

The Eye

Beach, Village + Urban Living in Mexico

Huatulco • Issue 158

May/June 2026

FREE

In this Issue:
Tren Maya Tsíimin K'áak'

Escaping the Heat of the Coast

Cine Pobre:
Where Film Isn't About Budget

More Books to Anticipate in 2026



NEW LISTING

PUERTO ESCONDIDO

LA FLIA BEACHFRONT VILLA #79819

4 bdr, 5 bth furnished beachfront luxury villa w/ infinity pool, sunset bar & concierge service!
\$2,999,000 USD



FOR SALE

HUATULCO

VILLA POSITANO #65628

4 bdr, 4 bth, 6,050 ft² fully furnished beachfront villa with infinity pool and direct access to Arrocito Beach!
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HUATULCO

VILLA ESCONDIDA #77110

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FOR SALE

HUATULCO

VILLA CONCHITA OCEANFRONT #73805

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FOR SALE

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BEACHFRONT CABEZA de TORTUGA #68955

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\$1,650,000 USD



FOR SALE

PUERTO ESCONDIDO

CASA PIEDRA #67592

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\$1,600,000 USD



FOR SALE

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ECO LUXURY VILLA #69329

3,767 ft², 4 bdr, 4.5 bth move-in ready beachfront villa with private pool & high-end finishes!
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NEW LISTING

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Ask us about our exclusive off market listings.

Editor's Letter

In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life—no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed in the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing. I see all. The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* 1836

The month of May for me is always a time when I am changing gears. From October to April I work long hours, juggle many tasks and all the while try to move through the world with a smile.

As the busy season winds down in April and the temperature on the coast rises, my heartbeat softens, my muscles relax, and I come back into myself. I remember that there is no reason to rush. But who am I when I am not producing, organizing and planning? There is a meditation I like to do where I sit and close my eyes, I allow my mind to focus on my breath and then I imagine myself at younger stages of life. I sit like I did when I was 4 or 8 or 16. What is the essence of me? What is the essence of each of us when we strip away our tasks and obligations?

In May I get to enjoy leisurely mornings, long swims in the ocean or walks by the river with my dogs. With this slowing down I get to sit and contemplate my life's purpose. Everything in nature exists in a symbiotic relationship with everything else: tree roots intertwine with fungi in the soil, nourishing flowers that feed bees, which pollinate fruit that sustains animals—and so the cycle continues. I recently read that nut producing trees don't produce each year. In the years when there is an overpopulation of creatures that live on nuts, nuts will not produce and the population will be culled. How do the trees know? As a species do we trust in those cycles or are we pushing against them?

It is a cop-out to think our life's purpose is amassing more stuff; homes, cars, financial security. While those things bring comfort do they really represent our purpose? I look at the tree outside my window; a large guanacaste. The sunlight flickers through its branches, a squirrel runs along a branch, a chachalaca hoots good morning, a magpie jay and a grackle screech at each other.

For me immersion in nature is as close as I feel to my life's purpose. To just be and feel my soul as a part of something larger. Humans do not have dominion over nature, it has dominion over us and the sooner we accept that, we can stop struggling, let go, and enjoy it's beauty.

Happy Summer,

Jane

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is reading this.

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está leyendo esto.

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Beat the Heat in Mexico

By Marcia Chaiken and Jan Chaiken

Here for business or pleasure? At the beach or in the city or in the mountains? The good news is: wherever you are in Mexico the temperature can climb pleasantly high. The bad news is: as the temperature climbs high so can yours. Rapidly rising body temperature can result in heat exhaustion or worse. So here are a few tips for creating a pleasurable stay in Mexico instead of a medical emergency.



Dress to stay cool. The song might say “no shoes, no shirt, no problems,” but the absence of a shirt on tourists parading down city streets is a cringeworthy moment. Not only is it gauche but it increases the chances of overheating. Slip on a light-weight loose shirt, especially one with material designed to reflect sun. Lightly covered with room for air to circulate is acceptable in beach

communities. In cities and the mountains, opt for several layers. Peel them off as the temperature rises during the day and replace them as the sun and temperature go down.

Stay hydrated. Realize that while you've been dreaming of margaritas and *cervezas*, water is the key to hydration – not alcohol. Experiment and experience the many different kinds of flavored waters available in Mexico. Some of the favorites of local residents and long-time tourists are water spiked with tamarind juice, hibiscus flower (*agua de jamaica*), and cucumber (*agua de pepino*). We order our favorites in *jarras* (pitchers) and down the whole *jarra* during a meal for two.

Stay out of the sun. We wince when we see bone-white tourists laying prone in the sun on loungers around pools. Even with a high SPF suntan lotion, they are literally cooking themselves to dizziness and nausea. Exercise caution - even in the shade; the sun reflects off surrounding surfaces, especially water, and can cause roasting under that umbrella or *palapa*.

Plan your outdoor activities for the early morning and late afternoon. One of our granddaughters recently joined us in Huatulco for a week of rest and recreation with a bunch of friends whom she had met in med school. The young docs knew the nitty-gritty details of the havoc that heat can play on human metabolism. They rose early and went to the beach, beating the crowds and high temperatures. When the sun was rising high, they left the beach for indoor activities in air conditioned places. As the sun lowered enough to cast deep shadows, they brought their books and smart phones to the shade near a pool and took a plunge whenever the body temperature warranted a cooling. Evenings after dinner were their prime times for walks and other outdoor explorations. They pretty much held to the same schedule in city environments, touring in the morning and late afternoon and enjoying air conditioned museums midday.

Take cold showers. Even if you enjoy soaking in or spraying yourself with warm to hot water, before you towel off, stand under a shower that is as cold as the water gets. It's the fastest way to bring down your body temperature. Returning from the beach or sweaty activities, a cold shower is not only enjoyable but necessary.

Siesta, siesta, siesta. Mexico is famous for its fiesta opportunities. But note that local fiestas typically begin around sunset. Midday is set aside for a long indoor snooze. You might try imitating the national pattern of having your largest meal (*comida*) in the early afternoon; the reason many stores and museums are closed midday is because the staff are enjoying *comida* during the hottest hours. Then as many local residents do, take a nap or at least rest while you digest. You'll find that afterwards your body temperature will be normal and you'll be raring to go.

Long-stay acclimatization. Many of us longer-stay Mexico visitors get used to the heat. It's not psychological – it's physiological. Our circulatory systems including our hearts adjust to keeping us cooler in hot weather. But it normally takes a week or more for our bodies to adapt – longer as we grow older – so we follow our own advice that we've given you during that period. We continue to follow it after acclimatization except that we don't use air-conditioning. As soon as we arrive in Huatulco, we open windows and turn on all ceiling fans in our condo, leaving them on until we depart for the US. The fans and the sea breezes eventually replace the need for A/C.

Watch those babies! We love to see the babies and toddlers from north of the border in their floaties in pools and being wheeled about city streets. But please realize that their little circulatory systems take much longer than adults' to adjust to heat at beaches and midday high temperatures in cities and mountains. When we hear the little ones wailing with discomfort, our hearts go out in hope that their parents are keeping them indoors and cool midday and providing bottles of water and cooling them off with baths and wet cloths.

Mexico's weather is wonderful for visitors. It's one reason tourists head south during below-freezing months in the U.S., Canada and Europe. But wonder can rapidly turn into woe – unless you beat the heat.

Drs. Marcia and Jan Chaiken have been married for 62 years and have published many justice system research reports together.



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Tren Maya *Tsíimin K'áak'*

By Julie Etra



The Tren Maya links the main cities, major airports and tourist destinations, including major Mayan archaeological sites within the five states rooted in Mayan culture in Mexico (Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo). It also formally recognizes and helps safeguard the Mayan culture and its contributions to Mexico. All the signage is bilingual (Spanish and Mayan). The major and central station is Cancún.

Although other rail line projects in the region had been proposed by past administrations, the Tren Maya was the brainchild of the former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador (aka AMLO) and his administration, and one of his top priorities shortly after his election in 2018. The Tren Maya consists of 1,554 km (966 miles) of modern rail that loops around the Yucatán Peninsula, with two additional legs, one east to Chetumal on the Belize border, and the other lengthy section south and west from Escárcega to the archeological site of Palenque in Chiapas. There are a total of 34 stations, of which 20 are major, consisting of seven segments. The three train types include the Standard Mayan Train (Xinnbal, 'walking' in Mayan), the Restaurant Car (Janal), and the Mayan Train Long Distance (P'ata), the latter of which will provide sleeper cars for the lengthier routes. The Standard Train has a 300-passenger capacity. The stations tend to be on the outskirts of communities, probably dictated by right of way issues, community concerns, engineering, hydrology, and archaeological. Passengers cannot simply hop on and off the train, so if you want to stay in a particular area for an extended stay, buy two one-way tickets.

The Eye 8

Engineering, Construction and Operation

The lead firm selected for this project was Alstom, a French multinational company specializing in rail transport, mobility solutions, and engineering. Including the acquisition of Bombardier Transportation (part of Bombardier, known for its aviation division, including business jets), with a facility in Querétaro, Mexico, they are a global leader in high-speed trains, metros, trams, and sustainable signaling systems. At the time, FONATUR (National Fund for the Promotion of Tourism) was the lead agency for the Federal government, with a carefully selected consortium of businesses responsible for the design, manufacture of the trains, construction of the rail line, environmental and cultural analysis, and likely public outreach and coordination. The consortium was in part selected for its ability to manufacture the 42 X'Trapolis trains in Mexico in Ciudad Sahagún, Hidalgo, fulfilling another goal of being a 'Train for Mexico Built in Mexico' as well as design and install the entire associated infrastructure. The exterior design is sleek and elegant, and the train's logo, an artistic interpretation of Kukulcan, the Mayan plumed serpent deity, was clearly displayed.

Construction began in 2019 with clearing and grubbing of the right of way. Topography is mainly flat, though hilly and rough terrain in Campeche required excavation and stabilization of long cut slopes. Some sections required multiple vehicular overpasses to maintain access to small communities. Sections were built and opened incrementally, with the final segment from Escárcega to Chetumal on December 15, 2024.

The routes are now fully operational although, as of this article, it is not clear what services are available at all the major stations. The trains are powered by a hybrid system, utilizing both electric-diesel dual-mode locomotives and dedicated diesel locomotives to travel the 1,554 km route. Approximately 44% of the track (about 690 km), primarily between Mérida and Chetumal, is electrified. The remaining sections are intended to run on clean biodiesel and ultra-low sulfur diesel, resulting in lower emission and energy efficiency. And the source of the biodiesel? Sources are primarily used cooking and vegetable oils produced in the surrounding five states through which the train passes. Alternatively, ultra-low sulfur diesel fuels are also used, according to causanaturamedia.com.

The Guardia Nacional, (established by AMLO in 2019), under the direction of the Mexican Armed Forces, oversees security and plays a role in operations.

Our Trip March 2026

We decided, without much debate, to take the Tren Maya this year from Mérida to Playa del Carmen, then rent a car and head to Akumal to meet up with family members, returning to Mérida. We did discuss taking it last year, but since 2025 was Tren Maya's first year in operation, we decided to wait for reviews from friends or acquaintances—which never came. We chose Mérida since we had great memories from a brief trip we took decades ago on our way to Tulum; I was alone in Mérida in 2011 to present at an International Conference and wanted to go back with my hubby. We chose Playa del Carmen for the destination north of Akumal since it appeared that the station was better developed than the Tulum station to the south of Akumal and we were concerned about transportation to the rental car agency. As it turns out that was a prudent decision, as neither taxis nor Uber were available at the Playa del Carmen train station, and we were lucky to catch a private van to pick up our rental car.

Mérida To Playa del Carmen

Websites recommended that we be at the station across town an hour early so we left the hotel at 5:15 am, before the Mérida rush hour. The station was elegant but with few functioning services and mostly empty store fronts. Signage indicated that no outside beverages or food were allowed on the train; the body and luggage scanners, however, were not functioning at the time and we noticed employees enjoying a good *desayuno* in Styrofoam containers once we were on board in our first-class seats. We left at 7:00 a.m. on the dot. The comfortable seats were identical in coach and first class, the latter came with a fold-out table, but that was the only perk, other than first class allows for early boarding. There was plenty of space for storage and even a rack for bicycles. The food, in a separate 'vagón' (car) consisted mostly of packaged microwavable snacks, but I had a decent slice of carrot cake and a cup of coffee (skip the chapata de carne with mystery meat) and I was impressed with the selection of magazines. They serve rum, vodka, tequila and beer, but alas no wine, although it was a bit early for alcohol. It appears that the *vagón* may offer more culinary options in the future, as what we experienced was not the 'restaurant' car described on various websites ('There will be 8 Restaurant model Maya trains, and the reason is that they have a carriage that functions as a restaurant. It has an industrial-type kitchen with a capacity for 140 passengers, and it prepares food from each region it passes through').



There are electrical charge outlets and USB ports on the trains, but the wireless internet was not functioning on either leg of our trip. It was a 4.5-hour comfortable trip to Playa del Carmen through the flat and monotonous terrain, dominated by scrubby vegetation of the limestone parent material of the Yucatán Peninsula, mostly paralleling the existing highway to Cancún.

Return to Mérida

The train at Playa del Carmen left punctually at 7:10 p.m. and it was good we were early, as an intense downpour would have slowed our 25-minute taxi ride. We ducked into a small fast-food restaurant to get out of the rain blowing through the station and had a few beers. The station had functioning scanners, but they did not catch the limited food and beverages we managed to bring. The train was on time, and other than the coach being very cold (I resorted to wrapping a tee shirt around my head), we had an uneventful return in the dark night, with a few rum and coke cocktails and our books to break the monotony. We caught a cab back to the hotel in Mérida.

Would we do this again? Perhaps! I would love to check out the restaurant car and go back to either Palenque or Bacalar. Some challenges remain along several sections of the train due to difficult and complicated civil engineering associated with the karst topography (porous and cavernous limestone formations) and cenotes (freshwater sinkholes) of the Yucatan Peninsula, and several derailments occurred in 2025. Be sure to check the status of the rails when considering your itinerary.

Reservations:

These were easy to do online and directly through their website www.trenmaya.gob.mx



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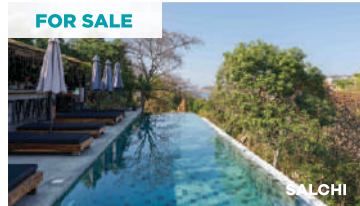
NEW PRICE



SALCHI

INVESTMENT OPP #80991
6468 ft2 turnkey ready beachfront hotel w/ 7 ocean view suites, swimming pool & palapa roof restaurant!
\$1,599,999 USD

FOR SALE



SALCHI

BOUTIQUE HOTEL #81067
6,996 ft2 ocean view boutique hotel w/ 6 private suites, infinity pool, sundeck area & easy beach access!
\$1,599,000 USD

FOR SALE



PUERTO ÁNGEL

OCEANFRONT 2 BEDROOM CASA #78895
2,364 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth fully furnished oceanfront casa w/ infinity pool, coastal views & easy beach access!
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NEW PRICE



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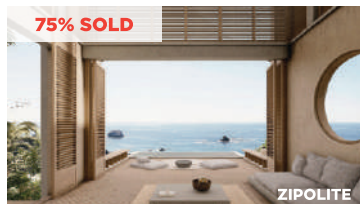
SOLD



SALCHI

CASA CELESTE #81650
2,368 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth fully furnished ocean view home with private infinity pool & easy beach access!
\$599,999 USD

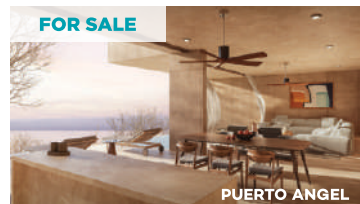
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FOR SALE



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FOR SALE



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1,281 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth fully furnished oceanfront condo w/ panoramic views & swimming pools!
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NEW PRICE



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SOLD OUT

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The Eye Call for Submissions



Are you a storyteller, writer, or photographer?

We're always looking for creative voices and new perspectives that explore life in Mexico — its people, culture, cuisine, travel, and ideas.

Each issue follows a theme. Upcoming topics include:

- July - Water**
- August/September - Food**
- October- Memory**
- November- Art**
- December- Exchange**

If you have an idea, photo essay, or finished story that connects to one of these themes, we'd love to hear from you.

theyemexico@gmail.com

Guidelines: theyemex.com/faq

Tell your story. Share your Mexico.

Huatulco English-language AA meeting

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Meet Our Team of Professionals

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Kevin Knochel

Erin May

Brent May

Victoria Merino

Brent St Arnaud



NEW LISTING

La Principal

Costa 55 Ocean View Hotel #82352
\$1,543,000 USD
 4,736 ft2, 27 bdr, 27 bth boutique hotel in front of Bahía Principal, steps to the beach!



NEW LISTING

Rinconada

8 Bed Villa w/ Ocean View #80987
\$1,299,000 USD
 5,511 Ft2, 8 bdr, 9 bth fully furnished villa w/ rooftop ocean views & minutes to multiple beaches!



UNDER CONTRACT

Palmarito

4 Bed Single Family Home #73612
\$799,000 USD
 6,562 ft2 furnished ocean view beach home with pool, rooftop palapa & rental revenue potential!



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Zicatela

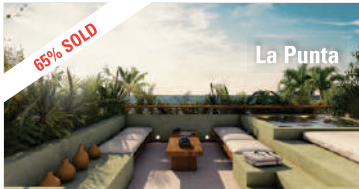
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A Team Transforming Rural Education with Technology, Commitment, and Heart

By Britt Jarnryd

The Bacaanda Foundation, through its *Escuela Rural Inteligente* program, has developed an innovative educational model driven above all by its team. This extraordinary group of professionals, guided by vocation, consistency, and a deep sense of social responsibility, is transforming the educational experience.

The team is made up of six educational coaches, a technology engineer, and a project director, all working in close coordination to directly support teachers and students. In addition to conducting in-person visits to schools for 3 to 5 days each month, the team provides daily online support—guiding teachers in lesson planning, the design of teaching and learning strategies, and the effective use of educational technology.

During these visits, the coaches monitor, advise, and train teachers in the use of internet resources, smart screens, iPads, and educational apps, integrating them into Spanish and Mathematics curricula at the preschool, primary, and secondary levels. This hybrid model—combining in-person and virtual support—allows for continuous, timely, and personalized attention.

The role of the engineer is equally essential, overseeing the proper functioning of equipment, ensuring the effective use of technological tools, and providing timely technical solutions to prevent interruptions in the learning process.

Complementing this work, the project director coordinates efforts, ensures follow-up, and maintains the quality of implementation across the 53 rural schools currently served, guaranteeing consistency, efficiency, and alignment with the foundation's educational goals.

In addition, the team maintains an active presence within the communities—observing and modeling classroom practices during school hours, and offering training sessions for teachers and parents in the afternoons. This close engagement strengthens trust, local commitment, and the long-term sustainability of the program.

Thanks to this consistent, hands-on and online support, the results have been clear: reduced gaps in literacy, steady improvements in mathematics, and significant progress in digital skills. The *Escuela Rural Inteligente* team has become a powerful example of how human guidance, combined with technology, can transform educational realities in rural settings.



Transform a Child's Future in Rural Oaxaca



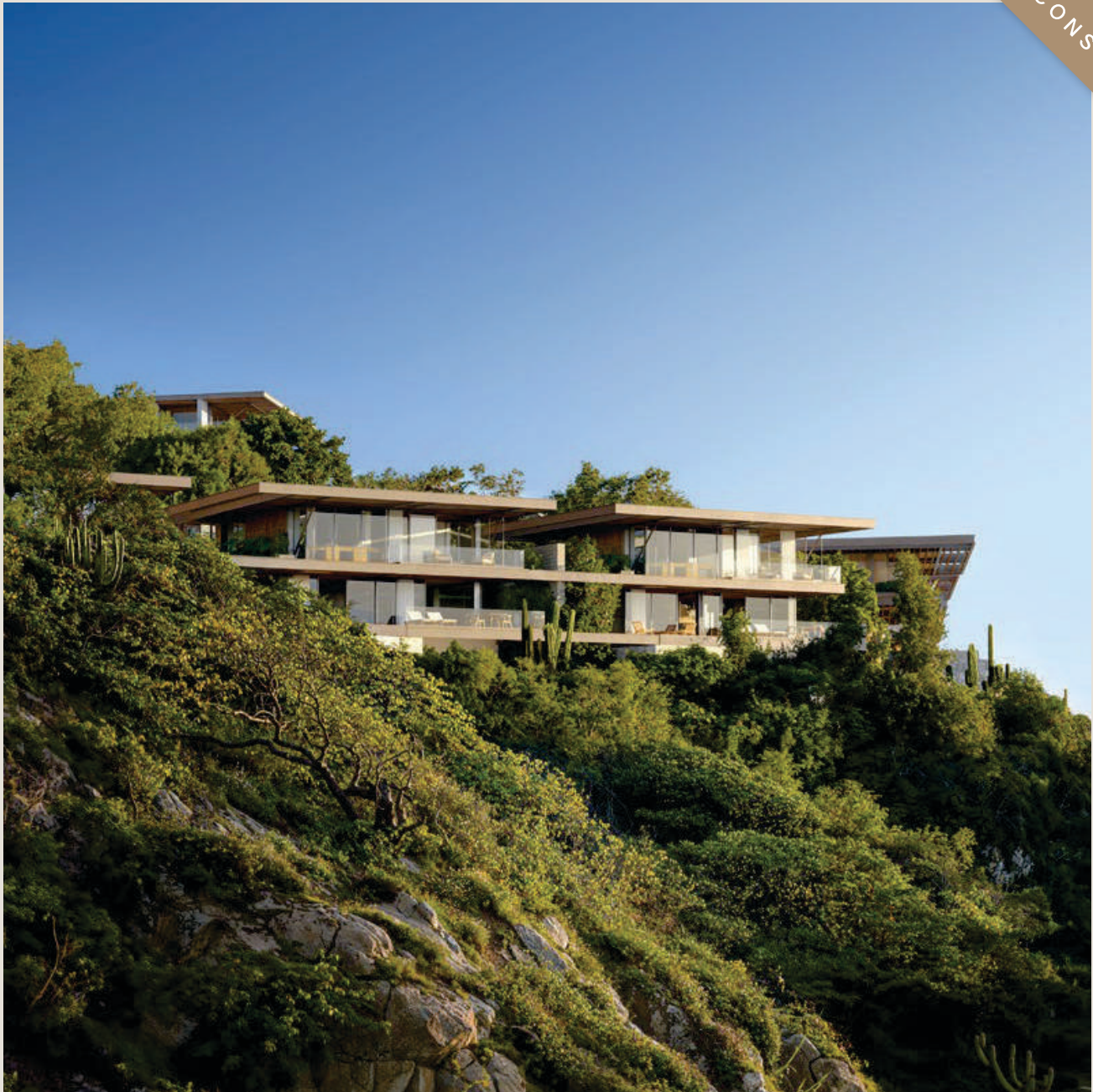
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Festival of the Holy Cross of Huatulco

By José Palacios y Román

Religious syncretism in Mexico is present in the most important festival of the *Bahías de Huatulco*, which is celebrated every May 3rd in front of the pier in Santa Cruz.

The tradition dates back to pre-Hispanic times, when the goddess of rain and fertility was venerated, making it a place of pilgrimage connected to the sea and nature. To this day, certain indigenous communities perform ancient rituals, purifying themselves with seawater. With the Spanish invasion and conquest, Christianity was introduced and adapted from the legend of a tall, bearded old man, similar to Quetzalcoatl, who buried a cross in the sand as a symbol of protection and blessing.

The religious part of the Catholic festival begins with a procession, carrying the image of the Holy Cross from the *Cruz del Monte* to the Chapel of the Holy Cross, located next to the pier where cruise ships dock.

A solemn mass is celebrated to bless the cross and ask for protection. After mass, food is shared - free of charge - with all attendees at a communal meal featuring typical dishes. The colorful and moving celebration continues with traditional dances and music, such as the dance of the devils, deeply rooted on the Oaxacan coast. The blessing of the fishermen, their families, and boats is part of the rituals. The secular aspect of the celebration is also grand. Enormous stages are set up for popular musical groups to perform during the evening dance. A spectacular fireworks display, a true work of art, will light up the sky at midnight. Carnival rides, target shooting, entertainment, and vendors of all kinds of products make this a true fiesta.

This year, 2026, we are adding a major event: the **Huatulco Natural Gastronomic Festival**, to be held on May 2nd and 3rd in the central park of Santa Cruz Huatulco. It will feature a cultural catwalk, a gastronomic area, beverages, and a show called *Ronqueo de Marlin*, an experience of cutting the fish in the traditional way.

All participating chefs will prepare cold dishes. This great addition to the festival is organized by the Huatulco Hotel Association.

The Copalli Art Gallery has been invited to present local artists within the framework of the festival, extending exhibition spaces across Huatulco. In this way, the destination transforms into a point of convergence—where sea, nature, culture, and art meet. Several of Huatulco's hotels will open their doors to host works in painting, sculpture, textiles, and installation, creating a dialogue between place and expression. Through this collaboration, the experience of Huatulco expands beyond landscape into something more immersive and cultural.



2026

Huatulco Natural

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Rotary Club Bahías de Huatulco Hosts Bi-district Conference in May

By Bonnie Ganske

The Rotary Club of Bahías de Huatulco, established in 1998, is preparing to host a bi-district conference at the Barceló Convention Centre from May 14–16. Rotary is an international service organization with a presence in more than 200 countries and over 1.2 million members worldwide. Its primary areas of focus include healthcare, disease prevention, clean water, literacy, peace, education, and the environment—all guided by the motto “Service Above Self.”

Locally, the club supports its Park Library in Sector U2, which offers a computer lab for area schoolchildren, language classes in Spanish, German, and English, and serves as both a lending library and a resource center for visiting students. The Huatulco Rotary Club has also delivered numerous wheelchairs, hosts an annual dental campaign for rural schoolchildren, and has installed water purification systems in schools across surrounding communities.

The upcoming conference will welcome more than 400 Rotarians from across southern Mexico. District 4195 includes participants from Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Tabasco, Yucatán, Quintana Roo, and Campeche. District 4185 will bring attendees from Puebla, Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Morelos, and additional regions of Veracruz. The event will also host approximately 250 foreign exchange students.

For local businesses, this gathering presents an opportunity to offer special promotions or discounts during the low season, as visitors explore the area’s shops, restaurants, and services.

Conference Highlights:

May 15: Presentation by Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Rotary Peace Scholar, Dra. Rigoberta Menchú Tum

May 15: A colorful parade of Rotarians in traditional regional dress, beginning in El Centro and culminating at Parque Guelaguetza near the marina. The public is warmly invited to attend and enjoy food and artisan stalls at the park.



May 17: A 2 km walk/run to the golf course in support of Rotary’s global polio eradication campaign

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The Comfort Zone: Body Heat And The Snowbird Experience

By Randy Jackson

“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.” From *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens.

Even that image from Victorian London seems warmer than this. Here, no sun or shade, only grey and flurries, and it's mid-April already. The steady heat of Huatulco is now a distant memory. Standing at the



THE LIVER: Muscles may get all the headlines in the body gazette, but the liver is relentlessly busy in the background, processing food, filtering toxins and making proteins. Liver cells, like all cells, run on ATP, and all that constant consumption generates significant heat as a byproduct. But unlike the muscle cells, liver cells don't perform a mechanical function, and so most of the ATP energy ends up as heat, about 20% of our body's heat

overall. Standing at the window watching snow that should have stopped weeks ago, the body does what bodies do in the cold. It complains. Specifically, and elaborately at the cellular level, and more 'whiny' at the snowbird level. Why is it such a struggle to stay warm?

HOW DO OUR BODIES CREATE HEAT?

In a nutshell, body heat is a waste byproduct of cellular activity. Those cellular activities are enormously complex and varied, like running our organs, firing our muscles and digesting our food. But they have one thing in common. Like a car engine that heats up trying to turn the wheels, our cells cannot do their job without generating heat.

The energy that drives all our cells to perform their different functions comes from the body's universal energy packet, the ATP molecule. This molecule is produced by the digestive process, transferring energy from the food we eat into a fuel that every cell in our bodies needs to perform its function. But not all parts of the body generate heat equally. There are four functions that account for most of the heat generation.

MUSCLES: Even sitting idle, muscles have their engines running. They need to be ready for that dash to the bus or to get up to pee. For a muscle to fire, or remain ready to fire, muscle cells hold that ATP energy molecule in a primed state. When our brains send the electronic signal, the muscle-primed ATP molecule splits, releasing energy, and the muscle fires. But that muscle firing is not perfectly efficient, and some of that energy simply escapes as heat. At rest, muscles produce about 25% of our body heat. And WAY more when sprinting from a bear.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES - HEART, BRAIN, KIDNEYS: These organs run 24/7 and, as a result of their constant consumption of ATP, contribute about 10% each to our body's heat generation

BROWN FAT: Unlike all those busy organs, doing stuff and accidentally creating heat, brown fat just hangs out and creates heat. Sort of like your nephew who plays computer games in the basement. Except when brown fat isn't working, everyone notices. Our bodies need a certain amount of heat, and when we don't have enough, things can go south quickly. Unlike other body cells, where heat is a byproduct of other functions, brown fat cells contain a protein that essentially converts all the ATP energy into heat. This is critical for newborns who are unable to shiver to create heat. And for adults who do not spend their winters in Huatulco, brown fat saves them from having to shovel the whole block just to keep warm.

WHY DO OUR BODIES REGULATE HEAT?

We all know that people can suffer and even die when their bodies get too much or not enough heat. It turns out our Goldilocks body temperature is 37°C (98.6°F), and our bodies have evolved to keep us at or near this temperature. There is a chemical reason for this. Back at the cellular level, the chemical processes cells use to produce proteins and enzymes are highly sensitive to temperature. Nudge that temperature a bit too far in either direction, and the whole system starts to break down.

So the body has a highly sophisticated heating and cooling system to keep us, like Goldilocks's porridge, 'just right'. Our body's thermostat is the hypothalamus, a small region of the brain that constantly monitors our core temperature and triggers responses to keep it within range. Too hot, and it triggers sweating and redirects blood toward the skin to release heat. Too cold and it triggers shivering, ramps up metabolism and redirects blood away from the skin to conserve warmth.

LIVING OUTSIDE THE COMFORT ZONE

All this sophisticated biological body heat regulation can only do so much. Our bodies are happiest when our environment is in the Thermoneutral Zone of 20°C to 25°C (68°F to 77°F). Moving further from this temperature range in either direction requires action on our part.

TOO COLD: It has been said that one of the most important inventions in human history was the sewing needle. Fifty thousand years ago, needles enabled the making of fur clothing, thus enabling humans to adapt to climates colder than those in tropical Africa. As with most important things, this was both good news and bad news. The good news is that the vast majority of Earth's landmass lies north of the tropical zone, opening up entire continents for human expansion. The bad news was that humans needed parkas. Yes, chafing was involved, but it also left humans, to this day, spending a great deal of time and energy just trying to stay warm.

Besides clothing and huddling around whatever could be burned, the 'endurance option', nature offered warm-blooded creatures just two alternatives: get out or go unconscious. Migrate or hibernate.

The 'get out' option came naturally to birds. Birds also have a hypothalamus, which, in migratory species, contains photoreceptors that detect day length. This triggers a hormonal release that drives the migratory instinct. When the days shorten, the hypothalamus sounds the alarm, and the bird heads south. In the highly evolved 'snowbird', their computer calendar reminds them to book airfare. Hormones kick in, and they find themselves inexplicably drawn to bathing suits, suitcases, and Huatulco Facebook posts.

Unconsciousness, nature's only other winter coping option, requires hibernation. Hibernation works reasonably well for bears, chipmunks and squirrels, who don't have Netflix. Again, the hypothalamus is involved, triggering hormones that dial down metabolism, heart rate and core body temperature to the minimal levels required for survival. During hibernation, an animal's body is too cold to produce the electrical currents required for dreaming, and that just sucks.

TOO HOT: Options for regulating body heat when temperatures exceed the thermoneutral zone are far less onerous than those on the too-cold end of the spectrum. The body's cooling mechanism triggers sweat glands on the skin, and blood vessels near the skin surface dilate to bring more warm blood to the surface for cooling. Shade, water and moving air all accelerate exactly these processes.

Water, pool, ocean or shower is the most immediate solution, pulling heat from the body twenty-five times faster than air alone. Moving air, whether breeze or ceiling fan, amplifies the cooling effect by accelerating evaporation from the skin, the same process your sweat glands are already working hard to achieve. Using wind-chill calculations as a rough approximation, a light breeze or a moderate ceiling fan speed in a 30°C (86°F) environment reduces your felt skin temperature to around 28°C (82°F), nudging your body back toward the thermoneutral zone while you possibly enjoy a margarita.

Randy Jackson blends local reporting from the perspective of a seasonal Huatulco resident with explorations of life and change in Huatulco, Oaxaca and Mexico. Email: box95jackson@gmail.com



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Escaping the Heat of the Coast

By Jane Bauer

May is the worst time of the year on the Oaxacan coast. It is when the land is the driest, the ocean the warmest and it seems as though everyone is waiting for those first drops of rain. While many people come to the Oaxacan coast for the beaches, I am most enthralled by the mountains. Turn around and look behind you. They rise up in majestic tones of purple and blue. When it gets unbearably hot it's time for a drive into the Sierra Sur, where the temperature drops, the air sharpens, and everything slows down. Within a few hours' drive from Huatulco, a completely different world unfolds.

The journey itself is part of the ritual. Leaving behind the palms and salt air, the road climbs steadily, curling into the mountains. The vegetation shifts almost imperceptibly at first, dry brush gives way to greener growth, then to dense forest. Windows come down. The air cools. By the time you reach the higher elevations, you're reaching for a sweater. This is the Sierra Sur: a region defined by altitude, cloud forests, and quiet.

San José del Pacífico: Where the Clouds Settle

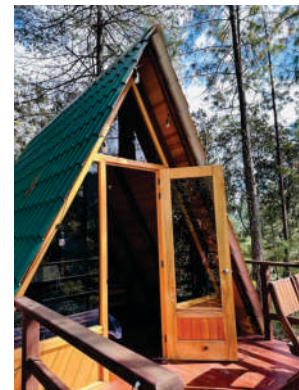
Perched along the mountain highway, San José del Pacífico has built a reputation as Oaxaca's most atmospheric escape. Known for its drifting clouds and panoramic views, the town often disappears into mist by afternoon, only to reveal dramatic sunsets hours later. It is also famed for the hallucinogenic mushrooms that grow there.



One of the highlights is that many cabins come with a *chimenea*, a fireplace, which keeps you warm and cozy. The pace is unhurried, slow, chilly mornings—listening for birds, watching steam rise from your café de olla. Travelers come for the cool weather, but they stay for the feeling of introspection and awe that the environment inspires. Whether sitting on a balcony wrapped in a blanket or watching the clouds roll through the valley.

San Mateo Río Hondo: The Quiet Alternative

A short drive, or an hour's hike, from San Jose, lies San Mateo Río Hondo, a lesser-known but equally compelling destination. Down in the valley this town has some great hiking. Dirt roads, community life, and long forest walks define the rhythm. The smell of pine trees and woodsmoke. With fewer visitors, Río Hondo offers something increasingly rare: space to be alone with the landscape.



Pluma Hidalgo: Coffee in the Clouds

Just an hour from Huatulco, Pluma Hidalgo offers another kind of escape, one rooted in agriculture and tradition. This region is synonymous with high-quality coffee, grown under the shade of forest canopy and nourished by the same cool, misty climate that defines the Sierra. Visiting



Pluma Hidalgo is a chance to see the slower cycles of rural life: coffee drying in the sun, families tending to their land, and a deep connection to place that feels unchanged by time. The air here carries the faint scent of earth and roasted beans, a sensory shift from the salt and sunscreen of the coast.

A Different Kind of Luxury

What ties these places together is not just the temperature, but the contrast. In a matter of hours, you move from heat to cool, from open beaches to enclosed forests, from movement to stillness. There are no beach clubs here, no urgency to fill the day. Instead, the luxury is found in simple things: a hot drink in cold air, a quiet night wrapped in fog, the sound of wind through pine trees. It's the kind of reset that doesn't announce itself loudly, but lingers long after you've returned to sea level.

For those living or visiting the Oaxacan coast, this mountain escape isn't just a trip. It's a seasonal rhythm. When the heat builds, you go up.

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Mexican Photographer Citlali Fabián Wins Sony World Photography Awards' Top Honor



Mexican photographer Citlali Fabián has been named Photographer of the Year at the prestigious Sony World Photography Awards, one of the most important global platforms celebrating contemporary photography.

Originally from Oaxaca, Fabián's work is deeply rooted in identity, memory, and representation. Her winning series centers on Indigenous women and communities, offering an intimate and carefully constructed perspective that challenges conventional narratives. Through a blend of portraiture and conceptual storytelling, she highlights both personal and collective histories, bringing visibility to voices that are often overlooked.

The Sony World Photography Awards, organized annually by the World Photography Organisation, attracts thousands of submissions from photographers across the globe. Being named Photographer of the Year places Fabián among an elite group of image-makers shaping the direction of contemporary photography today.

Fabián's recognition marks a significant moment not only for her career but also for Mexican photography on the international stage. Her work continues to bridge tradition and modernity, drawing from her Oaxacan roots while engaging in a global artistic dialogue. The award includes international exhibition opportunities and further cements Fabián's place as a leading voice in visual storytelling.

www.citlalifabian.com

Cine Pobre: Where Film Isn't About Budget

By Alicia Flores

“Film becomes art only when its materials are as inexpensive as pencil and paper.”

The Cine Pobre Film Festival is heading into its 24th edition. At a time when most film production is tied to large budgets and industry backing, Cine Pobre focuses on something much simpler: films made independently, often with very limited resources, by people who choose to make them anyway.

The festival started in 2002 in La Paz, Baja California Sur, and relocated to Oaxaca in 2023. Over the years, it has built a network of filmmakers working outside traditional systems—people funding their own projects, working without strict formats, and often using whatever equipment they have access to.

The result isn't a specific “look” or genre. Some films are polished, others are rough. What they share is a sense of intention. These are projects that exist because someone was determined to make them, not because they fit a market.

Working Without a Safety Net

There's no romanticizing the limitations here—working without funding is difficult. But it does change how films are made. Smaller crews, fewer locations, simpler setups. Decisions tend to be practical, and that often leads to a more direct kind of storytelling.

Cine Pobre leans into that reality. It doesn't try to imitate big-budget production. It presents films on their own terms, without comparing them to industry standards they were never meant to meet.

Beyond the Festival Circuit

The group behind Cine Pobre isn't only organizing screenings. Over time, they've also produced and distributed independent films across Latin America, staying close to the kind of work they promote.

In 2024, they opened a small screening space in Oaxaca's cloud forest, at about 2,400 meters above sea level. It's not a commercial cinema—it's a modest venue meant for small audiences, discussions, and ongoing programming.

That shift matters. Cine Pobre isn't just an annual event anymore; it's becoming a year-round presence.



Taking Film to Places Without It

One of the more interesting parts of the project is its outreach into rural communities. In many cases, these are places where people haven't had much access to cinema, either as viewers or as creators.

The approach is straightforward: bring screenings, and encourage people to document their own lives. No expensive equipment required—a phone is enough.

In that setting, film becomes less about consumption and more about record-keeping, storytelling, and identity.

Cine Pobre doesn't operate like a typical festival. There's no focus on awards or competition. The selected films—often referred to as “the best self-funded films in the world”—are screened for their cultural value rather than ranked against each other.

The audience is just as important as the filmmakers. Screenings often take place in environments where people aren't used to going to the movies, which changes the dynamic entirely.

The 2026 Edition

For its 24th edition, Cine Pobre will continue expanding in Oaxaca, including screenings in rancherías in the municipality of San Mateo Río Hondo.

These events are designed to be accessible—open-air or small-scale gatherings where people can watch films, ask questions, and spend time together. It's less about a formal festival experience and more about creating a shared one.

The official selection will be announced on April 26 through the festival's online platforms.

More than anything, Cine Pobre is a reminder that filmmaking doesn't need to be complicated. It can start with whatever is available—and that's often enough.

The festival is May 8th-10th, 2026 in San Mateo Río Hondo.

More info:

<https://www.cinepobre.com>

Instagram: @cinepobre

WhatsApp for screenings: +52 951 148 6408



Layne Ulmer Ashleigh McAuley Bianca Corona Lindsay Harder Erin May Brent May Leah Guzmán Hector Cisneros Jay Dunnett Mario Devcic



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Oceanfront Luxury Condo #80561
\$699,000 USD
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Arrocito

FOR SALE
2 Bedroom Residence Condo #68065
\$545,000 USD
 1,965 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth move-in ready ocean view condo w/ multiple pools & direct beach access!



Sector O

FOR SALE
Delonix Homes #64845
\$451,000 USD
 2,843 ft2, 3 bdr, 5 bth quick possession homes with rooftop terrace & easy access to multiple beaches!



Tangolunda

UNDER CONTRACT
Golf Course Home #79127
\$405,000 USD
 1,367 ft2, 2 bdr, 2.5 bth private home with modern design, pool, expansive terraces & golf course views!



Santa Cruz

SOLD
Santa Cruz Marina Condo #80482
\$329,999 USD
 1,565 ft2, 1 bdr, 2 bth fully furnished condo with pool, multiple terraces & steps to Santa Cruz beach!



Santa Cruz

FOR SALE
Pueblo Real 2 Bed Condo #76704
\$275,000 USD
 Fully furnished 1,200 ft2, 2 bdr, 2 bth condo with pool, grill area & steps to Santa Cruz beach!



Chahué

80% SOLD
Cala Chahué #41954
Starting at \$260,000 USD
 1 & 2 bdr condos located steps to the beach with pool, rooftop terrace, grill area & elevator!



Santa Cruz

FOR SALE
Santa Cruz 1 Bed Condo #76398
\$259,000 USD
 703 ft2, 1 bdr, 1 bth fully furnished condo with private terrace, rooftop amenities & steps to the beach!



Santa Cruz

FOR SALE
Cozy Beach Studio #79845
\$225,500 USD
 645 ft2, 1 bdr, 1 bth stylish furnished studio w/ multiple rooftop pools, lounge area & steps to the beach!



La Bocana

FOR SALE
Olas Bocana #72135
Starting at \$225,000 USD
 1 & 2 bedroom condos steps to La Bocana Beach with ocean view rooftop, infinity pool and investment potential!



La Cruccecita

NEW LISTING
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\$169,500 USD
 609 ft2, 2 bdr, 1 bth recently renovated, fully furnished centrally located condo w/ swimming pool!



La Cruccecita

NEW PRICE
Pacifico 2 Bed Condo #82638
\$169,900 USD
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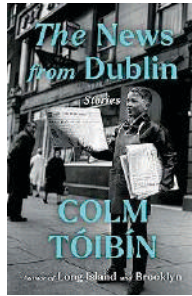
More Books to Anticipate in 2026

By Carole Reedy

There's something especially satisfying about the second half of the reading year. The dust has settled and it's time to relax and read! From long-awaited novels by favorite authors to a handful of surprises that will no doubt find their way onto nightstands everywhere, the months ahead promise a rich and varied season. Here are the books to look forward to as 2026 continues to unfold.

The News From Dublin by Colm Tóibín

The publication of this new book of short stories by Tóibín was mentioned in the March issue of *The Eye*, and now that I've read each emotionally charged story I can unreservedly recommend it.



Every story in this collection is unique in location (Dublin being just one of them), and the stories are diverse. What sets Tóibín's work above others is the emotional turmoil he's able to convey, coloring his brilliantly crafted characters with fluid descriptions of pain, uncertainty, and anticipation.

The final story, *The Catalan Girls*, a novella, is the book's *crème de la crème*. Uprooted as children from Catalan to Argentina, three sisters mature over the decades. Each plays her own colorfully depicted role within the family structure, stirring in the reader pity, rage even, and possibly acceptance. The finale is wrapped up neatly. We feel satisfied.

The Guardian identified *A Free Man* as the standout selection. A man alone, released from prison, his crimes and reactions presenting moral dilemmas. It is challenging under any circumstances for a writer to address the issue of child abuse. Joyce Carol Oates achieved a brilliant depiction in her last novel, *Fox*. Tóibín succeeds here also.

The collection overall is a subtle, honest observation of people in new places and/or situations, voluntarily or not.

London Falling by Patrick Radden Keefe

This is one of the most anticipated books of the year. Readers know Keefe as the author of the unforgettable tome *Say Nothing*, which took us full stop into the heart and soul of the troubles in Northern Ireland. Disguised as a novel, the pace and details of the six counties so emotionally distant from the rest of Ireland made for compelling reading. From the IRA to the Union forces, readers remained entranced, fascinated, and shocked by it.



Now Keefe gives us *London Falling*, whose subtitle, *The Mysterious Death in a Gilded City and a Family's Search for the Truth*, offers a hint that the story is not simply about a devastated family searching for answers to their son's shocking death after falling from a balcony. It also implies the decadence of a city.

The Eye 28

In 2019, teenager Zac Brettler mysteriously fell to his death from a luxury apartment balcony into the Thames river. An investigation into Zac's final days reveals his double life, one in which in which he was the son of a wealthy Russian oligarch.

The investigation will expose the shady underworld of a grand city and the son's secrets.

Keefe has a talent for writing nonfiction that is as readable and enjoyable as a novel. Quite a feat.

The Keeper by Tana French

French's readers will rejoice at the publication of this, the third novel in the Cal Hooper series. It's one of the most anticipated books of the year in publications such as *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*. And it is already on the bookshelf of your favorite bookshop.



If Sarah Lyall's comments from *The New York Times Book Review* don't compel you to rush out and buy or download this novel on your Kindle, I wonder what will.

"I would crawl across a field of glass to get my hands on a new Tana French book...You don't have to read the previous two—*The Searcher* and *The Hunter*—to appreciate *The Keeper*. But if you start here, I bet that you'll want to go back, if only for the chance to fill in the characters' back stories and to luxuriate some more in French's prose. Open this book to any page to see what I mean."

Villa Coco by Andrew Sean Greer

We remember well Greer's Pulitzer prize-winning novel *Less* from 2018. This time around the clever, poignant, and provocative word artist entertains us in Tuscany, bringing a smile as we imagine what marvels he will create with the locale and ambiance of Italy.

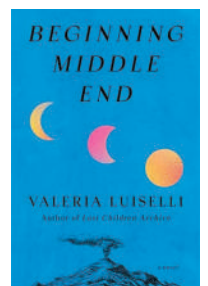


The delightful premise is that of an undistinguished young man who takes a position as an all-purpose assistant to a flamboyant 92-year-old Tuscan *Baronessa*. The publisher describes it as a bawdy Mediterranean tale of becoming what we want to be. And rumor has it that Greer knows a lot about *focaccia*!

Beginning Middle End by Valeria Luiselli

I'm surprised at the number of avid readers who aren't familiar with this multi-talented young woman, who was born in Mexico City and carries a fully stamped passport.

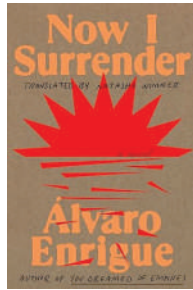
Luiselli worked with Central American immigrant children in New York City, from which blossomed the short but emotionally charged *Tell Us How It Ends*. This sad short accounting of the children's experiences will stay with you, as it did with her own children who wanted to know "how it ends."



Luiselli's newest tale is set in irresistible Sicily. Dare we call it a mother/daughter road trip? We saw a type of road trip theme in her award-winning *Lost Children Archives*. This time she tackles the idea of memory along with a mother in the beginning stages of dementia.

Where do we begin, how to start again, what if we got it wrong the first time?

Now I Surrender by Alberto Enrigue
Valerie Luiselli was married to and has a daughter with everybody's favorite Guadalaajaran writer, Alberto Enrigue. His recent *You Dreamed of Empires* was one of my favorite 2025 reads and had one of the most startling unforeseen endings ever written.



He also has a new novel just published this year, *Now I Surrender*. Enrigue is a master of wit and the surreal. This time he gives us a 400-page+ epic about the Apache wars, with a modern-day road trip by Enrigue himself tucked neatly inside. Not surprisingly, the story is a mix of history and myth.

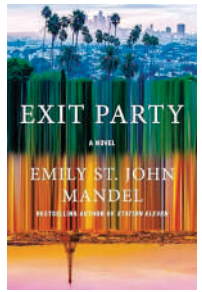
If his past is representative of the future, this promises to be a delightful and surreal romp.

Exit Party Emily St. John Mandel
Here we have an eagerly awaited new novel by the author of *Station Eleven* and *The Glass Hotel*.

Starting in the year 2031, with a party in a nation unrecognizable to us, the Republic of California is born. A celebratory gathering that will prove unforgettable is in process.

Skip ahead many years later to Paris, where repercussions of that night will haunt the main character.

In the publisher's words: "*Exit Party* is Emily St. John Mandel's electrifying new novel about freedom and surveillance, art and survival, love and loss in a broken world."



Reissued novels

This year, popular novels of the past are being reissued by various publishers. One example is Beryl Bainbridge's renowned *An Awfully Big Adventure*, being reissued by McNally Editions in the US and Daunt in the UK. It was made into a movie with Hugh Grant and Alan Rickman in 1995.

The goal of this new release is to highlight Bainbridge's reputation as a "queen of comic darkness" whose work remains relevant today.

Bainbridge, who died in 2010, is a five-time Booker Prize nominee. Her novels are brilliantly rendered, dark and sardonic. I love them and am thrilled she will be brought to life once again.

There are many more novels coming our way in the next few months. Until then, I leave you to your hardback, paperback, or Kindle...and a comfy chair!

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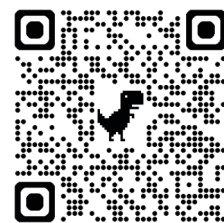
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— John M., USA

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- served with Rice and Chicken
- Handmade Tortillas
- Mezcal Margarita

THURSDAYS

Fiesta-

- Beef Picadillo Tamales
- Poblano & Nopal Empanadas
- Guacamole
- Jicama, Cucumber, and Orange Salad
- Ancho Reyes Margarita

FRIDAYS

Street Food-

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

SATURDAYS

Seafood-

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- Rosemary Shrimp
- Shrimp Mousse
- Baja-style Fish Tacos
- Beer Micheladas

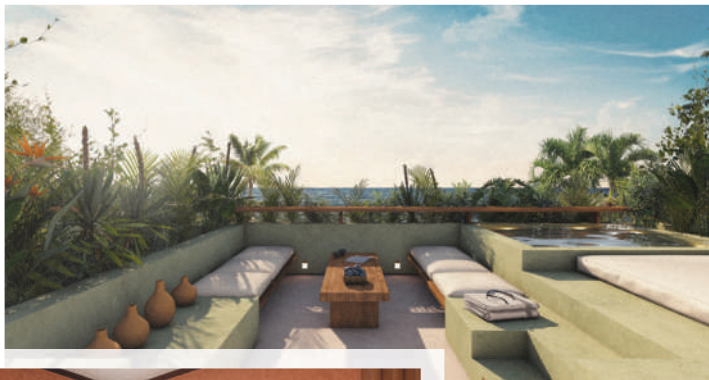
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