

Manzanillo

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Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine



In this Issue

Planting Roots in Mexico - Tommy Clarkson
Curcuma Phaeocaulis
Spider Plant

Living in Mexico

A Local Road Trip with Family - Suzanne Marshall
Manzanillo of Yesteryear - Colima de Ayer
Welcome to Ajuchillan the Place of Comals - Kirby Vickery
Hoe to Snorkel Dive - Terry Sovil

Technology - Señor Tech

Not your Father's Laptop

History - Owen Jarus

Path to Citizenship - Palenque-

At the Movies - Suzanne Marshall

I'll Be Me
20 Feet from Stardom

Finance - Yann Kostic

Relax and Ride the Wave During This Summer's Doldrums

Recipe: Sopa de Albóndigas

Surfboards
by
Scott Whitelaw



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or ideas on what you would like us to write
about in the magazine.

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All articles should be 1000 words or less or may
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by photos.

Pictures appropriate for the article are welcome.

Comments, letters to the editor, articles, photos
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Curcuma phaeocaulis (No Common Name)

Family: *Zingiberaceae*

Also known as: None

The genus *Curcuma* consists of between ten to one hundred different species (professional opinions, obviously, widely vary) in the ginger family (*Zingiberaceae*) which also contains the Tumeric plant (*Curcuma longa*). All originated in south to southeast Asia.

Now, not to get sidetracked early, but this is good to know stuff that can prepare you for a successful stint on the TV Show Jeopardy or enhance your competitiveness, at home, playing Trivial Pursuit!

Turmeric is, of course, the key ingredient in curry powder. However, beyond that, it is called by some "the healthiest spice on earth". Derived from the dried, then ground, Tumeric root, it has been used by Indian Ayurvedic healers (one of the world's oldest nature healing systems) for centuries.

However, much more recently, the scientific community has been evaluating it as a potential natural remedy for medical conditions like as varied as allergies, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, cataracts, cognitive decline, Crohn's disease, and ulcerative colitis.

The reason I share that information is that the *Curcuma phaeocaulis* has some good stuff going for it as well! Not only is it a commonly prescribed Chinese



One wonders just how this beauty got from SE Asia to (very) rural La Rosa in the Mexican State of Colima?

medical herb for tumor therapy but significant research has been going on regarding the "Anti-tumor potential of ethanol extract of *Curcuma phaeocaulis* 'Valeton' against breast cancer cells".

But this all is supposed to be more about tropical botanical than pharmaceutical information, right? So – scant though the gardening information on this beauty may be – let's discuss what I have experienced with mine "up close and personal" as well as whatever I have dug up from reading about it in my books.

Where and how I acquired my *Curcuma phaeocaulis* specimens is quite the story – particularly if one recalls the origin of them – on the other side of the world! It all commenced when my best pal, Rowdy, and I were exploring back areas a couple of hours outside of Manzanillo around the tiny community of La Rosa.

We'd stopped to admire two varieties of giant Agave that were different from my several types already growing in *Ola Brisa Gardens*. Well, one thing led to another and before we know it we'd acquired a couple of new buddies, were having tequila with them and wandering around the area admiring their numerous different plants!

During these meanderings, we came across perhaps thirty or forty of these stunners growing beneath several bananas. Almost immediately, several of these beauties started begging to come home with me, so what could we do but comply with their pathetic and plaintive little plant pleadings!

Besides these and the Agave, before the trip was over, we'd picked up two other new tropical flowers and a seed to plant from an unidentified - but delicious - small, yellow, tropical fruit we'd never encountered before!

While mine is still growing, research has borne out that this magnificent, rhizomatous tropical perennial can that grow up to two feet (.3 meters) tall and have a spread of one to two feet. (.3 -.6 meters).

It is a repeat bloomer during the spring and summer season in our environs with the plants going dormant in late fall and winter. (As in all our garden's beds we mulch them, copiously, with coconut coir (fiber)).

What at first are perceived as the flowers are actually bracts. These inflorescences - each of around three inches in height - consist of showy, petal-like, pink bracts that surround the tiny, yellow lavender-white, true flowers. The true flowers are seen only if they curl around the bracts edges. Each inflorescence appears atop a rigid, reed-like stem that grows to two inches (five cm) tall from a clump of narrow, lance-shaped, dark green leaves.

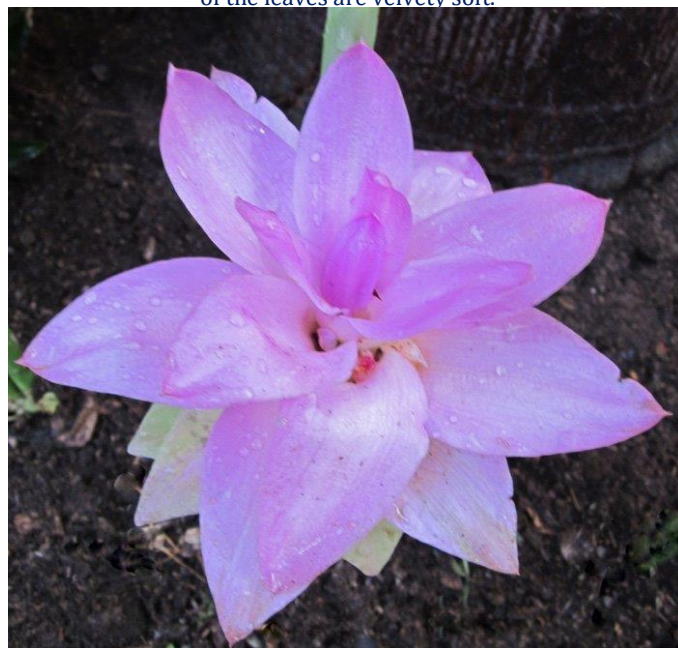
To the best of my awareness, they have no serious insect or disease problems. Water them well - probably a couple of times a week - but let the soil dry out a bit between those sessions. As to fertilizer, I'd suggest use of a general flower and plant type monthly - something as simple as Miracle Gro - while they are flowering.

From what I have experienced, and been able to determine firsthand, these plants can grow in a variety of environments. But if they have their "druthers" they'd prefer bright filtered light, high humidity and well-draining, fertile soil. Propagation I learned from the outset out in the country is by root division.

An added bonus is that those magnificent flowers are long-lasting when cut and really add to a tropical floral arrangement.



Growing to two feet or more, the backsides of the leaves are velvety soft.

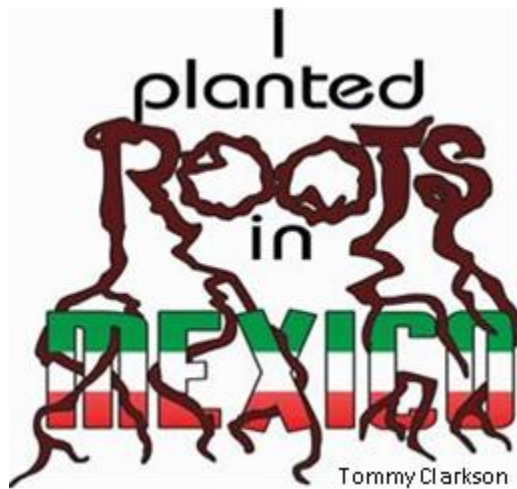


The inflorescences consist of showy, petal-like, pink bracts that surround the tiny, yellow lavender-white, flowers.

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Spider Plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*)

Family: Arecaceae

Also known as: Airplane Plant, Spider Ivy, Ribbon Plant, St. Bernard's Lily and Hen-and-Chicks

The Spider Plant is one of the most popular of all indoor plants or can be equally effectively used out of doors in a variety of venues.

It is exceedingly resilient and easy for which to care. Secondly, (for all those who are greatly "green") it gobbles up airborne benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide and xylene. (That latter one is a solvent used in the leather, rubber and printing industries.) Thirdly, it is easy to propagate. And lastly, wholly lacking in toxicity, it's considered a safe houseplant for pets.

Originating in South Africa, a mature specimen can form a clump three feet (0.9 meters) tall, cascading out as much as five feet (1.5 meters). This sun-loving, evergreen, perennial has slender, arching, linear dark green leaves with creamy white stripes between 8-16 inches (20.3-40.6 cm) long and less than 1 inch (2.5 cm) wide. (Take note: They like lots of light to attain and maintain the best leaf color. Specimens grown in low light may lose their attractive variegation.)

Borne on outward arching, wiry stalks (called runners) are small white flowers. These give rise to seed filled capsules, after which baby spider plants (sometimes called "spiderettes" or "pups") - develop on the stalks - taking root wherever they touch the ground.



Ours are in a very large planter pot on the edge of the entry terrace

Generally speaking, one really can't cramp their style as they like to be slightly root-bound. When they are, they'll optimally flower and produce plantlets best. And as to feeding them - too much (those are the operative two words) fertilizer will produce a lot of leaves, but minimal flowers and plantlets. I'd suggest feeding them every two weeks (if in our tropical environs) with a liquid fertilizer that's been diluted by half. As to watering, some growers advise to keep the soil evenly moist at all times. However, I prefer to let it slightly dry between watering.

To best show off their trailing foliage, Spider plants look great on pedestals or in hanging baskets. Ours are well presented in an extremely large pot surrounding a magnificent Emperor Cycad in front of our Dining Palapa.

But they not need be left solely to themselves. The slender, arching variegated leaves and graceful, fountain-like growing habit present a most attractive contrast and texture when grouped with other house plants.

Chlorophytum comosum prefer to be semi-pot bound. Accordingly, wait until their large, fleshy roots are highly visible and watering is difficult to re-pot.



A few tips are as follow:

- Should you note the leaves appearing dull and grayish with webs underneath, you have red spider mites. Treat accordingly.
- If your plant is rotting in its center you've been overzealous in watering it. Allow your ailing friend to dry out before giving it another drink.
- Upon noting that the tips of leaves are turning brown, ensure you are not giving it water in which fluoride has been added. If not, then it is either too dry or is receiving too much direct sunlight.
- If your plant looks floppy and dull it probably will benefit from the use of a balanced liquid food.
- Weak and lanky leaves that have become dry and lost their color are indicators that it is too hot and dry. Move and/or water accordingly.
- And, it's time to repot the parent plant (and remove extra babies) if the plantlets are pulling the parent to one side.



This is a *Chlorophytum comosum* 'Variegatum'.

There are numerous different cultivars (varieties) of the *Chlorophytum comosum*. What is thought to have been the original has green leaves with a slightly lighter green shade running through the center. Actually, it prefers the shadier areas (no, not south of the tracks or dark, sleazy alleyways) than the variegated versions. These seem to be getting increasingly hard to find in nurseries or garden centers.

Chlorophytum Comosum "**Vittatum**" was the first variegated Spider Plant cultivar having mid-green leaves with a broad central white stripe. From its long stems hang yellow/white "babies."

Chlorophytum Comosum "**Variegatum**" is the botanically "new and improved", more compact, version with dark green leaves and white margins and long green stems which support the offsets.

Chlorophytum Comosum "**Bonnie**" has leaves of the traditional green with white stripe variegation but they curl and bend. Its flowering stems are yellow. Some, with limited space, prefer this type as it doesn't require a large area to show off its attractiveness. Whichever cultivar you choose, if you have a brown thumb, this is a great plant for you!



See all the "Spiderettes" or "pups" all eager to leave home and set up their own residence!

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Welcome to Ajuchillan the Place of Comals

By Kirby Vickery

Somewhere high in the central Mexico Mountains, almost on the slopes of the Volcano De Colima itself, four shimmering disturbances in the air could barely be seen. They were floating over an ancient path which could have been a long and forgotten 'road' from what is now Mexico City. Their general direction was toward Colima through Comala. If you held still, you could hear from the largest of the forms, a voice speaking in the ancient Nahuatl.

"Remember that I was Coyotl (Coyote) and had risen to the rank of an Aztec Achcauhtli (Leader) during the last of three attempts by our people to conquer this area we call Ajuchillan which means The Valley of the Flowers. The Spanish called this place the city of Comala which means the city of 'Comals.' You see, children, a Comal is nothing more than a small, round or oval, flat, iron or baked clay cooking platter. Some say this was the city which developed the comal for all of Mexico to fry the ground maize (corn) to make tortillas. And I know you liked those. Don't you Citali?



Hacienda church

"Citlali (Star), you were my oldest child and my only son. This means that you would have taken over my business one day and it is still important for you to know this city in which I traded in copper. Mezthi (Moon), under the Spanish rule, you would have been allowed to assist Citlali and increase our profits. But, right now I need you to look after your little sister, Ihuicatl (Sky) who may yet grow to benefit you both.



Main entrance to the Hacienda

"Montezuma wanted this area and this city because their craftsmanship with most metals was far superior to anywhere else in the Aztec empire. This is probably why we Aztecs were unable to win any battles especially after the licking we got in the year the Spanish call 1479. I can tell you that it was their mastery of creating the edges on their copper axes, swords and lances that kept us from winning. Our family wasn't spared from the sicknesses the Spanish brought. Although I had lost my position in the army, I was able to establish our family as metal merchants when the plague and small pox hit and wiped out a large part of our population.



Comala today



Mexican art

“The Ajuchillan was settled by the Olmec, Nahuatl, Toltec and later the Chechemec. They formed a society called the Purépechas people. Their King just gave the entire area to the Spaniards in 1525 so they would never be overrun by Montezuma. The problem with that was the Spanish were more ruthless than us Aztecs and demanded more tribute than we did, too. But the die was cast even with the Purépecha’s, Princess Eréndira, leading her people against the conquistador Cristóbal de Olid in 1529-30 when she was only 16. How about that Mezthi? Think you could do that? Ha! Ihuccatl just told me that she could, maybe in our next lives, my Sweet Flower.



Plant study

“With the advent of Hernando Cortez and his Spanish Rule, through to Modern times and several European rulers to include major wars and revolutions even with the United States, Comala’s legacy has grown. The entire area was declared a National Monument by the Mexican Government in 2002 in a successful attempt to increase tourism. Of course being by one of Mexico’s

active volcanoes doesn’t hurt either. Today Comala boasts of a town square named after Benito Juárez, and it has benches designed and built by Alejandro Rangel Hidalgo, and restaurants and shops which feature the sale of the Famous Mexican Ceremonial masks.

“Alejandro Rangel Hidalgo inherited a large estate just outside of town and filled it with his own art which is portrayed today along with the furniture he designed.



Church in Comala today

He was the artist that UNICEF contracted to create Mexican Christmas scenes on their Christmas cards

during the 1960's. A visit to the hacienda which he turned over to the University of Colima as an art education center will show you a more complex and dynamic designer of articles ranging from the very walls of the hacienda itself to the furniture and art placed within. When we get to the Hacienda, Mezthi, please be careful when you walk around. At times there are art student classes everywhere. When the Hildalgo family owned the property, they farmed it successfully and in its growth it created its own little village and the gardens are just wonderful.



Hacienda storage area

“Now, my children, it has been in recent years that the population has fallen off a little and the town has taken measures to attract a larger tourist trade. I told you about the ceremonial masks. I haven’t told you what the town did in 1961. They painted their entire village white figuring this would attract people to the town. The problem with that was the paint reflected only too well and they started to complain about it. The government decided to help and hired a contractor that developed a non-glare type white paint which has become known as ‘Comala White.’ The contractor stepped in and re painted everything for them to give the ‘village’ look. Today you will find a house here and there which has different bright colors. But overall, the city has kept its ‘village’ look which goes with the feel of a small community at the base of that active volcano that has become a jumping off place for all sorts of outdoor activities.

“And now, my children, we have to get down into the center of town for the festivities there in the town square before we peruse the metal working shops to see if any would sell to a family of Aztec ghosts. It’s better than haunting someone’s house, don’t you think?”



Ornate back wall of the Hacienda



At the Movies

By Suzanne A. Marshall

While travelling and visiting family and friends back in Canada these past few months, I found myself tuning into Netflix on occasion due to availability and the luxury of a little 'down' time. This allowed me to view some really excellent documentaries and I'm sharing a couple of these with you now.

I'll Be Me (Netflix)

Starring: Glen Campbell, Kim Campbell with family and friends

Director: James Keach

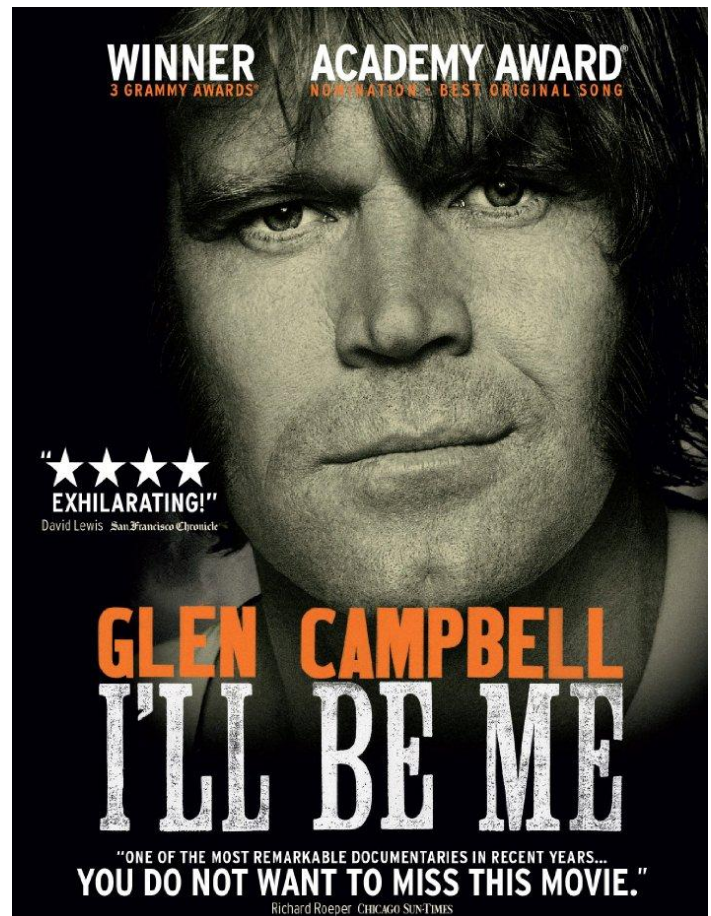
"As he struggles with Alzheimer's disease, country music legend Glen Campbell embarks on his farewell tour in the U.S. Australia and Europe."

As a lover of many genres of music, I've always held a great deal of respect for the talents of Glen Campbell. Aside from his well-known commercial hits, Glen has written and recorded some of the most beautiful and prosaic ballads out there. I may be influenced to some degree by the fact that a member of my family knew and worked with Glen Campbell way back in the earlier days as studio musicians. Many may not know that, aside from being a wonderful singer, he was also a truly awesome guitarist, right up there with the best of them. You see this in this documentary/biography.

Five minutes into viewing this touching film I developed a lump in my throat that remained there for the entire viewing. I was deeply moved by his story and the intimate look at the slowly unraveling nuances of Alzheimer's disease. We are taken back to the beginnings of Glens' career as a young, talented musician and shown home footage of some of those times. While the film delves into the story of his life, his ups and downs, we watch his family support him and share the pain of watching how this awful disease begins to take away his mind.

In spite of this, his ability to stand in front of packed auditoriums and venues and rip off guitar solos, and find his way through old favorite lyrics, is nothing short of amazing. He begins to need help from prompters and sometimes strays from the planned performance agendas but somehow he remains himself and

completely admirable. His audiences admire him and support him with many standing ovations.



I believe that his wife Kim has needed dauntless strength in order to see him and the entire family through the tour. She supports him in order to bring his story to the masses so they might better understand what Alzheimer's disease really is.

This film was nominated for an Oscar for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Picture, Original Song "I'm Not Gonna Miss You". It was also nominated for various other awards for editing, best documentary, best direction as well as Grammy Awards and many others.

I highly recommend this film.

IMDB has rated this movie at 7.9/10.



20 Feet from Stardom

Starring: Lisa Fischer, Darlene Love, Merry Clayton, Judith Hill, Mick Jagger, Bruce Springsteen, Tata Vega, Stevie Wonder, Sting, and on and on and on.....

Director: Morgan Neville

"Filmmaker Morgan Neville shines a long overdue spotlight on the hit-making contributions of longtime backup singers like Darlene Love and Merry Clayton."

I loved this documentary/history/music production so much I've watched it twice and would be willing to do so again.



If we harken back to the 60's, 70's, 80's and remember the songs that we 'mature' listeners sang and danced to, you'll remember all the rich vocal sounds of the artists and groups of those times. Have you ever caught yourself humming or singing along to the backup lyrics or improvised rhythms in the backgrounds of a song? ("da do ron ron ron da do ron ron?") Well that was them, the backup vocalists!

This documentary showcases just how talented and important they were to those times. In fact there were songs on the hit parades, by such vocalists as Darlene Love, that were released under a group name and never gave her the recognition she justly deserved. This was not unusual in those days. Even more mind boggling is the fact that they were largely untrained musically and simply sang from their hearts and souls, many of which had honed their harmony skills while singing in church.

To hear such artists as Chris Botti, Stevie Wonder, Sting and Bruce Springsteen talk in the interviews they all agreed upon the importance of these singers (and dancers) to the success of their tours and recordings. They consider them stars for which a number of them deserved much more fame than fortune allowed them. This is an excellent and totally entertaining look from this perspective and I highly recommend people watch it.

20 Feet from Stardom won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2014. It won numerous other industry awards and captured other nominations as well.

IMDB has rated this movie at 7.4/10. I'd personally give it a 9/10 at least.



Not your Father's Oldsmobile Laptop

By Señor Tech

My apologies to my loyal readers, I was on vacation and missed last month's publishing deadline.

First, let me remind you that the free Windows 10 upgrade (Windows 7 or higher) expires July 29, 2016. So if you were contemplating the upgrade, get it before the price increases to over \$100.00.

Are you are looking to buy a new computer? Consider spending more and purchasing either a Microsoft Surface or iPad Pro. The reason I recommend these devices is that they are extremely portable and fully capable computing devices. Why spend the extra money when laptops are cheaper? That is a good question and I will endeavor to help you decide.

Microsoft has, for close to forty years, been a software company. They have, over the past few years, started to produce hardware optimized to run their software. In this article, we will look at the Surface 3 and the Surface Pro 4.

The Surface 3 and Surface Pro 4 devices are a new breed of laptop. The screen can be detached from the keyboard, and used as a tablet. To type, a soft keyboard is displayed onscreen and used for input. The screen is touch capable and using the accessory Surface Pen, the user can draw or sign documents onscreen. Battery life is advertised as ten hours (Surface 3) and nine hours (Surface Pro 4). Tablet mode frees the user from sitting at a desk while computing. The keyboard snaps into the bottom of the screen, converting the tablet into a standard laptop configuration.

The Surface 3 is a budget model - The processor chip is a Quad Core Intel® Atom™ x7-Z8700 processor which, in layman terms, means that it is limited to running basic software such as MS Office but don't try editing photos. If your goal is to surf the web, send emails and occasionally run a spreadsheet, produce a PowerPoint presentation, or write a novel; then the

Surface 3 may be your choice. The Surface 3 ships with Microsoft Office 365 (one-year subscription) which is a \$49.00 option on the Surface 4 Pro. The subscription includes 60 minutes a month of SKYPE International calls to landline phones (including cellular phones in Canada and USA). Memory configurations are either 2GB or 4GB and SSD storage is 64GB or 128GB.

The Surface Pro 4 is a true laptop replacement - The processor chips are either Intel® i5 or i7 and memory choices are 4GB, 8GB, or 16GB. Data storage is available in either 128GB, 256Gb, 512GB and 1TB (1000GB) SSD (solid state) drives. Users are not constrained to the basic software programs that limit the Surface 3. The Surface Pro 4 components will make your investment more future-proof (less likely to become obsolete).



The Surface Pro 4 comes complete with a Surface Pen (stylus); the Surface Pen is a \$79.00 option on the Surface 3. As I write this article the cost difference between the base models is \$400.00 more for the

Surface Pro 4 than the Surface 3.

Tablets are the future of computing. Touch screens make input more intuitive and fun. PDF documents can be modified to add your signature. Think of the time savings to sign a legal document and then return it to a third party by email.

If you are an aspiring artist, use the Pen as a paintbrush, pencil, or crayon to produce true art on a digital canvas. Once complete, print the final results on canvas or fine paper of your choice; suitable for framing. Or if you prefer writing freehand instead of typing, use the Pen to handwrite your notes. Microsoft offers OneNote, a note-taking app, that will be stored in the cloud with the One Terabyte (1000GB of data) included in the Office 365 subscription.

On the Apple front, there are two iPad Pro tablets available. There is a 12.9-inch and a 9.7-inch model in the Pro versions. The Pro versions work with the Apple Pencil which is necessary to do a true apples to apples (Apple to Microsoft) comparison. There is a \$250.00 premium for the larger screen. The 12.9-inch iPad Pro is \$75.00 more than the Microsoft Surface Pro 4 when you include the Apple pencil. If screen size is not an issue, the iPad Pro 9.7-inch model is \$175.00 less than the Surface Pro 4.



The iPad Pro 9.7-inch model has better cameras than the larger iPad Pro and the Microsoft Surface(s). Video can be shot in 4K (4x resolution over 1080P) vs 1080P which is the limit on the iPad Pro 12.9-inch and the two Surface models. Regular photos are at 12MP vs 8 MP for the rest. Both iPad Pro models allow Slo-motion video and Time-lapse video with stabilization. The Surfaces do not.

The Apps for the iPad Pros are generally less expensive than the Microsoft Surface, although MS Office 365 is the same cost. Powerful drawing, photo editing, and note taking apps are available on the App Store for less than \$10.00 each. Included Apple apps are Pages, Numbers, and Keynote which can convert the files to their MS Office counterparts. Also included is iMovie so you can make and edit movies on the iPad including the Slo-motion and Time-lapse videos.

I would recommend the Surface 3 if you are looking for a budget touch screen Tablet / laptop. It is the lowest cost and upgradeability probably nil. But if you just want to occasionally edit documents / spreadsheets, surf the net, view Facebook, and send email; this product will do fine.

If you are looking for a true Windows laptop replacement, the Surface Pro 4 is an excellent choice. You can run all Windows software. In tablet mode you can draw, annotate, and take handwritten notes. The cost differential is justified as you will be able to stay current with software upgrades for years. The higher end Intel processors are much speedier than the processor in the Surface 3 so applications will open and run faster. The screen size is also larger for readability. For most people computers are used for 3-5 years so the yearly difference is between \$80.00 - \$100.00.

If you are looking for a device to satisfy your artistic side, then the iPad Pro should be your choice. While the Microsoft products are built well and are solid, Apple has always sold products that feel special. The Apple Pencil and Microsoft Pen both perform the same function, but the Apple Pencil looks and feels sleeker. I found it to be more responsive and accurate while drawing fine details. Apple products are usually more expensive, but in this case almost equal, and the 9.7-inch model considerably less expensive. The main difference between the iPad Pro models is size vs photo and video quality. If a larger screen size suits your needs, then the 12.9-inch model is for you. But if you want better quality video and photos then save \$250.00 and buy the 9.7-inch iPad Pro.



When you go to purchase your next computer, ask yourself what is it that I want to do with this tool? How do you currently use your existing computer? Do you find it a chore? Is it inconvenient? If you do not enjoy the experience, then it may be the time to try a device that stimulates your creativity.

The prices above do not include a keyboard. The manufacturers offer their own, but there are many third party keyboards available at lower prices.

If you have questions or suggestions about future technology topics, email me at seniortech@manzanillosun.com.

A Local Road Trip with Family

By Suzanne A. Marshall

Early this year we had occasion to be in Guadalajara for meetings. At the same time, my sister-in-law and her husband from Canada were finishing a months' stay in Bucerias Nayarit, just north of Puerto Vallarta. Since we were already away from Manzanillo and using our own car (rather than bussing with ETN this time) we decided to turn the trip into a new adventure and drive to Bucerias, pick up our family members and return to Guadalajara for a tour of the historic section and some fun and food around the city. We booked a wonderful old hotel called the Morales which is smack in the middle of the historic section and dates back to 1888. From there, one can walk to museums, view ancient gothic cathedrals and overdose on Spanish and Mexican history plus find delightful places to eat and, of course, shop.

At this time of year the drive was very beautiful. Having bloomed from the previous rainy season, the mountains were lush and green with foliage while we crossed running rivers and creeks flowing under the numerous bridges that span the valleys between the mountains. The highway was busy but we arrived safe and sound in Bucerias in due course.

Having stayed overnight and dined and chatted together in a lovely courtyard restaurant, we all jumped in the car the following morning and headed out for Guadalajara. During our conversation the night before, we had all decided to take a side trip into the town of Tequila since we would be passing so near to this hub of famous tequila breweries and tourist attractions on our way back to Guadalajara.



A beautiful mural in Tequila



A fine Tequila distillery in Tequila

How we wished we had planned an extra day in Tequila once we arrived. But it was terrific just to have a few hours to savor the central square, walk the streets and view the art shops and learn more about the available Tequila factory tours (which we did not have time for). We have since determined that we will return in order to see more of this wonderful location.

The municipality of Tequila is just 60 klm from Guadalajara and has a population of roughly 40,000 people. The town, of course, is world famous for its production of various brands of tequila.

Made from the local blue agave plants, by law, only those locally-approved distilleries in the municipality and four other states in Mexico are allowed to legitimately use the term *Tequila*. Other versions of tequila might be called Mezcal. Indeed, forget about the

'rot gut' version of tequilas that we've all seen in some movie, in fact the best tequilas are to be sipped like fine brandies from a snifter and enjoyed for the bouquet and smoothness that many of us have happily discovered.



Tequila centre square

Later that evening we arrived at the Hotel Morales with its cavernous soaring cathedral ceilings and surrounding courtyards. We would enjoy several morning breakfasts and head off to tour the surrounding historic areas.

I highly recommend this beautiful hotel, not only for its tourist location, but also for its extremely reasonable pricing. It also provides secured underground parking. The staffing is abundant and cordial and the food in the main level dining area (under those cathedral ceilings) was excellent. We also enjoyed the stylings of a talented pianist who played various pieces on a grand piano that carried the music throughout the lobby and

dining areas. The rooms were equally inviting and spacious.



Guadalajara cathedral

From the Hotel Morales, there are numerous attractions within walking distance. There are also traditional horse and carriage tours that are a lot of fun and easy on the legs. If you can understand some basic Spanish, the carriage drivers will give you a complete history of the sights along the way. Our Spanish is pretty sketchy but between our lessons and what we've learned thus far we did manage to understand a good deal of the tour. There are a number of gorgeous and interesting locations to view. Though we had four days it wasn't enough so some 'must see' locations will await a future visit.

Here are a few high points:

The Guadalajara Cathedral is located on the lovely public square known as the Plaza de Armas. Its façade faces the adjoining Plaza de los Laureles with a lovely large fountain at its centre. It was built between 1558 and 1616 with many alterations in later periods. It is magnificent. Though Baroque on the exterior, its interior is mostly Gothic and displays breathtaking artwork by various Mexican artists such as Cristobal de Villapando, Miguel Cabrera and Murillo.

The Government Palace in the Plaza de Armas was started in 1643 and completed in 1774. This splendid Baroque building is well worth a visit to see its interior,

murals depicting the War of Independence and the heroes of the three Mexican wars.



Plaza de Armas

The Churches of Santa Monica and San Agustin are accessible from the historic centre. Just a few blocks north of the Cathedral, the Church of Santa Monica is notable for its Baroque façade as well. With twisted columns and intricate carvings, it is an ode to the symbols of religious orders.



Santa Monica cathedral – Gothic interior

The Regional Museum of Guadalajara is just a short stroll from the Plaza de Armas. Housed in a former 18th century seminary, the building at one time also

served as headquarters and a prison during the War of Independence. The museum opened in 1918 and one must tour the exhibits to fully appreciate the breadth of displays. Put aside a good deal of time to do so if you can.

The Rotunda of Illustrious Men is also near the Plaza de Armas and was constructed in 1952 in honor of the states best-known historical figures including famed artist Jose Clemente Orozco.



Rotondo de los Hombres

Having spent some wonderful days in Guadalajara it was time to check out of our hotel and head back to Manzanillo where sun and surf awaited us. With our heads full of history and wonderful images, we all felt that we had seen and learned so much more about this wonderful country of Mexico and its equally wonderful people.





Relax and Ride the Wave During This Summer's Doldrums

By Yann Kotic

Is your portfolio ready for summer?

This time of year, most of us are in vacation mode - and the same can be said for the people who drive the financial markets. Investment analysts, traders, brokers, and money managers take vacations, too.

As a result, the summer season is generally a slow time for financial markets, leading to what finance professionals call "the summer doldrums." It's an important concept to understand, because it can affect your portfolio.

When financial professionals are out of the office, they aren't buying and selling stocks and bonds. That leads to reduced activity in the financial markets, and is sometimes referred to as "low volume."

Interestingly, low volume means greater volatility. Why? Because the few purchases and sales that are completed have a bigger impact on the price of the stock or bond.

Think about it: if you sell 1,000 shares of a stock that trades, on average, 100,000 shares a day, your sale is only 1% of the total sales volume. But during the summer doldrums, if you sell 1,000 shares of the same stock that now trades, on average, 10,000 shares a day, your sale has become 10% of the total sales volume.

You may want to keep that in mind as you review your account statements over the summer. Don't panic and decide to sell just because your investments decline; be sure you have a portfolio that is allocated appropriately for your goals, and then ride the wave. And take heart: the summer doldrums end after Labor Day.

Yann Kotic is an Investment Advisor (RIA) and Money Manager with Atlantis Wealth Management. Yann specializes in retirees (or soon to be), self-reliant women and expats in Mexico. Atlantis is working with an international custodian which allows multiple international currencies in a single account. Yann splits his time between the Lake Chapala area, Manzanillo and Central Florida. Comments, questions or to request his newsletter, "News you can use" contact him at yannk@atlantisgrp.com in the US at (321) 574-1521 or in Mexico, (376) 106-1613



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How to Snorkel Dive

By Terry Sovil

History

Snorkeling can trace its roots back over 5,000 years of history. In a forerunner to the modern snorkel, ancient divers used hollow reeds to allow them to breathe while submerged in water.



The diving bell allowed divers to take breaths without returning all the way to the surface of the water. But it wasn't very mobile. Instead, attempts were made to allow the diver to breathe from the surface air. Aristotle mentions divers taking air from a tube connected to the surface. Leonardo da Vinci included, among his inventions, several designs for diving apparatuses, from simple tubes leading to floats at the surface of the water to an almost completely self-contained diving suit.

People soon found out that tubes connecting a diver with the surface were of limited use. Water pressure below one or two feet quickly became too high for even the strongest pair of lungs to take a breath. Today we

have modern rubbers and plastics. These allow snug fitting masks and goggles with tempered glass for the diver's safety. We now have more efficient snorkeling fins, developed to allow snorkelers to navigate with ease.

Basics

A snorkeler must be comfortable in the water and in wearing the mask and breathing through the snorkel. Practice putting your face below the surface and looking through the mask. You can breathe through the snorkel while looking around at the aquatic life. Although relatively simple, beginning snorkelers should know their way around their mask and snorkel, including how to clear both of water. Clearing a snorkel is an easy process. If you find your snorkel tube flooded simply exhale with a strong force through your mouth, this sends the water up and out the end of the snorkel. Some snorkels come with built-in drainage valves, allowing the water to be pushed out a one-way valve.



Clearing a mask while snorkeling simply means: lift your head out of the water and pull forward on the front of the mask. This will open up a gap in the bottom of the mask, allowing the water to drain out the bottom.

To do this, you will need to be comfortable with using your snorkeling fins to stay afloat upright as well as to

move around while floating face down in the water. The most common underwater kick is the basic flutter stroke. As you kick, use a slow, comfortable pace and remember to keep your fins submerged in the water. You should find that a pace of about twenty kicks per minute will give you a good cruising speed through the water without too much fatigue. Keep your fins under the water. Breaking the surface uses more energy.

Safety

The most important safety tip while snorkeling is to never do it alone. Choose a buddy who you are comfortable with and stay close together while you are out. And don't snorkel if you cannot swim! Stay close to shore or the boat. Be aware of your surroundings. Know the area that you are diving in and if there are any areas to avoid. Be very careful around rocky shores or pounding surf which can pick up a snorkeler and cause injury. Retain your energy. Relax and let your wetsuit float you! Do not touch marine life. Be aware of the seabed. Do not let yourself get into too shallow waters.

Snorkel Gear and Equipment

Masks

The mask is the centerpiece of the collection. A proper mask serves as the window of air between a snorkeler and the world beneath the water. For this reason, when choosing a mask, a snorkeler should pick one that provides a clear, unobstructed view and does not limit peripheral vision. Some masks include side windows, to allow for wider vision, while others simply widen the front lens. Tinted glass should be avoided. A mask must fit correctly. Buy your mask from a reputable dive shop and they will assure a good fit and high quality!



Pricing: Low-end masks sell for \$15 to \$30, while top-of-the-line masks approach \$80 or even \$100. For the casual snorkeler, a quality mask that will last should run you around \$35-\$45.

Snorkels

A snorkel is a flexible tube, generally made from plastic or stiff rubber, which connects a snorkeler to the surface air. Snorkels are a diver's lifeline, allowing them to breathe while their face is in the water. The right snorkel should let you breathe easily and comfortably for extended periods of time, without making you short of breath or light-headed. If the bore is too wide, however, it may make it more difficult to clear water from the snorkel. Most snorkels measure between 12 and 18 inches, but choose one that feels comfortable for you.



Note the construction of the snorkel's mouthpiece. Every diver has a mouth shaped slightly differently. Choose a snorkel for comfort and fit! A snorkel mouthpiece has two parts: an oval lip flange, which fits just inside the diver's lips, and the bitepiece, which is gripped between the diver's teeth. The bitepiece should be held securely between the teeth but does not need to be bitten down hard upon. The real seal is provided by the lips covering the flange.

Clear your snorkel with a sharp exhalation of air. At the surface simply look up (tipping your head back) and exhale gently to remove all water. There are many snorkel designs (100% dry, semi-dry and the old stand-

by, a snorkel that will flood). A reputable dive shop can help you select and fit a snorkel that will work for you and your needs.

Pricing: Basic snorkels can be found for \$10-\$15, while high-end snorkels will sell for \$40 and up. For the average person, a \$20-\$25 snorkel will be more than adequate.

Fins

Fins provide efficient propulsion in the water. Fins increase your speed and mobility by 50%. There are two basic types of fins, open-heel fins and full-foot fins. To be effective, fins must fit comfortably and securely. Too tight and they can hurt and cause blisters, too loose and they may chafe or fall off. Full-foot fins, which fit over the entire foot, offer more protection to the bottom of a diver's heel, but because they are not adjustable, they do not provide as secure a fit. Open-heel fins, held in place by an adjustable strap, are more secure but they don't provide foot protection. Most snorkelers with open-heel fins wear neoprene booties with them. This protects their foot and allows them to wander the beach and over rocks.



As with the other gear we've mentioned, a professional dive shop can help you select the right pair of fins for your needs!

Vests

Snorkel vests are small inflatable vests that can be worn in the water to help improve buoyancy while snorkeling. Many locations offer standard vest life preservers which can be decent alternatives.

We have often offered people swim noodles which offer a lot of support and can be tucked under the arms allowing you to better lay flat to see underwater. Wet suits will float you shoulder high in the water with no effort and offer sun protection, environmental protection, floatation and warmth. Boats have regular life preservers available for you to use.

Cameras

More and more snorkelers are buying cameras that can get wet. New models appear every day. There are still 3 main categories:



- 1) Disposable underwater cameras
- 2) Waterproof Cameras
- 3) Traditional Cameras in a waterproof housing.

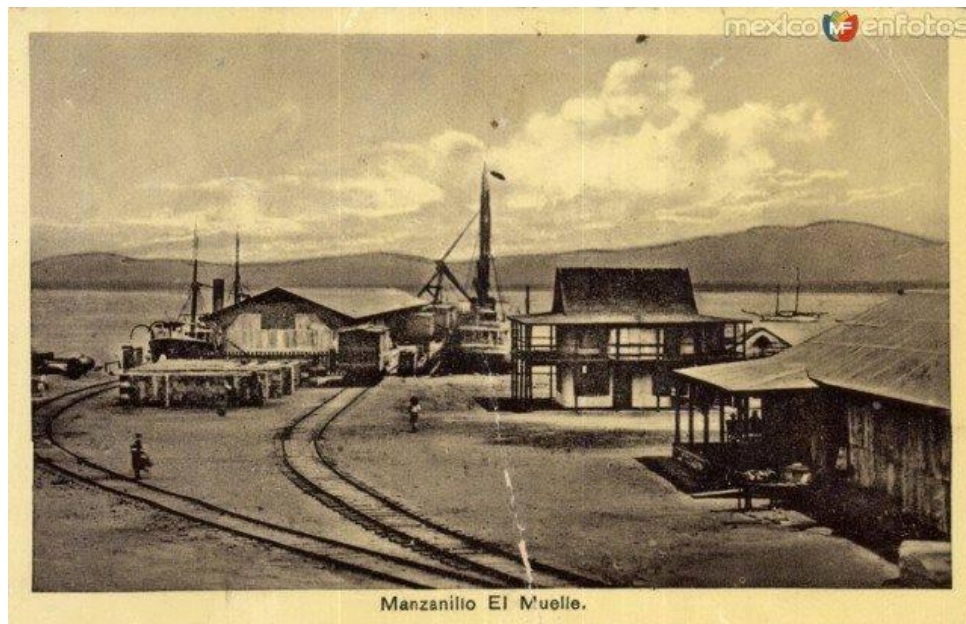
Visit <http://www.aquaticsportsadventures.com/> (scuba, snorkel and PADI dive school) for more information, tips and great diving equipment.

Manzanillo of Yesteryear

Photo journey courtesy of our friends at "Colima de Ayer"



Calle México 1896 – Manzanillo Centro



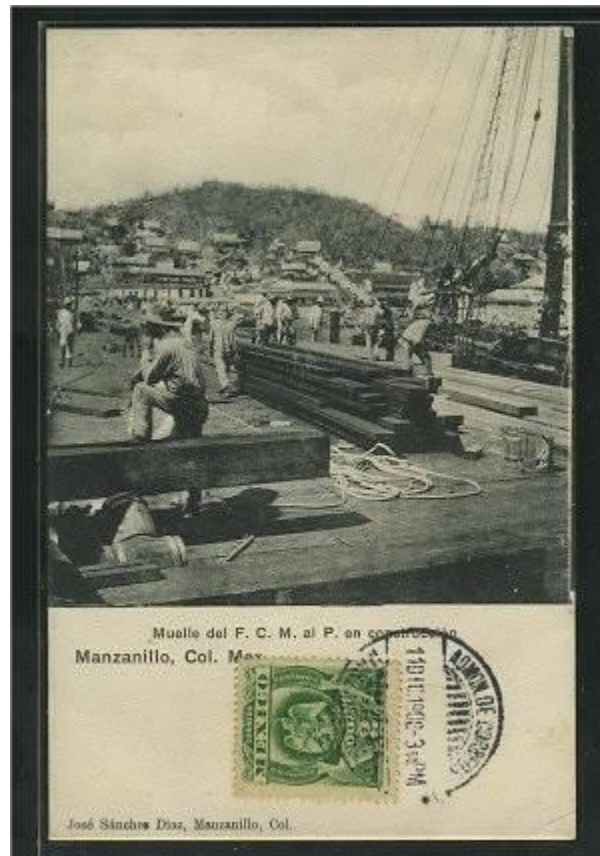
The Wharf – Manzanillo Centro



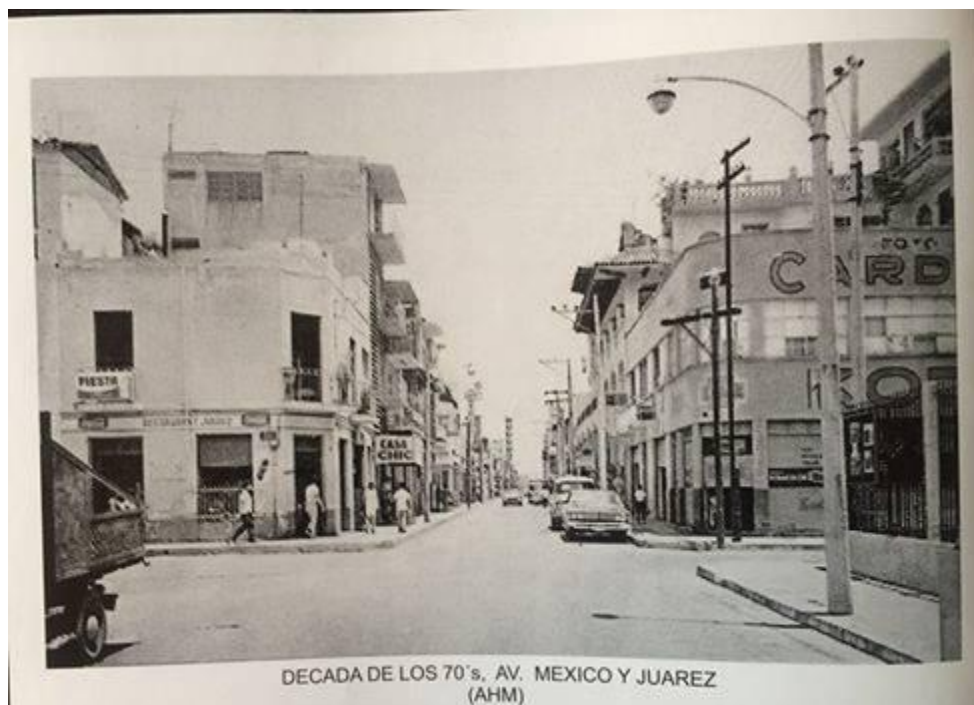
Calle México 1930 – Manzanillo Centro



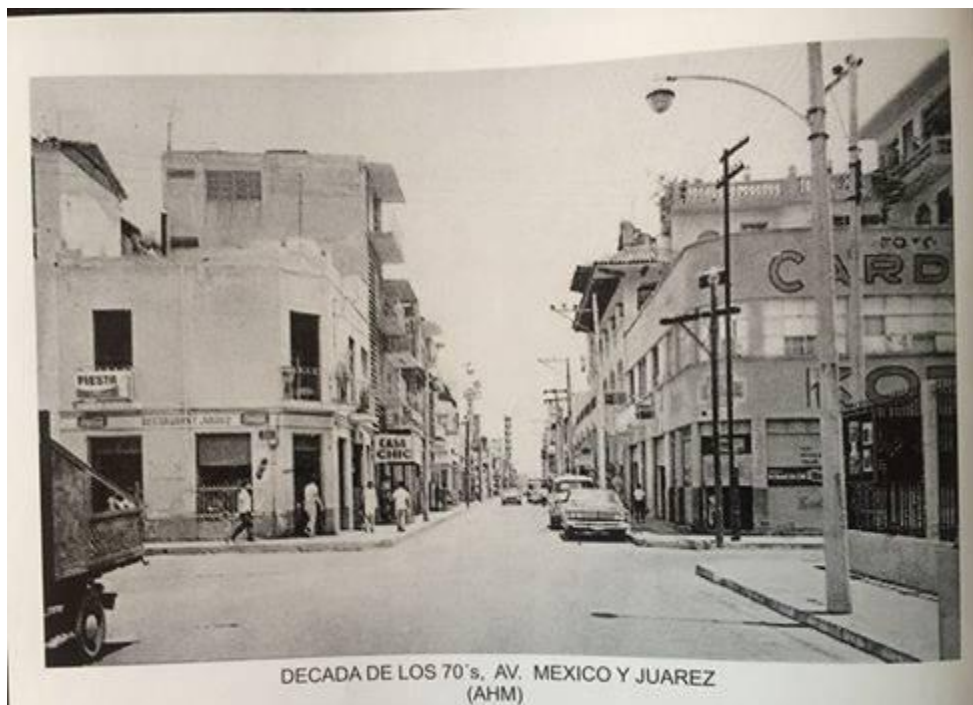
Calle México 1935 – Manzanillo Centro



The Wharf circa 1908



Manzanillo Harbour



1970s Avenida México and Calle Juárez



P2C -Path to Citizenship

Palenque – Maya City of Temples

Article by Owen Jarus, Live Science Contributor

Source: Live Science

Palenque is an ancient Maya city located about 500 miles (800 km) southeast of Mexico City. It lies in northern Chiapas, near the bottom of a highland, overlooking a vast plain.

Its ancient name was Lakamha ("Big Water") and its modern name comes from the nearby Spanish colonial settlement of Santo Domingo de Palenque. Although probably known to the local modern Maya, it was rediscovered by European explorers in the 18th century and even elicited the interest of King Charles III of Spain.

Pakal's city

Archaeological finds indicate that the city was occupied at least as early as 500 B.C. but reached its peak in the seventh century A.D. under the rule of K'inich Janaab Pakal, also known as "Pakal the Great." It was during his reign that Palenque recovered from invasions by its rival Calakmul (a city located 180 miles to the northeast) and launched a major building program that would see the development of a palace 300 feet by 240 feet (90 meters by 70 meters) and construction of the "Temple of the Inscriptions," which sits on top of a step pyramid about 65 feet (20 meters) high.

There was an abundant supply of soft limestone nearby that allowed the city's artists to carve intricate reliefs.

"Most of what we see of Palenque, in that central area, is Pakal's city, it always was, even to the kings that came much later," said University of Texas researcher David Stuart in a lecture given online on "National Geographic Live."

Coming to the throne in A.D. 615 at the age of 12, Pakal was given the war headdress of kingship by his mother Ix Sak K'uk, an event depicted on an oval tablet discovered in the palace's white throne room. When Pakal died at about age 80, he was buried along with five or six human sacrifices in a jade-filled tomb (including a jade funerary mask he wore) deep inside his pyramid. His sarcophagus shows the king's rebirth

and depictions of his ancestors in the form of plants. The tomb was re-discovered in 1952.



A stone tablet from Palenque shows K'inich Janaab Pakal receiving the crown from his mother, Ix Sak K'uk.

Credit: Irafael, Shutterstock

It's "the American equivalent, if there is one, to King Tut's tomb," said Stuart in the lecture. "He [Pakal] was really venerated by later kings, his descendents, as a great historical figure that really brought Palenque back from the brink."

His wife appears to have been buried in a smaller tomb located next to the pyramid. Her burial was rich with red cinnabar and contained two human sacrifices.

Gods and temples

The panels in the Temple of the Inscriptions include a text that "is among the longest known from any Maya site," write George and David Stuart in their book "Palenque: Eternal City of the Maya" (Thames & Hudson, 2008). The text combines "Palenque's dynastic

history with highly specific descriptions of rites associated with the three patron gods of Palenque.”

This triad, which scholars call gods one, two and three (their exact names are difficult to discern) were said to have been created by a progenitor god in 2360 B.C. in the mythical land of Matwiil.



Credit: Ales Liska, Shutterstock

This triad was honored by Pakal’s son and successor K’inich Kan Bahlam, who built three temples, known to us as the “cross group,” in their honor. The temples were constructed just to the southeast of the palace and are now called the Temple of the Cross, Temple of the Foliated Cross and the Temple of the Sun. Archaeologist Michael Coe writes in his book “The Maya” (eighth edition, Thames and Hudson, 2011) that their designs are similar, a stepped platform containing an outer and inner room with sanctuary and a carved relief tablet. Each temple has a “comb” on their roof that looks like a giant honeycomb.

The Stuarts write that the Temple of the Cross honored god one, an aquatic deity with “strong solar associations,” who was the leader of the three. God two, also known as “Unen K’awiiil” (Infant K’awiiil), was honored in the Temple of the Foliated Cross and was a “deity of lightning.” God three was honored in the Temple of the Sun and was related to the sun god, his temple associated with war.

As their name suggests, the cross and foliated cross temples have tablets that depict giant crosses at center. While they do bear an “astonishing resemblance to the Christian cross,” Coe said, they are in fact depictions of the Maya “branching world tree,” a motif that the Maya used to envision the cosmos.

Early history — before King Pakal

The early history of the city is poorly understood, write the Stuarts. They point out that the earliest building

that we know of dates to, perhaps, A.D. 400. Furthermore, inscriptions tell us that the earliest king at Palenque was a man called “Snake Spine,” who supposedly ascended to the throne in 967 B.C., long before the city even existed. The authors note that Snake Spine would have reigned at a time when the Olmecs, an earlier civilization in Mexico, were flourishing.

Determining real kings from mythical ones is difficult, but it appears that by the end of the fifth century a dynasty of rulers was established at Palenque. Recently, archaeologists have been probing a tomb under temple XX using a video camera. The tomb is believed to be that of a Maya ruler who ruled before Pakal’s time, somewhere between A.D. 431 and 550.

Researcher Edwin Barnhart notes in a paper published in the book “Palenque: Recent Investigations at the Classic Maya Center” (AltaMira Press, 2007) that Palenque would become one of the most densely populated Maya cities we know about. At its height in the seventh and eighth centuries its urban core had a population as high as 6,200 people living in 2.2 square kilometers (0.8 square miles) of land. Researchers have found evidence of sophisticated engineering techniques, including a water pressure system that may have been used to create a fountain.

The city’s end

Between the late eighth and early 10th centuries, the ancient Maya civilization collapsed (although the descendants of the people live on today). Palenque was no exception with archaeological evidence indicating that the city was abandoned by A.D. 850, if not earlier.

George and David Stuart note that the last known inscription at Palenque was carved on Nov. 17, 799, and was recorded on a vase. It records the name of a nobleman named “Janab Pakal,” who may have been the city’s last ruler. His name is apparently in honor of the great king who reigned more than a century earlier.

What led to the collapse of the Maya is a matter of debate but recent research suggests that drought caused by climate change played an important role. It appears that no Maya king, regardless of whose name they took, had the power to stop the natural calamity.

To see more about this article series, visit us online at [Path to Citizenship \(P2C\) online](#)

Sopa de Albóndigas (Meatball Soup)

Source: Food.com



INGREDIENTS

(SERVINGS 8-10)

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 4 cups water
- 2 (10 1/2 ounce) cans beef broth
- 1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 beaten egg
- 1/4 cup finely snipped cilantro or 1/4 cup parsley
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1/4 cup long grain rice, uncooked

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large saucepan cook onion and garlic in hot oil until onion is tender but not brown.
2. Stir in water, broth and tomato paste.
3. Bring to a boil; add potatoes and carrots.
4. Simmer 5 minutes.
5. Meanwhile combine egg, cilantro or parsley, salt, oregano and pepper.
6. Add ground beef and rice and mix well.
7. Form into 1-inch meatballs.
8. Add, a few at a time, to the simmering soup.
9. When all meatballs are added, bring soup back to boiling.
10. Reduce heat and simmer about 30 minutes, or until meatballs and vegetables are done.

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