

The Eye

Beach, Village + Urban Living in Mexico

April 2024

Issue 137

FREE

Outdoor Pursuits

Nevado de Toluca

*Hike from San Mateo Rio Hondo
to San José del Pacifico*

Open Water Swimming in Huatulco

and more....



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

FOR SALE

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 PRICE

Arrocito

Ocean View Huatulco Villa #50855
\$949,000 USD
 Beautiful 6,297 ft2 ocean view villa with 3 bdr, 4 bth, infinity pool, BBQ area & steps to the beach!

FOR SALE

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!

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Arrocito

Pacific Blue Village #52066
\$676,000 USD
 3 bdr villas located steps to Arrocito Beach with private pool, kitchen appliances & private rooftops!

FOR SALE

Arrocito

Oceanfront 3 Bedroom Condo #34605
\$649,000 USD
 2,280 ft2, 3 bdr, 2 bth poolside oceanfront furnished condo with direct beach access and multiple pools!

75% SOLD

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 Aragon 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

Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz #52708
\$399,000 USD
 2,023 ft2, 3 bdr, 3 bth fully furnished with jacuzzi, swimming pool, security & steps to Santa Cruz beach!

FOR SALE

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.

NEW LISTING

Sector E

Santa Cruz Penthouse #51474
\$383,000 USD
 2,142 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth furnished condo with private rooftop, plunge pool & steps to Santa Cruz 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.

NEW PRICE

Santa Cruz

2 Bed Santa Cruz Condo #52663
\$324,000 USD
 1,005 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth furnished condo, multiple amenities, rooftop pool & steps to Santa Cruz Beach!

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!

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!

FOR SALE

Sector K

2 Bedroom Central Condo #46456
\$214,000 USD
 904 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth condo with private plunge pool, kitchen appliances & ocean view rooftop.

NEW LISTING

La Cruccecita

La Cruccecita 2 Bedrom Condo #53225
\$214,000 USD
 855 ft2, 2 bdr, 3 bth fully furnished condo located in downtown Huatulco, steps to endless amenities!



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 savanna hypothesis addresses the issue of how we select places to live and why we find some landscapes more beautiful than others. The central argument is that our preferences in this domain were shaped over evolutionary time through the repeated selection of safe and healthy environments over dangerous and resource poor landscapes.”

Kevin Bennett

Department of Psychology, Pennsylvania State

On a podcast I listened to recently, the interviewee suggested that each of us has a landscape that defines us. I hadn't thought of looking at the world this way but it made a lot of sense. The chef being interviewed talked about his pull towards certain types of food and certain landscapes which, if he looked back far enough, were a part of his ancestry.

I wondered, what landscape am I? Where do I feel most at home? What are the sensations I crave; open desert spaces, high mountains, plains with grasses, the woods or the wide ocean and a sandy beach?

I didn't have to think too hard. I am drawn to the forest and the jungle. I yearn to feel dwarfed by an army of majestic trees, small dirt paths, and rocky rivers that cleave and twist their way between hills. I love seeing sunlight speckled through canopies of tree branches, Japanese has a word for this: *komorebi*.

When people ask me how I got here, I tell them about that first visit and the people I met. That something made me want to return, I try and find the words for it but they always seem to slip away. I don't mention the landscape because it sounds sort of silly and fantastical, but that is what it really was. I came to this seam where the mountains kiss the ocean, it closed me in between the lapping waves and the darkness of its forest. It beckoned me down dirt paths and up river beds and waterfalls. Stay with me it said and I did.

This month our writers explore outdoor pursuits. We hope it encourages you to do a little exploring. If it does, please let us know via email or on our socials.

Facebook: [TheEyeMexico- be sure to join our group](#)

Instagram: [TheEyeMexico](#)

******All our previous articles and issues are available on the website.**

Happy Exploring,

Jane



hux pool
SINCE 2007

HUATULCO ALBERCAS

f Huxpool i Huxxpool d Huxpool01

WE HAVE ALL YOUR SWIMMINGPOOL NEEDS AND MORE

- + FILTRATION SYSTEM
- + POOL CHEMICALS
- + ACCESSORIES
- + TECHNICAL SUPPORT
- + SPARE PARTS
- + INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Contact us! Whatsapp: **958 111 3811**

Jazmín #1301, Huatulco, Oax.

The Eye Team

Editor: Jane Bauer

Copy Editor: Deborah Van Hoewyk

Writers: Diana Rodríguez Aquino, Jane Bauer, Jan Chaiken, Marcia Chaiken, Julie Etra, Randy Jackson, Leigh Morrow, Brooke O'Connor, Carole Reedy, Deborah Van Hoewyk, Kary Vannice

**Cover Image: Galyna Andrushko
Photography/Art: Various Artists, Jon G. Fuller, Jr.**

**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**

**Visit Us Online
www.TheEyeHuatulco.com**

In This Issue

Editor's Letter

By Jane Bauer

Page 3

Open Water Swimming in Huatulco

By Randy Jackson

Page 6

The Search for Self in the Outdoors: A Few Imperative Reads

By Carole Reedy

Page 10

Nevado de Toluca

By Diana Rodríguez Aquino

Page 14

Outdoor Pursuits over Eighty

By Marcia Chaiken and Jan Chaiken

Page 19

Poetry in the Clouds

By Leigh Morrow

Page 22

Hike from San Mateo Rio Hondo to San José del Pacifico

By Jane Bauer

Page 23

The Street Names of La Crucecita

By Julie Etra

Page 24

Experience Mexico's Environment through Zapotec Culture

By Deborah Van Hoewyk

Page 27

Going Out and Under

By Kary Vannice

Page 30

www.TheEyeHuatulco.com

The Eye 4



We Are Water

More than a Retreat, a Transformation

Find Your Flow

-women only

5 nights luxury accommodation
Gourmet Vegetarian Meals
Daily Yoga and Meditation
Ceremonial Temazcal
Transformational workshops
Waterfall excursion

Cost 1400 USD

Reserve your spot for 300 USD

**Book before May 15th for a 20%
discount**

October 28-Nov. 2, 2024

Huatulco, Mexico

JOIN US

www.RetreatsHuatulco.com



Open Water Swimming in Huatulco

By Randy Jackson

For me, the greatest thing about Huatulco is the variety of outdoor activities available: swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, surfing, boogie boarding, biking, golf, pickleball, beach volleyball, pool volleyball, kayaking, fishing, paddle boarding, mountain biking, bird watching, and hiking. I've done all of these activities in Huatulco, but my favorite activity has migrated to open-water swimming. And what an ideal place Huatulco is for *travesía aguas abiertas*.



Some Swim Resources for Huatulco

Yair Santiago Ortiz is a swim instructor and coach based in Huatulco. He welcomes new clients and is fluent in both English and Spanish. He can be reached at (phone/Whatsapp): +52 559 185 1023.

Each year in February, an open water swim event is held at Santa Cruz bay in Huatulco. This event is available for ages

7 to 60+ with timed swim distances of 500 meters, 1.25 km, 2.5 km, and 5 km. Potential entrants can find Information for the event on the RenueVa Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/renueva.ac.9/.

Each February, Karlyn Pipes, a champion professional swimmer and swim coach, hosts a seven-day swim camp in Huatulco. For more information, visit her website: <https://karlynpipes.com/huatulco-mexico-swim-camps>.

Another open-water swim competition takes place at Santa Cruz Huatulco in October: www.granretto.com/proximos-eventos/detalle?id=11.

For general information about open-water swimming in both fresh and salt water, and a list of certified open-water swim events, check out the World Open Water Swimming Association (WOWSA, www.openwaterswimming.com/); they certify a fresh-water swim of six different lengths at the Zimapám Dam in Querétaro in October. The Open Water Pedia listed the top 50 open-water swims in Mexico for 2018-19 – you can Google each swim to see whether it is still being held (www.openwaterpedia.com/wiki/Mexico%27s_Top_50_Open_Water_Swims).

Swimming for Physical Fitness

Swimming is an aerobic, cardiovascular physical activity that includes all the positive benefits of physical exercise, but swimming also has some unique advantages over other forms of exercise. Swimming is particularly beneficial for people with arthritis. Swimming improves the functioning of arthritic joints without worsening symptoms. Swimming is a form of exercise especially recommended for older adults, as it improves range of motion, flexibility, and upper body strength. Regular swimming has also demonstrated improvements in the mental health of all ages.

There are nine official bays in Huatulco and many more coves with beaches. In April 2022, I wrote an article for *The Eye* on swimming each of the nine official bays of Huatulco. Swimming in the different bays or coves is delightful, and swimmers can go farther distances by swimming between beaches.

Some Open-Water Distances

Based in Santa Cruz, I am most familiar with this area's more common open-water swims. All of these are swims I have either done or heard of others doing:

- Santa Cruz beach: From the rocks on the west (below the Nirú Beach Club) to the cruise ship pier: 200 meters
- Santa Cruz Rectangle: From the rocks on the west to the cruise ship pier, out along the pier to the end, across the bay past the first green buoy and back to the beach: 1 km
- Santa Cruz beach to the first green buoy and back: 750 meters
- Santa Cruz beach to the second green buoy and back: 1.5 Km
- Santa Cruz beach to Entrega beach: 1.2 Km
- Santa Cruz beach to Chahué beach: 2.5 Kms
- Órgano beach to Maguey beach: 1.5 Km
- Maguey beach to Violin beach: 2.5 Km
- El Tejon beach to Chahué beach: 1.2 Km
- El Tejon beach to Esperanza beach: 750 meters
- Cacaluta beach, loop around Cacaluta Island and return: 2 Km

Blue Spaces

Many studies have shown that time spent in nature benefits our mental well-being and promotes the emotions of happiness and contentment. Urban environments, especially the winter months in northern latitudes, make interactions with nature difficult. That is less of an issue in Huatulco, where nature in its tropical splendor surrounds us. The greenery and flowers are part of the natural environment here, but importantly, the ocean provides, in abundance, the benefits of blue spaces. Blue spaces are natural environments where water (oceans, rivers, lakes, streams) contributes natural benefits to our mental well-being.

In his book *Blue Mind: The Surprising Science That Shows How Being Near, In, On or Under Water Can Make You Happier, Healthier, More Connected, and Better at What You Do* (2015) marine biologist Wallace J. Nichols, Ph.D., outlines the remarkable effects of water in all its shapes and forms on our health and well-being. Although there are many ways to attain Blue Mind benefits, some simply by being near water or listening to its sounds, swimming is the total immersion with nature and a way to enter the Blue Mind zone.

Swimming Movies for Inspiration

There are several movies that depict swimming as a vehicle of personal transformation.

NYAD (2023, available on Netflix)

Starring Annette Bening and Jodie Foster, who received Oscar nominations for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress, respectively, *NYAD* is about the 60-year-old former marathon swimming champion Diana Nyad, who endeavors to swim from Cuba to Key West Florida, a swim she failed to complete when she was in her swimming prime at age 28. Based on Nyad's memoir *Find a Way: The Inspiring Story of One Woman's Pursuit of a Lifelong Dream* (2016), the film uses a line from "The Summer Day," a Mary Oliver poem (1999) – "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" – as a catalyst to undertake such a swimming quest. Spoiler alert: she makes it (eventually).



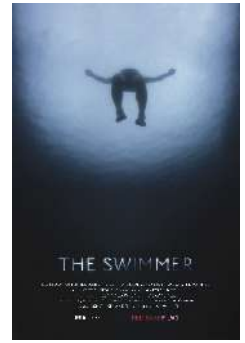
The Swimmers (2022, available on Netflix)

This film tells the touching, true story of two female swimmers (sisters) who fled war-torn Syria, ending up on an overloaded migrant boat headed to Europe when the motor failed. Almost none of the migrants on board could swim, so the two sisters pushed, pulled, and dragged the raft to shore. One of the sisters went on to compete in the Olympics. Beyond the swimming, this movie is a heartfelt tale of the humanity of refugees, who risk everything to escape violence and persecution.



The Swimmer (2020, available through AEON Magazine):

A 12-minute video by filmmaker Thomas Beug about long-distance swimmer Stephen Redmond, both of them Irish, about the transcendence of swimming; he finds an "ineffable sense of purpose" in open-water swimming. Redmond is the first person to complete the marathon swimming challenge Oceans Seven, with swims ranging from 10 to 27 miles (16-44 km) across the English Channel, the North Channel (between Scotland and Ireland), the Strait of Gibraltar, the Catalina Channel in California, the Moloka'i Channel in Hawai'i, the Cook Strait in New Zealand, and the Tugaru Strait in Japan.



The Swimmer (1968, available on Amazon Prime)

The story is of Ned Merrill (Burt Lancaster), who emerges from the forest wearing a bathing suit and goes to a swimming pool of some welcoming, friendly neighbors. He then embarks on a quest to swim across the various pools of his wealthy neighbors in a quest to "swim home." As he goes from pool to pool, the neighbors become less friendly, and he slowly realizes things are not as he thought. He comes to face the failures of his past – based on a short story by the American author John Cheever.



Overall, I would suggest that most open-water swimmers don't need much inspiration to go for a swim. Huatulco is a fantastic place to do that. Recently (March 8), I encountered a large group of swimmers while returning to shore in the bay of Santa Cruz. It was a swim clinic from Mexico City, spending a long weekend practicing in the warm waters of Huatulco. A long way to go for a swim, but with the delights of all the bays of Huatulco, it is well worth it.

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

Are you interested in growing your business?

Contact us for advertising info: theyehuatulco@gmail.com



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



Your place to meet!

Your resource to
 Well-Being
 Huatulco

"A Better Way to Make You Better"
 Medical SPA
 The Healing Sanctuary Institute

WhatsApp
 958 115 2683

www.thsi.mx
 info@thsi.mx

Village to Table Dinner

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



www.huatulcofoodtours.com



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

Cost 1900 pesos/ person

WhatsApp 958 100 7339

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 :

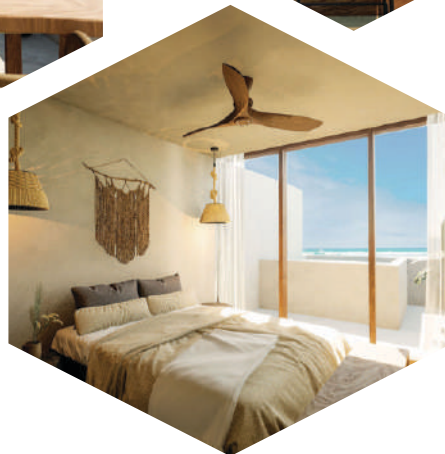
Café Surf (Santa Cruz)
 Sea Soul Beach Club (Chahue)
 Café Juanita (Tangolunda)

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

Information WhatsApp +52 958 585 0219

Beachfront Living

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



Starting at \$289,000 USD

The Search for Self in the Outdoors: A Few Imperative Reads

By Carole Reedy

“And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.”
— John Muir

Not every novel that studies human behavior takes place in an overstuffed-chaired drawing room over tea and scones or the dark halls of a long-hallowed university. The pursuit of happiness and thoughts of things past are often found in the wild seas or calm pastures of the natural world.

Here are a handful of books that conjure thoughts of a daring yet sublime existence outside the home, office, or studio.

[The Flaneur, by Edmund White \(2001\)](#)

In the 70+ years during which I've turned to the written word for pleasure and knowledge, without a doubt *The Flaneur* is one of my favorite books.

Flaneuring itself is a favorite pastime for many dreamers and observers of human nature and culture. The term “flaneur” was first coined by the 19th-century French poet Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) in his essay collection “The Painter of Modern Life” (1860). The flaneur is an observer, an explorer of the city and streets and is found in many impressionist paintings.

White takes us for a stroll through the myriad streets of Paris, home of the existentialists, poets like Baudelaire, the revered Colette, the famous Josephine Baker, and numerous museums. We never want the journey to end while walking with Edmund White. The goal? To observe and reflect.

There are details that can be discovered only while randomly and aimlessly walking the streets of a city. White describes this wandering as “that aimless Parisian compromise between laziness and activity.”

This is the Edmund White we have come to expect, who with each book gifts us pages of beautiful and descriptive prose, taking us beyond our self and into other worlds.

White has stated that the only thing Parisians will not tolerate is publishing a mediocre novel. I doubt he will ever prove to be guilty of that.

The Eye 10

[The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Murder, and Mutiny, by David Grann \(2023\)](#)

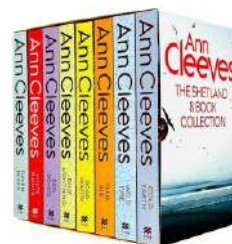
The success of this newly published story may rest partly on the popularity of the blockbuster movie *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023), based Grann's 2017 book that bears the subtitle *The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*. Both *The Wager* and *Killers of the Flower Moon* depict actual tragic events that Grann has brought to our awareness.



The Wager is an adventure story that takes place on the high seas from Britain and Brazil to Chile during the 18th century. Human behavior at its worst and best is explored in this remarkable tale of the pursuit of a Spanish galleon filled with treasure ... as well as the resulting shipwrecks. Heroes or thieves and murderers? It all ended in a court martial and trial that rivals a modern-day thriller.

[The Shetland Series, by Anne Cleaves \(2006-18\)](#)

Rich description of these remote northern Scottish islands is one of the delights of this Cleaves mystery series. Details of a quickly changeable climate color the text, allowing the reader complete immersion in the finely tuned crime story. Most of us feel compelled to get out an atlas to fully grasp the location and makeup of these surprisingly complex islands and their place in the historical and social context of the British Isles. Rumor has it that Shetland has had a desire to become a part of Norway.



This eight-book series (Anne Cleaves is also the prolific writer of several other series in various locations) stars a detective of Spanish descent, Jimmy Perez, along with a range of other characters who hail from the various Shetland Islands. Along the way we learn about fishing and knitting as well as the language and cultural differences of these communities.

I challenge you to guess any ending, which in each case provides the cherry on top of the author's astute, carefully written, detailed style.

Dr. Ruth Galloway Series, by Elly Griffiths (2009-23)

The fifteen books that make up the Ruth Galloway mystery series become favorites of any reader who starts the first book, *The Crossing Places*. If you are anything like my friends, you will eagerly anticipate each of the following books in the series.

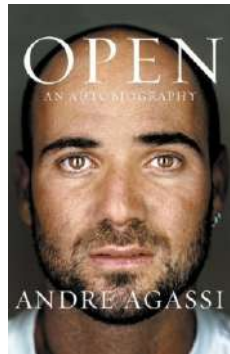


Ruth, an archeologist in Norwich, England, is beaconsed by the local police whenever any human bones are discovered. If they appear to be recent deaths, the police take over, although somehow Ruth always finds herself entwined in the search for a solution to a perceived crime. If the bones are ancient, they become the impetus to investigate and open doors for Ruth and her archeological students, leading to discovering new theories about civilization.

The recurring characters in the book (Ruth, Nelson, Cathbad, Judy) will quickly become part of your friendship circle. The shifting environmental moods of the marsh where Ruth lives, along with the various surrounding English regions, establish a foreboding ambience for each of the novels, a perfect background for the eerie situations that confront Ruth (and her friends).

Open: An Autobiography, by Andre Agassi with J.H. Moehringer (2009)

Most autobiographies of famous sports figures stand out as nothing more than facts and statistics about the sport with some color added regarding contributing characters.



This history, written by the controversial tennis star Andre Agassi (with ghostwriter J.H. Moehringer), breaks that mold.

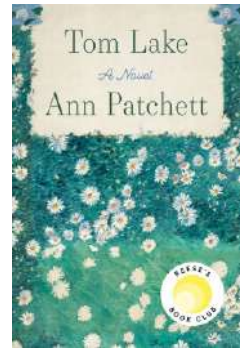
Agassi opens his heart and soul to the reader as if he were sitting in a psychiatrist's office. The pressure from his father an early age to play tennis permeates every decade of his life. Without revealing too much, I leave it to the reader to follow this emotional journey.



**Santa Cruz, Huatulco
Tel: 958 100 9998**

Tom Lake: A Novel, by Anne Patchett (2023)

Patchett has drawn on a vast repertoire for the subjects, locations, and characters of her previous novels. My favorite is one of her first, *Bel Canto: A Novel* (2001), which transplants the reader to a country in South America where an opera singer finds herself in a hostage situation at a birthday party for a Japanese businessman.



Since then, Patchett has explored a variety of scenarios. In this, her latest, a cherry orchard in northern Michigan provides the setting for a family saga that takes place during the COVID pandemic. A family of parents and their three grown daughters find themselves saving the family business by coming together to harvest the cherries. Over the course of months, they learn more about one another, especially about the mother's life before her marriage to their father.

This is a sweet book, suspenseful enough to keep the reader's curiosity piqued throughout. Unsurprisingly, you may not be able to stop thinking of Anton Chekhov's classic 1903 drama, *The Cherry Orchard*.

Happy April reading!



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

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!



 huatulcoweddings@gmail.com

 www.destinationweddinghuatulco.com



Meet Our Team of Professionals

Kevin Knochel

Erin May

Brent May

Victoria Merino

Jonathan Ferioli



FOR SALE
Zicatela
Casa Polo #50649
\$1,500,000 USD
 Multi-family ocean view residence with 3 buildings, 6 bdr + 5.5 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!



NEW LISTING
Palmarito
Escondida Palmarito #54291
\$1,250,000 USD
 3,832 ft2, 4 bdr, 4.5 bth fully furnished beachfront villas with swimming pool & natural finishes!



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!



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



NEW LISTING
El Faro
2 Bed Ocean View Ocean Condo #50465
\$457,000 USD
 1,254 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth ocean view condo w/ expansive terraces, private plunge pool and 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 penthouse w/ private plunge pool, expansive terrace & 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!



FOR SALE
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.



SOLD
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!



FOR SALE
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 sponsors of local surfers
 Roger Ramirez Jr, Maya Larripa,
 Sebastian Williams & Neshar Diaz.*

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

Nevado de Toluca

By Diana Rodríguez Aquino

Nevado de Toluca, also known as Xinantécatl, is a dormant stratovolcano located in the state of Mexico, Mexico. It is one of the highest peaks in Mexico, standing at approximately 4,680 meters (15,354 feet) above sea level. The volcano is part of the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt and is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) west of Mexico City.

I signed up with a tour to explore the Nevado with a day climb. The day before I prepared all my clothes (first thermal layer, second polar layer and third waterproof layer), boots, accessories (gloves, hat, UV glasses, buff) and backpack (food, toilet paper, water, cash, change of clothes, sunscreen). I was excited and I went to sleep early to be well rested.

I got up at 5am, got all my gear and left for the meeting point with the excursion team. The guides took a roll call of the entire group, and we left for Toluca. Along the way I rested a little, since what lay ahead were eight intense hours of constant effort. As we advanced, I felt the drop in temperature. Before reaching the park entrance we made a stop to eat something light and use the bathroom.

We continued with the trip and in a matter of minutes you can see how the environment changes, the temperature drops even more, and we entered a forest, the closer you get to the base camp nature changes again, everything becomes more arid as you approach the base of the mountains. We arrived at the camp, and they gave us picks and a helmet.

The beginning of the climb was very hard, it is the first push to adapt to the climate and altitude. I was barely warming up, but as we progressed, I began to adapt. The first stop was twenty minutes in and the guides advised us to eat something light and drink water. Afterwards, we proceeded to go down towards the lagoon.

In the Nevado there are two crater lakes, the Moon Lagoon and the Sun Lagoon. We went down the Moon Lagoon to surround it and began our ascent. We took one last rest before beginning the real challenge, reaching the summit. It is around three hours of ascent. Arriving at around 3800 meters above sea level we take a break and eat something sweet, which is crucial for having energy.



The last hour of ascent is the most difficult, it is a very steep slope and later you have to climb, this is where you must be very careful, since with any false step you can fall into the overhang. At this moment the temperature dropped a lot, and I began to feel less air, it was difficult to breathe and of course the physical effort was greater, because you are climbing between stones.

Finally, after climbing for about an hour we reached the top. The best feeling of the day was knowing I'd made it. From this point I could clearly see Laguna del Sol, an indescribable view. This was the perfect moment to recognize all the effort we'd made, we were 4500 meters above sea level.

Subsequently, we descended into a small valley to eat a well-deserved meal, rest, and prepare for the descent. For some people this is the most fun part and for others the worst part. Going downhill is like skiing on land, some people go very fast, while others go downhill and fall. If you have a good rhythm and are not afraid of falling you can make the descent in no time. My biggest tip is, let go, don't be afraid of falling, it can happen eventually, enjoy it and when you least expect it you will be arriving at Laguna del Sol.

Here we rested a little more and waited for the group to come together again to leave. From this point you can see how high you were and the entire journey you took to get to the top. The last hour of the excursion is dedicated to returning to the base camp and saying goodbye to Nevado. Finally, between laughter and talks, we arrived exhausted but very happy. It was 3pm, we returned just in time for lunch. In a typical Mexican dining room, they served us quesadillas, sopes and coffee. Now yes, you can eat as much as you want and get ready to head back to Mexico City. This was an amazing experience and I highly recommend it.

Despite its status as a dormant volcano, Nevado de Toluca still poses some geological hazards, and visitors are advised to take precautions when exploring the area. Additionally, the volcano and its surrounding ecosystems are protected within the Nevado de Toluca National Park, which aims to preserve the natural beauty and biodiversity of the region. There are several tour companies that offer day trips like this.



ALMA

YOUR ARCHITECTURAL SANCTUARY

RESHAPING HOW YOU EXPERIENCE HUATULCO

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



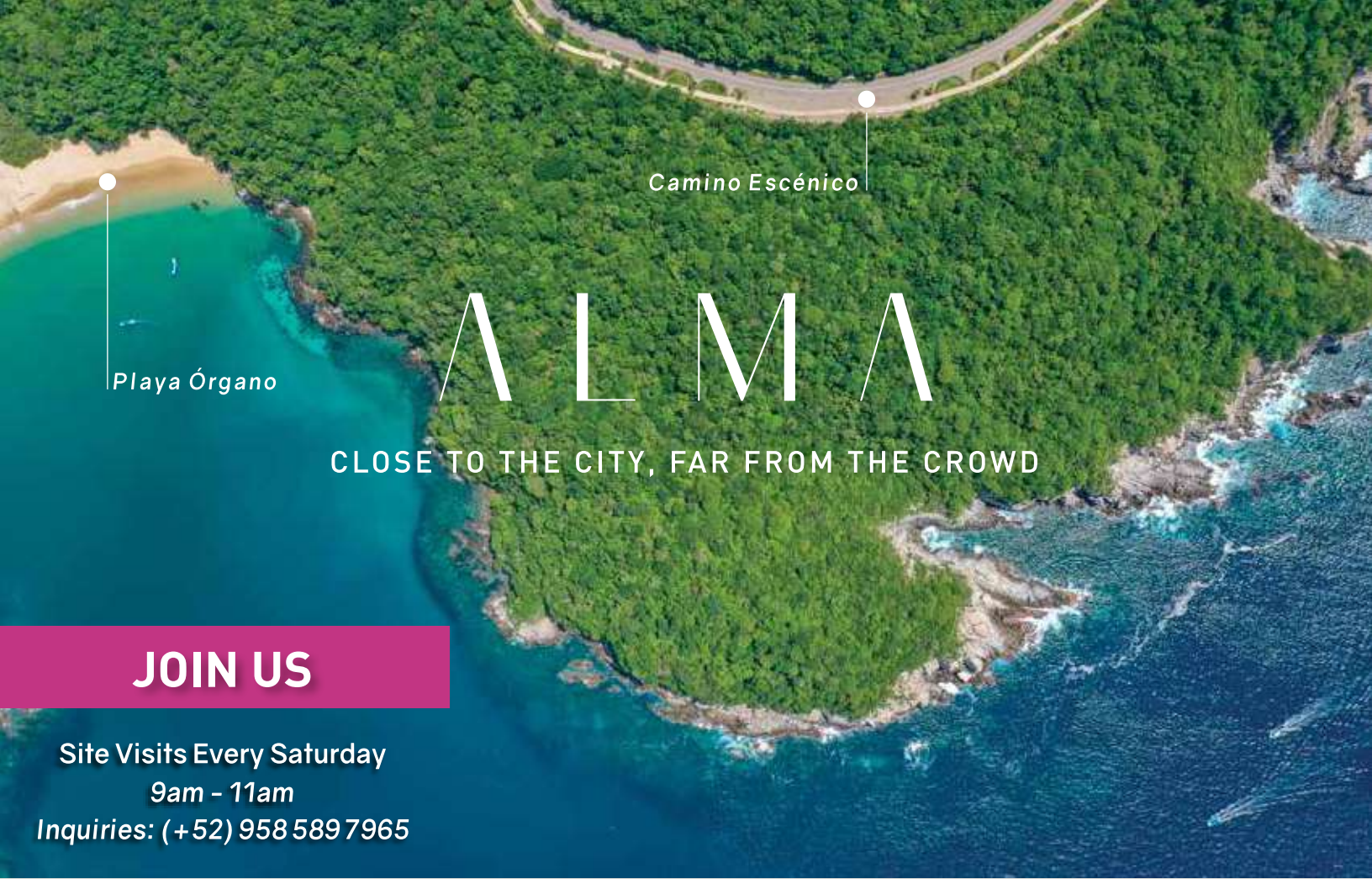
Exclusively offered by Resort Real Estate



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.



Playa Órgano

Camino Escénico

ALMA

CLOSE TO THE CITY, FAR FROM THE CROWD

JOIN US

Site Visits Every Saturday

9am - 11am

Inquiries: (+52) 958 589 7965

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

Outdoor Pursuits over Eighty

By Marcia Chaiken and Jan Chaiken

We visited Mexico off and on beginning in 1980, and we've spent several months in Huatulco most years since 2001. Needless to say, we were considerably younger then. Our outdoor pursuits on the Oaxacan Coast required stamina and strength – hours of continuous snorkeling, hikes up and down steep trails, and long drives in our 4-wheel-drive SUV along bumpy roads that turned into river beds and ended at deserted beaches. We enjoyed every minute of such activities. But when we reached age 80, some vigorous activities began to result in more pain than pleasure. You'll be glad to hear that we adapted and now find that many of the activities we've always enjoyed can be carried out from a comfortable seat on a patio overlooking a garden and the ocean.

Exploring botanical life

The coastal plant life, especially the cacti and agaves, always interested us. But now we can sit still long enough to observe the differences in the varieties and the fascinating ways they react to seasonal and daily changes. The cacti near our condo's patio range from low-growing barrel shapes – with different arrangements of spines covering their green flesh – to amazingly tall trees with thick needle-covered mazes of branches reaching 20 or more feet (over 6 meters) into the sky. During the highest winds, the barrels hunker down and seem absolutely impervious, while the tall cacti stand firmly in place but gently sway – each branch in its own rhythm.

The rosette-shape agaves with their multiple spear-shaped leaves range in our garden-view from about 2-feet (60 centimeters) in height to over 5-feet. Their colors are primarily green but some are the palest green on the palette while other are the darkest green hue – and others are every green shade in between. When the winds sweep off the ocean, the agaves shimmy. Yes, not shake but actually shimmy. In a kind of optical illusion, by staring at one of the agaves you can “see” the leaves on the right continuously rotating to the right and down like a wheel, with the leaves on the left a mirror image -- a movement which is not possible but is mesmerizing.

The agaves randomly produce buds and flowers. Some of the agave flowers appear startlingly overnight. Long stems emerge from the rosette and then are topped by bright yellow flowers. The flowering is very rare and usually signals the end of the plant's life cycle. We also can observe low-growing succulents (*Stapelia Gigantea*) that usually are not worthy of mention. But after a recent unexpected overnight deluge, they produced an amazing huge starfish-shaped cream-colored flower, so large as compared to the usual size of the plant that the overall impression was of a miracle.

The cacti in our closely observed garden produce fruit at a specific season on a particular day. When that day occurs, the call goes out from all the local birds -- and suddenly the cacti are covered with feathered fellows that are every color of the rainbow. Which brings us to our next pursuit.

Bird watching

We have our own unscientific names for groups of birds that keep us continuously entertained: strutters, flitters, and high-fliers. Two types of **strutters** parade across the garden in the early morning, the small brownish-grayish doves coo as they strut like chickens, occasionally stopping for a tasty bug treat. The large ungainly chachalacas resemble turkeys (and some local residents prepare them to eat as one would a turkey) as they march in front of us calling their friends with an excessively loud squawking chatter.

The **high-fliers** include three varieties of vulture – one uglier than the other-- that appear in circles above a land area where some animal has died. We should be grateful that they clear the land of carrion – but actually we're happy to see a decrease in their numbers in our visible skies, as the surrounding jungle is gradually being cleared and humans are replacing reptiles and rodents. Fortunately, sufficient trees remain for the pairs of nesting osprey that fly gracefully high above all day, emitting tiny little chirps unsuitable for such large birds. The pelicans, which can be seen fishing in the ocean by themselves or in small groups, flock together around sunset and present incredible geometric patterns as they circle the bay on the way to their nighttime arboreal campgrounds. And shortly after sunset when the sky becomes pink, peach, or rose, the swallows amass, flying by at first in a vanguard of ten or twelve and later in scores filling the sky.

The **flitters** include an incredible spectrum of song birds and strident screamers, ranging from the tiny nondescript cactus wrens that nestle down between agave leaves to the beautiful deep-marked blue, black and white screaming magpie jays. Each day brings different species – woodpeckers, flycatchers, orioles, buntings, hummingbirds. There are over 100 species of birds in our area. Many birders visit Huatulco, arise early in the morning, drive to parks armed with binoculars and bird books, and follow guides up trails or through jungle areas to complete their checklists. That's fine for the under-80 crowd. But we pursue a similar passion with a cup of coffee or a glass of wine in hand on an ocean-view patio. Moreover, rather than merely checking a name off a list, we can observe details of the fascinating commensal relationship between birds and plants, such as golden-cheek woodpeckers who clean insects that are visibly attacking cacti.



Bonding with other animal life

While one of us has always avoided boats except to admire them, the other has long pursued whale-watching, all the way from the northern reaches of the Atlantic to both hemispheres of the Pacific. However, one of the greatest dangers for those over 80 is the possibility of falling, and small whale-watching boats are not particularly stable. Now we have found there is no reason to give up the joy of watching these incredible fellow mammals. We are always scanning the ocean surface for a sudden telltale spray of water. And a few times a week this scanning leads to the delight of watching the antics of one or more whales. Sometimes a solitary whale will swim in circles with one fin extended looking like he or she is waving a beckoning hello. Baby whales playing are adorable as they dive and bob up around each other, obviously paying no attention to the nearby adults guarding them. And one can never tire of watching a whale breaching or fluking – until numerous boats show up.

We can frequently watch whales for twenty minutes or more but invariably the human call goes out – “whale there,” and small boats gather from all directions surrounding the playful giants. It’s amazing that these gentle behemoths don’t simply knock the human pests out of their protective shells. But instead, they usually watch the boats for a few minutes, dive deep, and disappear from view.

Iguanas are another source of outdoor entertainment. Watching a heavy fellow climb a tree on branches more slender than his tail, then reach out to chomp on tender leaves, while the branches bend and sway under the pressure from his meaty body is remarkable. They never seem to fall since they use their tails to cling and balance. And although a friend claims iguanas have no maternal instinct because their babies hatch from eggs, we’ve watched a baby iguana feeding off low growing plants while a female circles protectively around the baby until it was time to leave and she nudged it in the right direction.

Human aquatic behavior is also interesting. Name the type of water vehicle humans use to stay afloat on the ocean and you can probably witness it from Huatulco. A few times a month, usually around dawn, large aquatic cities (aka cruise ships) make their way to dock in Santa Cruz. They seem to spawn smaller human water toys, since a few hours later the water in the surrounding bays often is disturbed by water jet skis and wave runners. Usually, shortly before sunset, the deep blast of the cruise boat’s horn warns passengers to be back on board and later we are alerted by another horn to watch the ship being tugged slowly back out to sea, where from our patio we can see it slowly make its way through the channel and off to its next port.

Even when the cruise ship dock is vacant, the two nearby marinas launch fishing boats, “booze” boats for tourists, bay tour and snorkeling boats, graceful sail boats, catamarans, luxurious yachts, and a plethora of outboard pangas. On the sea horizon, full oil tankers make their way from the refineries in Salina Cruz to cities upcoast and back again with empty containers. Marines stationed at the nearby Mexico Naval base train in military boats of a spectrum of sizes and purposes. For a basically terrestrial species without gills or tails, we humans collectively spend much of our time on the water. That pattern is interrupted only when the winds blow hard, the waves turn white capped, the ocean color deepens to an ominous dark hue and the local marinas close.



Tuning into the rhythms of the world

As we age, we become acutely aware of natural cycles. There’s no place better for observing these cycles for the over-80 folks than the Oaxacan coast. From our outdoor patio theater we can watch the ebb and flow of the waves, especially remarkable at full moon and new moon when the waves smashing on the rocks below and islets at a distance reach the limits of their height. Storms at sea are literally awesome with high winds that toss about flora and fauna – including us.

We marvel at each miraculous sunrise and sunset – no two are the same. At night, as the sky turns from deep red or pink or peach to star-studded black, the distant lighthouse, El Faro, begins signaling “dangerous shoals” to passing ships, inspiring another outdoor pursuit – creating Haiku.

Quantified darkness
Light beams swirl from El Faro
Illuminate all

Neighbors have suggested many other outdoor pursuits suitable for adults of all ages: star-gazing, wine-tasting, cocktail mixing, reading in the shade of an umbrella, barbecuing, and one “off-patio” pursuit that we hope never to give up – aqua exercise. But whatever floats your boat, the basic message is the same: when you are over 80, your mobility and stamina may well change, but your zest for outdoor pursuits can remain the same.

Huatulco Salt
Company
handcrafted sea salt
for cooking



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

www.HuatulcoSaltCompany.com



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.HuatulcoFoodTours.com



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



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

Poetry in the Clouds

By Leigh Morrow

Thousands of years ago, the people who lived in the forested slopes and valleys of the Sierra Madre del Sur, where fog lingers on the tops of trees, and corn is communally planted, spoke in a language that rose and fell like music. Today they still do. The Zapotec language, the oldest written language in America, comprises of 50 different dialects that together have almost as many varieties as there are pueblos in which it is spoken. Some half a million people speak Zapotec, most living in the states of Oaxaca and Veracruz, usually speaking one or two varieties of their native language along with Spanish. In some areas, this native language is used in all daily communication such as commerce, religion and literature, but in other areas, the Zapotec language is on the brink of extinction.

More than three quarters of the dialects have fewer than ten thousand speakers fluent in the language, so its preservation has become critical. Although all varieties of Zapotec share some basic phonological and structural similarities, there are so many differences between and among them, that 40 of them are considered to be mutually unintelligible. Unlike English or Spanish, Zapotec is a tonal language with three pitches, low, high and ascendant (the movement from low to high). The number of contrasting tones differs from one dialect to another. Further complicating the learning for outsiders is that none of the tone changes are marked in the written form. Zapotec poetry perhaps best displays the dazzling rich rhythms and auditory effects of this language.

Natalia Toledo, a poet who travels the world to read her poetry in her native tongue, commented that when she reads her verses in Vietnam, Italy or North America, people are enchanted even though they do not understand the Zapotec language at all. It is the sounds that captivate.

A Zapotec poem by Antonio López Pérez reads:

“Zapotec/ I saw you/flying/ like a carpet/ upon the pleasure/of my tongue”.

When it comes to translating this poem there is no real way to capture the layers of sound that happen in the original work.

As Spanish professor and translator Claire Sullivan notes...

“When poets write in Zapotec, they entrance their readers with their melodic verses, remind their people who they are by reimagining local traditions, and call them to take responsibility for the future of their language and culture.”

Preserving these dialects, and recording their spoken words, is a key element in The Mountains Voices Project. (www.mountainvoices.org) To date, over 300 interviews have been conducted by local people in local dialects and posted on their website. The topics range from their opinions of politics and community to customs and for our interest in this article, identity.

When Zapotec native speakers were interviewed for the project and asked about their identity they indicated their language is seen as a key feature of local identity. A narrator interprets Mario Fernando's pain in school.

“Maybe the hardest thing in the primary [school] is that they didn't let you speak Zapotec, because they punished us and our fathers or our mothers if they heard us speak Zapotec...They drew attention to us and they sent for our parents and gave them a punishment too.... And that is how it was and we lost the language. I still understand [the language] because, thankfully, I've maintained a close relation with the village and I listen to what the people say in Zapotec. I understand them perfectly well but [laughing] now I can't answer them in Zapotec, no! It's possibly the most bitter experience I've had because now I know the importance of the language”

Mario Fernando, age 36, community manager.

“When [my relative] Camerino went to the school, he spoke [Zapotec] language very well, because his grandfather and his father did not teach him to speak Castellano (Spanish)and the teacher removed him from the class and she told him: 'Look, do not speak [Zapotec], because....I do not understand you ...and your classmates do not understand you either. No, you can not speak the language.' And she turned him out, poor Camerino, because he spoke in [that] language.”

Maximina, age 67, trader.

Compounding the disappearing language issue, transnational migration began. Over the past five decades, Zapotecs have been leaving for the opportunities of California, further eroding the nurturing of their original dialect.

Felipe Lopez was one of them. He left Oaxaca and arrived as an undocumented immigrant 25 years ago. He worked in the agricultural fields of California, then moved to Los Angeles, where he struggled as a dishwasher until he became a legal resident. Lopez was inspired to compile a two volume dictionary of the Zapotec language, the first of its kind. The dictionary titled Zapotec Dictionary of San Lucas Quiavini (Di'csyonaary X:tee'n Dii'zh Sah Sann Luu'c) was published in 1999. The dictionary bears the name of Felipe's home town. It includes 9,000 words translated into English and Spanish and was designed for the 50,000 Oaxacan Indians whose native tongue is Zapotec. Felipe was inspired to create the dictionary as he witnessed the erosion of his language.

Another lifeline to the Zapotec language was extended in 2010 when The University of California in San Diego offered, for the first time, a Zapotec language class.

Two years later, in Salinas, California, The Natividad Medical Center began hiring medical interpreters bilingual in both Spanish and Zapotec. Last year, the Natividad Medical Foundation launched an interpreting business that specializes in indigenous languages including Zapotec, Mixtec, Trique and Chatino.

Continued on next page

And then, Rodrigo Pérez Ramírez, who lives in San Andrés Paxtlán, Oaxaca, had an idea.

He wrote down his vision for his endangered language and entered it in a Global Voices draw, where the winner would receive funding for the project.

Rodrigo won a Rising Voices Microgrant, and now is creating audio recordings in Zapotec with Spanish translation of everyday images of the community. From simple objects to people's names, plants, animals, holidays, traditions, short stories of sites, festivals, interviews and events in the community. Records created will be published with the help of an open source application for mobile phones called ojoVoz. Generated content will be published in real time on the platform of the virtual museum of the Zapotec language.

His 21st-century union of an ancient language and the Internet aims to ensure the presence of the Zapotec language in the digital world and have those voices, sounds, tones and inflections survive indefinitely through document clouds. Zapotecs, who called themselves "Be'ena'a Za'a" meaning "The Cloud People," believed that they had descended from supernatural beings and when they died, they would return to their origins, in the clouds.

Appears they have done exactly that.

**Contact us to
announce your
activity or event.**

TheEyeHuatulco@gmail.com

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

Protect Nature

**Travel with a refillable water
bottle rather than buy
disposable plastic bottles.**

Hike from San Mateo Rio Hondo to San José del Pacifico

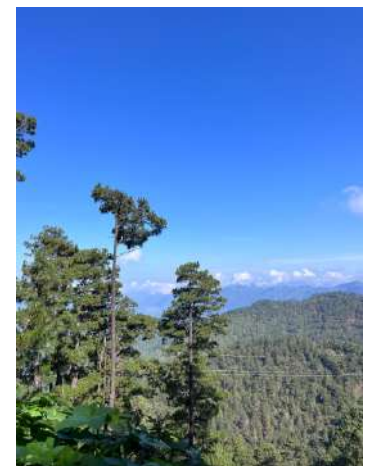
By Jane Bauer

With the temperatures on the coast heating up it is also a great time to take a few days to visit some cooler places. As the new highway is passing through Puerto Escondido I expect heavy traffic passing through San José del Pacifico will be slowing down which makes it a great time to head up there to explore.

San José del Pacifico, well-known for its shamans and hallucinogenic mushroom culture, is a charming town with lots of options for accommodations in all price points and several excellent restaurants. The views are breathtaking and when the fog rolls in it feels as if you are above the clouds. Be sure to bring some cozy clothes and I recommend getting a cabin with a fireplace.

Just a short drive off the main highway is San Mateo Rio Hondo another charming town that in recent years has captured some of the tourist market even though it is a bit further out than San José. It has stunning natural landscapes characterized by lush forests, rolling hills, and serene rivers. The Sierra Sur region is renowned for its biodiversity, offering visitors opportunities for eco-tourism and outdoor activities such as hiking, birdwatching, and river exploration.

The walk between the two towns, which takes you through the mountain woods rather than on the highway, is about 9km. I left San Mateo around 7am and got to San Jose at about 9:30am- perfect timing for a hearty breakfast. I got some fried chicken from a roadside stand to-go and began the journey back to San Mateo. It is not a challenging walk- mostly level and populated with interesting birds and butterflies.



The Street Names of La Crucecita

By Julie Etra

The cross streets of La Crucecita are almost entirely named for trees, and the vertical streets for flowering plants. Some are scientific names, some are common names, some are native species – the origins of some are not clear. For the most part, the names were chosen from the species of the dominant native plant community along the coast, known as *selva seca* (dry jungle). *Selva seca* is a winter deciduous (*caducifolio*) tropical forest. The decision to name the streets for native plants was apparently made by Juan Carlos Campillo Ojeda, an engineer working for FONATUR (Fondo Nacional de Fomento al Turismo) at the time the Bays of Huatulco resort was developed in the 1980s.

Bahías de Huatulco is the last of five federally planned resorts developed by FONATUR, which was created in 1964 to promote tourism through, among other things, resorts like Huatulco. The five major resorts developed by FONATUR are Cancun, Loreto, Los Cabos, Ixtapa/Zihuatenejo, and Huatulco. FONATUR has recently been relieved of its custodial responsibilities for Huatulco, which now falls under the aegis of the state and municipal governments.

The Grid

La Crucecita, even though a relatively new town (1985), was not laid out on a precisely north-south axis; the street grid runs northwest/southeast beside Blvd Chahue as it runs up to Route 200. It is easier, however, to think of the streets as being north-south and east-west. The grid is centered around the main square (*zocalo*) with its prominent kiosk, and fronts the town church, the *Parroquia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe y de la Santa Cruz*.

There are four major north-south streets – Jazmin on the west (two-way), Gardenia on the west side of the *zocalo* (one-way south), Bugambilia on the east side of the *zocalo* (one-way north), and Carrizal on the east (one-way south). There are 16 east-west streets, and then there a few small streets that continue bigger streets or have names of their own.

The Street Names, Explained

Of course, walking is an outdoor sport, and so you should be thinking of the actual trees that the street names represent. The following is a very brief summary of the plant characteristics, a little natural history, and some interesting factoids. For the nerdily inclined readers of *The Eye* who are interested in botany, the common name of the tree, shrub, or flower is followed by the scientific name – *Genus* – followed by the name of the *species*. When genus is followed by the word “species,” it means that there is more than one species or type.



North-South Streets (West to East)

These streets are all named for ornamental plants.

Violetas (*Viola species*). This refers to violets. The *Violaceae* family does not have any native representatives on the coast, as the climate is too hot, nor have I (yet) seen any ornamental plants in the local nurseries. If you go farther north and higher up, the Ponderosa violet (*Viola umbraticola*) ranges from New Mexico in the U.S. to the state of

Tlaxcala, east of Mexico City.

Plumbago (*Plumbago species*). This is a very common tropical ornamental plant with numerous species. The classic blue plumbago's scientific name is *Plumbago auriculata*. It is native to South Africa (as is the calla lily, made famous by Diego Rivera, and agapanthus, the Lily of the Nile); all three are common around Huatulco. Plumbago does well in clay pots (*macetas*) and attracts pollinators, such as butterflies and bees, but all parts, including the bark, fruit, pollen, roots, sap, and seeds irritate the skin and eyes and can be harmful if ingested.

Jazmin (*Jasminum grandiflorum* is the most commonly planted), or jasmine in English. This vine is native to southern Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, northeast Africa, and the Yunnan and Sichuan regions of China, although it grows well in many tropical and semi tropical climates. Its flowers are white and aromatic, and the vine appears delicate.

Gardenia (*Gardenia jasminoides*). This aromatic, evergreen, ornamental shrub is spelled just as it is in English. A fun factoid, it is in the same family with coffee. It is a small shrub and does well in *macetas*. It is native to tropical and subtropical regions of Africa, Asia, Pacific Islands, and Australia.

Bugambilia (*Bougainvillea glabra*). English speakers call and spell it by its scientific name *Bougainvillea*. This plant is native to Brazil, and it has an interesting French connection. It was first described by Philibert Commerçon, who was the first botanist sponsored by a national government to accompany an exploratory voyage. The voyage, intended to circumnavigate the globe, was led by the French admiral Louis Antoine de Bougainville, so the newly-discovered plant was named for him. The name was included in the *Genera Plantarum*, the first published classification of plant materials, put together by the French botanist Antoine Laurent de Jussieu in 1789; the name was finally codified in the 1930s in the *Index Kewensis Plantarum Phanerogamarum*, the reference work maintained by Kew Gardens outside London.

Another interesting story – it is possible that the first European to describe this plant was actually the botanical expert Jeanne Baret, Commerçon's partner and assistant. Because women were not allowed on ships, she disguised herself as a man and thus became the first woman to circumnavigate the globe. Women were at the time forbidden to be botanists, as plants are primarily identified and described by their reproductive parts, and that was considered scandalous.

Bugambilias thrive in full sun and sandy, well-drained soils. The colorful petals are not petals at all but bracts, or modified leaves; the central flower itself is small and inconspicuous. It has been cultivated for decades, with over 300 varieties available. This versatile, thorned plant can be pruned as a hedge, bush, or tree. Here in Huatulco, I planted two called *sorpresa* (surprise) since bracts are both pink and white. Although it is a tough plant, like many tropical ornamental plants, it is vulnerable to predation by leaf-cutting ants, known as *hormigas arrieras*, or muleteers, since they carry a burden of chewed off bracts and leaves back to their nests.

Carrizal means “place where the carrizos grow,” which would be a wetland or floodplain. And what indeed is *carrizo*? This is a type of large, stout grass and may have referred to several different plants, including grasses, rushes, cattails, and bulrushes, found primarily along riverine or riparian areas. Was this area indeed at some point a wetland? Not from what I have seen and read. It is considered an invasive plant in the U.S., controlled by fire and flooding along the Rio Grande.

East-West Streets (South to North)

Acacia (*Acacia species*). Acacias are a large group of trees and shrubs in the pea family, characterized by fern-like leaves and small ball-like white or yellow flowers. Plants in the pea family generally have a pea-like pod called a *vaina* in Spanish. There are a number of native species in Huatulco; some have spines, like the common *Acacia cornigera* (cuernitos, or “little horns”), which occurs at slightly higher elevation than the coast. This tree has prominent hollow spines in which resides a tiny ant with a nasty bite; they protect the tree from other plant-eating predators (herbivores) while receiving nutrition from the tree.



Ceiba (*Ceiba pentandra*). The ceiba tree, aka kapok, is in the same family with the *pochote* and the *bailador* (dancer), which we know in English as the shaving brush tree. In some places in Mexico, the ceiba is also known as *pochote*, but botanists see them as distinct in both genus and species, although both are in the Malvaceae family (see *Pochote* below).



The ceiba tree described here is a huge tree upon maturity, with a spiny, stout, single trunk, large fruits with tasty corn-like kernels/seeds that mature into a cotton-like fluff. The leaves are palm shaped. It was sacred to the Maya of eastern Mexico and Central America, as they believed it connected the heavens to the underworld through the earth. Along with the Guanacaste, this is one of the first trees you see in the median when approaching Huatulco from Highway 200. It is bat-pollinated and can live for hundreds of years. It is the national tree of Guatemala.

Cocotillo. I could not find a plant that corresponds to this common name, although it can be argued that it means “cultivated coconut.” *Coco* for “coconut” and *tillado* for “tilled” or “cultivated.” Might be a stretch.

Colorin (*Erythrina coralloides*). Like the acacia, this plant is in the pea family. It has a lovely almost tubular red flower that attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. The seeds are very poisonous.



Chacah (*Bursera simaruba*). *Chacah* is the Mayan name for this tree, aka gumbo limbo, with its peeling bark. This is a very interesting family of trees represented by 13 species in the Cacaluta watershed. They can often be distinguished by their peeling bark and berry-like red fruits, and large featherlike leaves. They are easily spotted in the landscape. The whimsical Oaxacan sculptures known as *alebrije* are from a related species, *copal*; the word *copal* originates from its Náhuatl name *Copalquahuatl*.



Flamboyan (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima* or *Delonix regia*). Like many common names, this one could be referring to two different plants. I am assuming it is the *Caesalpinia pulcherrima*, also known by another common name, *tabachin*. This colorful native tree has red/orange flowers and fern-like leaves, a long pea-pod fruit, as it is in the pea family. It attracts many pollinating insects and birds.



Guamuchil (*Pithecelobium dulce*). As the species name implies, this pea-family native has a sweet (*dulce*) fruit, pinkish on the inside, which attracts many species of birds, squirrels, and insects. It tends to grow near drainages and riparian areas. It can be found growing next to the *huaje* (*Leucaena leucocephala*) trees across the street from the Bladu'Yú restaurant near the entrance to Chahue beach.



Guanacastle (*Enterolobium cyclocarpum*). Also spelled *guanacaste*, this is a very large tree with a huge, broad, saucer-shaped canopy seen when entering La Crucecita south from Highway 200. It has a smooth bark, and unique ear-shaped fruits. With difficulty the seeds can be removed from the fruit and ground to produce a flour and then baked into delicious cookies (if you have a lot of free time). It is illegal to harvest here without a permit, and the wood can only be obtained through supposedly legal means and after natural senescence. The wood is beautiful, very hard, and bug resistant, even to termites. When cut and sanded it produces a somewhat toxic sawdust. It is the national tree of Costa Rica. *Pura Vida!*

Guarumbo (*Cecropia obtusifolia*). Although there is one in the garden of the Binniguenda hotel in Santa Cruz, this tree generally begins to appear in the next ecosystem north and away from the coast at a higher elevation, where vegetation is tropical and green all year (*siempre verde* = always green, like the Italian or Mediterranean cypress, *Cupressus sempervirens*). For house plant fans, it looks like a schefflera on steroids; if you visit Hagia Sofia or Pluma Hidalgo, you will see the tree shortly after leaving Santa María Huatulco on your way north. It is tall, with large leaves, and is easily distinguished from the surrounding landscape.

Macuitle. This appears to be a Hispanicized version of the Náhuatl word macuahuitl, which was a weapon of war, a wooden club with several embedded obsidian blades; the name means "hand-wood." It was effectively used by the Mexica (Aztecs) against the invading Spaniards, as chronicled by Bernal Díaz de Castillo, a soldier in the army of Hernán Cortés, and the author of *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España* (The True History of the Conquest of New Spain). Although I do not find that it corresponds to a particular tree, it was no doubt made of hardwood. According to Díaz and several other commentators, Aztec warriors could kill a horse with a single slash of the macuahuitl.

Macuil (*Handroanthus impetiginosus*, *Tabebuia chrysantha*, *Tabebuia rosea*). Ay yay yay yay. There are at least three of these magnificent flowering trees native to the area, all known as macuil, also spelled maquil, and all members of the *Bignoniaceae* family. They bloom at different times, with the yellow flowering trees lining Blvd Benito Juárez in the vicinity of La Bocana in January, and the pink/purplish flowering tree (*Tabebuia rosea*) dominating in March. The bright pink *Handroanthus impetiginosus* blooms in late October to mid-November. It is the national tree of Paraguay. All of them attract birds, particularly orioles.



Ocotillo (*Cordia eleagnoides*). This tree is locally known by another common name, *parota*, and is not to be confused with the cactus-like plants of the southwestern deserts of the United States of America. This native, moderate-sized tree lines Benito Juárez Blvd. east of La Crucecita from approximately Balcones de Tangolunda to La Bocana. It has a broad canopy with white flowers, and blooms twice a year. The wood, sometimes known as *bocote*, is hard, heavy, and insect resistant and is used in construction, particularly for the support structures of *palapas*.

Palma Real (*Roystonea regia*). As its common Spanish name implies, we know this tree as the royal palm, a tall, stately palm with a whitish trunk. It is native to the Caribbean, Mexico, Florida, and parts of Central America. It is the national tree of Cuba.

Palo Verde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*). The name means "green stick" in Spanish. Here we go again with confusing common names. Referring to my bible, *Cátalogo de Nombres Vulgares y Científicos de Plantas Mexicanas* by Maximino Martínez (México: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1979), there are eight trees that correspond to this name. The La Crucecita street name Palo Verde is most probably the one that grows in hot areas of Oaxaca, and not the one commonly found in southwestern United States. What the species have in common are the green trunks and branches, where photosynthesis occurs, providing essential carbohydrates (sugars) when the leaves drop from this deciduous plant.

Pochote (*Ceiba aesculifolia*). The multiple stemmed trunks have spines, but they are not as prominent as those of the ceiba. The flowers are large and before they emerge, the buds resemble those of the shaving brush tree, to which it is related.

Sabali. This was a tough one. Saba or sabal is a type of fan palm tree, or palmetto, found in tropical and subtropical climates (South Carolina, US, is called "The Palmetto State"). Sabalí, with an accent over the 'i', may be referring to a species of fig, or *Ficus*. The street name is NOT Sábila, so forgive me while I digress – you are sure to encounter sábila plants in Huatulco.

Sábila is Aloe vera (*Aloe barbadensis miller*), native to the Arabian Peninsula but happy in many tropical surroundings. "Aloe" comes from the Arabic *alloe*, which means "bitter and shiny substance," or from the Hebrew אהלים *ahalim*, the aloes mentioned in the Old Testament. Aloe vera has medicinal properties and is applied externally to heal skin due to its mucilaginous texture and antiseptic properties. Taken internally it may improve digestion and support healthy blood sugar levels, but it can also cause digestive problems. It can also be used to seal cuttings of woody tropical plants, prolonging their storage, until they can be propagated directly in soil or in water.

Note: Mostly unrelated, but I wonder whether readers of *The Eye* have noticed that the National Park (*Parque Nacional*) has a new name. Recently big green signs have appeared along Highway 200 and other major thoroughfares with the new name for the park, Ricardo Flores Magón. Flores Magón was a well-known anarchist, socialist, activist, writer, and a major figure in the Mexican Revolution. Look him up.

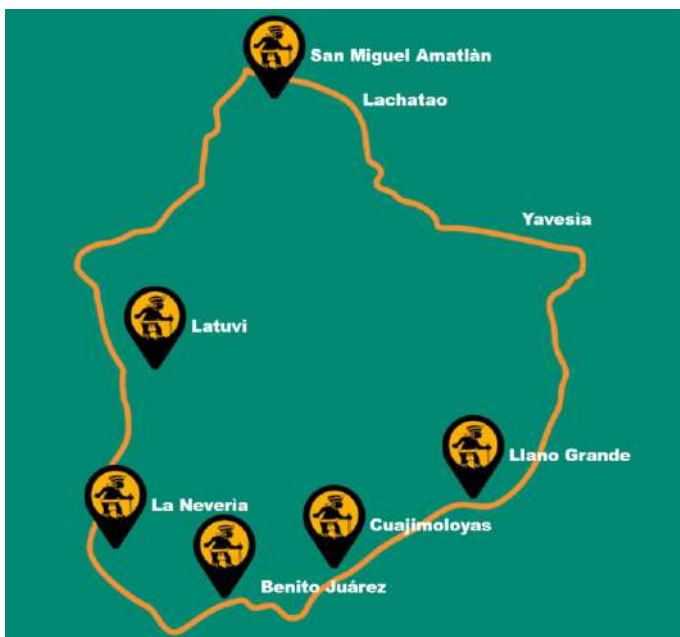


Experience Mexico's Environment through Zapotec Culture

By Deborah Van Hoewyk

Outdoor adventures in Huatulco? There are many, many, many! Swim, boogie board, surf, or paddleboard at the beaches; float through an alligator-filled swamp in sun-dappled mangrove shade or down the Rio Copalita by moonlight; bump along rural tracks to the waterfalls; go snorkeling, deep-sea fishing, or whalewatching; birdwatch and release baby turtles – just name it, you can get some exercise and explore the natural environment here, no problem.

Oaxaca, however, offers outdoor adventures beyond Huatulco and way beyond a *tarde deportiva* (sporting afternoon). Among the very best of such adventures is *Los Pueblos Mancomunados*, a cooperative of eight Zapotec villages high in the Sierra Norte mountains northeast of Oaxaca City.



Los Pueblos Mancomunados

Literally, *Los Pueblos Mancomunados* means “the joint towns,” but a better translation might be “Commonwealth of Villages.” About thirty years ago, the national Tourism Secretariat, working through state tourism agencies, undertook a program to set up rural ecotourism centers to create jobs and new income streams in the region.



Some of the villages that are now part of the group had already had similar ideas. Starting with the village of Benito Juárez, the most accessible from Oaxaca City, three villages developed a collaborative ecotourism plan in which the activities the towns conducted – both in collaboration and individually – would benefit all the villages. It started small, with forest walks around Benito Juárez and trail-walks to the villages of La Nevería and San Antonio Cuajimoloyas. Visitors were allowed to pay whatever they wished.

Collaboration is a way of life familiar to the indigenous Zapotecs of these mountain villages, often called *la gente de las nubes* (the people of the clouds) – some of the trails among them have been there for 400 years. The people govern themselves by *usos y costumbres*, or traditional indigenous customary law, which organizes how all members participate in the work of running their community (see “Governing Oaxaca: The Frontier between the Traditional and the Modern,” *The Eye*, May-June 2014). *Usos y costumbres* can be selected as an alternative form of local self-governance by indigenous villages; it has been legally recognized by 417 of Oaxaca's 570 *municipios* (a *municipio* is roughly equivalent to a U.S. or Canadian county) since 1992.

Five more towns have joined the Pueblos Mancomunados; San Miguel Amatlán, Santa Martha Latuvi, San Isidro Llano Grande, Santa Catarina Lachatao, and Santa María Yavesía. Altogether, the eight villages have about 2,400 residents, and cover 24,932 hectares (about 61,608 acres); and the altitude ranges from 100 to 3,300 meters (± 300-10,000 ft). There are over 2,000 species of trees and plants – the “cloudy forests” near the peaks are the largest virgin forests north of the Andes. There are more than 400 species of birds, 350 kinds of butterflies, and wildlife that includes jaguars, ocelots, and other wild felines, along with deer, foxes, and more.

How To Visit the Pueblos Mancomunados

While it is possible to reach any of the pueblos on your own via public transportation and hiking, and you can then make arrangements for activities in the village, it will be difficult, especially if your Spanish is minimal. You will no doubt be better off contacting *Expediciones Sierra Norte*, a nonprofit organized in 1998 and operated jointly with the Pueblos Mancomunados. Sierra Norte Expeditions is a particular type of nonprofit, a *sociedad de solidaridad social* (social solidarity society); this class of organizations, established by law in 1976, uses “collective assets to carry out commercial activities” among marginalized Mexican communities.

Sierra Norte Expeditions specializes in setting up hiking/biking itineraries on the trails among the pueblos. They arrange local guides, and maintain a list of the other activities provided in each local village, and can arrange them for you. If you are in Oaxaca anyway, go their office and discuss what you'd like to do.

There are also independent tour companies that arrange itineraries, including horse- and by bike-packing – you can find them by googling, but for most things they need to book with Sierra Norte anyway. Sierra Norte returns 90% of the income from the tourism activities to the villages.

Trails of the Pueblos Mancomunados

Hiking. Sierra Norte Expeditions will organize a hike of any length on trails that run between six villages: San Miguel Amatlán, Santa Martha Latuvi, La Nevería, Benito Juárez, San Antonio Cuajimoloyas, and San Isidro Llano Grande. To hike the entire length takes seven days and six nights (you stay in “comfortable cabins with chimney” – bring your socks and sweaters!). Transportation to and from the mountain starting place, local guides, meals, “local experiences” (these vary by village – see below), and insurance are all included. If you need to have your luggage carried from village to village, that's extra. At the time this was written, the cost of the pre-set *paquete*, or package, to hike all six pueblos was \$9,450 MXN (\$566.30 USD, \$763.63 CAD), double occupancy, minimum of 4 people, maximum 12. There are two *paquetes* of 2 days, 1 night, and a one-day hike; you can, however, arrange a custom hike to include different pueblos. It should be noted that Mexicans run on mountain trails (see “Lorena Ramírez: Top Runner of the Rarámuri,” *The Eye*, March 2024) – you are free to do likewise.

Are you interested in getting involved with The Eye?

We welcome submissions:
theyehuatulco@gmail.com

Horseback riding. Sierra Norte does not have pre-set paquetes for doing the trails on horseback, but horses are available in most of the villages – for this kind of experience, you can look on the Sierra Norte website under *nuestros centros ecoturísticos*, which sends you to the individual pueblos. In San Isidro Latuvi, you ride to San Miguel Amatlán; if you are not an experienced rider and would prefer not to ride on steep, narrow trails, you can ride half way to Amatlán and hike the rest. For a description of an independent tour by Horseback Mexico: www.horsebackmexico.com/rides-2/multiday-rides/ride-the-continental-divide/.

Biking. Making bike-packing arrangements works pretty much the same way as making hiking arrangements, although again, Sierra Norte does not have any pre-set paquetes. However, all of the trails can be done on mountain bikes, and you can arrange a cabin or bring your tent for overnights. For a great description of biking the pueblos: www.stilloutriding.com/2022/11/benito-juarez-and-the-pueblos-mancomunados/.

Village Activities

The six villages included on Sierra Norte trail paquetes have local ecotourism centers where you can add on activities after you have arrived – the price will be the same as if you had arranged it in advance.

Benito Juárez. This pueblo is located in the mountain forest about an hour and a half from Oaxaca City. It has a *mirador* (viewpoint) that looks out over the Central Valleys, a 150-meter suspension bridge, and three zip lines. You can visit a couple of farms and trout nurseries, and hike, bike, or horseback on the surrounding trails. There are cabins, camping areas, and *comedores* (family restaurants). There are several community projects to visit or participate in: bread baking, other food workshops, mushroom production, and research on medicinal properties of native plants.



La Nevería (Latzi Belli in Zapotec).

Located in a small valley, La Nevería has only about 100 inhabitants. It is called La Nevería because a century or so ago, the people produced ice and transported it by donkey to sell in warmer parts of Oaxaca. There are trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. The community hosts a *sietes colores del maiz* (seven colors of corn) walk to visit their efforts to preserve native, i.e., non-GMO, corn varieties. You can also visit a “productive projects” route that shows off efforts to use local resources to create new income streams. There are cabins, homestays, camping, and a comedor (features a watercress special!), cooking classes, a zip line, and athletic obstacle course.



Santa Martha Latuvi. Latuvi offers seven trails for hiking, biking or horseback riding, including a trail to El Molcajete waterfall and a trail that follows the historic route of the Camino Real, where Mexican muleteers brought goods from Veracruz to the Central Valleys. You can visit two women who make pulque and tepache, eat in a comedor where you catch your own trout at the trout nursery, visit various projects to produce marmalade, make bread, and explain traditional medicine. There are cabins (with hammocks on the porches), homestays, and camping areas.

San Miguel Amatlán. One of the larger pueblos, with just over a thousand inhabitants, Amatlán still has some vestiges of colonial architecture. It is located on the Camino Real, and has a community museum (“Community Museums: Very ‘Special Ed’ for Indigenous Peoples,” *The Eye*, Sept./Oct 2013). Trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding; cabins, campsites, and a comedor. Workshops and project visits include mushroom farming, bread baking, women artisans, and traditional medicine.

San Isidro Llano Grande. Founded early in the 1800s by people trying to escape the Mexican Revolution, Llano Grande is the highest of the Pueblos Mancomunados (3,300 meters, or over 10,800 feet at the highest mirador). Located on a flat mountain-top and surrounded by forest, Llano Grande inhabitants are dedicated to preserving the forest. Hiking and biking of course, birdwatching, and workshops in cooking, breadmaking, and tortilla making. Cabins, camping, and comedores; one special treat is to learn the history and legends of the community by visiting “the elders.”

Santa Catarina Lachatao and Santa María Yavesía. Although these last two villages are part of Pueblos Mancomunados, they do not have their own ecotourism centers. **Lachatao** is a very old village, and a recently (2009) discovered archeological site indicates that this was an important Zapotec ritual site, as well as a key stop on trade routes from the north. It has a community museum with archeological finds. **Yavesía** is a small village, less than 450 people, and has lost population since the 2010 census. Here are the headwaters of the Papaloapan River, which flows to the Atlantic through Veracruz. There's a roundtrip hiking trail to the Lotoa waterfall, a trail the Cave of the Virgin, and one to Lachatao.

Each of these villages, if you take time to talk with residents, offers more. To get started on a plan to visit one, some, or all of the Pueblos Mancomunados, contact Expediciones Sierra Norte:

www.sierranorte.org.mx
info@sierranorte.org.mx

Telephone: +52 951 514 82 71

WhatsApp: +52 1 951 226 8395.

Going Out and Under

By Kary Vannice

Some of Mexico's most fantastical and fascinating outdoor pursuits aren't actually outdoors but underground. With over 7,000 recorded cave systems scattered across the country, Mexico boasts some of the most extensive and awe-inspiring underground networks in the world. Beneath its amazing surface lies an even more mesmerizing world waiting to be discovered – a labyrinth of caves, caverns, and underground rivers that weave throughout Mexico, telling the earth's ancient origin story.

Mexico is, of course, well known for its diverse landscape, from lush green jungles to towering blue mountains, but it's her vast subterranean realm that can truly captivate the adventurous spirit. Each cave system tells a story of geological evolution, carved out over millions of years by relentless forces of nature.

One of Mexico's most iconic cave systems is the **cenotes of the Yucatán Peninsula**. Cenotes are ancient sinkholes formed by the collapse of limestone bedrock to reveal a hidden world of crystal-clear waters and intricate caverns. Exploring the cenotes offers a unique opportunity to swim, snorkel, or dive amidst massive stalactites and stalagmites as shafts of sunlight pour down from surface openings, lighting up the subterranean landscape. If you're visiting the Yucatán, you can find many guided tours that will safely allow you to experience these hidden wonders.

Venturing further into Mexico's underground realm, you can explore the sprawling **cave systems of the Sierra Madre Oriental** on the eastern side of the country. Here, limestone cliffs give way to a network of caverns adorned with stunning formations, including delicate helictites, which, unlike stalactites and stalagmites, look like they were formed in zero gravity. They can extend horizontally or even diagonally across the cave's surface often ending up looking like sea coral growing out of the depths. Also, in this area, you will find the **Cave of Swallows**, one of the largest vertical cave shafts in the world. It plunges over 1,200 feet straight down for anyone seeking an adrenaline rush by rappelling a quarter of a mile down into the black abyss.



If you're looking for a more immersive experience, the **Rio Secreto in the Riviera Maya** provides a journey through an underground river system that flows beneath the pristine jungle above. Kayaking or floating through the subterranean waterways reveals a hidden world of ancient rock formations and subaqueous chambers where the echoes of dripping water create a symphony of sound that reverberates through the caverns.

But perhaps one of Mexico's most extraordinary underground landscapes lies deep beneath the surface of Naica, Chihuahua – the **Cave of the Crystals**. Located 300 meters within the Naica Mine, this otherworldly cavern is renowned for its gigantic gypsum crystals. Some of the crystals inside the cave are as tall as a 4-story building and weigh over 50 tons. Humans in this environment look like tiny ants surrounded by perfectly formed, crystal clear prisms and luminescent shafts of light. The cave's extreme conditions, with temperatures reaching up to 58°C (136°F), along with humidity levels nearing 100%, created the perfect environment for forming these monumental crystals

over thousands of years.

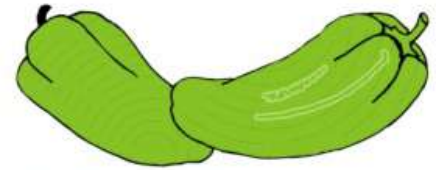
So breathtakingly beautiful, this true marvel of the underground world was featured on the Discovery and History Channels and the Outdoor Life Network in Canada. These programs offered a rare glimpse into this surreal underworld that seems more like a scene from science fiction than reality. Unfortunately, unlike many other underground wonders in Mexico, your only opportunity to experience this mystical landscape is on TV. Discovered initially as part of a mining exploration that required pumps to keep the underground water from filling the chamber, the caves were allowed to re-flood when mining operations ceased in October of 2015. Nevertheless, the mere existence of this extraordinary ecosystem serves as a testament to the incredible geological diversity and untold mysteries that lie beneath Mexico's surface.

Mexico's expansive cave systems offer a gateway to a realm where time stands still, and the earth reveals its hidden treasures. Each unique cave system tells a story of geological wonder and cultural significance. You just have to be adventurous enough to look below the surface.

Chiles & Chocolate

Cooking Classes

Huatulco, Oaxaca



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

www.HuatulcoFoodTours.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

Zimatan, Huatulco

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

Tel. 958 105 1671 Cel. 958 100 7339

chiles.chocolate@yahoo.com



50% SOLD!

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

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



STARTING AT \$317,000 USD

— \$5,393,986 MXN —



MX (+52) 958.587.4543

www.BaysideHuatulco.com