Novelists and poets fill reams of pages attempting to make these variegated feelings tangible. Here are several novels that survey the many faces of love.

***Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, by Gabrielle Zevin (2022)**

Gabrielle Zevin's novel is absolutely one of the most absorbing and emotionally dense books about friendship that I've read in the past few years. Happy to say that *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Esquire*, and *The Boston Globe*, among other prestigious publications and many critical reader-friends, agree with me.



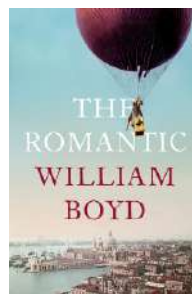
The nucleus of the novel is the complex friendship between Sam and Sadie. The eventual presence of their friend Marx complicates, yet paradoxically enhances, both the friendship and the story line. Skillfully presented personalities and inter-relationships underpin the simple yet creatively mastered plot.

I must admit that I was hesitant to read this book because the main characters are creators of video games, an activity that holds no interest for me. Try to overcome that prejudice. The games themselves are the impetus, the glue, and the core around which the friendships are spawned and enhanced.

Please read this book. You will not be disappointed.

***The Romantic*, by William Boyd (2022)**

William Boyd is prolific. His repertoire consists of more than 15 novels, several short story collections, and many screenplays, plays, nonfiction works, and radio programs.



Equally impressive is his history. Boyd's Scottish parents emigrated to Africa to run a health clinic (his father was a doctor of tropical medicine). Boyd was born in Accra, Ghana, and also lived in Nigeria. Several of his first novels take place in Africa: *A Good Man in Africa* (1981), *An Ice-Cream War: A Novel* (1982), and *Brazzaville Beach: A Novel* (1999).

Boyd's latest panoramic novel, *The Romantic*, presents the main character, Cashel Greville Ross, from his birth in County Cork, Ireland, in 1799, through his adventures in Oxford, London, Brussels, and Zanzibar. A significant part of Ross's saga, however, takes place in Italy, where he encounters Percy Bysshe Shelley and other Romantic poets and intellectuals in Pisa. A romantic interlude in Ravenna becomes a serious love affair. However, the love he finds there, he callously discards in a moment of rash anger. This misunderstanding haunts him for the rest of his days.

This novel is sweeping not only from a geographical and historical perspective, but also in an emotional sense. We follow Ross across a century and a grand part of the world, all the while cognizant of the significant events of the 19th century as well as one man's emotions, perceptions, and moral values. Boyd asserts that this is a fictionalized biography of the actual Cashel Greville Ross (1799-1882) – Ross did not actually exist.

Boyd tells a wonderful tale that sparks a broad range of emotions as we journey over foreign lands and within the hearts of his characters. There is everything to love in a William Boyd novel.

***Tom Lake: A Novel*, by Ann Patchett (2023)**

This prolific and diverse author has hit the top of the charts with her latest story of familial love, with romantic incidents to add flavor and spice to the recipe.

In this latest book, the COVID epidemic creates the backdrop for parents and adult children to reunite in northern Michigan, where they will pick cherries from the trees that support the family business. The time the family is sequestered together opens the doors to the past. The three adult daughters vigorously question their mother on her "life before dad" and her romance with an eventually famous movie star.

This novel appears to be on its way to the bestseller lists, seated among Patchett's other gems, *Bel Canto: A Novel* (2001) and *The Dutch House: A Novel* (2019).

***The President and the Frog: A Novel*, by Carolina de Robertis (2021)**

Ex-president of Uruguay Jose “Pepe” Mujica dedicated his life to the small country tucked between Argentina, Brazil, and the sea. As an ardent socialist, Mujica suffered years in the prisons of Uruguay for his beliefs and actions against a fascist government.



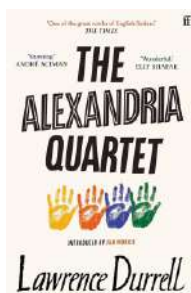
And yet years later (from 2010 to 2015), he became one of the most popular and recognized presidents of a South American country. Mujica eschewed the usual decorous lifestyle of many heads of countries. Every day he drove himself to his presidential duties in his 1987 Volkswagen and returned to his farm each evening, where he personally tended to his crops. Ninety percent of his salary was designated for the poor citizens of the country.

This charming novel demonstrates the love of one man for his people and country. It is written in the form of an interview by a journalist, his story teetering between present and past, and bringing to mind the Irish ballad:

*For the love of one's country is a terrible thing,
It banishes fear with the speed of a flame,
And makes us all part of the Patriot Game.*

***The Alexandria Quartet*, by Lawrence Durrell (1957-60)**

The twists and turns in these four time-proven fortuitous novels (*Justine* [1957], *Balthazar* [1958], *Mountolive* [1958], and *Clea* [1960]) set the stage for hours of challenging reading enjoyment.



At first it appears that everyone is in love, one way or another, with the mysterious Justine, but as the series develops our perceptions regarding the roles and feelings of the characters change.

The deep love among the characters in the quartet is more than romantic; it is also the deep-seated friendship that develops among them that keeps narrative flow suspenseful yet accessible.

I tried to read this Durrell classic as a young 30-year-old avid reader when the series was quite the rage. I struggled with the writing style and set it aside. Last year I picked it up again when a good friend and dedicated reader recommended that I “give it another try.” He was right: this time I was thoroughly entertained, not only with the story, but also with the rich mosaic style of Durrell.

***Baumgartner: A Novel*, by Paul Auster (2023)**

Simply, this is a story of an elderly man told to us by one of the best known and most worldly novelists of our generation. The love in this recent novel addresses the enduring feelings that Baumgarten feels for his dead wife and, ultimately, his obsession with her legacy.



As always, Auster combines humor with sorrow. Those of us advanced in years will identify with the often comical descriptions of Baumgartner's daily struggles. I kept asking myself whether this was meant to be a humorous or bittersweet novel. Of course, it is both.

Auster's novels always scrutinize the past and present with hope for the future, and this congenial read does not veer from that path. At the somewhat surprise finish, as a critical reader I thought, “What a perfect ending!” – although this should not be at all surprising, coming from this most astute of writers.

Our thoughts go out to Auster as he struggles with his own recent health issues. We hope to see more brilliant novels from him in the future.

***Day: A Novel*, by Michael Cunningham (2023)**

Newly published to joyfully ring in the new year is another thought-provoking novel by the author of *The Hours: A Novel* (2003), Cunningham's clever look at the illustrious Virginia Woolf and her memorable creation, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).



Day takes place during the month of April in three successive years, 2019, 2020, 2021. At the core of the novel is a family, each member dealing with his or her individual struggles with daily life and routine. Although quite different in character, desires, attitudes and goals, each player in this novel is likable and sympathetic. This could be due to Cunningham's striking ability to describe individuals in relation to the others and to communicate each one's thought processes as they ponder their personal demons.

The New York Times sums up the frictions: “By the end, the members of the family seem to have laid their ghosts to rest. They're reconciled to moving forward and to living in conflicts that have come to seem almost jolly.”

***Wuthering Heights: A Novel*, by Ellis Bell (Emily Brontë, 1847)**

The preeminent of obsessive love stories, that of Cathy and Heathcliff, was created by Emily Brontë. This, her only published novel, remains to this day a staple in literary circles.

“Be with me always – take any form – drive me mad! only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I CANNOT live without my life! I CANNOT live without my soul!” This is Heathcliff speaking in this ambitious novel that leaves the reader in awe of the literary ability of the young 29-year-old country girl from York.

Brontë's exploration of romantic love and obsessive passion has not been surpassed in well over 100 years. The success and endurance of the novel and the movies made from it have assured Brontë's stature in the world of literature. In my mind, there is little doubt that none of the movies made even grazes the surface of the passion and melancholy expressed in the novel.

Emily Brontë died at age 30, one year after the publication of *Wuthering Heights*.

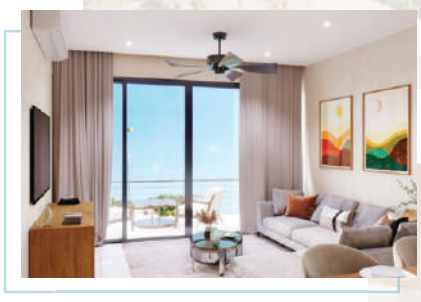


OVER 50% SOLD!

- * BAYSIDE HEADQUARTERS
- * 2 INFINITY POOLS
- * FITNESS CENTER
- * SPA & YOGA SPACE
- * FIBER OPTIC WI-FI
- * COMMERCIAL SPACES

2 & 3 bedrooms
/ 1,230 ft² - 2,036 ft²

STARTING AT \$283,894 USD





THE BEST WINE STORE IN HUATULCO
Find us in Chahue beach
 Free delivery within Bahias de Huatulco

YOU CAN ORDER ONLINE AT
www.cavachahue.com
 Or Whatsapp us at +52 56 55000813
 Or Call us at +52 958 688 4263



CLUB DE PLAYA DEL SOL, GRAND BEACH

@lacavachahue info@lacavachahue.com lacavachahue



Fish Taco Friday!
3 TACOS + 1 CERVEZA
175 pesos
12pm- 10pm

Tangolunda, Huatulco

Su anuncio aquí
No pierda la oportunidad
de hacer crecer su negocio

Contáctenos:
theyeyhuatulco@gmail.com



QUIT YOUR JOB
BUY A TICKET
GET A TAN
FALL IN LOVE
EAT FISH TACOS

#FishTacoFriday
#CaféJuanita

Village to Table Dinner

Our 8-course tasting menu using local ingredients with wine pairing is an incredible culinary adventure!



www.HuatulcoCookingClasses.com



This dinner is held on Fridays only.
Transportation is included
and pick up is 5pm.

Cost 1900 pesos/ person
WhatsApp 958 100 7339



LAS PALMAS
 oceanfront villas & casitas
 Exclusive Boutique Resort

Enjoy Relax Escape

Oceanfront Weddings 🌿 Retirements in Paradise

Phone MX: 958.109.1448 Phone US: 909.241.2324

www.LasPalmasHuatulco.com
courtney@laspalmshuatulco.com

Playa Violín, El Faro, Camino a Playa La Entrega

Love and ¿Marriage?

By Jan Chaiken and Marcia Chaiken

Love and marriage are eternally linked – or so we are told through truisms and songs. “Every little girl dreams about her wedding” – really? “Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage” – we sing it but does anyone in this modern age believe it? The romantic notion that love inevitably leads to marriage and ties marriage contracts to an extremely expensive and ostentatious celebration of love is a relatively modern conceit that has been practiced for decades rather than centuries and, based on our family experience, may be going out of fashion.



Somewhat over 60 years ago, when we informed our parents that we wanted to marry but wanted to skip the big wedding, we were told that we were too young to make that decision. We had the official marriage ceremony and contract signing in front of 250 people followed by all the romantic elements everyone expects – the first dance, the cutting of the cake, the toasts, the shower of rice. Thirty-three years ago our son and daughter-in-law had pretty much the same wedding with minor variations. But last May, our granddaughter called on a Friday to tell us that she and her boyfriend were going to marry on Monday and asked us to attend along with four other people. The ceremony was in a courthouse and performed by a judge – no rings, no personal vows – just official documents. Why the quick marriage? Because although they were already committed to a loving, supportive relationship, when he became her legal spouse he would automatically be enrolled in the health benefits she would be receiving as an OB-GYN resident. Their wedding reflected a return to the primary purpose of marriage for millennia: economic benefits.

Marriage as a socio-economic institution has existed for at least as long as writing. There are documents and laws referring to marriage that are more than 3,000 years old in Mesopotamia (current-day Iraq) and elsewhere in the Middle East. The Hebrew bible has reference to husbands and wives and also describes various events prior to marriages (although not to any details of ceremonies). In only one marriage in the bible is the concept of love between spouses mentioned – Isaac loved Rebecca. Not surprisingly, written mentions of divorce are also available from around the same time period, including in the Hebrew bible. But customs and practices surrounding marriage and divorce developed and were codified gradually over later centuries, with interruptions in early Christianity when divorce was forbidden entirely.

From about the 12th century in Europe – and the emergence of the concept of courtly love – until the middle of the 20th century, practices and ceremonies related to marriage and divorce were so stable that we can read novels and histories from that period and have little doubt about what was going to happen in the chapters following a particular couple's announcement of intent to marry or a married couple's becoming estranged.

But then came major changes around the world – in the last 80 years, fewer people became married at all, the average age at marriage increased, more unmarried couples lived together, same-gender marriage became a formal recognition of a behavior that occurred previously less conspicuously and without legal acknowledgement, and parenthood became uncoupled from marriage. The positions of religious organizations on

these issues also shifted during this time period and are still in flux.

The extent of these changes has varied greatly among countries, especially where previously unapproved practices have been legalized at different times and to different degrees. For example, same-gender marriage was legalized nationally in Canada in 2005, but it was not possible in Mexico until just one state allowed it beginning in 2015; eventually, state after state approved until in 2022 Mexico achieved national legalization. The first U.S. state to permit same-gender civil unions was Vermont in 2000, followed four years later by Massachusetts' legalizing same-gender marriage. U.S. national legalization of same-gender marriage occurred in 2015.

But even before same-gender marriages were legally sanctioned, some clergy willingly performed ceremonies with all the elements of marriages of opposite-gender couples. One of the most memorable family weddings we attended in the early 1990's was one in which both brides wore identical gowns – one in white and one in black. The elements of the marriage ceremony and reception were virtually identical to ours in the early 1960s.

All three countries of North America experienced rapidly declining marriage rates in the last 80 years. In the US, the marriage rate peaked in 1942 with 16.3 marriages per 1,000 people and then plummeted to 5.7 in 2019. Canada peaked in 1972 at 9.2 per 1,000 people and dropped to 4.1 in 2019. Mexico held fairly steady around 5.0 for decades, dropping a bit to 4.0 in 2014. (All countries had sharply lower numbers of marriages in 2020 and 2021, during the COVID pandemic.)

Canada has a definition of common-law marriage for census purposes-- this describes a couple living together without marriage for a period of time, or with a child of one or both of them. The number of common-law marriages in Canada has increased five-fold in the last 40 years and substantially explains the decline in real marriages as well as the later age at which people are married. In Canada, common-law marriages now account for about one-quarter of all households with two adults.

The average age at first marriage is now 29 in the U.S., 31 in Canada, and 32 for men, 29 for women in Mexico. Compared to 1950, these figures have risen from age 22 in the US, age 23 in Canada, and age 21 in Mexico, or an increase of about 7 years of age in the U.S. and Canada, 10 years of age in Mexico.

Ending a Marriage

While a severe drop in the number of marriages initiated during the COVID pandemic is easily understood, there was a similar dramatic drop in divorces during those years due to a combination of people's unwillingness to change their living arrangements and the difficulty of processing paperwork for accomplishing a divorce when attorneys and courts were not readily accessible.

Outside those years, the annual number of divorces has been dropping throughout North America. This is explained mostly by the fact that couples living together without marriage (or, in Canada, in common-law marriages) do not require a divorce to dissolve their relationship. Examining divorce, then, as a percentage of marriages, in the U.S. about 40% of marriages end in divorce. This is higher than in Canada or Mexico, but lower than it was in the 1970s in the US. In Canada, about 33% of marriages dissolve. Experts attribute this lower rate to Canada's strong social safety-net and family-friendly policies. Mexico traditionally has had the lowest divorce rate in North America – about 15% of marriages end in divorce. This is attributed to Mexico's patterns of family unity and multi-generational households, influence of the Catholic church, and the sheer difficulty of processing a divorce through Mexico's legal system. But no one has suggested that the lower divorce rates are due to stronger bonds of love.

Today, although love may lead to long-term cohabitation, few would suggest that love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage. In fact the trends seems to suggest that marriage may become as obsolete as a horse and carriage. And, as women are becoming increasingly economically independent, marriage as a socio-economic institution may be replaced by other means of sharing companionship, daily housekeeping duties and child-raising responsibilities.



Santa Cruz, Huatulco
Tel: 958 100 9998

**Contact us to
announce your
activity or event.**
TheEyeHuatulco@gmail.com

Huatulco Weddings



Boutique Weddings and Events

We make it easy for you to simply enjoy.



**Specializing in events under
100 people
Personalized Service
Customized events to make
your dreams come true
14 years of experience planning
events in the Huatulco area.**

**We have budget-friendly
pricing.
We have an efficient, organized
team.
We provide stress-free and
professional wedding/event
planning
English and Spanish spoken**

**Get in touch for a free
consultation!**

www.destinationweddinghuatulco.com

@HuatulcoWedding

Sergio Valadez Estrada: A Visionary's Lasting Legacy in Art

By Tania Guzmán

In the world of art, few have managed to blend the vibrancy of Mexican heritage with the enigmatic charm of Parisian nights as masterfully as the late Sergio Valadez Estrada. The Huatulco Art Gallery in Plaza Chahue proudly houses ten of Valadez's final masterpieces. In this article, we intend to celebrate and illuminate the profound impact of Valadez's work.



Born with the challenge of color blindness, Valadez turned this into an artistic strength, demonstrating that true art transcends the conventional spectrum of colors. A graduate of the *Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas* (National School of Plastic Arts) of Mexico and first-prize winner of the *Valores Jóvenes* (≈ Youth of Merit) award in 1964, Valadez's journey was nothing short of remarkable.

His art, heavily influenced by his Mexican roots and the atmospheric nightscapes of Paris, speaks volumes of his dual heritage. Valadez, an expressionist at heart, drew inspiration from the likes of famed political muralist José Clemente Orozco, yet he maintained a unique touch, a testament to his resilience in preserving his cultural identity despite his long residence in France.

Joining the *Taller de Gráfica Popular* (People's Graphic Workshop) in 1963, Valadez worked under the tutelage of another major muralist, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Workshop co-founder Leopoldo Méndez. Valadez's career burgeoned, leading him to international acclaim in Mexico, France, the United States, and Belgium. His art, deeply connected to the lives of ordinary people, vividly captures the essence of communal celebrations and struggles, often displayed in spaces like cabarets and bars.



Valadez's acclaim is not limited to his paintings. He was a celebrated musician, imbuing the old cafes of Le Marais in Paris with the soulful melodies of his accordion, blending French and Latin American tunes. His interactive musical performances, in which he improvised instruments and distributed lyrics to the audience, were a unique, immersive experience for his appreciative audiences.

Huatulco Art Gallery, now the custodian of ten of Valadez's last works, invites you to experience the depth and breadth of his artistic genius. Each piece is a gateway into the world of Valadez – a world where expressionism, Mexican vibrancy, and Parisian subtlety coalesce into a symphony of visual delight.

Valadez's journey from the streets of Mexico City to the heart of Paris is not just a story of geographical transition but an odyssey of artistic evolution. His work serves as a bridge between cultures, capturing the parallel lives and vibrant atmospheres of two distinct worlds.

His artistic signature, often playfully concealed within the intricate details of his works, is a humble reminder of his belief in art for art's sake. This playful element adds another layer of engagement for the viewer, inviting them to delve deeper into the narrative woven into each canvas.

As we remember Sergio Valadez Estrada, we do not merely recall an artist who painted, sculpted, and played music; we reminisce about a visionary who saw the world in a different light and painted it in hues only he could perceive. His works, now on display and available for acquisition, are not just pieces of art; they are fragments of a legacy that continues to inspire and captivate.

The life and work of Sergio Valadez Estrada are a testament to the enduring power of art to bridge cultures, transcend barriers, and touch the human spirit. We invite art enthusiasts and collectors alike to experience this magical fusion of cultures and emotions, to own a piece of history, and to keep the legacy of this extraordinary artist alive.

The Sergio Valadez Exhibit is on display until March 1, 2024.

Huatulco Art Gallery
95 Benito Juárez Blvd
Plaza Chahue, Local S2
Sector P

Monday to Saturday 10 am to 2 pm
Email: taniaguzman.art@gmail.com
Facebook: Huatulco Art Gallery
www.facebook.com/thestudiogalleryhux
Instagram: Huatulcoartgallery
www.instagram.com/huatulcoartgallery/
Tel: 958-174-9964





Meet Our Team of Professionals

Kevin Knochel

Erin May

Brent May

Victoria Merino

Jonathan Ferioli

NEW LISTING

Zicatela

Casa Polo #50649
\$1,500,000 USD
 Multi-family ocean view residence with 3 buildings, 6 bdr + 5.5 bth with pool, steps from Zicatela beach!

FOR SALE

El Faro

La Escondida Oceanfront Villa #42491
\$1,250,000 USD
 4,122 ft2, 4 bdr, 4.5 bth fully furnished villa, private plunge pool & walking distance to the beach!

SOLD

Costa Cumana

Casa Marcela #38829
\$849,000 USD
 6,458 ft2 balinese style villa with beach access, pool, gym, rooftop bar & open living spaces!

SOLD

El Faro

Oceanfront Casa #41228
\$849,000 USD
 7,561 ft2, 5 bdr, 6 bth casa, the ideal B&B/investment property, walking distance from Carrizalillo beach!

NEW PRICE

Esperanza Verde

Eco Luxury House #46207
677,000 USD
 4,331 ft2, 3 bdr, 3.5 bth modern home with private pool, expansive gardens & open living concept.

NEW LISTING

El Faro

2 Bed Oceanview Condo #50465
\$457,000 USD
 1,254 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth ocean view condo w/exp terraces, private plunge pool & steps to the beach!

85% SOLD

Playa Venado

Puerto Bambu #36015
\$427,000 USD
 16 beachfront 3 bdr, 3.5 bth single family homes w/ opt private plunge pool, common pool & beach access.

80% SOLD

La Punta

La Punta Penthouse #42656
407,600 USD
 1,300 ft2, 3 bdr, 2 bth beachfront w/private plunge pool, expansive terrace & direct beach access!

NEW LISTING

Costa Cumana

Costa Cumana Lot #51471
\$353,000 USD
 Build your dream home on this 28,255 ft2 ocean view lot with access to Ventanilla beach!

65% SOLD

Playa Delfines

Puerto Escondido 2 Bedroom #41335
\$332,000 USD
 1,699 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth single-family home steps from the beach with private pool & 24 hr security!

NEW LISTING

La Barra

2 Bed Ocean View Condo #50494
\$329,000 USD
 1,205 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth ocean view fully furnished condo steps to beach with pool & rooftop palapa.

NEW LISTING

El Faro

Ocean View Puerto Condo #51539
\$238,000 USD
 1,291 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth ocean view fully furnished condo with large terraces, pool & steps to the beach!

NEW LISTING

Rinconada

One Pacific #49448
Starting at \$204,000 USD
 1 & 2 bdr condos with swimming pool, BBQ area & walking distance to many nearby beaches!

FOR SALE

Esperanza Verde

Ocean View Lot #44689
\$139,000 USD
 Build your dream home on this 6,458 ft2 ocean & mountain view lot located minutes to the beach!

VACATION

Costa Cumana

Casa Zee Sleeps 20
\$3,000 USD per night
 Luxurious beachfront villa with private pool, yoga room, full-time staff & chef services!

*Proud sponsor of local surfers
 Roger Ramirez, Jr, Maya Larrripa
 & Sebastian Williams*

FULL SERVICE REAL ESTATE SOLUTIONS

Vacation Rentals | Property Management | Residential & Commercial Real Estate

CA 403.615.2885 MX 954.559.9159
 info@BaysidePuertoEscondido.com

www.BaysidePuertoEscondido.com



We Are *Five*



Yoga & Healing Retreat

HUATULCO, MEXICO - APRIL 22-27, 2024

5-night retreat at a private,
oceanfront villa

- Yoga, Meditation & Inner Healing Work
- Full Moon River Raft Float, Live Music & Beach Bonfire
- Natural Hot Pools Jungle Excursion
- Pairs Acro Yoga
- Vegetarian & Vegan Meals



SEE YOU IN HUATULCO!

Reconnect

WITH YOUR INNER FIRE

Cost 1400 USD

Includes: accommodation, meals, excursions,
and activities.

Open to Men & Women

Unlock Your Inner Strength and
Ignite Your Transformation.

MORE DETAILS AT
RETREATSHUATULCO.COM



Indulge in the Pinnacle of Luxury Living at Montello. Located in the picturesque Quinta Avenida, Huatulco. This development seamlessly blends refined elegance with the rich heritage of the Zapotec culture. Every step is a tribute to our ancestors, a journey through the sinuous mountains of Oaxaca's coast. Meticulously designed suites offer a sanctuary of style, complemented by three commercial spaces. Immerse yourself in nature's beauty and architectural marvel, and be part of an extraordinary living experience.

APARTMENTS STARTING AT \$2,795,000 MXN

*commercial spaces starting at \$6,445,000 MXN

CONTACT US

+52 958 106 5850

frances@blueresidences.com.mx

[@montello.mx](https://www.instagram.com/montello.mx)

[blueresidences.com.mx](https://www.blueresidences.com.mx)



Montello
Huatulco



Walking Food Tour

A Walking Food Tour is a fun way to discover Mexican culture in a personal way. Join us for a delicious journey through the streets of La Crucecita, Huatulco!

Enjoy seeing where the locals shop, eat, and hang out.

Our guide will meet you and take you on a culinary adventure. During the tour, you will taste at least 7 different snacks so be sure to bring an appetite!



Morning Tours

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am

Evening Tours

Wednesdays and Saturdays 5pm

Cost 65 USD/ person

Includes food, drink, and a gift bag.

WhatsApp 958 100 7339

www.HuatulcoCookingClasses.com



Indulge yourself with fresh inspired food, drinks and ocean views from our beachfront patio or **air conditioned dining space.** Live guitarrist/singer Mondays and Thursdays



Thursday to Tuesday: 12pm-10pm
Wednesday: 5pm-10pm

Located at Sea Soul Beach Club
Chahue, Huatulco

www.bluhuatulco.com.mx
(958) 100 3223

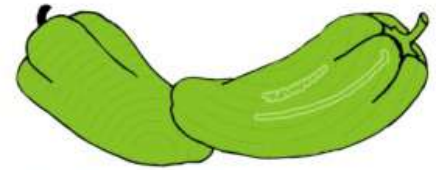
Reserve via [opentable.com](https://www.opentable.com)



Chiles & Chocolate

Cooking Classes

Huatulco, Oaxaca



The best way to learn about a culture is through its food.

www.HuatulcoCookingClasses.com



Morning Activities

TUESDAY- Seafood

- Fish Ceviche with Totopos
- Rosemary Shrimp
- Shrimp Mousse
- Baja-style Fish Tacos
- Beer Micheladas

WEDNESDAY- Mama's Kitchen

- Black Mole- This is the most exquisite and complicated Mexican sauce.
- Yellow Mole
- served with Rice and Chicken
- Handmade Tortillas
- Mezcal Margarita

THURSDAY-Speciality Classes

-

FRIDAY- Street Food

- Red and Green Salsas
- Pico de Gallo
- Handmade Tortillas and Sopes
- 2 types of Taco Fillings
- Tlayudas
- Jamaica Margaritas

Fodor's Travel

FRIDAY- NIGHT

Village to Table Dinner

Our 8-course dinner using local ingredients is a culinary experience not to be missed!
*This is not a cooking class



Chiles&Chocolate Cooking Classes offer delicious culinary and cultural experiences that explore Mexican cuisine. Our hands-on classes ensure you will leave prepared to recreate the dishes when you get home.

- Hands-on
- Instruction in English
- Recipe Manual
- Free Gift Bag
- Food and Drinks Included
- Transportation Included
- Morning pick-up is 9am
- Evening pick-up is 5pm

Cost: \$110 USD per person
Activities are 3-4 hours
Zimatán, Huatulco

Tel. 958 105 1671 Cel. 958 100 7339

chiles.chocolate@yahoo.com

www.HuatulcoCookingClasses.com

 [chileschocolatehuatulco](https://www.instagram.com/chileschocolatehuatulco)

slow living

Your Oasis of Tranquility
Amidst Life's Hustle



VILLAS BIZNAGA

Discover a lifestyle focused on
balance, nature and serene living
in the heart of Oaxaca, Mexico.

Premium Ocean View Villas

Lots starting at **\$239,000 USD**

— *Buy your lot, build your villa.* —



MX (+52) 958.587.4543

www.BaysideHuatulco.com