



Bocce Tournament 2019 in Full Swing  
Photo by John Chalmers



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- History and Mythology
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- Around Manzanillo
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- Entertainment
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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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## More Coffee in Mexico!

by Terry Sovil

The coffee article last issue talked about coffee in Colima and ways to brew it. I was intrigued about how Colima compared to Mexico and the world.

### Coffee Types

There are more than 80 coffee types! Out of the 80, two dominate our tastes and purchases: Arabica and Robusta.

### Arabica

This is the older bean considered finer than the Robusta. Less bitter, less caffeine and more aroma, one of the oldest seed types in agriculture. It matures in 9-11 months, has more than 60% of the market and is mainly grown in Brazil, Columbia and Central America. Mexico is one of the largest producers of organic coffee and 95% of our harvest is Arabica-type beans.

Mexico's location between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans puts us in a perfect position for the growing of Arabica beans. Mexican plants tend to flower 3-4 times each year due to diverse climates. November to March sees a lot of coffee harvesting. Many of our beans, about 40%, are grown in medium- to high-altitude forests. They say "High Grown = High Quality".

### Robusta

Robusta is less aromatic, twice the amount of caffeine as Arabica, more resistant to heat, disease and parasites. It is round-shaped and the cut is straight. It matures within six to eight months. Market share is about 40% of the market. Primary growing areas are Central and West Africa, South East Asia and Brazil.

### Coffee in 2018

The International Coffee Organization predicted a growing year in 2018 but the estimated 158.56 million bags was 0.3% lower than 2017.

The findings:

- South America was 8.2% lower with 70.57 million bags
- African production rose by 5.3% to 17.63 million bags
- Asia and Oceania rose 7.9% to 48.44 million bags
- Mexico and Central America rose by 7% to 21.92 million bags
- Arabica output was expected to decline about 6.5% to 97.16 million bags
- Robusta expects 11.5% growth to 61.40 million bags



Coffee harvesting machine

### Mexico Coffee History

A majority of our coffee, particularly organic, is from small farmers, mostly in the states of Chiapas and Oaxaca. Coffee is one of the most profitable exports in Mexico and up to a half million small farmers and their families depend on exports for their survival. The Mexican Coffee Institute (INMECAFE), is a government agency developed to help and administrate coffee growth among the small growers. They supplied technical support, credit and transportation to market. Their efforts produced big results in the 3 main states of Chiapas, Veracruz and Oaxaca that produce 75% of the coffee in Mexico.

As Mexican coffee consumption increases, and becomes more common, there are some changes in overall coffee culture. For many, coffee is an early morning kickoff, but that isn't always true here. For many, it can be a more important item at lunch or dinner. Customers eat and relax a bit and talk. This is why many coffee shops don't open early but rather late morning. This creates a different coffee shop culture but it is still an activity that binds people together. Despite the boom, there is still demand from the commodity coffee buyers for instant coffee.

Typical fine Mexican coffee is comparable to a light white wine. Delicate body, dry, with an acidic rush. If you like this, you will like typical Mexican coffee. If you like more, high-growing regions like Chiapas rival the coffees from other areas like Guatemala, in power and complexity. Since we have certified, organically grown coffees, 75% comes from Latin America, there are many coffees appearing on North American menus. Some of the most admired Mexican coffees do not end up in the United States or Canada but in Europe.

...More Coffee in Mexico!



Picking coffee cherries

**Harvesting**

Coffee is a plant. It grows as a bush or as a tree (4 to 10 meters / 13 to 33 feet). A tree can carry blossoms and fruit, called coffee cherries, of different ripeness at the same time. The cherry-like fruit contains two seeds facing each other on their flat side. The seeds are in a thin skin and a slimy type coating. Since each bush or tree can have beans at a different stage of growth it makes the picking difficult. The lay of the land is often a high altitude with difficult, steep terrain. Most of the harvesting is by hand.

Unroasted



Roasted

**Handpicking**

Specialty coffees have been hand-picked by a team (estate) or the individual farmers (small cooperatives). It is imperative that the cherries have reached their maturity. This means you bypass some cherries and leave them on the tree. It's not unusual to have up to 10 passes to assure they are picked at the right time. Most pickers are paid by the weight so it is difficult to have consistency unless they pay extra for quality ripe cherries.

**Strip Picking**

A big percent of the harvest is with strip picking. Each picker strips the entire branch rather than selecting fully mature fruit. It is efficient but the results of a mix of mature and unripe cherries can be a huge detriment to coffee quality. A farmer will receive a greater price for the coffee if they deliver only good, ripe cherries.



**Machine Picking**

Machine picking is very efficient but is only used by Brazil. Brazil has flat lands where the machinery can be operated effectively among perfectly planted rows. The equipment is costly but it can be operated by one man, which lowers costs due to reduced overhead. The machine strips the branch. This is not good for the harvest of good cherries. You end up with a resulting mix of unripe and ripe cherries. It is also hard on the trees. This is why Brazilian coffee can be cheaper in price due to lower production costs. Some farmers have found newer, gentler equipment but there is still no close observation by a human picker.



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## Doctor on the Run!

Story by Suzanne A. Marshall

If you live in Manzanillo or 'winter' here, chances are you've needed some medical intervention or advice at some point. Where we all hail from, be it Canada, USA, Scotland or some other part of the world, chances are you've never had the privilege of calling a doctor and having him come to your home.

Even as a small child, I can barely remember this occurring, though it may have at one time. No, nowadays we're far more familiar with the 'hurry up and wait' situation. Yes, indeed.

First you make an appointment to see the doctor, then you wait whatever time that may be. Once you're there, it's time for blood work and perhaps X-ray imaging; then you make another appointment to go to the lab for tests. Then you wait. In order to find out results, you must make another appointment with the doctor because the lab doesn't share that with you. Then you wait.

Once at the doctor's office, you finally find out the diagnosis and, if you're lucky, some sort of treatment is initiated (unless of course they need more tests) and then you repeat the process and of course you wait again. An exaggeration? Perhaps for some. But it has been a reality for many of us.

There are those that have concerns about the healthcare in Mexico. Personally, I do not, having become more familiar with the life here over these past dozen years. But, indeed, it is currently under review by the newly elected President López Obrador and his new government.

As I understand it, they are reviewing the public system that is comprised of two separate entities 'Seguro Popular' and 'IMSS' which deliver services via local hospitals and public clinics. And, of course, there are all of the private practices and doctors' offices that provide various healthcare specialties.

The government of Mexico is talking about merging the two public systems and is working towards 'universal healthcare services'. It makes sense to me. This is the term we use in Canada for our healthcare system and indeed no one is turned away. The quality of services is very good, though there is a tremendous strain on the country now. This is largely due to the 'baby boom' population bulge, as this huge demographic reaches retirement and old age. But the philosophy of 'universal health' is usually one that most individuals would agree is ideal.

In Manzanillo, indeed in Mexico, I believe that one important factor that allows for better and faster access is the much younger population and the lack of 'baby boomers' who are the result of a statistical birth rate jump after World War II. If you show up at a private hospital, for example, you will be seen, examined, and often leave with an X-ray photo under your arm or an ultrasound report. You will have received advice for treatment and prescriptions, if needed. Sometimes there's a doctor with you who has been guiding you through the process. And, I might add here, that the costs are unbelievably reasonable.

Maybe you've just got the flu or a mild injury that needs review. Again, this can be done in your home, if you're one of the lucky ones. The only problem might be the great demand for this particular doctor. His name is Dr. Thomas Martinez

Dr. Tom was born in San Jose, California. Educated in the United States, Tom was in the US air force for four and a half years in the dental field. After leaving the air force he proceeded to study molecular, cellular and developmental biology at the University of California, Santa Cruz as an undergrad. He then chose to come to medical school in Mexico to learn Spanish and intended to return to California fluent in the Spanish language, which is so prevalent in California's population base.

**...Doctor on the Run!**

Dr. Tom received his Medico Cirujano (Medical) degree from the University of Guadalajara. His intention was to return to practice in Northern California. But Mexico had grown on him during his university years and he could envision a simpler lifestyle and the ability to independently practice medicine and skip the bureaucratic systems elsewhere. Here, his skills can be effectively concentrated on patient care.

Tom is a family man, with a supportive wife and six-year-old daughter. One can imagine that all of his spare time is spent with his family and that they understand the good work he does for this community. I personally know many people who are grateful for this 'at-your-home medical service'. Mary says: "On my first meeting with Dr. Tom, I knew he was going to be an important person in my life; someone that would enable me to manage my many health issues."

Over the past four years, Dr. Tom has become my "go-to person" for my health issues and I trust him completely to deal empathetically and appropriately with each situation. He also makes home visits day and night. That's what I need, the personal touch, someone who knows ME, knows ALL my issues, someone who cares."

Diane says "concerned, caring, thorough, respectful, composed, assuring, empathic, resourceful, persistent, energetic, capable, trustworthy, confident, positive---are just a few of the distinctive traits of Dr. Tom! It was Nov 2018 and my pain and diarrhea had become uncontrollable; so I called Dr. Tom. After conferring with me regarding the problem, he communicated to me that he "thought" he could resolve my problem.

His sharp perception of my problem and his rational attitude to solve my problem were remarkable. He ordered hospital scans and took me to a specialist. He was determined to get me "well". It was a difficult challenge; but I kept my faith in Dr. Tom! For three-plus months, he came to my condo to treat me---he applied his detailed knowledge with his unlimited source of energy.



He diligently proceeded with a positive attitude to resolve my problem. Throughout these three-plus months, he cultivated in me an awareness of how important it is to drink "water" in order to enjoy a richer, fuller life! I am not thoroughly cured; but I am 60% better than I was in November. Therefore, I will continue my sessions with Dr. Tom until leaving the sunny shores of Manzanillo. I am ever so grateful for Dr. Tom who had the determination and fortitude to find the cause of my problems and graciously lead me down the road to recovery."

These are powerful testimonials to the personal attention and knowledge that patients are receiving from Dr. Tom. I, too, have benefitted from his services and wonder if it will be necessary to 'clone' this skilled individual who makes our lives so much better.

One thing for sure is that there will never be a lack of demand and a large population of expats living in Manzanillo are very grateful that he is here to give us his support.

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Story and photos by  
John Chalmers



## Bocce on the Beach February 21, 2019

On February 21, 2019, the seaside at the Oasis Beach Club was again the venue for a bocce tournament on the sand. The third annual competition began at 9 am, with 48 teams of two players competing for prizes in first, second, third and fourth place. As well, team members competed for a prize in the Goofy Hat Contest that inspired some unique headgear for some of the competitors.

The annual event is in support of Friends of Mexican Animal Welfare (FOMAW), which works to provide spay and neuter services to dogs and cats in the area. The fundraising event was supported by a \$600-peso entry fee per team, a silent auction of dozens of donated items, a 50/50 cash raffle, a raffle for a well-stocked booze basket, and financial contributions from supporters.

sion by offering clothing, jewelry, sunglasses, other merchandise for sale and horseback rides.



The wide beach at La Boquita in front of the Oasis Beach Club provided a perfect site for the tournament, held on eight courts.



Played on eight courts of 60 feet by 12 feet, but 10 feet shorter for women players, scheduled competition ran until mid afternoon. All day long, the serving staff of the Oasis Beach Club restaurant was kept on the run, serving food and drinks to on-lookers and competitors alike. Beach vendors provided diver-

Overall, whether folks were competing in the bocce games or just there to watch the sport and enjoy a day in the sun or under the *sombrillas* on the beach, the event is a totally festive affair. Announcer Randy Dean provided commentary and music for what was again a successful event in support of a worthy cause.

The festive day was highly successful, raising over \$24,000 USD to help street animals in Manzanillo through FOMAW's Animal Angels program. The program provides approximately 50 free spay/neuter surgeries per month for street animals and for low income pet owners who cannot afford the \$450-peso cost of surgery.

...Bocce on the Beach 2019

As well, FOMAW pays for over 300 annual treatments for Transmissible Venereal Tumors (TVT) by Alianza Animal veterinarians. TVT is a potentially lethal, but curable, form of sexually transmitted cancer in dogs. In addition, Animal Angels provides transportation to veterinary clinics and financial support for care of animals in need of medical and/or surgical care and treatment.



"There is no question there are fewer, free-roaming animals in Manzanillo thanks to the work done by FOMAW and other spay/neuter programs in Manzanillo," says FOMAW president Stan Burnett. "One point often forgotten about animal welfare work is that it also has a direct impact on public health. With animals in better shape, and fewer of them, there is less animal waste on the street, less spreading of garbage by scavenging animals. Healthier animals result in fewer parasites and fewer



Eight bocce courts 60-feet long and 12-feet wide were in play to keep the tournament going right on time with scheduled starts for the matches.

diseases, such as mange, that can be transmitted to humans." Stan points out that, "It takes involvement of the entire community to make a difference and we couldn't do what we do without the wonderful support of our sponsors, donors, volunteers, event participants and a fine staff!"

First prize of a five-course dinner for six with drinks from the Oasis Beach Club went to Rich Taylor and Salvador "Chava" Martinez Ochoa, whose skill at playing washers on the beach no doubt paid off in bocce. Their team name, R Team 1, proved

to be prophetic! Second place was taken by Team Canada, last year's winners Bruce and Robert Stevens, receiving a \$1000-peso gift certificate for the Pacifica del Mar restaurant.



Announcer Randy Dean provided music, announcements and commentary to keep competitors informed, and got into the spirit of the hat competition.

Team Iguanabees, Lorill and Dave Hill placed third and were rewarded with a dinner for four from Monkey's Chicken. Fourth place prize of dinner for two from Pizzeria Ritos was won by Rob and Mary Reinsmoen, competing as Team Ole and Lena.

The crazy hat competition was declared a tie between Tullis Thomas and Steve Conrad. Mary Lu Booth was the lucky winner of \$11,965 pesos (\$630 USD) for her share of the 50/50 raffle and generously donated all of it back to FOMAW.

Organizers could no doubt count on fine weather for the bocce tournament, but what made it a success was the 48 teams of competitors who stepped up to fill all slots in the schedule; the donors and supporters who contributed cash, merchandise for auction and raffle, prizes for the winners; and the team who organized the unique event. Kudos go to all for their enthusiastic approach to staging a successful fundraising event for the Manzanillo community.

The [Manzanillo Sun](http://ManzanilloSun.com) is pleased to support the efforts of the entire bocce tournament team and the good work of Friends of Mexican Animal Welfare.

To learn more about FOMAW, visit its web site at [www.fomaw.org](http://www.fomaw.org).

... more pics follow

...Bocce on the Beach 2019



Darcy Myer, left, launches a ball as teammate Bill Dea looks on. Darcy and another partner were winners of the first tournament in 2017.



This year's tournament included a hat contest, but some of the competitors' t-shirts were definitely worth a look!



Tournament organizer Fred Taylor drew up the schedule of teams and start times and briefed all competitors before starting their matches.



Rich Taylor shows the winning form that eventually helped his team win first-place prize of a 5-course dinner with drinks for six people from the Oasis Beach Club.



The element of a hat contest in the bocce tournament added another dimension and originality to the appearance of competitors.

...Bocce on the Beach 2019



Sharon Harmer, a repeat competitor, displays fine form and intensity as she launches her ball while partner Brian Nelson in the Viking helmet looks on.



Women are as welcome as men and teamed up together or with male partners. The fair sex had a 10-foot advantage for throwing the balls, but there was no evidence they needed it!



Dennis Fair, launching his ball, was back again with teammate, Dick O'Leary, enjoying more success this year than last.



Barb Bishop, left, and Marge Tyler staffed the table for raffle tickets of the Top Shelf Booze Basket with over \$200 worth of spirits.



Bocce is the perfect game for wearing specially made hats with iguanas on them, a big hat for the hat contest, or something to shade your eyes while enjoying a *cerveza* between throws! Tullis Thomas, center, was a co-winner of the Goofy Hat Contest.

...Bocce on the Beach 2019



Well supported by donations, the silent auction array included a wide variety of items to tempt the bocce spectators and participants.



Brian Matheson tosses a blue bocce ball at the white golf ball size target called a *pallino*, while his teammate, wife Mona, watches her husband's effort.



Mona Matheson who, with husband Brian, comprised one of the Canadian teams, demonstrates technique while Chava Martinez Ochoa looks on.



Sun, sand, sea, style and silly hats were all part of the show in the third annual Bocce Ball Benefit and Silent Auction tournament.



In a 60-foot long court marked out with yellow tape, a line of red tape gave women players a 10-foot concession for throwing the bocce balls.



In a bocce game, a small white ball called a *pallino* is first thrown to become a target. Balls are then thrown to it, with points given for those coming closest.

...Bocce on the Beach 2019



As the tournament wore on with teams being eliminated, competition became more intense as all competitors gave their best efforts.



Action was continuous from the start of the first game at 9:00 am, with eight courts marked out in the sand and all games starting on time.



Spectators at the tournament had the option of watching the games from the shade while enjoying lunch and refreshments served by the busy staff of the Oasis Beach Club.



A bocce ball kicks up the sand as it lands in the final game between R Team 1 and Team Canada, watched by a growing sideline crowd in the big finale.



Bill Dea exhibits follow-through form as his bocce ball sails towards the target in a late game of the tournament as competition heats up.



Bocce can be a game of millimeters, with careful measurement frequently needed to determine who gets the points. Ultimate winners, Rich Taylor, in hat, and teammate Chava Martinez Ochoa are observed by "Ole" of the Lena and Ole team.

...Bocce on the Beach 2019



Tension mounts in the final as neutral judges are called upon to confirm precise measurement and ensure fairness before points are awarded, while competitors hold their breath!



Marge Tyler, left, one of the key organizers of the tournament who was involved in obtaining sponsorships, introduces 50/50 raffle winner, Mary Lu Booth, who herself became a sponsor when she generously donated her \$630 USD win to FOMAW.



Left: The final game between 2018 tournament winners, Team Canuck, brothers Bruce and Robert Stevens, and R Team 1 members, Rich Taylor and Chava Martinez Ochoa, was a fine match played on Court 1 with appreciative spectators enjoying the competition.



With their team appropriately named R Team 1, Chava Martinez Ochoa, left, and Rich Taylor went undefeated all day to take first prize in the first bocce tournament they have ever entered.



Above: Laurie Taylor, left, organizer of the excellent silent auction, looks on while FOMAW president, Stan Burnett, introduces the Alianza Animal clinic team, left to right: Dr. Diana Morales, Dr. Adriana Castro, Karen Lopez, Silvia Zuñiga, Alan Ramériz and Vero Vejar Velasco.

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## A Mayan Folk Tale

as told by Kirby Vickery

Have you ever been to ruins of Uxmal? Have you noticed the many turtle motifs and wondered what kind of a relationship the Mayans had with this particular animal?



Uxmal

The turtle figures prominently in the Mayan Creation Myth, as transcribed from the Popol Vuh. The god of corn, Wak Chan-Ahaw (Translated literally meaning "Risen Master of the Sky"), was also known as Hun Huhnpu the father of the famous twins. Even though he was killed in the story, his sons were able to resurrect him back to life by having him crawl out of the mouth of a turtle. Or, as they put it: "Emerging out of a turtle shell."



Wak Chan-Ahaw or Hun Huhnpu emerging from a turtle shell

The Atlas-like Maya deity (Pauhtun), who supported the world on his shoulders, is sometimes depicted wearing a turtle shell on his head. Turtles' shells are also associated with altars in some contexts and the Maize God is sometimes shown emerging from a turtle shell.

The Mayan turtle was associated with water and with the earth. Not only are turtles found in aquatic habitats but their shells seem to have been associated with thunder because of their use as components of musical instruments such as drums. An image in the Codex Borgia depicts a turtle playing a drum.



This turtle is located at the Puuc Maya site of Uxmal in the Yucatán. It's one of the many turtles decorating the building known, not surprisingly, as the House of the Turtles. The turtles decorate the cornice at the top of the building at more or less regular intervals. They are realistically rendered, though their shells are decorated with decorative reliefs. The function of the House of the Turtles is unclear but it is obvious that it is an integral structure in the Uxmal complex—its central doorways on the north and south are aligned with the archway and central doorway of the major building called the Nunnery.

The Mayan dwarf



### THE LEGEND OF UXMAL:

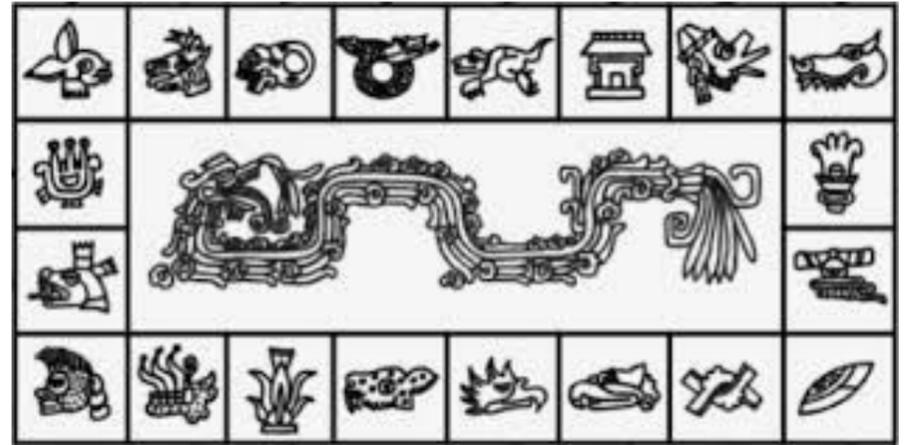
In the old and very ancient city of Uxmal there lived a very ancient lady. As old as she was, she still was very adept at being the city's oracle. However, she was as sad as she was old because she was unable to conceive any children. After planning and asking the gods for a way to remedy this situation, she came to a decision and asked ChicChan [a serpent - celestial

...A Mayan Folk Tale

life force, bringer of rain, sensual, passionate, primal knowledge of duality, heart expansion] to bring her the shell of a very large turtle. A tiny green dwarf with fiery red hair was born a few months later.

As a thoughtful young man, the dwarf decided to take a large gourd with which he intended to make a kind of rattle. He had heard of a prophesy from his mother that foretold that the new king would come from one who played a similar instrument.

Uxmal's king had heard of this person and became angry at the thought of someone wanting to take over his kingdom. So he sent for the boy to kill him outright but, as king, he realized that he was in the public's eye and he just couldn't have the kid put down. Because he couldn't let him go either, he challenged him to a test of kingship.



ChicChan the serpent

He had developed three tests for the dwarf. For the first test, he asked the dwarf to give him the total number of trees in his palace. The dwarf was quick to reply with the correct answer because he had previously counted them. For the second test, the king told the dwarf to bring a male turkey to lay eggs. Now the dwarf didn't like turkeys to begin with and knew that he wouldn't be able to fine a tom to lay eggs.

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...A Mayan Folk Tale



A Mayan spearhead

The next day, the dwarf brought a man with a stomach condition who appeared to be pregnant. His thought was to show that neither were able to lay eggs and just wishing so wouldn't do any good.

The decision to allow this was pushed off to some judges for arbitration and they gave him points for thought. For the third test, the king ordered the dwarf to place a hickory branch on his head and allow the king to break the branch by swinging a

spearhead. The dwarf, fearing deceit, picked the largest branch he could find and let the king have a go at it. Before the king could swing, the dwarf forced the king to accept the same test so that the king could save face as their little contest had started to draw a crowd. The piece of wood the dwarf placed on his head was the largest he could find, and still lift, because he knew that the king was going to swing the spearhead just as hard as he could. The king was finally able to break that branch but it was so large that there wasn't any way he was going to hurt that dwarf.

This is where the king found himself in trouble. With the dwarf's branch cut in half, it was unusable and there weren't any others around anywhere close to the size he needed to be safe. The king died because of his pride and the dwarf was proclaimed king before the sun went down on that day.

As king, the dwarf built the famous temple "The Governor's House" and a house for his mother which he called "The House of the Elderly Mother." Both buildings can be seen in the Mayan ruins of Uxmal.



Casa de las Tortugas, Uxmal

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## The Truth About Bocce Balls

story and photos by John Chalmers

The international popularity of the game of bocce is evident here in México, as seen in Manzanillo's third annual Bocce Ball Tournament. Held on February 21, 2019, on the sand in front of the Oasis Beach Club, the competition this year had 48 teams of two players who were competing for prizes from first to fourth place.

The game is played by tossing colored balls about the size of a baseball towards a small white target ball which is about the size of a golf ball. What many folks may not know is that the bocce balls are not manufactured, but in fact are grown on vines in México. Scientifically, the Latin name for the bocce ball is *Sphaera naturalis organici bocce*, from which the game gets its name. After harvesting, the perfectly formed balls are then painted by hand in preparation for use in the game.



As the bocce grows, it becomes a beautiful and perfectly formed shape for harvesting and ultimate processing for use in the game of bocce.



As the bocces grow, they can first be seen on the vines as a tiny bocce taking shape after the pollinated blossom is gone.

The Mexican state of Colima is México's largest producer of organic bocce balls, and the state's biggest single grower of the balls is Ricardo Boccellini. A Mexican-Italian descendant of the family that developed the game in Italy, Ricardo is well known for the high-quality balls he produces and ships throughout México and to the United States and Canada.

"We don't ship overseas to Europe," he says, "because it is not our intention to compete with a market there that is already well served by bocce ball plantations."

The small inland town of El Cucurbita in Colima state is the heart of the bocce growing industry where Ricardo Boccellini has his *plantación* of 20 hectares of bocce vines. The bocces are harvested at the end of March each year. Any balls that do not meet exacting standards are not discarded, but instead are sliced up and boiled to make the town's famous *estofado de bocce*, or bocce stew. Included in the recipe are rice, beans, jalapeño peppers and small pieces of chicken. Some chefs will prepare the stew with beef, lamb, or goat meat, but *pollo* is the traditional favorite.

...The Truth About Bocce Balls



When the bocces are mature and ready, each one is carefully harvested by hand by cutting it from the vine on which it grows.



When fully dried and hardened, the bocces form a flawless orb, ready for painting. Only the *Sphaera naturalis organici bocce* species, recognized by 10 white stripes and 10 green stripes, is used to make bocce balls.



A display of bocce balls harvested at perfection. Although slightly oval in shape, as they dry and harden after harvesting, they contract slightly to form a perfectly round shape prior to being painted as colored bocce balls.



The beautiful blossoms of the bocce vines are the first sign of a good bocce harvest.



When hardened to a perfectly round shape, after painting the bocces are ready for marketing and sale, to be put into service in bocce games like the Manzanillo bocce tournament on the beach.

Over-ripe bocces are not used to make bocce balls, or used in *estofado de bocce*, but are fermented to prepare a potent liqueur called Fuego Agua de Bocce, produced in limited quantities and only in the town of El Cucurbita.

Each year, when the bocce ball harvest is completed, the town celebrates with music, dancing and a public Mexican feast for all, held in the town's *plaza pública* with *estofado de bocce* as the featured dish. The harvest festival is always held on April 1, a date known as April Fool's Day.

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## Manzanillo History

by Kirby Vickery

### Pre-Columbian Times (overview):

I have found that history has almost forgotten Manzanillo's first inhabitants, even though we have some Nahuatl ruins in the State of Colima which are superb. Archeology for the history between 2000 BCE and 500 BCE for this area reads like a dart board. I even found an account that gives the state of Jalisco credit for the introduction and use of lacquer to the ancient Chinese and Japanese development for their ships and fine art from a Mexican tree. I also believe there are a couple of old Chinese ship anchors in the bay somewhere. (But, don't quote me on that.)

Manzanillo appears to sit on the fringe of several cultural societies' population centers as they waxed and waned through pre-Columbian times.

### The Otomi:

The Otomi were one of the earliest peoples to filter down doing their hunting and gathering. They wandered down through central Mexico and settled in an area which is currently Mexico City. A few did settle just to the north of Manzanillo. This happened anywhere from 2000 BCE to 1000 BCE. The reason for this boosts belief in the reality that there wasn't just one migration across Beringia, known as the Alaskan Land Bridge. The first of four major migrations headed across northern Alaska and Canada to come down into the East coast of the USA.



Otomi design work

Later, as the snows and ice filled in, they took more westerly routes, populating the Appalachians, then the Plains and on into the Rockies and Sierra Madres and, finally, the west coast. These routes were extended into Mexico, then through Central America and into South America. Subsequently, the major population and language groups were settled along the east coast and the central mountains long before these people knew about a west coast. There are some theories out there that the Pacific Rim and Polynesian civilizations were populated East to

West from South America. There have been no fewer than ten attempted sailings starting with the Kon Tiki. Some made it and some didn't.

The Otomi culture was almost completely absorbed by the Aztecs. But, as with the majority of the sixty some odd cultures which have made their home in pre-Columbian Mexico, they still have pockets of folks scattered about still speaking their own language. They are well known today for their intricate fabric designs on pillows and tapestries.

The people that initially settled in Manzanillo were hunter-gatherers and really hit the pay dirt when they settled in the mussel and fish heaven in the two bays. This is known because of the piles of broken and hollowed out shells which littered the coast line. The name in which Manzanillo grew to be known as came from the Nahuatl speaking peoples of the area who came later.

### The Chichimeca or the Nahuatl Speaking People:

Chichimeca is the 'local' name of another semi-wandering folk. They were a widely ranged semi-nomadic peoples who came down from the Southwestern United States through the Northwest of Mexico following the coast line. 'Chichimeca' loosely means 'Barbarian' and is currently being changed to "Uza" by these people themselves through being called "Jonaz."

The original name was adopted with a pejorative tone by the Spaniards when referring especially to the semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer peoples of northern Mexico. Although they were of many different groups, collectively they fought and resisted Spanish rule in what is known as the "Chichimeca Wars"(1550-1590). Their language stem runs all the way back up to the Yaquis Tribe found along the Arizona/Mexico border around Yuma.

It's sad to note that many of the peoples called Chichimeca are virtually unknown today; few descriptions mention them and they seem to have been absorbed into mestizo culture or into other indigenous ethnic groups. For example, virtually nothing is known about the peoples referred to as Guachichiles, Caxcanes, Zacatecos, Tecuexes, or Guamares. Others like the Opata or Eudeve are well described but extinct as a people.

...Manzanillo History

[The Nahuatl language/Nahuatl name Chīchīmēcah (plural, pronounced Template: IPA-nah; singular Chīchīmēcatl) means "inhabitants of Chichiman"; the place-name Chichiman itself means "Area of Milk". It is sometimes said to be related to chichi "dog", but the i's in chichi are short while those in Chīchīmēcah are long, a phoneme/phonemic distinction in Nahuatl. The word could either have a negative "barbarous" sense, or a positive "noble savage" sense. The Spanish added 'primitive' and 'uneducated' to those terms regarded as translations to the word 'Chichimeca'.]

In 1526, Hernán Cortés writes that he found the Chichimec tribes as not as civilized as the Aztecs but that they could be made slaves easily enough. Again these people settled to the north and west of Manzanillo.

**From Classic to Spanish times:**

The last of the early peoples to be in the Manzanillo area are the Tarasca or Tarascan people, even though it appears they didn't come all the way down into Manzanillo to settle either. However, there is enough evidence in residual artifacts to show their presence. They were of a different language group called the 'Purépecha.' One of their population centers was in Jalisco which is close enough to lend some culture contamination into the Manzanillo area.



Pre-Columbian coyote statuette attributed to the Tarascan culture, likely a representation of the coyote god Uitzimángari

In the late classic, at least two non-Purépecha ethnic groups lived around Lake Pátzcuaro: Nahuatl speakers in Jarácuaro (smaller population), and some Chichimecan cultures on the northern banks.

The leader, Tariácuri, of the Purépecha, decided to consolidate the population around Lake Pátzcuaro into one state. In 1300 CE, he won the first conquests and installed his sons, Hiripan

and Tangáxoan as lords of Ihuatzio and Tzintzuntzan while he ruled from Pátzcuari city. In 1350 CE, his family was in control of all the centers around the Lake. Hiripan expanded into the areas around Lake Cuitzeo.



Lake Pátzcuaro area

Hiripan and Tangáxoan I began to institutionalize the tributary system and consolidate the political unity of the empire. They created an administrative bureaucracy and divided everything up between lords and nobles. In the following years, the Tarascan Sierra and the Balsas River was incorporated into the increasingly centralized state.

Later, under the rule of Cazonci Tzitzipandáquare, a number of regions were conquered, only to be lost with Aztec expansion. In 1460 CE, the Tarascan state reached the Pacific coast at Zacatula [La Union, now located about 200 miles southeast of Manzanillo] and advanced into the Toluca Valley and also on the northern rim. They reached into the present-day state of Guanajuato.

In the 1470s, Aztecs under Axayacatl started to raid outlying Tarascan settlements. They were defeated only to intensify their attacks in the 1480s. The Cazonci incorporated the help of the Otomies and Matlazincas who had been upended and left homeless in the defense of this little empire. Although the Aztecs were defeated, the wars inhibited further expansion by the Tarascan people. The last Cazonci, Tangáxoan II, had been a ruler for two years when the Spanish arrived and put an end to this little independent empire.

The Tarascans mined and worked copper, silver, and gold which made metallurgy a prime commodity during their rule. Today, the mining operations are centered in iron and cement making. The entire northwest part of the state's mineral rights have been taken over and managed by a private firm headquartered in Manzanillo.

...Manzanillo History

**Los Ortices and others:**

The Tarascan state was home to a number of pre-Hispanic cultures as part of Western Mexico Archeological evidence dates human occupation of the area as far back as 1500 BCE, with sites here contemporary with San Lorenzo on the Gulf Coast and Tlatilco in the Valley of Mexico. One period of the area's development is called the Los Ortices era, which began around 500 BCE. During this time, the elements that characterize the pre-Hispanic peoples of Colima appear, including shaft tombs and a distinctive ceramic style called rojo bruñido, or burnished red.



La Campana

The next phase, called Comala, and centered on a site of the same name, was from around 100 to 600 CE. Comala people perfected burnished red pottery and created representations of people and animals with skill and fluid lines. The best known of these figures are known as the fattened dogs. The Comala site shows influence from Teotihuacán. Around 500 CE, another site in Armería developed along the river of the same name.

**The Sites:**

El Chanal is one of two major Mesoamerican sites in the state of Colima. It sits just North and a little East of the City of Colima.

The other Mesoamerican ruin in Colima, La Campana, is just a little over two miles from El Chanal and closer into the city of Colima. There is a third, Periquillo, but it's privately owned although still open to the public. One could surmise that, in ancient times, they might have been a part of one facility, Culture, or city. Some sources state these were these were built by the Mayans, while others say the builders were Aztecs or Toltec and still others admit that the builders are unknown. I recommend visiting them both, but with a guide because it sure beats walking around, taking pictures and guessing what each formation was for, like I did.



The Chanal site was active from the 6th to the 16th centuries and was the main culture center in the Colima area. Belonging to this culture was a number of smaller sites and most of the ones known and explored to date. After El Chanal, the largest related site is La Campana. Most contain pyramidal bases and plazas with structures often containing rounded edges. Images of Huehuetotl and Tlaloc appear with this culture, which may indicate the origins of the cultures that ultimately settled central Mexico.



El Rey Colimán

At the beginning of the 16th century CE, the Purépechas invaded the territory of the Tecos and got as far as the salt fields of Tzacoalco. However, a chief named Colimotl or Coliman defeated the Purépechas during the Salitre War (Guerra del Salitre). After this, the Tecos conquered Sayula, Zapotlán and Amunla, making them the dominant cultural group in this part of the state. Both the Periquillo and Chanal sites were occupied when the Spanish arrived in the 16th century.

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by Tommy Clarkson

**Cyclamen Colchicum** *Cyclamen Colchicum*

**Family** *Primulaceae*

**Also known as** *Sowbread or Swinebread*

*(Steven, our close pal who, for a number of years, owned and operated a couple of funeral homes outside of Kansas City, shared that, as a result of their lovely flowers and delightful leaves – no few times – he has seen Cyclamen species given to families as part of a floral display. He said that, in no few cases, he had seen them later placed on a dining room table, or similar location and noted that they successfully bloomed constantly for up to two or three years!)*

After finding my specimen at a local *vivero* (plant nursery), I set about endeavoring to learn more about them. This was more difficult than first imagined as, beyond learning that this is a genus of some twenty-three species, few of my several score, botanical books even acknowledged their existence! However, I was able to confirm that they originated in Georgia (the country - not US state - where Stalin was born)! There they ". . . generally grow in humus-rich pockets of soil in limestone rocks on the sides of wooded river gorges, but (are) also found in similar pockets in the degraded sub-alpine area of the river catchment."



And uniquely attractive flowers they are!

However, you need not travel that far to obtain one as, increasingly, nurseries appear to be finding them favorites of gardeners. If given to you as a present – or you find it gussied up in that manner for marketing purposes - ensure that you immediately remove any decorative foil that might have been placed around the pot so that any excess water trapped in the soil can drain from those overly zealous, but well-intended folks.

And, speaking of its H2O requirements, while they are blooming, try to keep the root ball moist, while feeding it a general purpose fertilizer every two weeks. But do the former by watering in a tray, below the pot, and allowing the roots to enjoy the water from below, rather than watering from the top of the soil, as this can lead to rotting. Stop watering your *Cyclamen colchicum* once you note that the leaves are dying.

Scent-wise, I've seen it written where that "they smell like a fine perfume." But I've also read that "even the florist variety has an unpleasant rubbery odor (however) the wild-type cyclamens have a beautiful, delicate fragrance that is partially captured in the aroma chemical, cyclamen aldehyde." Mine, sitting in indirect sun underneath the Dining Palapa have a unique, subtle, fresh scent.

...Cyclamen Colchicum



Ours thrives in indirect light under our dining palapa.

"But, Tommy, what if I don't live in your paradisiacal environs?" Well, I'm glad you asked! As a tuberous perennial, in the warmer climates of zones six through nine, it can be planted outside, where it will reappear every year.

Though, in zone six, I'd heartily encourage the addition of an extra layer of mulch, in an effort to protect it from those less than fun (at least as far as my - numerous years spent in the semi-tropics - thin-blood is concerned) cooler winter temperatures!

So, on a day to day basis, proper *Cyclamen* care starts with the correct temperature. Remember, in nature, this genus began in cool, humid environments. If the temperature is over 68 F. (20 C.) during the day, and 50 F. (10 C.) at night, your plant may start to slowly die. Temperatures that are too high will cause the plant to begin to yellow, and the flowers will fade rapidly.

In turn, know that your *Cyclamen colchicum* will thrive in bright, filtered light, but direct summer sunlight is too harsh and drying for them. (Remember its origins mentioned earlier!) Furthermore, in order to extend the flowering - and attractive their blossoms are - of your *Cyclamen*, you should deadhead (remove) old blooms and leaves regularly and inspect the foliage for any faded, yellowing leaves or signs of disease. To correctly remove these fading flowers and foliage, I suggest that you carefully follow the stem all the way down to the soil before plucking.

Want more specimens? That's not difficult. *Cyclamen* plant separation should be done when temperatures begin to get lower in autumn. Division is rather simple. With a clean, sharp knife, cut apart the bulb, ensuring that each piece cut has a nub from whence the foliage can grow.

All *Cyclamen* are toxic to those of the canine and feline sort and, if ingested, this plant can cause induce increased salivation, vomiting and diarrhea in whatever decided to munch upon it!

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## At the Movies

by Suzanne A. Marshall

### The Green Book

*Directed by:* Peter Farrelly

*Starring:* Virgo Mortensen, Mahershala Ali,  
Linda Cardelli

*"A working class Italian-American bouncer becomes the driver of an African-American classical pianist on a tour of the venues through the 1960's American South."*

This movie is the 2019 'Best Picture' winner at the annual Academy Awards. It received a number of other nominations including the winner of 'Best Supporting Actor' Mahershala Ali. It's a really well-crafted movie and story about the troubled sixties and the still oppressive attitudes towards the black populations by many of the whites. Here we have a tough Italian bar bouncer (Tony), down on his luck for employment, showing up to apply for a driving job to take a gifted pianist who is black, (Dr. Donald Shirley) through the Deep South, where segregation of hotels and restaurants are still abundant. It proves to be a sensitive and touching story of two human beings from different 'worlds' working out the issues and finding ways to make the concert tour work for both of them.

I really loved this movie and would recommend that anyone view it. I was particularly taken with the role of Tony as portrayed by Virgo Mortensen. He really pulls off the tough Italian guy with a soft heart. But the story itself is moving and very engaging. It's one of those quietly wonderful tales of human conflict and a far cry from the trendy superhero and special effects blockbusters so popular these days.

IMDB has rated this movie at 8.3/10 based on 136,174 viewers.



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by Tommy Clarkson

### **Amazon Lily** *Eucharis Amazonica*

**Family** *Amaryllidaceae*

**Also known as** *Eucharist Lily*

The *Eucharis Amazonica* comes from the South American Andes of Columbia and Peru – not, as the names implies, the Amazon. But the confounding, plant identification monster has, again, reared its ugly head with some botanists, stating there is a slightly smaller *E. ulei* that is very similar in appearance. Also, it was formerly identified as *E. grandiflora*.

Additionally, by some, apparently, it is sometimes assigned to the Liliaceae family. Furthermore, the identification issue has been additionally compounded in that I have seen pictures of what appears to be this plant called a Brisbane Lily (*Proiphys amboinensis*) with the citation of its origin as Malaysia. I knew that, as a result of the beautiful flowers, *eucharis* is compound word coming from the Green *eu*, meaning "good, true, original," and *charis* meaning "loveliness, grace, and favor." Also, I knew that its leaves are amazingly shiny and glisten of their own accord. Much beyond that, I knew not much. So I embarked upon a quest to either clear - or muddy, yet more – these waters!

From some personal experience, as well as discussions with friends, sharing of information with area *vivero* (nursery) acquaintances and general "here and there" data. I knew that the Amazon Lily produces clusters of fragrant, star-shaped white flowers up to three times a year.



The Amazon Lily produces clusters of fragrant, star-shaped white flowers.

In my collection of semi- and tropical-plant publications, both the 428-page, cram-packed with great tropical data book, *The Tropical Look*, and 594-page tome, *Flowering Plants of the Neotropics*, allude only one time - in mere single-word mention - of the genus, *Eucharis*. Frustrated, and as if I knew what I was doing, I then impotently directed my search to the all-Spanish, 496-page, *Historia Natural: Vida de los Animales de Las Plantas y de la Tierra* (Natural History Life of Plants and Animals and the Earth). (*I believe you can well guess what success I achieved there!*). But those three books aren't the only resource fish in the tropical plant sea!

Recognizing that, perhaps, I was being too "old school" thumbing through my books, I next dipped into cyberspace. According to the University of Florida's IFAS Extension Service, the "Amazon Lily forms tight, compact rosettes of deep-green, glossy leaves, up to several inches wide and tall spikes of fragrant, long-lasting, waxy, white flowers." I also learned that it can grow from one to two feet (30.48 - 60.96 cm) in both height and width. As such, it can remain undisturbed for many years in that it actually blooms better under-crowded conditions, regardless whether its home is a pot or thriving, outdoors, in clumps. Beyond that was the information stating that the leaves, primarily, emerge directly from the soil without a stem.

Next, I entered the files of the Missouri Botanical Garden. From there, I ascertained that the Amazon Lily is "low maintenance," seeks partial shade, but a "medium" amount on a regular watering schedule and can't handle temperatures below fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit (12.78 C°).

...Amazon Lily



Atop tall spikes are its fragrant, long-lasting, waxy, white flowers.

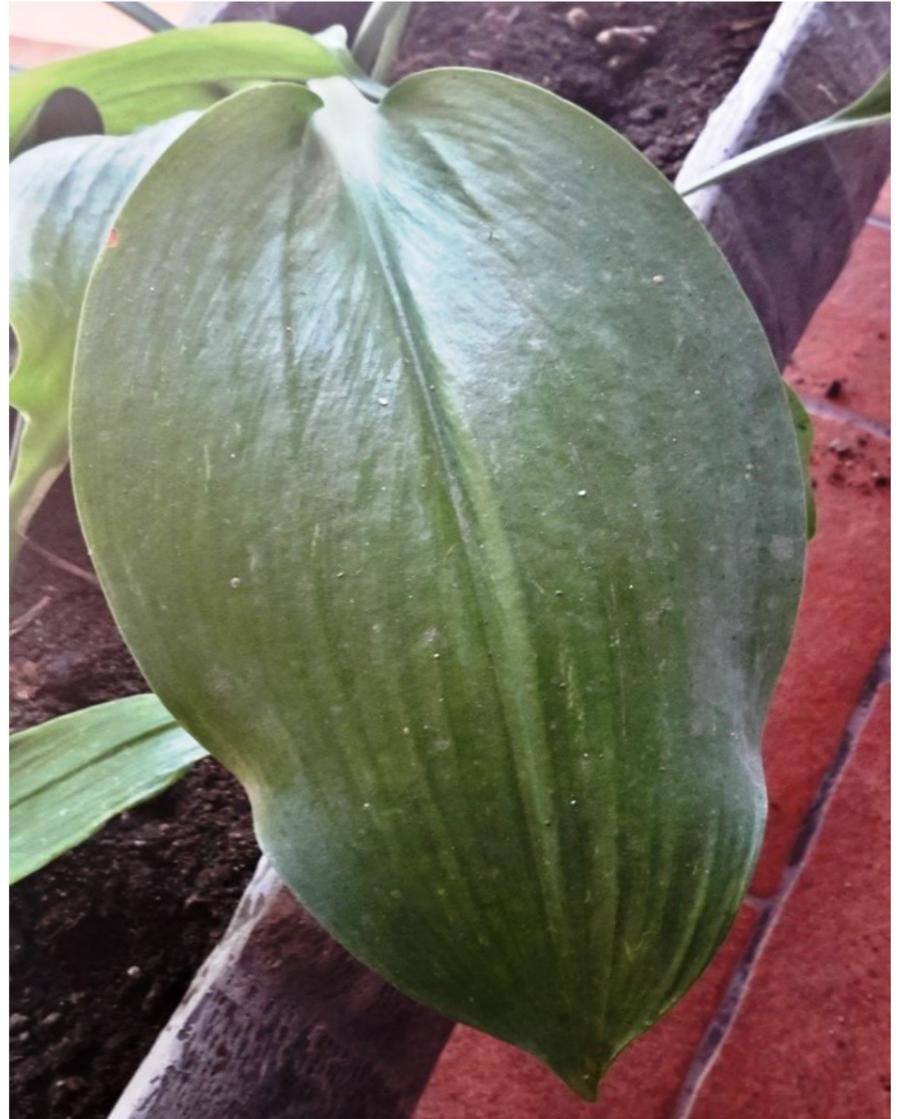
This site elaborated with the following, "The bulbous *Eucharis amazonica* is from the Amaryllis family. Waxy, white, daffodil-like (triandrus) flowers, in clusters of three to six, that bloom atop stems. They are eighteen to twenty-four inches (45.72-60.96 cm) tall.

Flowers are fragrant. Glossy, oval to elliptic, long-petioled leaves are evergreen and rather attractive when flowers are not in bloom. As to insect or disease problems, caterpillars, slugs, snails, spider mites, bulb mites, possible plant viruses and bulb rot could present themselves.

Many plant their Amazon Lilies in a pot. If so, place them with their bulb neck tips slightly above the soil surface, which should be kept consistently moist during its warmer times. It prefers areas of high humidity which is sun-dappled or in bright shade –definitely not direct sun.

If growing in a container, the best flowering occurs when its roots are pot-bound. Wherever located, its bulbs do not care to be disturbed. As a result, repot only when absolutely necessary. We must be doing something correct without employing this technique, but I have read that, in order to induce blooming, one needs to significantly reduce watering following blooming, to the point where the soil actually remains nearly completely dry for about one month, recommencing the watering schedule when new growth appears.

For those enjoying it out-of-doors, "up north," about the only places this somewhat tender plant will grow is south Florida and southern Texas. Thriving in moveable pots is an entirely different thing!



Its glossy, oval to elliptic, long-petioled leaves are evergreen.

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### How Should You Invest an Inheritance?

by Yann Kostic

You have inherited a sum of money but have some concerns about how to invest it, as there are many options available to you.

Traditional wisdom would be to invest any large sum of money using a method called dollar-cost averaging, which simply means investing it a little at a time. The idea is that you take on less risk by trickling your money into the market rather than dumping it in all at once.

If you like this option, you would put your entire inheritance in a savings account or money-market fund, and then, over the course of a year or so, invest an equal amount each month in a portfolio of stocks and bonds.

But there is another option for those who would like to get their money working faster. This is to determine an appropriate asset allocation—a mix of stocks, bonds, and other investments that meets your risk tolerance and helps you achieve your financial goals.

With this option, you would invest the entire inheritance at once based on that mix of assets. Proponents of this approach say your money starts working for you quickly, while not leaving you too conservatively invested for a period of time, as dollar-cost averaging might.

More importantly, and regardless of the approach you choose, your assets, ideally, should be divided between different types of investments, based on your financial goals and your risk tolerance.

Your advisor can help you determine the appropriate asset allocation, one that takes into account the fact that, sadly, no one knows how the market is going to perform. Note: This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide financial advice for your particular situation.

Note: *This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide financial advice for your particular situation.*

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## Baja Fish Tacos

Level: Easy  
 Total: 50 min  
 Prep: 20 min  
 Inactive: 15 min  
 Cook: 15 min  
 Yield: 6 to 8 servings

### Ingredients

#### Beer Batter:

- ✓ 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ✓ 1 teaspoon salt
- ✓ 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ✓ 1 cup dark Mexican beer\*

#### Cream Sauce:

- ✓ 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- ✓ 2/3 cup Mexican crema\*\* or sour cream
- ✓ 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- ✓ 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ✓ 2 tablespoons water
- ✓ Salt and freshly ground black pepper

#### Fish Tacos:

- ✓ Oil, for frying
- ✓ 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ✓ 1 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning
- ✓ 2 pounds skinned halibut cut into 5 by 1/2-inch strips
- ✓ Freshly ground black pepper
- ✓ Corn tortillas
- ✓ 2 cups shredded cabbage
- ✓ 2 cups tomatillo salsa (store-bought or homemade) for garnish, optional
- ✓ Pickled jalapenos, for garnish, optional

### Directions

#### For the Beer Batter:

Mix the flour, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Gradually add in the beer while whisking. Set aside and let the batter rest for 15 minutes before using.

#### For Cream Sauce:

Add the mayonnaise and crema to a medium bowl. Whisk in the lemon zest, lemon juice and water. Season, to taste, with salt and pepper (can be made 3 days ahead, covered and refrigerated).



#### For the Fish:

In a large skillet, over medium heat, add enough oil to reach a depth of 1-inch. Heat the oil until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350 degrees F or when the end of a wooden spoon sizzles when inserted into the oil.

On a large plate, combine the flour and salt. Season the fish pieces all over with salt and pepper and coat with the flour. Working in batches, dip the fillets in the beer batter and coat on both sides. Fry in the hot oil until golden brown and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain.

Make tacos with the tortillas and fish and top each with cream, shredded cabbage, tomatillo salsa and pickled jalapenos, if desired.

\*Cook's Note: Crack open a cold Mexican cerveza like a Negra Modelo or a Dos Equis (XX) Amber to make this tasty beer batter, which will change the way you think about fried fish! You can use it for vegetables, too.

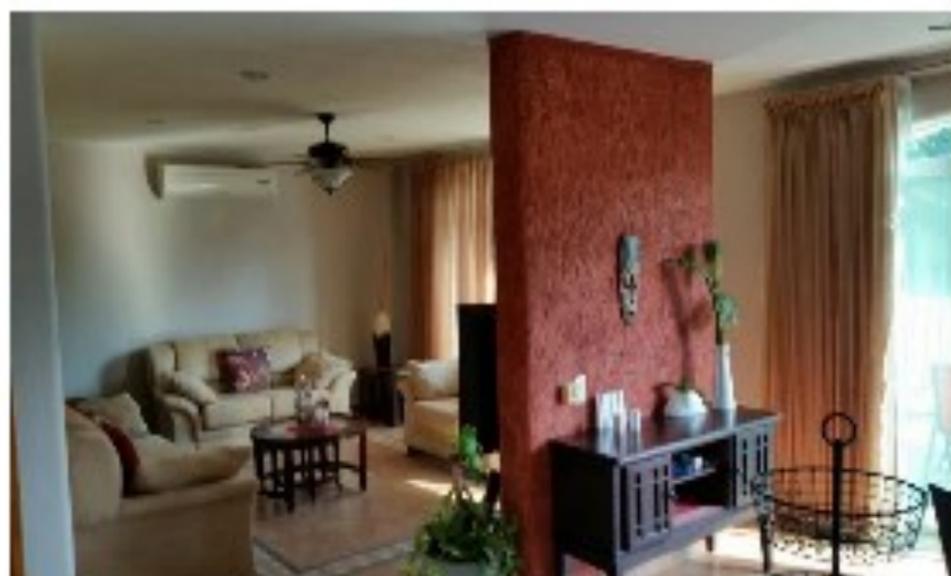
\*\*Cook's Note: Mexican crema is Mexico's version of creme fraiche and is found at many supermarkets and can easily be substituted with sour cream.

Recipe and images from [Food Network](http://FoodNetwork.com)

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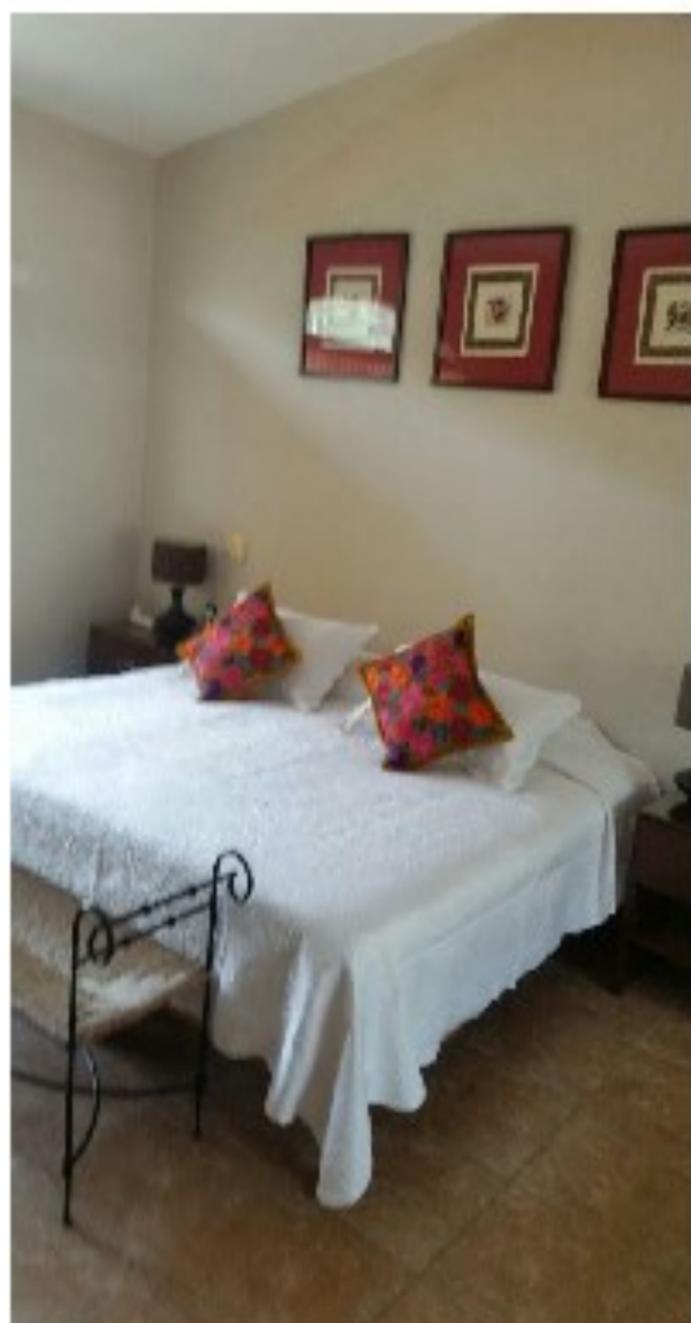
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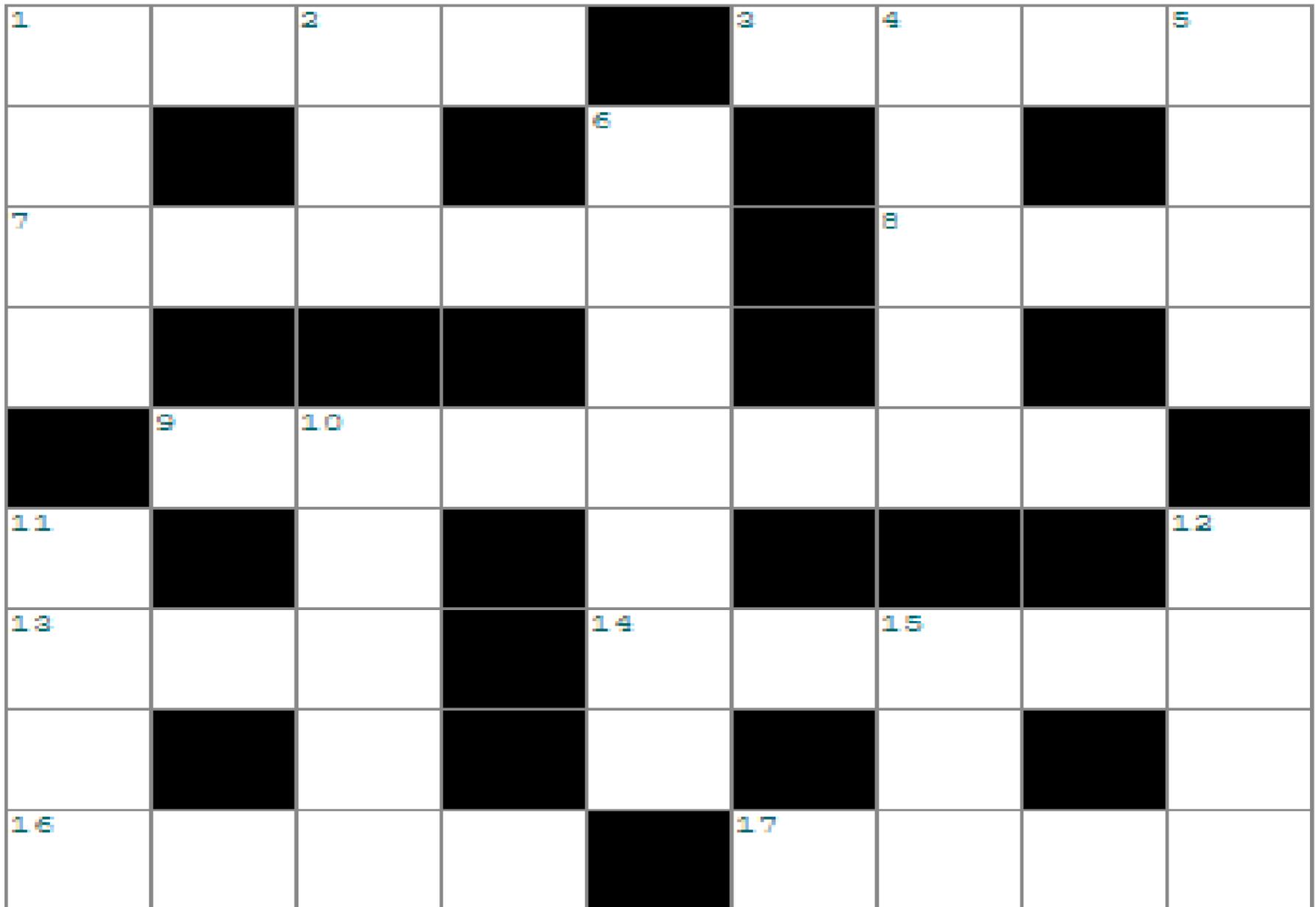
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Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition



Across

- 1 act
- 3 branch, of a tree; limb, branch of a tree
- 7 fly
- 8 grape
- 9 squid
- 13 bear
- 14 laughs
- 16 to tie
- 17 (feminine of) tall

Down

- 1 weapon
- 2 cough
- 4 help; aid
- 5 wings
- 6 drill
- 10 now
- 11 drop, small amount of liquid
- 12 island
- 15 salt

Last month's crossword solution:



lexisrex.com

## The Mexican-American War

from the Path to Citizenship series

Mid-May marks two key anniversaries in the conflict between the United States and Mexico that set in motion the Civil War—and led to California, Texas, and eight other states joining the Union.

On May 13, 1846, the United States Congress declared war on Mexico after a request from President James K. Polk. Then, on May 26, 1848, both sides ratified the peace treaty that ended the conflict.

In between those dates was enough drama to last for generations and the appearance of some familiar names that would dominate the Civil War, from President Abraham Lincoln to General Robert E. Lee.

To save space and make a long story short, the conflict centered on the independent Republic of Texas, which opted to join the United States after establishing its independence from Mexico a decade earlier.

The new U.S. president, James K. Polk, also wanted Texas as part of the United States, and his predecessor, John Tyler, had a late change of heart and started the admission process before he left office. Polk and others saw the acquisition of Texas, California, Oregon, and other territories as part of the nation's Manifest Destiny to spread democracy over the continent.

The U.S. also tried to buy Texas and what was called "Mexican California" from Mexico, which was seen as an insult in Mexico, before war broke out.

Mexico considered the annexation of Texas as an act of war, and after border skirmishes, President Polk asked for the war declaration, since in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, only Congress can declare a war.

In the fighting that followed, the mostly volunteer United States military secured control of Mexico after a series of battles, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed on February 2, 1848.

It was the first large-scale success of a United States military force on foreign soil.

Mexico received a little more than \$18 million in compensation from the United States as part of the treaty.

The pact set a border between Texas and Mexico, and ceded California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, most of Arizona and



Colorado, and parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Wyoming to the United States.

In today's terms, those 10 states account for 136 electoral votes, more than half of the votes needed to secure a win a presidential election.

It also cut the territorial size of Mexico in half.

On the surface, the war's outcome seemed like a bonanza for the United States. But the acquisition of so much territory with the issue of slavery unresolved lit the fuse that set off the Civil War in 1861.

The underlying issue of how adding new states and territories would alter the balance between free and slave states was critical.

The Missouri Compromise of 1850 attempted to appease Southern concerns about the shifting balances, but the die was cast as the nation headed toward the Civil War in 1861.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo also set in motion a whole range of issues for Mexican-Americans and Native Americans.

During the conflict, one of the vocal objectors in the Whig party was Representative Abraham Lincoln from Illinois. Key players on the political side included Jefferson Davis and Stephen Douglas.

On the battlefield, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, and Stonewall Jackson were among the dozens of commanders who would later emerge in the Civil War.

Image and content source: [Constitution Center](https://www.constitutioncenter.org/)