



# Manzanillo SUN

May 2017

coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine

La Boquita  
*by John Chalmers*

- Fresh Air
- Nature's Wonders
- Finance
- Mighty Nature
- History and Mythology
- At the Movies
- Technology
- RV Travel
- Around Mexico
- Path to Citizenship
- On the Road



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To send submissions for possible inclusion in the magazine, please send to the editor by 15th of each month. We are always looking for writers or ideas on what you would like us to see as topics for the magazine.

Article submissions:

- Preferred subjects are Manzanillo and Mexico
- All articles should be 1000 words or less or may be serialized or 500-750 words if accompanied by photos
- Pictures are welcome
- Comments, letters to the editor, articles, photos and advertisements are always welcome

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## Hiking in the Manzanillo Area

story and photos by John Chalmers

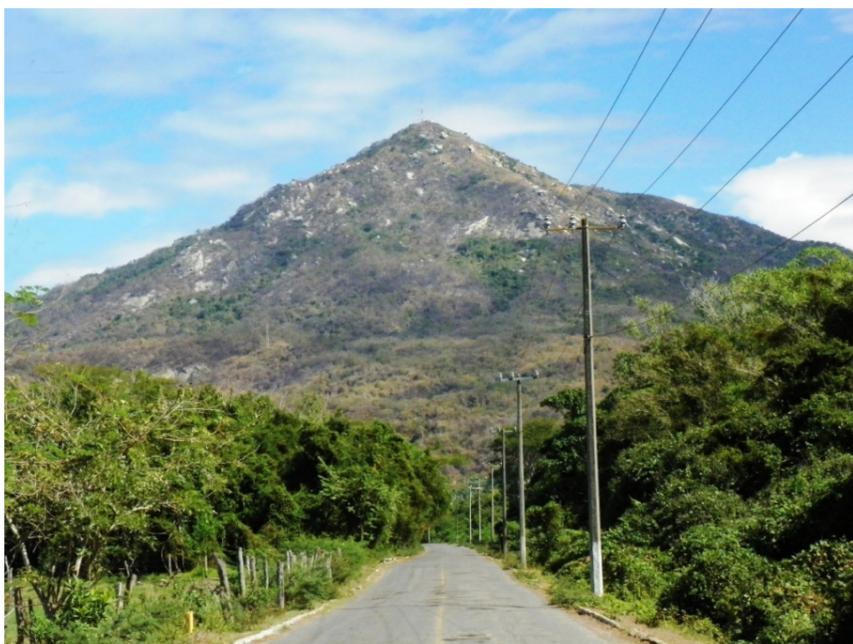


A hike up to El Cumbre, the abandoned hilltop condo built near the Palma Real resort near Santiago provides a stunning view of the lagoon, the beach and *Cerro del Toro* in the distance, the site of our most vigorous hikes.

A day trip by car from the Manzanillo area to see nearby towns, beaches and scenery is a fine way to enjoy the country. A scheduled group tour for a few days has someone else do all the planning, driving and arranging accommodation. Both car and bus trips, sometimes combined with air travel, have helped us become acquainted with México and its history.

For something completely different, hikes with fellow visitors on several of the routes in the Manzanillo area provide a social experience, great exercise and a chance to appreciate sights not seen when travelling by car, bus or airplane!

Most hikers in our groups are Americans or Canadians enjoy-



Viewed from below, the challenge to hike to the top of *Cerro del Toro* is evident!

ing the climate of México without having to bundle up and shovel snow which they might be doing if they had stayed home. We have numbered from 10 to 40 hikers on our jaunts, always pleased to have some of our Mexican friends join us. Our hikes have taken us on several routes. From Highway 200 west of Manzanillo we have hiked out to wide expanses of the Pacific beach. Another route in the area has taken us up roads on hills to undeveloped areas and remote sites that are populated with only a few homes.



Much of the road up *Cerro del Toro* and other hills/mountains is shaded.

Closer to Manzanillo, the hills—or should they be called mountains?—provide access to viewpoints of panoramic vistas of the sea and El Centro. From the starting point near the downtown area, on one trek, we took the trail that ends with 225 steep

(Continued on page 2)

(Hiking in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 1)

steps, culminating at the cross overlooking Manzanillo from atop the mountain with a view of the city and the port.



Proper clothing and especially footwear are necessities!

Starting from the same point, but hiking up a paved road instead, the route ends at the Manzanillo lighthouse. Like the hike to the cross, the reward is a fine view of the area, including the city, the sea, ships, the power plant and the port.



Atop Cerro del Toro, climbers celebrate with a group photo.

For a truly vigorous hike, the trek up the road to the communications towers atop Cerro del Toro is a fine test of fitness. From the starting point near the town of La Central, it takes roughly two hours, if you are in shape, and nearly as long coming down. Hiking poles, good footwear and lots of water are necessities on vigorous treks and a camera will record your experience to share with friends.

One route proved so popular that we hiked it three times. It is a level path on rural roads through farmland in the Manzanillo



On Cerro del Toro, the hike down from the two peaks is also a workout.

area. The trip provided close-up views of agriculture in the area. We walked past perfectly groomed fields of green peppers, red peppers, tomatillos, tomatoes, corn and bananas. Livestock we saw on the route included cattle, goats, burros and donkeys. Fields of agave and prickly-pear cactus added to the variety.



On the trails, hikers go at their own pace, enjoying the company.

That particular hike began in the area north of Santiago and continued for some 12 kilometers in a route that was scenic and often shaded, providing a fine start to the day, with the companionship of fellow visitors who share a love of México.

The route ends at a paved road where we flag down a local bus for the ride back to our starting point. Past the penitentiary and through new housing districts, the 7-peso ride ends where we began. A cold cerveza then provides a fine way to toast the experience and the companionship of fellow hikers. With the great weather in the Manzanillo area, any day is a good day for a hike -- Viva México!

(Continued on page 3)

(Hiking in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 2)



The wide and scenic beaches near Manzanillo offer great views of the sea and surf. The white *Peña Blanca* is usually seen when flying in or out of Manzanillo.



Urban hikes, like this tour of Miramar acquaint visitors with the town.



Both urban and nearby rural routes can combine for a varied experience.



Meeting some of the townsfolk is a pleasure of urban hikes.



School children greeted us and took interest in our group as we passed by.

(Continued on page 4)

(Hikes in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 3)



Even urban hikes are close to nature, like this road alongside a lagoon.



Local beaches such as *La Boquita* can be part of an urban tour.



The view from the cross is rewarding when reaching the top of the trail.



Rich Taylor points to the cross. He and his wife, Chris, plan our routes.



The hike to the cross is wide and often level before its narrow and steep finish.

(Continued on page 5)

(Hikes in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 4)



Illuminated and visible at night, the cross is a perfect spot for pictures.



Fine scenery abounds on the route to the cross and all other trails as well.



With eager expressions, hikers pose for a group shot at the start of a mountain trail.



The roads up the hills are rich with foliage as part of the scenery.



Travel by foot on the mountain trails takes hikers where cars can't go!

(Hikes in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 5)



Our popular rural route provides an appreciation for the area's agriculture.



A stroll through the countryside is a fine alternative to hiking the mountains.



Goats and burros are among the pedestrian traffic on a country road.



We never tire of the scenic views on any of our hikes.



For a little ways, our companions were cattle being led to water.

(Continued on page 7)

(Hikes in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 6)



Waves and friendly smiles from field workers greet us as we pass by.



When leafed out, this beautiful tree provides shade for cattle.

(Continued on page 8)

(Hikes in the Manzanillo Area - Continued from page 7)



An obliging driver always stops when flagged for the ride back to the start.



The bus ride back concludes the adventure of our rural trek.

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by Tommy Clarkson

**Cherry Tomato, *Esulentum lycopersicum***

Family: *Solanaceae*

Also known as: Mexican Midgets

Yes, these Cherry tomatoes are, indeed, an important part of the Ola Brisa Gardens plant family. Why you ask? Well, firstly and quite simply, I love to pick and eat fresh tomatoes right off the vine!

(It's a delightful vice that I first learned from my cousins Jeanette, Dick and Cindy back on their parents' farm in Western Kansas. During those early Eisenhower Whitehouse years, we'd grab a salt shaker and race into their mother's large garden to munch on vegetables that we'd pull up from the dirt or pick right from the bush or vine. Among them, wonderfully sour rhubarb stalks, crisp, crunchy carrots, fresh lettuce, tangy radishes, and yes, lots and lots of tomatoes!)

The second reason for their inclusion along with the several other hundred tropical palms, plants and flowers in our gardens is that these hardy little guys are native to and grow wild here in Mexico! In fact, their ancestors were savored by the Aztecs and whatever was good enough for Montezuma is durned straight good enough for me!

Those that vigorously grow next to our infinity pool – and on which I stop and chomp during my daily pool exercises - did not come from any store bought seeds. No way José! (Conveniently, that's also our gardener's name.) These are the

real things!

In fact, I first found these tiny - and I mean small, little, itty bitty – cherry tomatoes growing wild in the Sierra Madre Occidental Mountains in the southern part of the State of Jalisco during one of José's and my botanical treks into the "interior"!

About the size of my little finger tip, there they were growing in a clustered clump, right next to some large boulders about sixty meters from heavy tropical overgrowth. A few botanists contend that they originated in Peru, Ecuador and Northern Chile. (But I think that may be the tiny-fruited currant tomato *Lycopersicon pimpinellifolium*).



As can be seen, these are no monsters, but make up for their small size in gigantically good taste!

And, I just gotta' ask, "So just how'd these, that I found, get here in the wild?" Hence, I concur with those who believe that this variety originated here in Mexico. . . . but I've gotta' admit that the pictures I've seen of those more southerly currant tomatoes look a lot like mine what with their delightful trusses of sweet tiny fruits!

With so many cultivars now out on the market, it's a bit confusing sorting out what variety stemmed from what and where. Historically, tomato seeds appear to have been taken to Europe from Mexico after Cortez wreaked his havoc on the natives in 1519. And though originally from the New World, it was intro-

(Continued on page 10)

(Cherry Tomato — Continued from page 9)



Easy to grow. Come by *Ola Brisa Gardens* and I'll give you a few for seeds!

duced to the gringo palate in the U.S. in the 18th Century. (I'd like to think that these domesticated ones may have been distant relatives to my wild ones!)

Growing cherry tomatoes is pretty easy – perhaps more so than the regular, larger ones as these guys produce copious blossoms allowing a good chance some will set fruit. But for the best results, with prolific yields, give them what they like best – lots of full sun (at least eight hours per day), fertile, well-draining soil, and evenly-applied moisture.

Cherry tomatoes often remain productive in very hot weather when the blossoms of larger-fruited varieties call it quits and drop off. As to how much water is needed depends both on the rainfall received and the type of soil.

With fast-draining soil, one needs to water often if the weather's been dry. But before watering, check the soil for dryness – down a bit, not just the surface. If the foliage looks limp – as I often do after a full day in the gardens - you've neglected them too long.

Once your cherry tomato plants are established, and around a foot tall, I'd encourage mulching them with compost.

Just as in familial situations, strong support is important! Plant-wise, prune the vines to two or three major branches. I prefer caging inside a rounded portion concrete re-enforcing wire

“screen” which allows good air circulation and easy access to the fruit. But, make sure you stake them firmly into the ground. Those wimpy inverted conical cages, sold commercially all too often, bend and may collapse under the weight of mature plants with all those yummy “maters”.



Yep, these are those wonderful - native to Mexico cherry tomatoes that flourish right next to our infinity pool

Beyond standing by the bush and simply savoring them on the spot as I do, a bit more cultured - yet simple - way to enjoy them is to roast 'em in a pan with a little garlic, salt and pepper. Or, as a mix with chopped onion, fresh basil, fresh mozzarella, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, and a bit of salt. Now that is one heck of a great tomato salad!

(Now that I've fully warmed to the subject, next time we'll discuss growth of tomatoes as a whole.)

Get your copy of *The Civilized Jungle: Tropical Plants Facts & Fun From Ola Brisa Gardens (Volume 1) Paperback* – December 2, 2016 on [Amazon!](#)

For back issues of "Roots", gardening tips, tropical plant book reviews and videos of numerous, highly unique eco/adventure/nature tours, as well as memorable "Ultimate Experiences" such as Tropical Garden Brunches

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## Floating-Rate Securities May Make Sense Now

by Yann Kostic

Although interest rates fell precipitously in the early 1980s, they are now on the rise through the Federal Reserve System. Higher rates will resonate through virtually every sector of the economy, including investments; more specifically, the increasing interest rates can be bad for bonds. And many fixed-income investors are asking where they should turn.

When interest rates rise, new bonds pay a higher yield, which is good for new bond buyers. However, it is bad for existing bondholders, because their bonds, which pay less interest, are less attractive and therefore decline in price.

### Variable rate instruments

Investors who are concerned about the potential impact of higher interest rates on their existing portfolios have options in variable rate instruments, which are securities that do not offer a fixed rate of interest. The rate of interest they pay varies over time.

### Floating-rate securities

One such instrument is the floating-rate security. Floating-rate securities are typically issued by investment-grade companies with solid credit ratings.

They have interest rates that are tied to an index and reset periodically. So if interest rates rise, floating-rate securities tend to pay a higher interest rate starting with the next reset date. The downside: floating-rate securities may offer yields lower than fixed-rate bonds of the same maturity offered by the same issuer.

### Bank loans

Bank loans are also variable rate investment vehicles, with rates that usually reset every 30, 60, or 90 days. These tend to offer a higher interest rate, but also may carry a greater credit risk than investment-grade floating-rate securities.

In a declining interest-rate environment, variable-rate instruments such as floating-rate securities and bank loans can be poor investment choices. However in stable and rising-rate environments, they may offer a measure of protection against increasing interest rates. Discuss with your advisor whether variable-rate instruments are right for you, given your financial situation and investment goals.

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by Tommy Clarkson

### Cuban Oregano, *Plectranthus amboinicus*

Family: *Lamiaceae*

Also known as: Mexican Mint, Spanish Thyme, French Oregano and Indian Borage

Not native to Cuba, Cuban Oregano was probably introduced to the Caribbean folks via Haiti during the late 1800s French colonial period. Originating in India, the leaves of this mint family plant are used throughout Eastern Asia and the Caribbean as culinary seasoning and, sometimes, even medicine!

This coleus-looking perennial has succulent, thick, light green, three inch (7.62 cm) leaves - sometimes with white, scalloped edges.

*Plectranthus amboinicus* prefers sandy well-drained soil and, if happy, can – in a sprawling manner – easily reach a height of three feet (.91 meter) in height . . . while I've heard of no few specimens attaining heights as much as nearly six feet (1.83 meters).

To keep the foliage thick and dense, pinch the tips off periodically. Remember that it needs water regularly (but let it dry out between each watering). To attain its lushest growth potential, it prefers some shade. In full sun, it will be a ground hugger and tend to be stunted. Also, be aware that too much fertilizer will make the plant grow excessively and cause its leaves to lose their pungent flavor.

Some consider a down side to this plant its brittle stems that easily break off from the parent plant. While this is a fact, these detached pieces can be easily rooted to create new plants. (The norm for such is a stem with three or more sets of leaves.) Simply pinch off the bottom two sets of leaves, sinking the stem into damp soil up to the lowest remaining set of leaves and keep it well watered –but not waterlogged. Through this procedure, one should see new growth in a few weeks. However, I've had great results in simply putting the broken stems in a plastic container of water for about three weeks - in indirect light - and find the new roots that emerge then eager for soil re-planting!



I love the Cuban Oregano's rich, full smell.

Once mature, prune judiciously. Doing so will allow you to reap leaves regularly and still have an attractive plant. Important point: Make sure that you never harvest more than 2/3 of any plant at one time.

Not unattractive in themselves, these plants will occasionally produce pale violet flowers. Ours are displayed on the Stepped Terrace next to Rosemary and Tabasco Peppers not far from a large clump of Lemon Grass.

Cook with Oregano? Indeed! According to *The Herbalist in the Kitchen*: "The fresh leaves are used to season fish and cabrito (young goat) in the islands. They are sometimes chopped in chili pastes (something like Jerk Seasoning, but without the strong Onion and Ginger presence). The leaves are the primary

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(Cuban Oregano — Continued from page 12)

*seasoning in the Cuban black bean soup, Frijoles Negros. A kind of salsa, made by mincing the leaves together with various unripe fruits, is served as an accompaniment to rice. In Java and Malaysia, it is used in curries -- especially with goat or strong-smelling fish."*



And, honestly now, ya' gotta' admit, those leaves are just plain pretty!

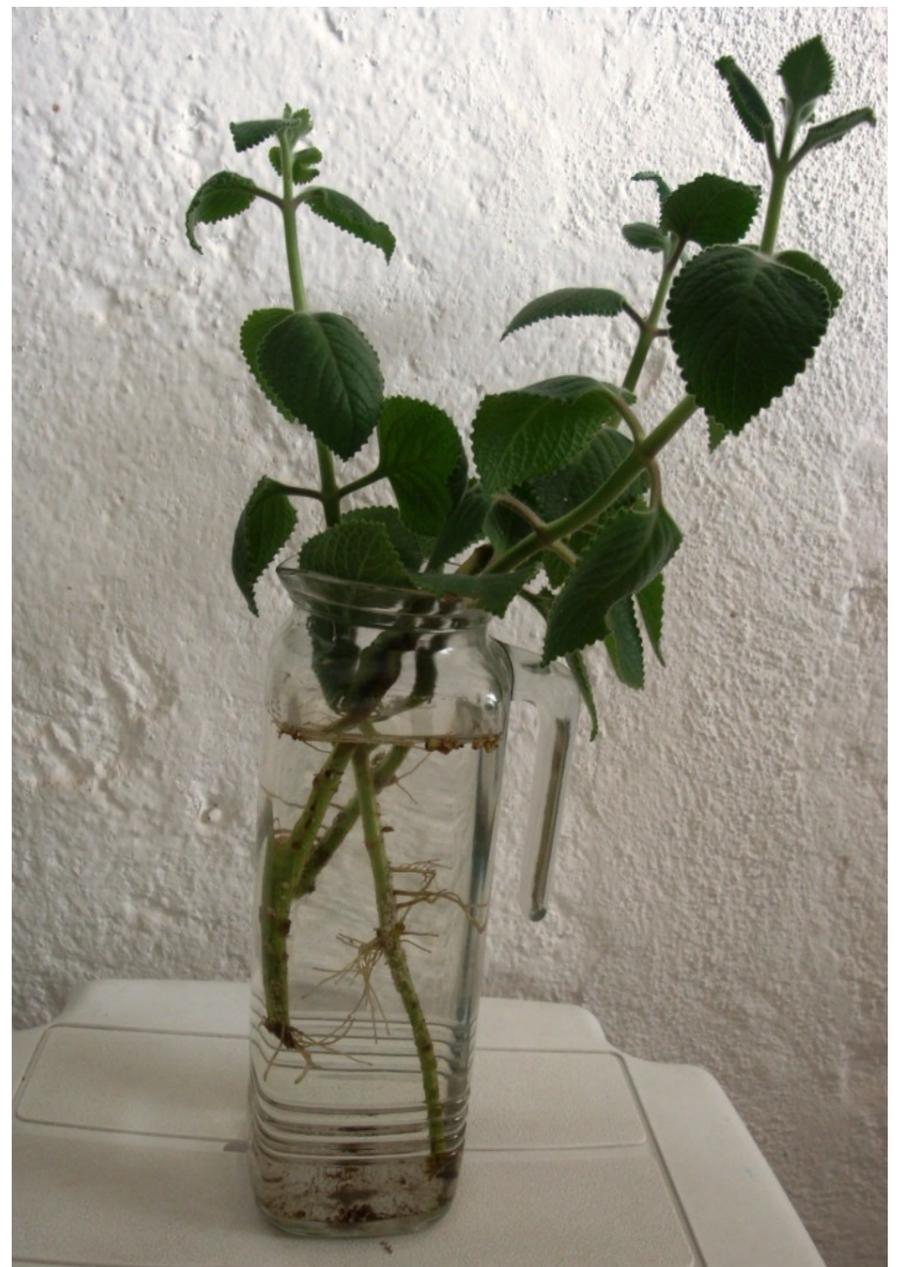
In Northern America – as a substitute for sage - the leaves are often used in stuffing. But be careful. Too many leaves, with their very strong and long-lasting flavor, will produce a somewhat turpentine flavor. Hence, you might wish to keep in mind that the younger leaves are milder.

Beyond use in poultry stuffing, other food with which it is commonly employed include: artichokes, duck, ham, lamb, leeks, potatoes, pork, pumpkin, sausages, and veal.

Some of Cuban Oregano's classic partners in flavor are Garlic, Garlic Chives, Lemon Thyme, Marjoram, Rosemary, Savory and Shallots,

In Cuba, practitioners of traditional herbal medicine make a tea from its leaves that help with digestive problems, respiratory ailments and arthritis. In Indonesia, its dried leaves are added to soup in order to increase the quantity of a nursing mother's milk. And in India, it is mixed with sugar and then boiled down into a syrup that is used as a homeopathic remedy for coughs and sore throats.

Some rub the crushed, strongly scented, leaves on their skin as an insect repellent.



To get new starts, clip, trim and place in water, where you've indirect sunlight, for about three weeks

But I've saved the best for last! It neutralizes capsaicin - that compound found in peppers making them so hot to one's palate - chewing on a Cuban oregano leaf will cool the burning sensation of spicy foods!

As part of our Ola Brisa Gardens tours, I pluck off a leaf and let visitors savor the Cuban Oregano's rich, full smell.

And, honestly now, ya' gotta' admit, those leaves are just plain pretty!

For back issues of "Roots", gardening tips, tropical plant book reviews and videos of numerous, highly unique eco/adventure/nature tours, as well as memorable "Ultimate Experiences" such as Tropical Garden Brunches

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## My Ocean Loves My Stuff

by Terry Sovil

Those beautiful beaches in Manzanillo can have a few drawbacks. We're going to focus on trying to protect your stuff from the oxidation and rust that our ocean seems to share.

These are common worries for those fortunate enough to live right on the beach.

1. "I worry about my computer, stereo equipment, TV, outdoor furniture, outdoor grill."
2. "My friend's house is less than 100 meters/yards from the beach. His windows are open most of the time with a fantastic breeze coming through. After 2 years many of the screws in a very expensive oven were rusted! A/C condenser coils didn't last much longer."
3. "I lived on the beach for 3 years. Appliances and electronics were not affected. The house was close to the beach but I didn't keep the windows open much."



iPhone after water exposure

Protecting your stuff is complicated due to the huge variety of appliances and electronics. They have different electrical properties and needs, so they all need different types of protection.

**Here are some basic tips for phones, tablets, laptops, cameras etc.:**

- **Keep them out of the sun.** Direct sunlight is never your friend. Keep your devices in cool, shady areas.
- **Cover any open ports.** USB ports, headphone jacks, memory chips etc.
- **Keep the exhaust vents open!** It is good to cover ports but keep the vents open!
  - Heat is a major enemy of a laptop.

- Know where the intakes are and keep them free of dust.
- Be aware that pillows, blankets or your legs may be blocking these vents.
- If you can, put your laptop on a hard, flat surface.
- Look for a stand such as Steklo – X-Stand such as the one below.



- **Clean with compressed air.** Dust is not your friend. Purchase a can of compressed air at Office Depot. Use short bursts only. If your laptop overheats or is running slow, take it to [ARHO](#) for a cleaning!
- **Avoid wide temperature swings!** Fast changes in temperature causes condensation. Wait a few minutes for your device to "acclimate" when moving from an air conditioned space to outside or vice versa.
- **Keep the humidity low!**
  - Use silica gel or a product such as "Damp Rid" in smaller spaces
  - Keep your devices inside an airtight case.
  - I store my laptop in my backpack and keep a few packets of silica gel inside.



(Continued on page 15)

(My Ocean Loves My Stuff — Continued from page 14)

- **The beach isn't for your laptop.** You may look cool, but you are getting tiny bits of sand in your vents, in your ports and between your keys.

### For Stereo Systems and TVs

You could buy a really nice marine stereo system. They come with radios, CD/DVD players and input jacks to pump your music from another external device. These units are sealed. You can buy really good speakers designed to be in boats. They are DC so you may have to wire and adjust powering.

Keep the unit out of the sun. Keep it in a protected area. Cover it when not in use.



The problem with any stereo or TV system is corrosion on the wires connecting the device to your speakers or to an external antenna, etc. Once you have them connected, you can coat them with a simple silicone sealant which will protect them for a long time.

### Windows

Consider fiberglass framed doors and windows! Vinyl and aluminum are good choices but they would not be as anti-corrosive as fiberglass. Use hot-dipped metal galvanized or stainless steel fasteners when you have to use metal. For sliding glass doors and screens, the rollers are best replaced with stainless steel. They will still rust but it is the best option.

Keep the windows and frames, all of your exterior surfaces, clean. Rinse with fresh water. The longer something stays damp, the higher the possibility of corrosion. For metal window fasteners and hinges, spray with WD-40 (Water Displacement-40), or silicone spray, to help slow corrosion.

### Bathrooms / Kitchens

Mold loves damp spots and can grow on just about anything. Inspect all areas of your home where water spray may leak inside. Stop the leak. Promote air circulation with fans or fresh air. If you find mold or mildew in shower corners, scrub the surface with some mild detergent, dry, and then apply a mixture of 1/4 cup bleach to one quart of water. Use anti-fungal cleaners regularly. Inspect and repair bathroom caulking, and squeegee shower doors after use.



For kitchens, you might want to apply a protective wax to metal-front appliances to repel water and rust damage.

### Outdoor Furniture

Patio furniture takes a severe beating from the ocean air and moisture. One of the best ways to protect your furniture is to cover it when not in use and overnight. Also be sure to remove salt buildup by rinsing your furniture often (weekly is recommended) and drying it with a soft cloth. A gentle wash with dishwashing soap is good. Further protection can be effected by applying a coat of car wax or other polishing compound every couple of months.

Handy tip:

Here is a product that is supposed to help...

<https://www.nocorrosion.com/>

*you can reach Terry Sovil at [terry@manzanillosun.com](mailto:terry@manzanillosun.com)*

## FOR RENT CONDO at the BEACH

Want to spend the winter in Manzanillo? We have the perfect condo for you.

This 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, very comfortable condo is right on the beach in a small, intimate 8-unit complex, in a quiet area in Las Brisas.

The balcony and master bedroom on this 3rd floor unit offer great views of spectacular sunsets, fishing boats, cruise and freight ships coming and going, and sometimes even whales and dolphins.

Relax by the pool or under the palapa, with a book, a coffee or a meal. Plenty of restaurants, spa, gym and other services are within walking distance. Major stores, casino and cinema are just a 20 minute walk or a short bus ride.



Kitchen and bathrooms are nicely redone. Beautiful tiled floor throughout. Freshly painted, super clean and well maintained. Owners (Canadians) spend the winter months nearby and are always available for maintenance, if needed.

New, fully screened windows and doors will keep any unwanted bugs out. Off-street parking and security gates front and back. The cool breeze and the shade from the palm trees keep this unit cool and comfortable. (AC installation in the unit is a future possibility but will affect the rental rate)



## FOR RENT CONDO at the BEACH

### DETAILS

- ✓ Fully furnished
- ✓ Ample bed, bath and kitchen linens
- ✓ Well-equipped kitchen
- ✓ Microwave, coffee maker, toaster, blender, juicer
- ✓ Gas (4 burner) stove and oven
- ✓ Washer and Dryer
- ✓ 24" TV
- ✓ Satellite dish and Shaw receiver (not subscribed)
- ✓ Wifi
- ✓ Ceiling fans in each room
- ✓ Safe
- ✓ Lockable closets
- ✓ Off-road parking
- ✓ Security Gate front and back
- ✓ Beach Chairs
- ✓ Laundry drying rack
- ✓ Mini Christmas tree and decoration
- ✓ Videos

### FEES

- ✓ Maximum number of people - 4
- ✓ 1st and last month due upon acceptance of rental agreement
- ✓ 3 months (minimum) CAD \$1,700.00
- ✓ 4 months CAD \$1,600.00
- ✓ 5 months or more CAD \$1,500.00
- ✓ All utilities included
- ✓ Housekeeping available at MXP \$200 per visit
- ✓ For further inquiries please contact Elly at [miselly2@telusplanet.net](mailto:miselly2@telusplanet.net)



Seeing is believing!



**Unseen Enemy**

(CNN Feature-length Documentary 2017)

by Suzanne A. Marshall

The IMDB rating is 8.8/10.

Starring: as themselves – Larry Brilliant, John Connor, Deontee Davis and more.....

Director: Janet Tobias

“Unseen Enemy is an essential exploration of reasons 21st-century populations are experiencing a rash of diseases that were once only outbreaks, but have become full-blown epidemics. This increased risk we face, and the ways society and individuals can work together to reduce the risk, are explained to the public through the case studies of three epidemics: Ebola, influenza and Zika. Moving across the globe, we meet doctors, disease detectives and everyday people who have stepped into the horror of an epidemic and emerged deeply changed. Epidemics bring out the best and the worst of human behavior, with effects reaching far beyond the tolls of sickness and death.”

The tagline “Once it’s here, it’s too late”, sums it up quite appropriately. The global mobility of the human race, our populations and excessive exposure to each other, is causing a surge of disease renewals such as measles and mumps that many of our older readers will remember from childhood. As a result of people choosing not to vaccinate, diseases are returning, mutating and spreading with a vengeance. If we don’t all come to terms with the need to protect the populations, we will be staring a true pandemic in the face soon. Only one epidemic has ever been eradicated: Smallpox. Watch this informative documentary and ask yourselves. What can I do?



you can reach Suzanne A. Marshall at [suzanne@manzanillosun.com](mailto:suzanne@manzanillosun.com)

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## Quetzalcoatl's Return

by Kirby Vickery

Quetzalcoatl (pron. Quet-zal-co-at) was one of the most important gods in ancient Mesoamerica. The god known as the Plumed Serpent is a mixture of bird and rattlesnake. Quetzalcoatl's name is a combination of the Nahuatl words for the quetzal - the emerald plumed bird - and coatl or serpent. He was around long before the Aztecs came into power. To the Maya he was known as Kukulcán. The Quiché of Guatemala called him Gucumatz. To the Huastecs of the Gulf Coast he was Ehecatl. He was regarded as the god of winds and rain and as the creator of the world and mankind.

In Central Mexico, from 1200 CE, he was also considered the patron god of priests and merchants and considered the god of learning, science, agriculture, crafts and the arts. He also invented the calendar, was identified with Venus, the rising morning star, he was associated with opossums and even discovered corn (maize) with the help of giant red ant that led him to a mountain packed full of grain and seeds.

Quetzalcoatl was the son of the primordial androgynous god Ometeotl. In Aztec mythology he was the brother of Tezcatlipoca, Huitzilopochtli and Xipe Totec.

In my musings over Aztec mythology, I sometimes look at other mythologies, if for no other reason to run a comparison or two. I remember having heard that one of the reasons Cortez was able to defeat Montezuma II, and assume control over the Aztec empire, was that he learned that he looked like (resembled) Quetzalcoatl or that of his emissary, to the Aztecs. So instead of being a concurring Spaniard, he was the returning God Quetzalcoatl and was welcomed with open arms. While it cut down on his losses back then, it sure made me sit up and wonder why today.

Why would the Rain and Life God of Venus disappear to begin with after his creation started to go so well? His planned return, I understood, was the answer. What I found out about other mythologies was very interesting. In both the Greek and Roman

mythologies, the creation of everything is very convoluted and complicated. In Norse mythology, Thor, it seems, is always fighting his brother Loki, for one reason or another. Cain fought his brother Abel in the Bible.



Tezcatlipoca in the form of a jaguar, carved on a granite ball player's yoke, AD 650-1000  
Giraudon/Art Resource, New York

The Pre-Christian god Baal had one heck of a time fighting his brother for control over the earth and its people. So much so he required the help of his mother to win the battle. The unanswered question is why do all these senior gods end up fighting their own brothers for control of mankind? The answered question is, in Quetzalcoatl's case, because of his brothers (three, actually) and what they did to him and his people. The Codex revealed four stories of the bad poking at the good and disrupting everything which caused Quetzalcoatl to want to leave. The first of the four is below for your reading enjoyment.

In the days of Quetzalcoatl, there was abundance of everything necessary for subsistence. The maize was plentiful, the calabashes were as thick as one's arm, and cotton grew in all colours without having to be dyed. A variety of birds of rich plumage filled the air with their songs, and gold, silver, and precious stones were abundant. In the reign of Quetzalcoatl, there was peace and plenty for all men.

(Continued on page 20)

(Quetzalcoatl's Return - Continued from page 19)



But this blissful state was too fortunate, too happy to endure. Envious of the calm enjoyment of the god and his people the Toltecs, three wicked "necromancers" plotted their downfall. The reference is of course to the gods of the invading Nahua tribes, the deities Huitzilopochtli, Tlalacahjua or Tezcatlipoca, and Tlacahuepan. These laid evil enchantments upon the land in these envious conspiracies.

Disguised as an aged man with white hair, he presented himself at the palace of Quetzalcoatl, where he said to the pages-in-waiting: "Pray present me to your king I desire to speak with him." The pages advised him to retire, as Quetzalcoatl was indisposed and could see no one. He requested them, however, to tell the god that he was waiting outside. They did so, and procured his admittance.

On entering the chamber of Quetzalcoatl, the wily Tezcatlipoca simulated much sympathy with the suffering god-king. "How are you, my son?" he asked. "I have brought you a drug which you should drink, and which will put an end to the course of your malady."

"I thank you kind sir," replied Quetzalcoatl. "I have known for many days that you would come. I am exceedingly indisposed. The malady affects my entire system, and I can use neither my hands nor feet."

Tezcatlipoca assured him that if he partook of the medicine which he had brought him, he would immediately experience a great improvement in health. Quetzalcoatl drank the potion, and at once felt much revived. The cunning Tezcatlipoca pressed another and still another cup of the potion upon him, as it was nothing but pulque. Pulque is an alcoholic beverage made from the fermented sap of the maguey plant. It is traditional to central Mexico, where it has been produced for millennia. It has the color of milk, somewhat viscous consistency and a sour yeast-like taste. He speedily became intoxicated, and was as wax in the hands of his adversary to commit all sorts of debauchery thru forcing him out of the land.



This was the first incursion that Tezcatlipoca used to cause the death of many Toltecs by his black magic and induction of the virtuous Quetzalcoatl into sin, drunkenness, and carnal love, thus putting an end to the Toltec golden age. It was under his influence the practice of human sacrifice was introduced into central Mexico. In the months to come I will tell of the other three tales.

you can reach Kirby Vickery at [kirby@manzanillosun.com](mailto:kirby@manzanillosun.com)

**Lion**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

Starring: Dev Patel, Nicole Kidman, Rooney Mara, Sunny Pawar (young Saroo)  
 Director: Garth Davis

“A five-year-old boy gets lost on the streets of Calcutta, thousands of kilometers from home. He survives many challenges before being adopted by a couple in Australia. 25 years later, he sets out to find his lost family.”

This movie is billed as a biography drama. If you remain for a while through the trailers following the movie you will see the actual families and major characters. The story itself is heart-wrenching and beautifully expressed through the actors, screen writing and cinematography. The young actor, Sunny Pawar, has stunning capabilities as the young 5 year old protagonist and is absolutely convincing. Dev Patel (Slum Dog Millionaire, Best Marigold Hotel series) is such a wonderful actor with an emotional range that touches your heart and moves you emotionally. So, too, does Nicole Kidman, who plays the adoptive mother and I found her emotional range to be dramatic and realistic. I highly recommend this movie if you are looking for a straight up human drama as it really happened.

The film was nominated for 6 Oscars including Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor, Best Supporting Actress, cinematography, music (original score), writing (best adapted screenplay)

The IMDB rating is 8.1/10 based on about 92,355 viewers.



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## Facebook privacy demystified (part three)

### Friend me again ??

by Señor Tech

The last few issues I have written about privacy settings in Facebook.

In the past weeks, a few of my friends have posted warnings not to friend them again. The reason, one of their friends may have friended someone who had larceny in their hearts. Once in a friend network, someone can slowly start to friend others because they appear to be trustworthy. After a while, they can start to harvest personal information from all the new friends.

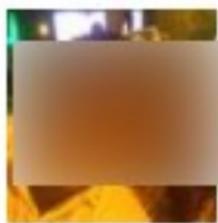
They can then set up a fake Facebook account claiming to be someone in the friend network. Once the fake account has been set up, they send friend requests to everyone in the cloned account to more rapidly collect information. You may wonder how this information can be used. A few examples follow;

1. If someone in the group is on vacation, and they have provided their address; the crook can leisurely go over and burgle the vacationer's home.
2. If your grandchild is travelling out of the country, a fake telephone call requesting money to help the grandchild out of a sticky situation (the requester will ask for a non-traceable money order) is possible. My 85-year-old Aunt once got one of these calls but was alert enough to call the police.
3. Some people provide a lot of information in their Facebook profile; in some cases, more than enough for someone to steal their identities.
4. Set up marketing schemes targeted to the list.

To insure you do not fall prey to this scheme, never friend someone you have already friended. If you get one of these requests, immediately contact your friend so they can confirm the request or at least so they can contact Facebook to limit the damage.

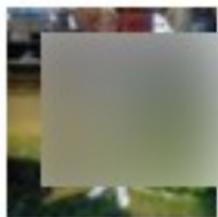
### Respond to Your 4 Friend Requests

[View Sent Requests](#)



Confirm

Delete Request



Confirm

Delete Request



Confirm

Delete Request



Confirm

Delete Request

(Facebook Privacy 3 - Continued from page 22)

I use Facebook to communicate with friends and family I know personally. If you have not already done so, read my articles on setting privacy (the previous 2 issues).

If you use Facebook as a promotional tool; set up a group instead and use your private account only for trusted friends and family.

*if you have questions or suggestions about future technology topics, email [seniortech@manzanillosun.com](mailto:seniortech@manzanillosun.com)*



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## Chetumal

by Dan and Lisa Goy, exclusive to Manzanillo Sun



Heading to Chetumal along Highway 307

### February 11-14, 2016 (Day 36-39)

This morning we departed southbound from the Pal Mul RV Park for Ciudad Chetumal, about a 5 hour drive, still on the Caribbean, but with a lot fewer tourists. Hwy 307 was wonderful, good pavement and plenty wide, lots of 4-lanes as well.

Our journey took us thru some small villages into Chetumal. The campground, Yax-Ha Resort is located just north of Chetumal on Calderitas Bay. This was an easy drive and we were very impressed with this campground. No sandy beach, however good water access, lots of coconut palm trees and grass, a great, inexpensive restaurant, showers and washrooms were clean, pool, wifi and laundry; we could even purchase purified water at the park.

After set up we organized a happy hour, then dinner for some at the restaurant. We were able to catch up on lots of wifi. To-

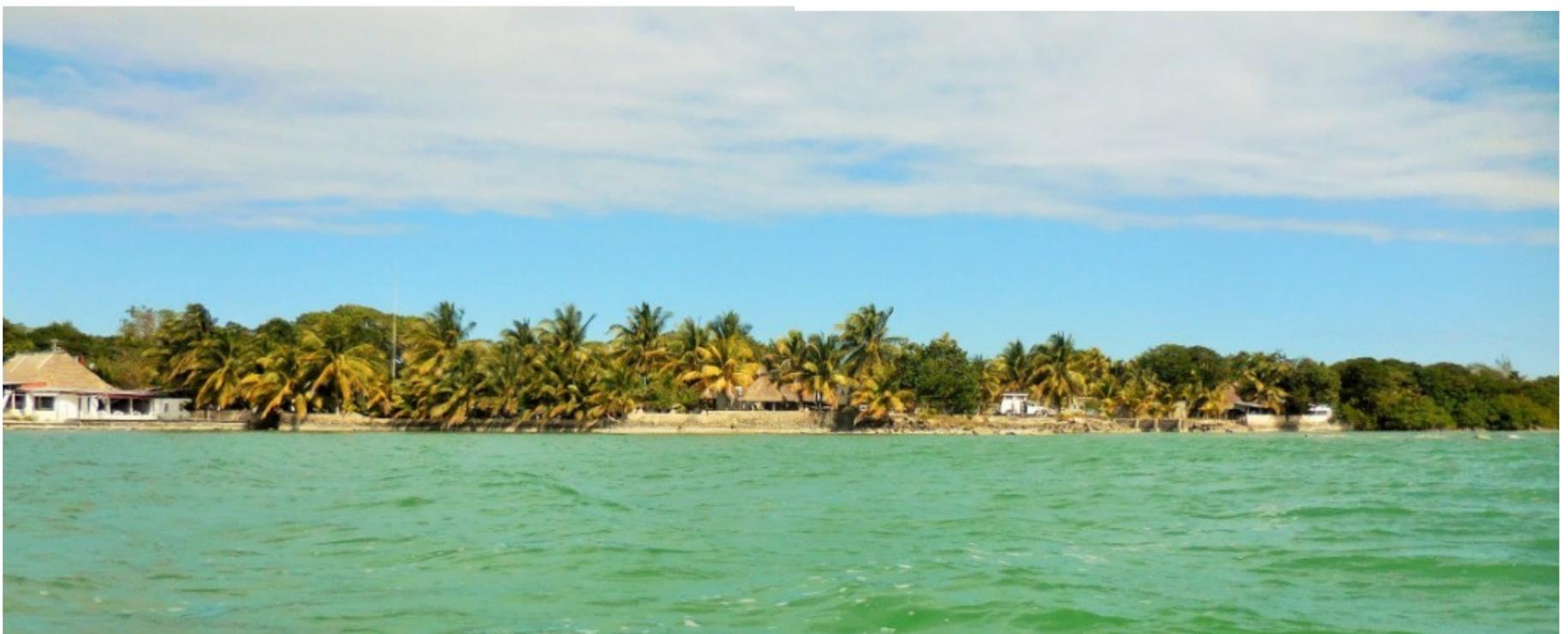
morrow, with help from all the Baja Amigos, we will get the SUP and kayak off the van and into the water.

The next day was a little windy but we still managed to take the kayak off the roof and put it in the ocean lagoon. Only Dan



Navigating through Felipe Carrillo Puerto

Yax-Ha campground from the water



(Chetumal - Continued from page 24)



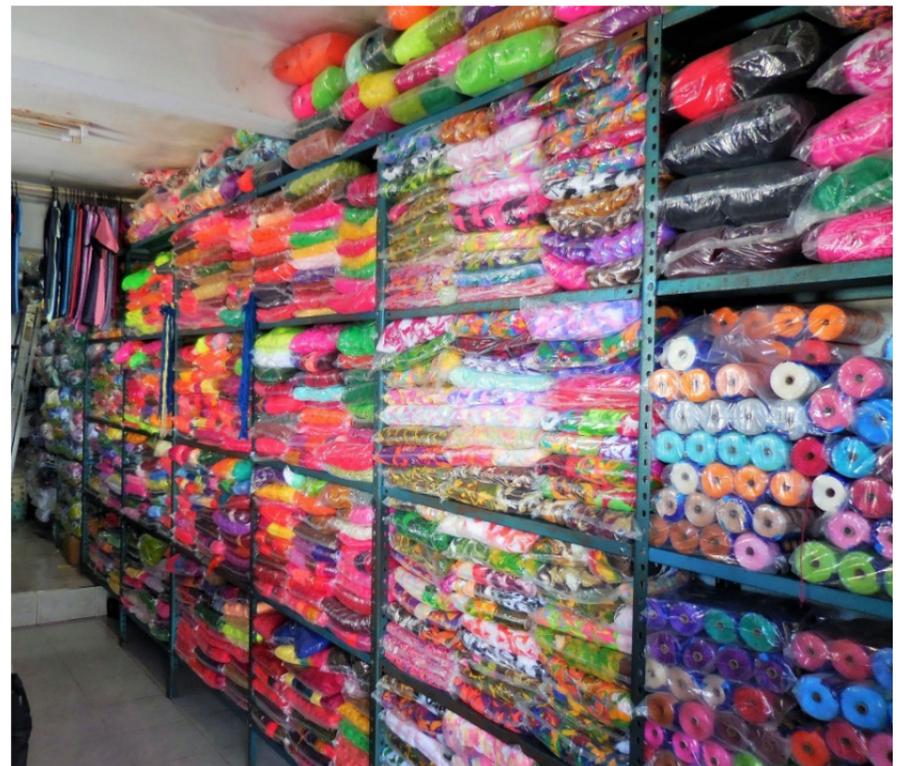
and Rafael took the boat out, but mostly, on the first full day at the park, we just kicked back and hung out, no excursions planned. Mike installed the new motor he received from the trailer manufacturer that had been couriered to Cancun for his slide and the gals organized our first potluck dinner which was fantastic.



Ladies' wear at the local market

Our 2nd day here was Saturday and we headed into Chetumal in search of the local mercado. Our excursion started with a very scenic drive on an oceanside road along the shores of town where made a couple of stops including a photo op with the group at the newly-installed sign for Chetumal.

We found the town very relaxed, with wide roads and few crazy drivers which was a real departure from many of the larger cities we had encountered to date on the trip. We found the local mercado, next to a museo about Mayans and nearby many small eateries.



Lots of colourful fabric at the market



(Continued on page 26)

(Chetumal - Continued from page 25)

We enjoyed our tour of the market, purchased a few items, and later Mike and Kelly joined us for lunch at a taco stop on the sidewalk. After we collected up the gang, we decided to drive to the Belize border to see what that was all about. We discovered that Mexico and Belize had set up a free zone, where you could cross with valid passports and shop duty free. Most did not have their passports so we decided to visit the next day.



Plenty of fresh vegetables

Later that evening, Rafael and I met with Jorge, Fina and Tio Ricardo Jimenez who had dropped by to meet us. Bety (Antonio and Bety from Bahia de Los Angeles) had contacted us and told us her brother and sister-in-law lived in Chetumal, gave us his number and suggested we contact him. As it turns out, her Uncle Ricardo was visiting from the US and came along as well. We really enjoyed meeting everyone particularly from Bety's family, great folks for sure.



Group on the dock - Laguna de los Siete Colores



Fortress at San Felipe Bacalar

Sunday was Valentine's Day and we off to the Belize free zone with passports in hand and then a scheduled swim at Bacalar Lagoon, Laguna de los Siete Colores (Lagoon of the Seven Colours). The name comes from the fact that the shallow lake has a very light-coloured bottom and, as the day moves along, the colour of the water changes as with this reflecting sky.



(Continued on page 27)

(Chetumal - Continued from page 26)

When we got to the border, we parked and went directly to the Mexican immigration station at the entrance to the Belize free zone. Now we were asked for our Mexican tourist cards, not just our passport as earlier informed. Some folks had them, others were not willing to give them up. Suddenly we had option B, as the Mexican immigration officer asked for \$50 pesos each to venture across into Belize. The group quickly decided this was a way too sketchy a process and we had gone nowhere. What was it going to be like when we had to re-enter Mexico after visiting the free zone we asked ourselves? Us in Belize and our RVs in Mexico with no tourist cards? I do not think so!

All righty then, we were off to our swimming appointment at the Bacalar Lagoon (Bacalar was named a "Pueblo Mágico" in 2006). When we arrived, it did not take long until we found a nice spot, very inexpensive, both to park and the entry fee which included a swimming dock, restaurant, tables and chairs, change rooms, washrooms, even some shopping. Most had a good swim, very refreshing, had a bite to eat, and headed back to the RV Park in the early afternoon.



Wonderful swimming at the fresh water lake - Bacalar

Time to pack up the kayak and other items then prepare for our group Valentine's dinner organized by Marian and Anita down the street. Prior to our departure, Roland had a Valentine for all the gals. Definitely a nice touch. Thank you Roland!

We sat on the patio outside on the water side and it was seafood all around. I had a shrimp dish that was very tasty and inexpensive. It was a memorable Valentine's dinner. We would return to both this region and RV Park if given the opportunity, lots to see and do here without the steady stream of tourist traffic.



Taking the gals out for Valentine's Day dinner

**Chetumal (Modern Maya: Chactemàal, "Place of the Red Wood")** is a city on the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico and capital of the state of Quintana Roo with a population of under 200,000. The city is situated on the western side of Chetumal Bay, near the mouth of the Río Hondo and an important port for the region and operates as Mexico's main trading gateway with the neighboring country of Belize. Goods are transported via a road connecting Chetumal with Belize City to the south, and also via coastal merchant ships.



Bronze statue of Emiliano Zapata

There is a commercial airport, Chetumal International Airport, with airline service. Because of its location on the Caribbean coastline, it is vulnerable to tropical cyclones; two (2) hurricanes in the 1940s leveled the entire town; followed by Hurricane Janet in 1955 which did the same. The town was subsequently rebuilt using a lot more concrete than wood and fared much

(Continued on page 28)

(Chetumal - Continued from page 27)

better with Hurricane Dean, also a Category 5 storm, which made landfall near Chetumal in 2007.



There's no shortage of taxis in Chetumal

### History of Chetumal

In Pre-Columbian times, a city called Chactemal (Chetumal), probably today's Santa Rita in Belize, was the capital of a Maya state of the same name that roughly controlled the southern quarter of modern Quintana Roo and the northeast portion of Belize. This original Chetumal is now believed to have been on the other side of the Río Hondo, in modern Belize, not at the site of modern Chetumal. Bacalar was a city of the Maya civilization in Pre-Columbian times.



Caribbean camping at Yax-Ha in Calderitas

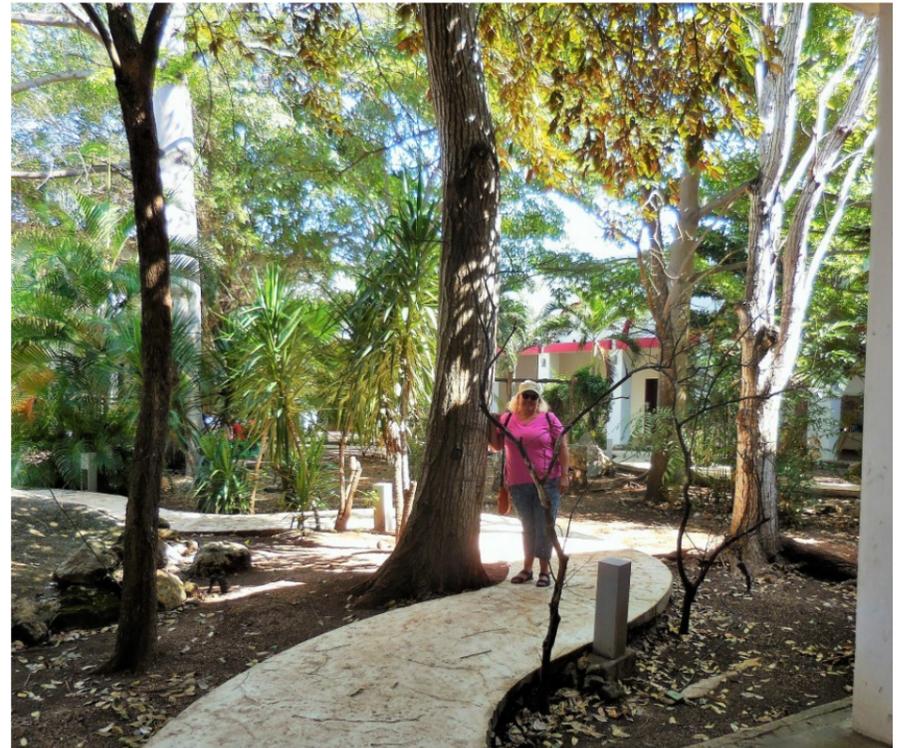
This was the first city in the region which the Spanish Conquistadores succeeded in taking and holding in 1543. In 1545, Gaspar Pacheco established the Spanish town here with the name Salamanca de Bacalar. The region of the southern half of what

Photo display at the Museo de la Cultura Maya



is now Quintana Roo was governed from Bacalar, answerable to the Captain General of Yucatán in Mérida.

During the Spanish conquest of Yucatán, the Maya state of Chetumal fought off several Spanish expeditions before finally being subjugated in the late 16th century.



Courtyard outside the Museo de la Cultura Maya

However, the development of the sugar plantations, including the expansion towards the east, at the expense of Indian communal lands, causes the impoverishment and the displacement of the Mayan population, which nevertheless was still forced to pay tithes and taxes, and carry out harsh work on the lands belonging to the whites.



Sunset from Yax-Ha campground

The situation reached such a degree that the Mayans believe that rebellion is the only way of saving their traditional means of subsistence and autonomy. Following the arrest and execution of the indigenous leader Manuel Antonio Ay, the Mayans

(Continued on page 29)

(Chetumal - Continued from page 28)

rose up against the government of Yucatán. The 1840s revolt of the indigenous Maya peoples against Mexican rule, known as the Caste War of Yucatán, drove all the Hispanic people from this region; many settled in British Honduras (modern day Belize).



Dan and Lisa on the swimming dock at Bacalar Lagoon

On 30 July 1847 the rebel forces, led by Cecilio Chi, overran and destroyed the village of Tepich, and neither negotiation nor military repression succeeded in curbing the relentless rebel advance. Soon, two thirds of the peninsula, including the whole of the east and Bacalar, are in the hands of the insurgents. By May 1848, the Mayan forces are positioned in the ports of Mérida, creating panic amongst the inhabitants, but the dreaded final attack never materialized.



Gals at the Yax-Ha campground

With the coming of the rains, many Indians abandoned their offensive and returned to their communities to cultivate the land. The governmental forces do not hesitate to counter-attack, retaking the main cities and forcing the Mayans to withdraw towards the jungle. The internal divisions and the death of the main leaders culminated in fragmenting the Mayan power in three groups: those from the east, independent and rebellious; those from the south, independent and peaceable; and the rest, the majority, peaceable and submissive.



Great road along the water at Bacalar

The current site of Chetumal was established as a Mexican port town in 1898, originally under the name Payo Obispo, later the name was officially changed to Chetumal in 1936.

**Chetumal today**

Without question, Chetumal's economy has been influenced by its proximity to the border with Belize. A goods and services tax-free zone (Corozal Free Zone) established on the Belizean side attracts many visitors to Chetumal and also provides a ready market for Chetumal's retailers and traders (this is where we wanted to visit). However, a certain vacuum was created by the lower free zone prices forcing many Chetumal retailers to close their doors. Merchandise bought elsewhere was hard to sell at higher prices than the competition.



Potluck dinner at Yax-Ha

Chetumal itself was also once a free zone and a notable destination for people from other parts of Mexico seeking to purchase high-value and bulk goods, free of government duty charges (a policy that was deliberately implemented to attract

(Continued on page 30)

(Chetumal - Continued from page 29)

this business). The city retains a significant retail trade for the region, which supports many local businesses.

A large indoor mall, the Plaza de las Américas, houses a modern movie theater (which belongs to the Mexican chain Cinépolis), various department store chains, fast-food outlets, and a Chedraui supermarket. In addition to its retail economy, Chetumal is also the capital of the state of Quintana Roo. Since it is the location of all of the state's central offices, there is a large population of government employees whose consumption of local goods and services injects additional revenue into the Chetumal economy. As Capital of the state, Chetumal receives a good share of the foreign currencies brought in by the considerable floating population composed of European, Asian and other North American tourists.

The city has a music school which offers lessons of various instruments as well as music theory and history. The school is the main music school of the state and is the home of the Junior Symphonic Orchestra of the state Quintana Roo ("Orquesta sinfónica juvenil del estado de Quintana Roo") which is directed by Silvia Alcántara Chavero. The city houses two theaters. The "Teatro Minerva", which is an open air theater and belongs to the state's music school, and the "Teatro Constituyentes", which is a private-owned theater. There is a country club, which features tennis, football and basketball courts, a gym, a swimming pool, a steam-bath and a lounge for parties. In the early 1990s, the University of Quintana Roo was established at Chetumal, providing training and advanced tertiary degrees over a range of subjects.

### Chetumal main tourist sights

#### Museums

- Cultural Center of the Fine Arts (Centro Cultural de las Bellas Artes), located in the center of the city. The building is housed in what was the school Belisario Domínguez, which was the first school of Quintana Roo.
- Museum of the Mayan Culture (Museo de la Cultura Maya), considered the largest and most comprehensive museum in the state dedicated to the Mayan culture. It has an important collection of authentic and reproductions of classical works, and tells the development of Mayan culture, its origins, as well as various aspects of their daily life.
- Museum of the City. Tied to the Cultural Center of the Fine Arts, dedicated to the exhibition of photographs, tools and documents that tell the story of the founding of the city.



Valentine's Day dinner

#### Monuments

- Monument to the Flag (Monumento a la Bandera), the first monument built in Chetumal. It consists of a white obelisk that has a clock dial on each of its faces.
- Cradles of the Meztizaje (Monumento Cuna del Meztizaje), constructed in the entrance of Chetumal. It has the form of a Mayan pyramid on which are the statues of Gonzalo Guerrero, his wife Zazil Há and the children of both.
- Andrés Quintana Roo Memorial, dedicated to Andrés Quintana Roo, whom the state was named after.
- Monument to the Fishermen, one of the most recent, located in the Bay of Chetumal.



Yax-Ha offered purified water and laundry service on site

#### Parks

- Ecological Park (Parque Ecológico)
- Cheese Park
- Biouniverzoo Zoo

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**Sopa de Flor de Calabaza**

Squash Blossom Soup - a Puebla favourite

Mexican cuisine includes the use of the delicate flor de calabaza (also known as squash blossoms or pumpkin flowers). These flowers are used in a variety of ways, such as in quesadillas, empanadas, and soups.

In addition to flor de calabaza, epazote is another native plant which is an integral part of Mexican cuisine. You'll find its use in many dishes, the most common being black beans and soups. You'll need a sprig of epazote for this recipe.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 Poblano chile pepper
- 2 bunches flor de calabaza (squash blossoms), rinsed
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 white onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, diced
- 2 zucchinis, peeled and cubed (about 4 cups)
- 1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and diced
- 2 cups fresh or canned corn kernels
- 3 cups chicken broth (or substitute 1 and 1/2 tablespoons chicken bouillon powder dissolved in 3 cups hot water)
- 1 sprig fresh epazote
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- salt, if needed, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, if desired, to taste

**Directions:**

Place the poblano chile pepper over the flame on the stovetop. When the skin is completely black on one side of the chile, flip and continue roasting until the whole chile is blackened. (Alternatively, you can roast the poblano under the oven broiler.)

Place the roasted poblano in a Ziploc (plastic) bag, seal it, and allow the chile to cool.



Chop the squash flower blossoms. You should end up with about 2 cups.

Melt the butter in a heavy-bottomed pot set over medium-low heat.

Add the chopped flowers.

Sauté until softened, about 2 to 3 minutes. Season with a little salt if desired.

Transfer half of the sautéed flowers to a small bowl and set aside to garnish the soup at the end.

Add the chopped onion and cook until tender and translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the garlic, yellow bell pepper, carrot, and zucchini. If using fresh corn kernels, add it at this point, but if you're using canned corn, don't add it yet.

Cover and cook until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. While this is cooking, remove the poblano chile from the plastic bag.

Peeling off the blackened skin should be easy now. Remove the stem and seeds, then chop the poblano.




(Squash Blossom Soup - Continued from page 32)



Check the sautéed vegetables. They should be tender and simmering in their juices.

Add the chicken broth and poblano. If using canned corn kernels, add them now also. Bring to a boil.

Add the epazote, reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer 10 to 15 minutes.

Turn off the stove and allow the soup to cool before blending.

Remove the epazote sprig. Pour half of the soup into a blender.

Blend until the soup is completely smooth.

Pour into a medium bowl and repeat the blending steps with the remaining half of the soup. Pour the puréed soup back into the pot and set over medium-low heat. Add the heavy cream and simmer a few minutes.

Taste the soup and season with salt and pepper if desired. (I don't find that I need to season the soup, but tastes vary.)

You may add the sautéed flower blossoms to the soup at this point, or garnish the soup individually when serving.

¡Buen Provecho!

Recipe Posted by Lindsay

From [Mexico Food and More](#)

### Cinco de Mayo

Not to be confused with Mexican Independence Day, which occurs on September 16.

Significance Celebration of the Mexican victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862

Celebrations Parades, food, music, folkloric dance

Date May 5

Cinco de Mayo is a celebration held on May 5. The date is observed to commemorate the Mexican Army's unlikely victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, under the leadership of General Ignacio Zaragoza.

In the United States, Cinco de Mayo is sometimes mistaken to be Mexico's Independence Day—the most important national holiday in Mexico—which is celebrated on September 16, commemorating the Cry of Dolores that initiated the war of Mexican independence from Spain.

Typically this is only a holiday in the state of Puebla.

Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition

1		2			3	4		5
				6				
7				8				
	9					10		
11								12
13		14				15		
16					17			

Across

- 1 how, sorry? what?
- 3 ship
- 7 bread
- 8 line
- 9 back
- 13 you
- 15 sea
- 16 there, away from the speaker and the listener
- 17 this, alternative spelling of éste

Down

- 1 cup
- 2 hands
- 4 actually, even, indeed
- 5 (they) used to be (you/ustedes) used to be
- 6 mayor
- 10 (the) other, remaining, besides
- 11 cure
- 12 art, skill
- 14 such, such a, that kind of

Last month's crossword solution:

1	p	i	2	e	l		3	d	4	e	j	5	a
	a						6	o		s			v
7	s	o	l				8	t	i	e	n	e	
	ó		a					r					r
		9	e	s	p	a			10	a	s		
11	u							v		r		12	c
13	s	u	14	a	v	e			15	e	r	a	
	o		ú					z		n			s
16	s	i	n	o					17	d	a	ñ	o

lexisrex.com

## The Conquest of the Aztecs

(1521)

from the Path to Citizenship series

The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs in 1521, led by Hernán Cortés, was a landmark victory for the European settlers. Following the Spanish arrival in Mexico, a huge battle erupted between the army of Cortes and the Aztec people under the rule of Montezuma. The events that occurred were crucial to the development of the American lands and have been the subject of much historical debate in present years.

The Spaniards landed on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico in 1519, where they found the advanced society of the Aztecs. The Aztec Empire stretched along the Valley of Mexico, and Tenochtitlan was its capital. The Aztecs had substantial wealth from trading and heavy payments of tribute from conquered peoples. From 1200-1520 the Aztecs flourished and expanded their empire greatly. By the time Hernando Cortes landed in Mexico with his 600 soldiers, the Aztecs were in control of most of present-day Mexico. The expansion of the Aztecs, however, ended with the Spanish Conquest.



A major element of Aztec life was religion. A polytheistic people, they often practiced human sacrifice to please their gods. According to legend, the god Quetzalcoatl, characterized by light skin, red hair, and light eyes, was supposed to return to earth. This appearance is remarkably similar to European appearance, and may be why the Aztecs originally greeted the Spaniards with food, gold, and women.

The Spaniards, however, approached the Aztecs with an entirely different attitude. They had a strong sense of supremacy and intended to convert the natives to Christianity. But their ministering methods were radical. The Spaniards gathered the natives together and shouted the essentials of the Gospel, obli-

ous to the fact that the Aztecs did not understand their language. If the natives refused to fall to their knees and repent, the Spaniards assumed they were rejecting the word of God and killed or enslaved them.

Upon arrival in North America, Hernando Cortes founded the colony of New Spain in Mexico. On November 8, 1519, he challenged the native forces and entered Tenochtitlan, taking the Aztec leader, Montezuma, hostage. This event led to an Aztec uprising that culminated in La Noche Triste. The Aztecs drove the Spaniards out of Tenochtitlan in July of 1520. Men from both sides, as well as many Aztec treasures, were lost as a bridge collapsed during the desperate flight of the Spaniards. Nevertheless, Cortes survived, and led the final attacks on Tenochtitlan. Throughout the warfare, the Spaniards were aided by the gruesome advantage of disease, for the Europeans brought ailments that the Aztecs had no immunity to. It is estimated that three-quarters of the native population died of violence or diseases like small pox and measles in just the first century of the conquest. Finally, the Aztec capital fell on August 13, 1521. After capturing Tenochtitlan, the Spaniards destroyed the city, and built Mexico City on top of it. Just as Tenochtitlan was destroyed, most of the Aztec civilization was destroyed with the European Spain Conquest.



Aside from this negative aspect of the European discovery of the New World, the Spaniards had some positive effects on the native population. They introduced domestic animals like horses, sheep, cattle, and pigs to the American Continent. Furthermore, they brought sugar, and different kinds of grains and fruits with them. The discovery of the New World also had a significant impact on the European diet, as the Spaniards brought important products like potatoes, tomatoes, beans and maize back to Europe.

Despite these benefits, the Spanish defeat of the Aztecs has been criticized extensively for many years. It is the center of a huge historical debate focusing on the role of the conquerors. The Spaniards were harsh in their methods and motives, and many people argue that it was not their place at all to encounter new lands and demand control, much less force submission so cruelly. Moreover, virtually all of Aztec culture was carelessly destroyed in the conquest. Nevertheless, the Spaniards did conquer the Aztecs, and whether Western civilization is richer or poorer, this victory has had lasting effects for both native and European Spain people.

Source: Then Again.info

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

## The Saga of One-Eye and the Two Blonds

by Kirby Vickery



We are on our way back to Manzanillo. We pulled into Hermosillo this afternoon for an early break to the travels.

Ewa's green Explorer was the vehicle of choice for this journey but it lies dead next to the RV in Coupeville, WA. It seems as I was putting in the last of \$3,000 in repairs a transmission line let go inside the radiator and everybody wanted a thousand to eighteen hundred and more days than we had left up there to fix it.

We're here in the Tomato Can even though it doesn't have an operational cooling fan. The only time it gave us any problem was in San Diego when we got caught in rush hour traffic. We just pulled over and waited for about 30 minutes and drove on into El Cajon for the night. Kinda happy with it because through Phoenix and down this way we've had 100-degree weather and it kept going just fine.

So far everyone is fine. We visited with my daughter, April and her new husband, Eric. Then drove to Albuquerque to visit my mom and brother Gregg with his wife Monica. I wrote a quick essay on some of my experience with the Canadian Social Medicine for Monica at Gregg's request and everyone had a good time.

I had been dreading going through the border with the Tomato Can. I had coordinated the initial articles in the Manzanillo Sun magazine some time back when the government changed some rules about vehicle importation et al.

Because of home front problems, my part in that project got

changed to someone else and I don't even recall reading how anything came out other than some expats were running all over the border states talking to this person and that and then getting this permission and that, etc. Actually, that was for people importing their autos and getting Mexican plates but I didn't know that.

So, here I come with a little Ford Fiesta registered in Washington. Ewa kept telling me that we wouldn't have any problems. But, to her, while on the road, there aren't any anyway. So I worried.

I had crossed into Mexico in Nogales before when you flashed your passport or a driver's license and they waived you through. Today was another story, however. We started by wandering through a maze of sharp-turning roads with dead ends here and there.

At one point, we were called to a stop by a sign that told us not to proceed unless given permission by a US Border Patrol agent. My problem with that was that there wasn't a single person around to grant or deny us the privilege of moving from that point.

I had to take a chance and break the law thereby facing death by firing squad by proceeding without official sanction from my government. I half expected some dude in uniform to jump out in front of the car and having my windshield peppered with little holes.

(Continued on page 37)

(Saga - Continued from page 36)

It seemed strange to me that the US Border Patrol would even have anything on this side of the road because crossing into Canada from Washington you see the American side of things way off to the left and don't go near any of them unless you're coming the other way.

After circumnavigating this mini-maze, we came to a two-lane toll booth affair with no one in the booths. It was then that I started to look to the Mexican side of things and all I could find were more lane endings and little arrow signs pointing either left or right.

After a while, we came to an open affair and a thin young man dressed in a black tee shirt and black jeans waved me over into an inspection area. He didn't want to see any paperwork to include our passports. All he wanted was to peek into the extreme left corner of the trunk. He turned over a small piece of luggage and waved us on.

After that we traveled for about 15 minutes and I was getting worried that someone would spot us in Manzanillo and have us jailed for immigration irregularities. Ewa was too busy with her head buried in the GPS to give any help and Daisy was sleeping in the back.

We finally drove into a fork in the road with the signs telling me I should drive into the parking lot. Ewa decided that, as it was my car, I should do the walking, which I did. Actually, it was nice to get out and walk anywhere for a while.

I walked into the first building and found myself behind a man mopping the floor who directed me to a young lady in a strange (to me anyway) uniform. As we were the only ones in there, I attempted to make everything light and I smiled to her and thanked her very much. Well, she wasn't having any of that and kept refusing to smile.

Anyway, she sent me back outside through another door to get "Copias." Again, outside at the copy kiosk, he asked me some additional questions which I couldn't answer, but for four pesos he made copies of everything he said I would need and then directed me to a third place with glass, see-through windows



that had holes cut in them.

Again, I was the only one there and ended up with another young lady who had a sense of humor as long as I didn't stretch her time out in any way. She charged my credit card some figure for the car and then charged some more for me. When she finished, I was broke but had a decal for my window and two receipts I was told not to lose.

She told me to go back to the first lady. Miss humorless checked over everything and went over all of it with a staple gun and told me to leave.

I went back to the car, dropped off the paperwork and signaled Ewa, who was out with Daisy, that I needed to go potty. I had to take some more change as these people had ripped out the toilet paper dispensers in the stalls, built a little table outside the confines and had little pieces of flattened out rolled up toilet paper available by dropping four pesos in a jar.

My god, I thought, what would happen if you pay for one bundle and then really need two or more while you're sitting there. It amazes me how people sometimes don't think. And, I guess, no one cares about the wadders. You know those that don't roll the paper around their hand and then press it flat for that perfect fit but just wad it into a small ball and go for it.

I found the paper dispensers for the hand drying completely gutted too but it was so hot and dry it didn't make any difference. Oh well. Next stop Hermosillo and points beyond!

*you can reach Kirby Vickery at [kirby@manzanillosun.com](mailto:kirby@manzanillosun.com)*



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