



# Manzanillo SUN

coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine



Colours of Mexico  
Nature's Wonders  
Findings in Nature  
History and Mythology  
RV Travel  
Entertainment  
Food and Drink  
Path to Citizenship

Stunning sunset over the bay in Manzanillo  
photo by Manu

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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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## A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone

by Suzanne A. Marshall

When we won the Bed and Breakfast hotel bid (at the Bocce Ball fundraiser in February), we thought that we would make plans for late summer to fulfill this trip. And, since my husband decided this would be a late birthday gift, I happily waited until August when I knew it would be very hot in Manzanillo. And it turned out to be a reprieve from the hottest summer we've experienced thus far!

We headed out to Ajijic, Jalisco to stay with Lorraine at her BnB named [Estrellitas](#) and enjoyed a lovely visit; lakeside walking (Lake Chapala), gawking and window shopping and eating some lovely meals. We truly enjoyed our two-day stay.

But this was not to be the end of our travels. We had decided that, since we were half the way there, we would carry on by car to breathtaking Guanajuato City. We were not disappointed.

It turned out to be about a 4 hr drive and ended in the heart of the historic section, where we relinquished all hope of finding our hotel and thankfully found some help from a hotel bellman passing by, who jumped in the car and gave us directions to the property; and then to a parking area we would never have found. You see, Guanajuato is an ancient city full of colour and history and incredibly narrow streets. Some are actually 'walking only'.

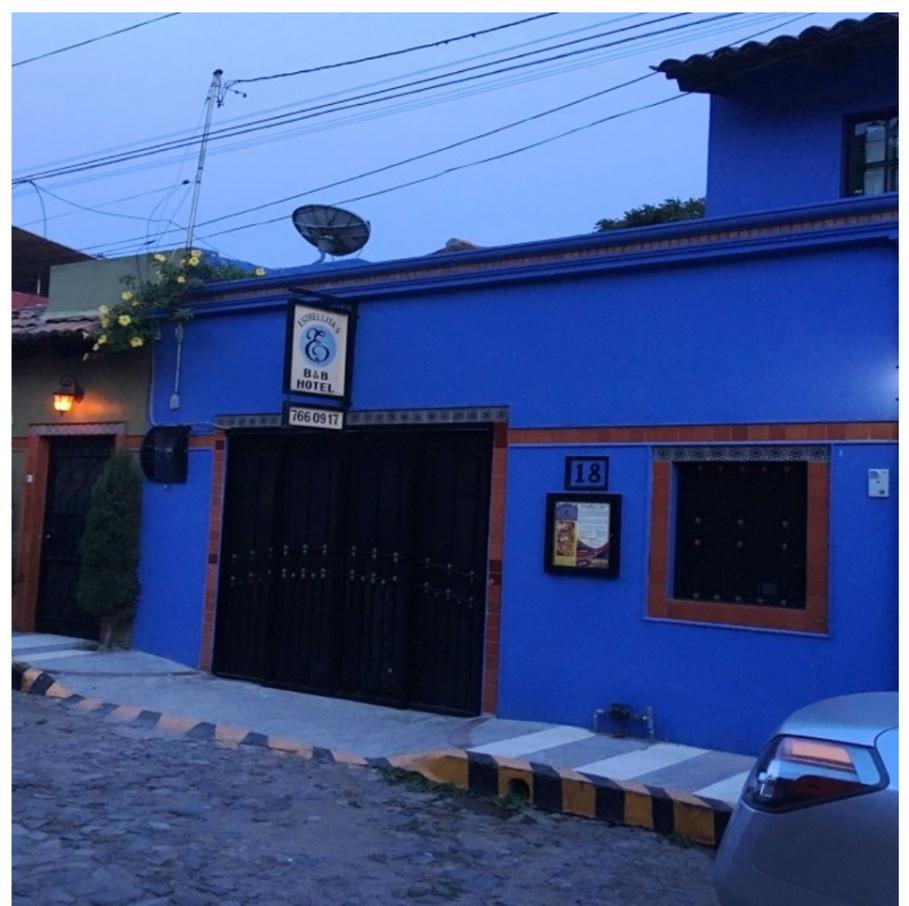


Above and right:

Estrellitas is a colourful and homey Bed and Breakfast right next door to the Lake Chapala Society in Ajijic.

We enjoyed lovely continental breakfasts and snooping around the children's art exhibits next door.

A lovely terrace complete with tables and seating gave us an engaging vista out over the town to the mountains.



...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone

It also has eleven tunnels that move you around 'single' file to various parts of this sumptuous place. We were about to embark on a very serious walking fitness program for the next 4 days and indeed we did. We walked up and down the narrow streets and found various museums and galleries with outdoor cafes everywhere. The city was teeming with tourists and university students so it felt a bit like a carnival and we loved every moment of it. But I'm getting a wee bit ahead of myself.

First, we checked in to [Hotel Meson de las Poetas](#). From the street, it is a plain rose-coloured wall with a doorway and a small sign above the door. That's it! HmMMMM, just what had we booked ourselves into?

Inside, a long narrow lobby with check-in desks and seating, warm friendly staff, greeted us. A curving stairway further on led us to an open dining room five stories high and an open hallway to the elevator area and up to five floors of beautiful rooms and open sitting terraces complete with patio furnishings and peripheral covered areas with sofas and footstools to relax and read if one wanted. On the fifth-floor rooftop, we could see forever. I fell in love with Guanajuato and we hadn't unpacked yet!!!

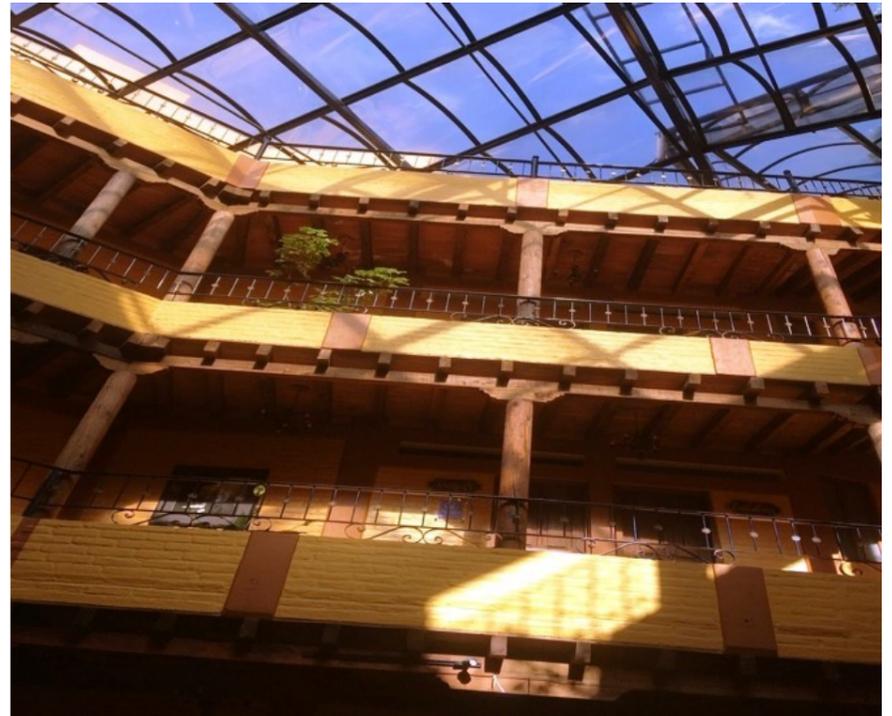


Guanajuato is the capital of the same-named state. Founded in 1548, by the Spanish, one can understand the narrow streets and lanes in the historic sector. Vehicles of any kind were long

Below and left:

The dining room in Meson de las Poetas reminded me of a castle with the stone walls. A very 'airy' place to have our morning breakfasts with a view up five stories to the sky.)

Our views from the rooftop terrace were fantastic!



into the future replacing horses and walking. It is part of the macro region of Bajío. It is in a long, narrow valley which makes its streets narrow and winding. Many are alleys that cars cannot pass through. Some are long winding stairways up the mountainsides.

The historic centre has numerous small plazas and colonial-era mansions, churches and civil constructions built using pink or green sandstone. The city is situated at an elevation of 6,600 feet or 2000 metres and has a population upwards of 200,000. At this elevation, we definitely found our cooler, dryer temperatures in the mid-twenties during the day and mid-teens during the night.



...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone

It was very comfortable for all the walking and touring we embarked upon for the next four days. And tour we did. We saw six museums and galleries and rode a little tourist bus (which looked like a locomotive) that took us a little farther afield.

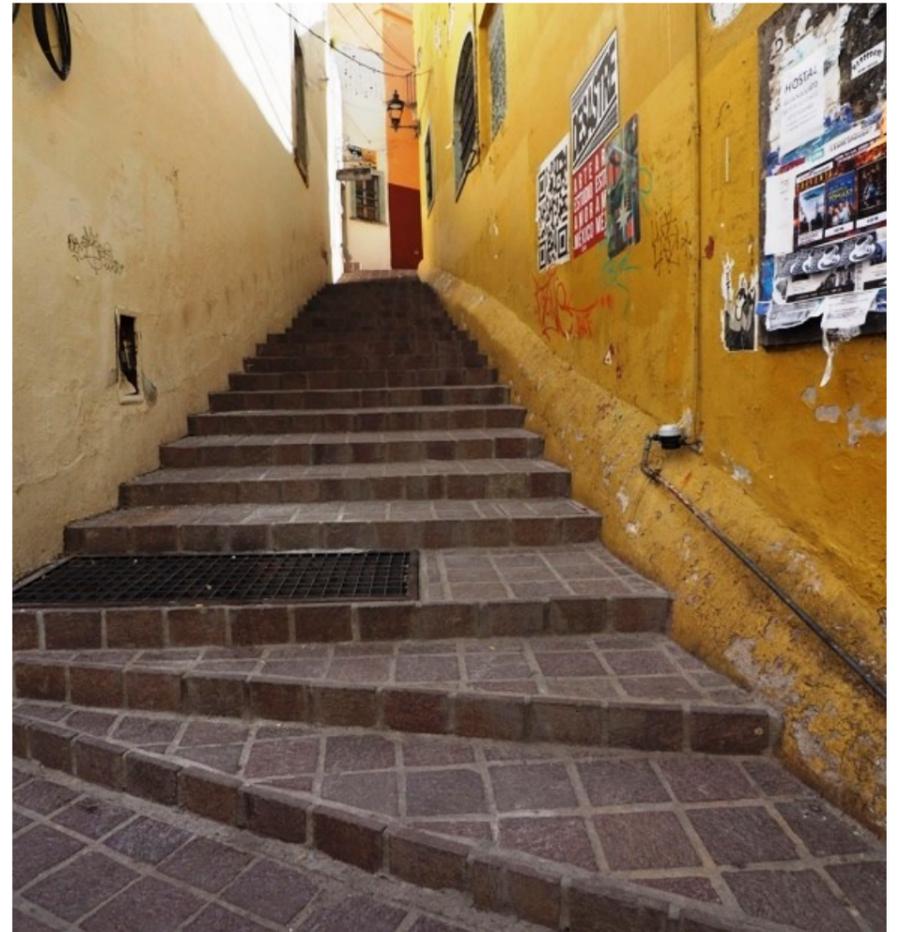
Guanajuato's growth has resulted from the abundantly available minerals in the mountains surrounding it. This made the city highly influential during colonial times. One of the mines, La Valencia, accounted for two-thirds of the world's silver production at its busiest point.

The city is the home of the Mummy Museum (which we opted not to see). The mummies were naturally mummified in a cemetery between the 19th and 20th centuries. We concentrated on artworks and historical sites.

Each year, the Festival Internacional Cervantino invites artists from Mexico and around the world to participate. Guanajuato was named a World Heritage Site in 1988.

Below and right:

There are numerous stairways that actually take you down into the tunnels carved out of the solid rock of the mountain. Only locals would take these 'short-cuts' on foot to another area.



Some back streets are for walking only

Right next door to our hotel was the museum and original family home of Diego Rivera which we explored, as well as the museum dedicated to the legend of Don Quixote and his sidekick, Sancho; the Museo Palacio de los Poderes; Museo Conde Rul and toured the Teatro Juárez one afternoon. We were delighted to find the symphony practicing and to learn that there was an event that night involving flamenco dancers and accompanists. We immediately purchased tickets.



One-way traffic only, as you can see



...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone

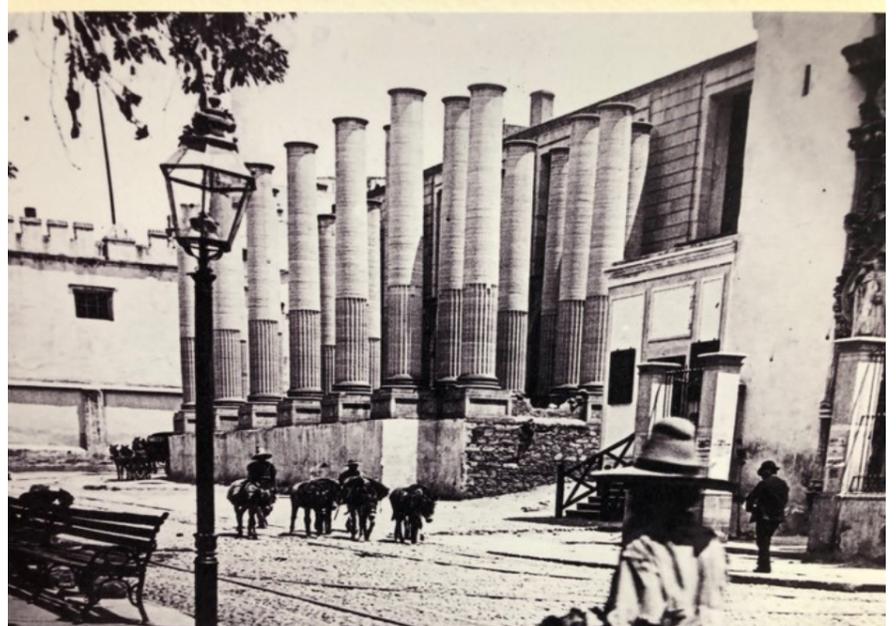


Above and right:

Teatro Juárez is a fabulous theatre, built a hundred years ago and still contains the original furnishings, curtains and ornamentals.

The second old photo is of the theatre under construction and another fountain and square which are still the same today.

Teatro Juárez is a stunning building, regal and elegant, where university students who attend the University of Guanajuato like to sit on the outside entrance stairways and enjoy the square across the way.



Below: a painting by Diego Rivera



The Pipila monument was erected in 1939. The rose-coloured sculpture is in honour of Juan José de los Reyes Martínez, "El Pipila", as he came to be known, who was the hero of the struggle for Mexican independence and, by setting fire to its portal with a torch, made possible the taking of the Alhóndiga de Granaditas on September 28th 1810.

To say that we obviously needed more time in this fantastic city is an understatement. There was so much more to see and enjoy. So, of course, that means we need to return and pick up where we left off and I do so look forward to that in the future.

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

... more pics follow

...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone



At the Museo Conde Rul, we found an art exhibit called 'El Arte del Vino' complete with the works of 21 different artists and relating to the subject of wine in one way or another.



Our eyes took in many different works of art in the galleries of Guanajuato

...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone



Don Quixote and Sancho ride again in this beautiful bronze sculpture and depiction.



The Pipila Monument rides the top of the hill overlooking the city.



As the Flamenco show came to a close, all dancers and musicians participated in a number together as the audience roared to its feet.

The Flamenco show at Teatro Juárez was called La Gañanía. The voice of the singer who performed in every dance number sounded like the Gypsy Kings and the songs were so intricate and baleful I found myself on the edge of tears. Just beautiful!



...A Summer Reprieve from the Hot Zone



The so-called "Kiss Alley" is located near the Plazuela de Los Angeles. It's a traditional narrow alley which, at its narrowest point, has two balconies which are just 27" (68cm) apart.

This is the site of a romantic legend that tells the tragic story of two young sweethearts.



On this narrow street (above), a foot bridge one level up off the street now sports tables and chairs spilling out from one of the many restaurants available for sumptuous Mexican dining.

The black and white photo (below) is the same street, a century ago or more, a tribute to the stability of Mexican construction.

One can now see added buildings, paint, and brick finishing in the street.



Above:

Hungry? Needing a drink or a cappuccino? This is no problem in the historic section of Guanajuato where outdoor/indoor cafes are plentiful.

Right:

Colourful Guanajuato, called Mexico's most beautiful city. The sun begins to set on Guanajuato. So lovely and friendly.





by Tommy Clarkson

### Devil's Backbone

**Family** *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* 'Variegatus'

**Also known as** *Zig-Zag Plant, Christmas Candle, Redbird Cactus, Japanese Poinsettia, Slipper Spurge or Slipper Flower*

One seldom encounters plants with multiple names as diverse in their inferred representation/description!

Those familiar with me are well aware of my great appreciation for the patient friendship and sage, botanical counsel provided to me by Dr. Mark Olson of the Institute of Biology at the University of Mexico, Ander Lindstrom of Nongnooch Tropical Gardens near Pattaya Thailand, Barry Fugatt of the Linnaeus Teaching Gardens in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and renowned tropical plant author and lecturer, Dr. Art Whistler from Hawaii. These gentlemen are true botanists of the highest order – not “dabble in the dirt” or “muddle in the mud” sorts such as me - and I will, forever, be in their debt for their many kindnesses!

The first of these professionals, Dr. Mark Olson, shared that this is “native to Mexico (common in the southern Isthmus of Tehuantepec area), into Central America and the Caribbean islands. Here, in Mexico, you can find people call it *zapatito de la virgen* or *zapatito del diablo*. But more pertinent is it to note that the genus, *Pedilanthus*, no longer exists with the entire clade now subsumed into Euphorbia. The clade, of thirteen species, are all found in Mexico.



*Ola Brisa Gardens is near an epicenter of Pedilanthus clade diversity.*

In fact, there is one species found near Ola Brisa Gardens on the pass going to Colima - *P. calcaratus* /*E. calcarata*; one endemic to the dry side of the Manantlán which is very close to us, just into Jalisco - *E. diazlanana*; another common in moister, mid-elevation areas in Nayarit and Jalisco and probably Colima and down through Guerrero - *E. peritropoides* - with amazing dangling duck-like inflorescences; one completely endemic to Jalisco from El Tuito up into the Sierra de Cacoma in the area of Desmoronado - *E. colligata*; and yet another endemic, the amazing tree, *E. coalcomanensis*, from near Coalcomán in Michoacán not far from the Colima border. So, you are near an epicenter of *Pedilanthus* clade diversity.

In turn, and more plant-specifically, as written by the latter of these individuals, regarding the *Pedilanthus tithymaloides*, Dr. Art Whistler noted in his book, “Tropical Ornamentals,” that the Devil’s Backbone “is widely cultivated for its red cyathia (a cup-like, highly reduced inflorescence).”

As one of its names implies, this plant’s thick, rubbery, green and white stems grow back and forth between each leaf - in a zig-zag manner. Attached to them are alternating, never segmented, green and white variegated leaves that take on a rosy blush in bright, sunny conditions. That latter name – Slipper

...Devil's Backbone

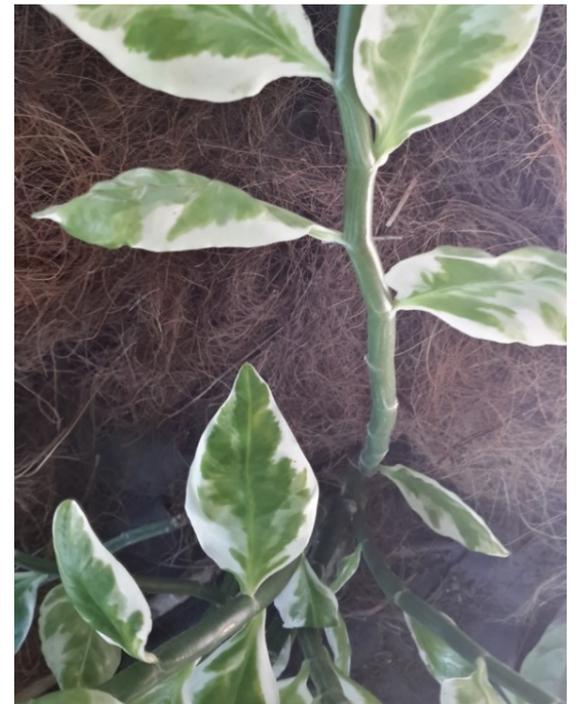
Flower – is derived from the fact that its flowers are thought to look somewhat like such. *Pedilanthus* is from the Greek word meaning both "shoe" and "flower." (*Why do I think that in ancient Greece one had to be wary of someone's request to smell their pedilanthus?*)



Yep, definitely a 'Variegatus'!

It can be grown as a landscape plant, maturing into a shrub from six to eight feet (2-2.5 meters) tall. Indoors, they seldom bloom, but are enjoyed for their beautiful form and colorful foliage. However, regardless of where sited, keep in mind that all parts of this plant contain a milky sap that can irritate one's skin and could well be rather harmful if ingested. So, locate the plant where it won't be in contact with overly explorative children and pets – *that long overstaying house guest, however, may be an entirely different issue!* I encourage the wearing of garden gloves when pruning its stems or transplanting to avoid possible, discomforting, skin irritation.

Its thick, rubbery, green and white stems grow back and forth between each leaf - in a zig-zag manner.



The *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* seeks a bright location. In our environs, it makes an attractive deck or patio specimen and, on the whole, is a useful landscape plant in virtually all frost-free climates. They're easy to grow. Enshonce (what a wonderful word!) it in a well-drained potting mix for cacti and succulents. Apply a balanced liquid fertilizer monthly during active growth; and water once a week.

In the wild, bright light and perfect conditions, it can reach a height of ten feet (3.04 meters) but, more often, "in captivity," it may stay around four to six feet (1.22-1.83 meters) high and that – or a bit more – in width. Provide a bright location indoors or a sunny to partly shaded location outside. The Devil's Backbone requires no support nor rigid truss (*a poor attempt at osteogenetic humor there*) but does seek well-draining soil and minimal watering - just once a week is usually adequate. Prune freely to maintain size and shape.

Get your copy of The Civilized Jungle: Tropical Plants Facts and Fun From Ola Brisa Gardens [Volume I](#), and now [Volume II](#) is here!!

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you can reach Tommy Clarkson at [tommy@manzanillosun.com](mailto:tommy@manzanillosun.com)

## Higuerilla or Castor Oil

by Terry Sovil

Castor oil is a type of vegetable oil extracted from the seeds of the castor bean plant. It has many uses in medicines and other applications. Less common is its use in gardening for a fight against pests but not harmful to plants. It is sometimes used to stop moles and rodents from burrowing in outdoor vegetable gardens.

Castor oil contains ricin. This is poisonous but castor oil is heated and treated so that this is not a danger. Castor oil can be poisonous if ingested in large doses (more than 1 teaspoon per day). It has been used to fight yeast infections, acne, sunburn and ringworm.



Fire Red Castor Oil Plant

### Castor Oil

Mexico 



#### Production

Higuerilla (Castor Oil Plant) can be found right here in Manzanillo, Colima, Mexico! The plant can be raised on a farm and harvested. Mexico ranked 7th in this product's production, 15th in global exports and 16th in global imports in recent studies.

See the chart where Mexico is high in production in 1997 and then fell way down until a huge jump in 2015 and a skyrocket in 2016. This put us into 7th place for production. Castor seed is the source of castor oil, which has a wide variety of uses. The seeds contain between 40% and 60% of oil that is rich in triglycerides. Global castor seed production is around two million tons per year. Leading producing areas are India (with over three-quarters of the global yield), China and Mozambique, and it is widely grown as a crop in Ethiopia.

#### History

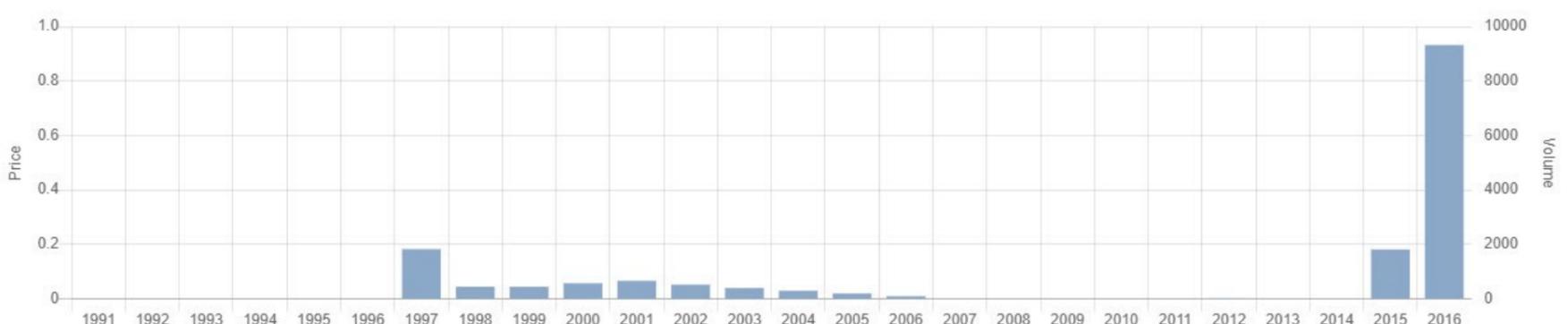
Castor seeds have been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 4000 BC; the slow-burning oil was mostly used to fuel lamps. It is said that Cleopatra used it to brighten the whites of her eyes. It was also used as a laxative.

Usage in India has been documented since 2000 BC, again, in lamps and in local medicines. It helped in curing arthritic diseases.

Ancient Romans used seeds and the leaves of the ricin. The poisonous seeds were used for lamp wicks and the oil was a laxative and lamp oil. Boiled, cooled and put on your face over 3 days, it improved the complexion.

In Haiti, it is called maskreti, and the plant is turned into a red oil given to newborns to cleanse the insides of their first stools. The seeds and oil have been used in China for centuries in local medicine for internal use or use in dressings.

Mexico's Production Trend



...Higuerilla - Castor Oil

Rank	Country	Production Volume	Production Share	1-Year Growth in Production	3-Year Growth in Production	Production Price	Last Reported Year
1	India	1.55M	87.4%	-11.3%	-10.0%	\$330.40	2006
2	Mozambiq...	77.42K	4.4%	+3.1%	+14.1%	\$348.30	2007
3	China	40.00K	2.3%	-	-20.0%	\$774.70	2013
4	Brazil	24.62K	1.4%	-47.3%	+96.6%	\$161.30	2001
5	Myanmar ...	12.09K	0.7%	-2.4%	+0.7%	\$0.00	
6	Ethiopia	10.00K	0.6%	-9.1%	-23.1%	\$432.60	2016
7	Mexico	9.32K	0.5%	+412.5%	+0.0%	\$414.30	2002
8	Paraguay	8.73K	0.5%	+8.5%	-20.6%	\$191.00	2016
9	Vietnam	6.80K	0.4%	-2.8%	+13.4%	\$0.00	
10	South Afri...	6.37K	0.4%	+1.1%	+2.8%	\$0.00	

Benito Mussolini of Italy used it to get information from prisoners. The Blackshirts and Spanish Civil Guard forced it into the prisoners in large amounts causing diarrhea and dehydration which could cause death after a while.



Poisonous Castor plant growing wild near Melaque

## 7 Benefits and Uses of Castor Oil

### 1. A Powerful Laxative

One of the best-known uses is as a natural laxative. It is a "stimulant laxative", increasing the movement of the muscles that push material through the intestines, helping to clear the bowels. Several studies have shown that castor oil can relieve constipation. While safe in small doses, larger amounts can cause abdominal cramping, nausea and diarrhea. It should not be used for long periods.

### 2. A Natural Moisturizer

Castor oil is rich in ricinoleic acid, a fatty acid. These types of fats act to reduce the loss of moisture thus moisturizing the skin, a humectant. It retains moisture by preventing water loss through the outer layer of the skin. It is often used in cosmetics and added to lotions, makeup and cleansers. It can be used as an alternative to store-bought products. Though locking moisture in the skin, it can cause an allergic reaction to some.

### 3. Promotes Wound Healing

Applied to wounds it, again, creates a moist environment that promotes healing and prevents sores from drying out. Castor oil stimulates tissue growth so that a barrier can be formed between the wound and the environment, decreasing the risk of infection. A study of 861 people in nursing homes found the use of castor oil in wound-healing, the effects were higher healing rates and shorter times.

### 4. Impressive Anti-Inflammatory Effects

The ricinoleic acid in castor oil has impressive anti-inflammatory properties. When applied topically, it reduces inflammation and relieves pain. This would apply to rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis.

### 5. Reduces Acne

Used to treat acne, the skin condition causing blackheads, pus-filled pimples and large, painful bumps on the face and body. Most common in teens and young adults. Castor oil has antimicrobial properties that may help fight bacterial overgrowth when applied to the skin.

...Higuerilla - Castor Oil



Green variant of *Ricinus communis*, post-bloom, with developing seed capsules

#### 6. Fights Fungus

*Candida albicans* is a type of fungus that commonly causes dental issues like plaque overgrowth, gum infections and root canal infections. Castor oil has antifungal properties that may fight this off. One study found it eliminated *Candida albicans* from contaminated human tooth roots.

#### 7. Keeps Your Hair and Scalp Healthy

Many people use castor oil for natural hair conditioning. Dry or damaged hair can especially benefit from an intense moisturizer like castor oil. The moisturizing and anti-inflammatory properties of castor oil make it an excellent option to keep hair soft and hydrated and help reduce dandruff symptoms.



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

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## The Jaguar (Báalam) and The Skunk (Zorrino)

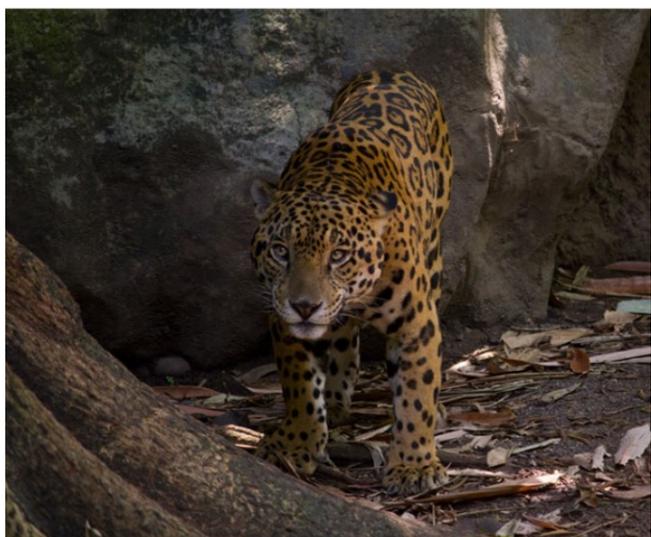
### A Mayan Folktale

[with some Yucatan Maya tossed in. Ed.]

as told by Kirby Vickery

A lady Zorrino (Skunk) had a small son named Tak Zóachil, which he shortened to 'Tak', and an even smaller daughter named Ti' Tu'. As luck would have it, this young skunk was baptized by his mother's good friend and compadre, a gentleman Báalam (Jaguar).

One day, it came time for Mr. Jaguar to go hunting and he decided that he would like to take Tak with him. So he went to ask permission. He told Mrs. Skunk that he wanted to take his Ahijado (godson) with him to start teaching him how to hunt for food.



Báalam

She replied, "I appreciate you taking such an interest in your godson but he is way too young and small to be taken out on a hunting trip." But the little one spoke out earnestly, "No mother, I had better go. What my Padrino (godfather) says is true. I need practice if I'm going to learn to hunt."

"But," she cried, "If you go, you'll be far away."

But the Tak was not to be put off and said, "I'm going, I'm going. Come on, let's go." And so, they set off, with Mr. Jaguar telling the young skunk that they were headed down toward a river to pick up some good game trails.

As is typical of youth, universally, the young Skunk kept asking, "When are we going to get there?"

"Soon." Mr. Jaguar told him. "You want to stay close and don't get lost." Then they came upon the river.

"This is where we're going to eat. You come on over here while I sharpen my knife," said Mr. Jaguar.

"All right," said the little skunk, looking at his godfather as he sharpened his claws, which he called his "knife."

"I've sharpened my knife. Now you're going to be on guard, because I need a nap. When you see them come, wake me up," said Mr. Jaguar.

"All right, Godfather" said the little skunk. Then Mr. Jaguar told him: "Don't shout. Just scratch my belly when they come so I won't alarm them. Oh yeah," he added, "don't wake me up if just any little old animals without antlers come along, only when the one with big antlers gets here."

"All right," said the little skunk. Then the one with the big antlers came, and the skunk awakened Mr. Jaguar by scratching his belly, and pointed out the deer to Mr. Jaguar, who then attacked the animal with big antlers.

"All right, my godson, we're going to eat this meat," said the Jaguar. "All right," said the little skunk. And so they ate and ate. "Now we're going to take whatever leftovers there are to your mother, since we are full. Your mother will have meat to eat, just as we did," said the Jaguar.

When they came back to the mother's house, he told her, "Look at the food here. Look, we've brought you some food that we hunted. Eat your fill of the meat, comadre." the Jaguar said and then turned and left.

"All right," said the skunk, and the family ate the meat until they were all full. They were so full that Yuum Zorrino (Papa Skunk) suggested that they all go out for a long walk.

...The Jaguar and The Skunk



Ti'. (champaalo' zorrino)

This was a good thing except when they got back they discovered that little Ti' wasn't with them and was probably lost in the woods.

Yuum (father) set up separate search areas for them and Tak was the last one back. But, when he finally showed up, he was followed by Ti' and everyone was very happy.

Later on, when mother skunk was putting the youngsters to bed, she asked Tak if he had to use any of his new found hunting skills with the Jaguar to find Ti'.

To which he replied, "No mother, I didn't have to at all, because Ti' Tu' (*In stinked*).

[*Yes, I know the word is: 'Instinto,' but I hope you don't hold it against me.*]



A young Báalam getting a real lesson in life.

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

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## Baja Highway

by Dan and Lisa Goy, exclusive to Manzanillo Sun

### Baja Highway: Mired in Myth-A Changing Reality

**Mexican Federal Highway** (*Carretera Transpeninsular* or *Transpeninsular Highway*) No. 1 follows the length of the Baja California Peninsula from Cabo San Lucas (BCS), at the southern end to Tijuana (BC) in the north. *Carretera Peninsular Benito Juárez* is the highway's official name and today it serves as Main Street for most of the settlements strung along its route. Most of its length is two lanes and construction was completed in 1973. It is also known simply as **Highway 1**, an appropriate number for the road that brought the modern world to Baja. The road turns into Interstate 5 at the international border with the United States south of San Ysidro, California and runs a length of 1,711 km (1,061 miles).



Construction north of La Paz

We first drove on Hwy 1 in November 1985. At the time, it did not seem that narrow, not surprising as we were driving a converted Ford Camper Van. Dan was 30, Lisa was 25 and the kids were 2 and 4 years old.

Even today, 95% of the highway is only two lanes wide, historically less than ten meters (19' wide with 9.5' lanes) in the least traveled middle of the route. The new highway was designed and built by modern engineers, so curves are broad and gentle, grades are moderate, and visibility is generally good.

Since water for construction was always scarce and sometimes had to be hauled scores of miles, an ingenious, water sparing, roadbed construction scheme was devised. The final surface was oiled and covered with fine gravel. Unfortunately, shoulders were few and far between. Except where the highway is actually cut into a hillside, it runs on top of an artificial ridge more than a meter high and only slightly wider than the roadbed. To build this ridge, earth was scraped from as much as a hundred yards on both sides, destroying the vegetation, much of it unusual endemic plants, and leaving a scar that will remain for decades if not for centuries. Protection against washouts, rather than maintaining the wildly beautiful desert environment, clearly had precedence in the engineers' plans.

The heavy investment in the new highway was justified by its attraction of vastly increased numbers of American tourists and the employment that will be created in providing them with services. The American visitors, prior to the paving of the highway have been of two classes, the drivers who traveled slowly, enjoying the scenery and the nearly empty country, camping out and spending relatively little money; another group flew to luxury resort hotels, particularly for fishing.



A dry lake

Unfortunately, Hwy 1 developed a well-deserved, notorious reputation over the years as a white-knuckle experience for RVers, particularly for those driving bigger rigs. The problem was a combination of the narrow roads, the lack of shoulders, no livestock fencing, unmarked speed bumps (topes), locals willing to chance fate at every corner and zero enforcement of

...Baja Highway

basic road rules. Thankfully, much has changed, particularly the highway, although Rule #1 of Baja remains "Don't Drive at Night", this is certainly not about banditos. This is about hitting a cow, donkey or horse!



Don't drive at night! - Hwy 1 Loreto - Constitución

Kilometre markers track the distance along Mex 1 through Baja California Norte in four segments. The first of these is the 109 km length from Tijuana to Ensenada, which is known informally as Mex 1 Libre to distinguish it from the parallel toll road. The second portion of signed road runs 196 km from Ensenada to San Quintín. The third segment comprises 128 km from San Quintín to the Bahía de los Ángeles junction. A final segment stretches 128 km from Bahía de los Ángeles junction to the border of Baja California Sur. The total length of Mexican Federal Highway 1 in Baja California Norte is 713 km (436 mi).



Hwy 1 comes with cows

After crossing state lines, the kilometre markers progress in the opposite direction. Baja California Norte markers count

from north to south, but Baja California Sur markers count from south to north. So, in opposite order from the road signage, a progressive route southward would span 221 km from Guerrero Negro to Santa Rosalía, 197 km from Santa Rosalía to Loreto, 120 km from Loreto to Ciudad Insurgentes, 240 km from Ciudad Insurgentes to La Paz, and 224 km from La Paz to Cabo San Lucas.



Hwy 1 rebuild has no shortage of equipment

You have had the option of a 4-lane, toll highway 1 for many years now from Tijuana to Ensenada and most of Highway 3 from Tecate to Ensenada through Baja wine country has been completely rebuilt, with lots of new 4-lane road, wide lane and equally wide, paved shoulders. The road construction over the last few years, from Ensenada to Cabo San Lucas, is nothing short of remarkable and extraordinary. Just this past season, a harrowing winding descent into the Santo Tomas Valley south of Ensenada was replaced as they literally cut directly through the mountain, a real engineering feat.

In the past, we used to keep a detailed report on where the new and improved highway replaced the old narrow road, now we just keep track of what old road remains. What we are finding is the worst pavement in one season seems to be replaced the very next season. Another significant factor is all the new bridges straddling the vados (dry creeks beds) that would commonly block the highway in those rare rain storms.

...Baja Highway

These are well constructed and very wide, a real pleasure to drive on, for sure.

Once you get to La Paz, the capital city of Baja Sur, you have two (2) options for your drive to Cabo San Lucas, Mex 1 down the east cape past Los Barriles and San Jose del Cabo or on Highway 19 through Todos Santos. Mex 1 is 4 lanes all the way to the turn off to the west and Todos Santos. After that, the road returns to 2 lanes.



Important not to speed in construction zones

The road is good, however, the first stretch where you drive past El Triunfo, San Antonio and San Bartolo is in the mountains with lots of switchback and blind corners. Take it slow and easy, listen for big rigs and busses coming from the other direction. Taking the Pacific route along Highway 19 through Todos Santos and Pescadero is a real treat, actually better than the I-5! With the exception of Todos Santos, you are on a divided, 4-lane highway for the entire drive. The section from Todos Santos south was just completed this year.

### Road Construction Zones

We always come across road construction and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. At the end of the day, this is all good as the highway will be better and safer to drive on. However, there are a few things you should note when you are in a Baja road construction zone. We all have the experience of road construction in the US and Canada on major transportation routes. Usually you find lots of flaggers, all is

well marked, plenty of cones are in evidence, speed signs abound and most everyone understands the need to slow down.

Unfortunately, this is not necessarily the case as we cross the Mexican border and head for Cabo San Lucas. Often locals, cars, busses and sometimes big rigs seize on the opportunity, with some folks going slow to pass and, since signage and markers are somewhat non-existent, flaggers are hard to find and there is zero enforcement by the police, these work zones can be mistaken for organized chaos. Our advice is simple go slow and leave lots of room for others to pass or get out of the way and enjoy the vehicular theatre.



Important to listen for those trucks coming around blind corners

Speed is the problem, not the road! Our experience on Baja demonstrates that the best advice we can provide RVers is to slow down, drive defensively, do not drive at night and you will be just fine. As we lead RV Caravans, we ensure we assist those wanting to pass (left turn signal when it is clear) and ensure there is always room for any passer to get back in the line. We have the benefit of radios to communicate to talk to each other.

If traveling with another couple, we recommend you purchase some they are relatively inexpensive. When facing oncoming traffic, particularly larger vehicles on the narrower stretches, slow down, move over and keep focused. Always keep your eyes open for large animals on the road.

...Baja Highway

Often, they blend in and are hard to see. If you come across an oncoming vehicle with their 4-way flashers on, take notice. Something ahead on the road needs your attention. We have lost a couple of mirrors over the years (we have the strap on kind) and, without exception, Mexicans are not to blame as 99% of the truck and bus drivers are great and always give you enough room.

Other RVers have knocked off all our mirrors, both passing us in the same direction and oncoming. Why? They were going fast, riding too close on the center line and, simply put, over-driving the road given their experience, size of rig and pavement conditions.

Baja is unforgiving for RVs that leave the highway, so you need to avoid this experience, remain between the lines and just enjoy this magnificent peninsula.

**Helpful Links**

[Baja Bound Insurance](#)

[Baja Nomad](#)

[Baja Insider](#)



Hwy 1 heading toward Ciudad Insurgentes

*Submitted by*

Dan and Lisa Goy

Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours

[www.BajaAmigos.net](http://www.BajaAmigos.net)

*... more pics follow*



Rebuild of a bridge on Hwy 1

Stay on the pavement on Baja



...Baja Highway



Wide loads on Hwy 1 south of Rosarito



Road to Punta Banda



Above: Requeson entrance construction



Left: Todos Santos Hwy 19 bypass

**Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile (Ted Bundy story)**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

**At the Movies**

Directed by: Joe Berlinger

Starring: Zac Efron, Lily Collins, Angela Sarafyan

*"A chronicle of the crimes of Ted Bundy from the perspective of Liz, his longtime girlfriend, who refused to believe the truth about him for years..."*

Thankfully, and in spite of what the movie title seems to suggest, the movie does not display the thirty-odd horrific crimes of murder that Ted Bundy was executed for (electric chair) in January of 1989.

What we have instead, is the relationship and romance between Ted and Liz while the accusations begin to play out and, ultimately, result in his arrest and imprisonment. In the movie, he is in permanent denial and there is some controversy over the way in which Liz was really told the truth. Perhaps a little Hollywood dramatics but, nonetheless, an absorbing story, to be sure.

Zac Efron plays the charming lead and bears resemblance to the good-looking Bundy, with all the charm that would be required to entice so many unsuspecting victims and keep his girlfriend believing in his innocence. This is long after the crimes had become world news and the subject of crowds of demonstrators that were seeking the death penalty for his crimes. We saw the movie in the theatre but it is slated for Netflix.

IMDB rates the movie at 6.7/10 based on 51,128 viewers comments.



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by Tommy Clarkson

### Healthy Plant Soil

Very few of us have “the perfectly balanced” natural soil mix for whatever tree, plant, flower, vine or succulent we’ve just acquired. Hence, it is important to know what our new acquisition might like in the way of additional nutrients. Doing so, we enter the interesting world of plant fertilizers and soil supplements.

One of the most important aspects of this issue lies in those numbers posted on bags or boxes of fertilizer. For instance, if you bought a commercial additive, such as Miracle-Gro, you might have noted it was valued at 24-8-16. Now, while recognizing that this is, obviously, a rather good chemical nutrient balance for flowering plants and vegetables, exactly of what is this a balance?

Well, those numbers are the NPK values. They represent the three “macro-nutrients” plants, generally, most seek: N – Nitrogen, P – Phosphorus and K – Potassium (Potash). I know, potassium doesn’t start with K, but just believe me on this, OK?

But what’s so important about these three? Nitrogen (N) is primarily responsible for leaf growth. Phosphorus (P) is a developer of roots and flowers. Potassium (K) is a generalist, helping overall plant functions.

In fact, different plant species like different combinations. In a wholly “ballpark” range, palms prefer a reasonably balanced mix, something like 16-16-16; cycads seem to care more for something around 24-7-8; bromeliads appreciate 18-9-27; and ferns generally like something around a 20-1-20, but tree ferns prefer 26-6-11.



It stores easily in covered plastic “trash cans”.

If the fertilizer contains only one of these macro-nutrients, the other values will be “0”. For instance, if it is labeled 0-10-0, then it only contains phosphorus. Obviously, the higher the number is, the greater the concentration of that nutrient will be. Hence 20-20-20 is twice the concentration as 10-10-10.

A bit of a naturalist and financial fuss-budget - which is to say that I can’t afford to buy copious bags of fertilizer - we extensively employ dried cow manure.

Why so? Well, dry, composted manure is rich in key nutrients, including various trace elements. I’ve read that its composition consists of approximately 70-80% of the needed nitrogen, 60-85% of the phosphorus, and 80-90% of the potassium – as well as other trace elements.

As to its application, it can be mixed into the soil or used as top dressing. We do the latter, applying about two to three inches topside about four times a year, allowing natural, seasonal rainfall, or regular watering, to dissolve and feed the roots.

...Healthy Plant Soil



Fresh from collection. It's not at all what you expected, is it?

What of other farmyard creatures', e'rrrrr, "leave behinds?? Obviously, the most important point to consider when choosing manure is its nitrogen content. The preponderance of common farm animals contains so much nitrogen that it 'burns' the plant roots. This renders the leaves brown, as opposed to the sought after, lush and green. Before plant application, these 'hot' manures must be composted with carbon-rich materials, like dry leaves or straw.

Seeing that excrement of cattle is the best carbon-to-nitrogen ratio, here is a list of commonly found farmyard manures: cow 25-1; horse 20-1; sheep 15-1; swine 12-1; and, poultry 7-1. (And, yes, for those more inquisitive of you, humankind's ratio is 10-1!)

The manure of large herbivores, like cows and horses, already has the ideal carbon-to-nitrogen ratio, allowing immediate tillage directly into the soil. These 'cool' manures generally contain bits of easy-to-see grass and are crumbly. The 'hottest' manures come from omnivores, like chickens and pigs, and have the less-than-desirable traits of being stinkier and slimier as well—not something I care for in my garden!

Relatively speaking, herbivore manure is "cool" and, as a rule, if it is aged a bit, fine for garden use composting.

But, let's return to those core nutrients. Those three are the proverbial nutrient "meat and potatoes" for healthy tropical plants. But, what else might we offer our leafy friends?



One of the "producers" of our natural fertilizer nonchalantly grazes in the background!

Though needed in lesser amounts than nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, calcium, magnesium, and sulfur are good secondary nutrients to keep in mind. In locales where the soil is acidic - often the case where there is high rainfall - these are important in keeping a good soil balance. (And, lime helps maintain a soil pH level, beneficial for plants.)

These six are the most important nutrients in maintenance of healthy soil. Other plant growth essentials include chlorine, iron, manganese, zinc, copper, boron, molybdenum, nickel, oxygen, carbon, and hydrogen. But—forgive the "dirty" pun—we needn't get that far into the weeds here and now!



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**The Loudest Voice**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

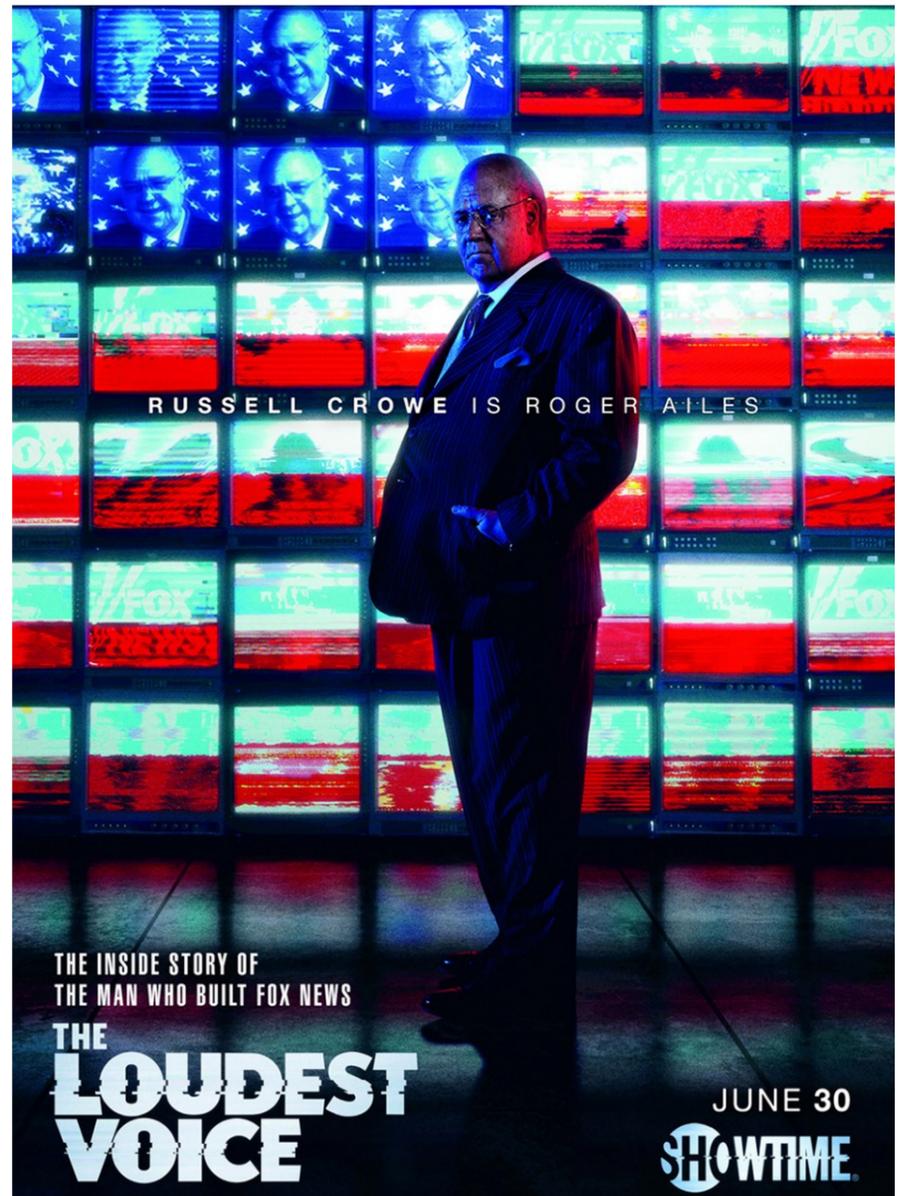
**At the Movies**

*Directed By:* Kari Skogland (3 episodes); Jeremy Podeswa (2 episodes); Scott Burns (1 episode) and Stephen Frears (1 episode)  
*Starring:* Russell Crowe, Sienna Miller, Seth McFarlane, Annabelle Wallis, Naomi Watts and others...

*"Based on the best-selling book, 'The Loudest Voice', by Gabriel Sherman, TV executive and media consultant Roger Ailes' life continues to be a source of interest to many due to the lasting effect he has had on the media world. Primarily focussing on the past decade when Ailes arguably became the Republican Party's de facto leader, and defining events in Ailes' life, including experiences with world leaders that helped launch Ailes' political career and the sexual harassment accusations and settlements that brought his Fox News reign to an end."*

We ended up 'binge' watching this series in two sittings on Crave TV and it is on Showtime as well. Enough cannot be said about the role played by Russell Crowe. He deserves every accolade in the 'book' for this stunning performance and should be up for many awards. The supporting cast is also tremendous, delivering a depiction that leaves one really wondering about politics.

Crowe is almost unrecognizable thanks to the amazing transformation by the make-up and prop crews. The only give-away is in his eyes. Wow! What a series. I give caution to those who can't handle fairly explicit sexual content but that's the real story and the subject of lawsuits and his ultimate downfall. A real dramatic feat.



IMDB rates the movie at 7.9/10 based on 2,864 viewers comments.

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advertisement



## Chiles en Nogada

A colorful dish the colors of the Mexican flag

Recipe for authentic chiles en nogada based on an old family recipe from Yuriria, Guanajuato that dates back to the 1950's. Filling includes beef, pork and biznaga, candied cactus that gives the dish a delicate sweetness.

Prep Time 45 minutes  
 Cook Time 1 hour  
 Total Time 1 hour 45 minutes  
 Servings 6  
 Calories 654kcal  
 Author Douglas Cullen

### Ingredients

- ✓ 6 large poblano chiles about 6" long

#### FILLING

- ✓ 10 ozs. beef
- ✓ 10 ozs. pork
- ✓ 1 medium carrot
- ✓ 1 medium white onion
- ✓ 1 medium waxy potato
- ✓ 1 medium zucchini squash
- ✓ 3 roma plum tomatoes
- ✓ 1/2 cup peas
- ✓ 8 ozs. biznaga or candied fruit or dried fruit
- ✓ 1/2 cup raisins
- ✓ 1/2 cup almonds
- ✓ 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- ✓ 1 tbsp brown sugar
- ✓ 1 tsp salt + salt to taste

#### NOGADA

- ✓ 1 1/4 cup Mexican cream do not use sour cream
- ✓ 1/2 cup shelled walnuts
- ✓ 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- ✓ 1 tbsp brown sugar

#### GARNISH

- ✓ 2 small pomegranates or 1 large
- ✓ 1 small bunch of parsley
- ✓ Instructions



#### PRECOOK THE MEAT

Place the meat in a pan and just cover with water. Bring to a simmer and cook the meat until just cooked through (about 20 minutes) turning once. When the meat is cooked, remove it from the pan and allow it to cool to the touch. Reserve the cooking liquid.

#### CHOP THE INGREDIENTS

- ⇒ Chop the meat into cubes first then chop finely.
- ⇒ Chop the onion, carrot, zucchini, potato and candied fruit into 1/4" cubes.
- ⇒ Chop the almond very fine.

#### PREPARE THE TOMATO BASE

- ⇒ Slice the tomatoes in half and add them to your blender with 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid from the meat.
- ⇒ Blend until smooth but not liquefied.

#### COOK THE FILLING

- ⇒ Fry the onions in 3 tablespoons of oil for 2 minutes.
- ⇒ Add the potatoes, stir and cook for 5 minutes.

... continued on next page

...Chiles en Nogada

- ⇒ Add the chopped meat and stir.
- ⇒ Add the pureed tomato.
- ⇒ Add the carrots, zucchini, and raisins and cook for 5 minutes until the tomato puree is starting to reduce.
- ⇒ Add the peas, biznaga or candied fruit and almonds. stir well.
- ⇒ Cook for 15 minutes until all of the vegetables are fully cooked and tender and the liquid is reduced.
- ⇒ Note: If the filling starts to get too dry before all of the ingredients are fully cooked add the cooking liquid from the meat a few tablespoons at a time as needed.

ROAST AND CLEAN THE POBLANO CHILES

- ⇒ Place the chiles over the open flame on the burner on your stove. Note: Do not leave chiles unattended.
- ⇒ Blacken and blister the skin on all sides.
- ⇒ When you have roasted all of the chiles place them in a plastic bag to sweat them.
- ⇒ Scrape the skin the chiles with the blade of a knife.
- ⇒ Using a small knife, gently split the chile down the side without cutting all the way through the tip of the chile.
- ⇒ Remove the seeds inside the chile with your fingers without tearing the chile.

PREPARE THE NOGADA

- ⇒ Place the cream, walnuts and cinnamon in your blender.
- ⇒ Blend until the walnuts are completely incorporated into the sauce and the sauce is smooth.

PREPARE THE GARNISHES

- ⇒ Slice the pomegranates in half.
- ⇒ Remove the seeds from your pomegranates.
- ⇒ Chop the parsley very finely reserving a few leaves to use as decoration.

SERVE THE CHILES EN NOGADA

- ⇒ Fill each poblano chile with enough filling so that it will just close. Use toothpicks to keep each chile closed if needed.
- ⇒ Place 1 stuffed chile on each plate.
- ⇒ Spoon nogada over the stuffed chile until the chile is completely covered.
- ⇒ Sprinkle pomegranate seeds and chopped parsley over the chile covered in nogada.
- ⇒ Decorate with a 1 or 2 parsley leaves.

Note: If you have time, allow the filling to rest for 2 hours so that the flavors can meld.

*Source image and recipe: Mexican Food Journal*



## House for Rent

### Golfers, take note!

**Beautiful furnished home for rent, well situated in Real del Country next to the golf course.**



The home has 3 bedrooms (each with air conditioning), 2 full, large bathrooms. One of the bedrooms is on the main (lower) floor and adjoins the downstairs bathroom. It comes with a fully equipped kitchen, a washer and dryer.



In addition to 2 patios, and an amazing view of hole 3 of the golf course, a third terraced deck overlooks the social area of the complex that offers a pool, tennis court and a palapa for your enjoyment.

This home comes with 24-hour security, wifi, cable TV and includes water, maintenance fee and covered, off-street parking for 1 car.

Rates:

\$2,100 USD monthly (3-6 months)

\$1,800 USD per month (7-12 months)

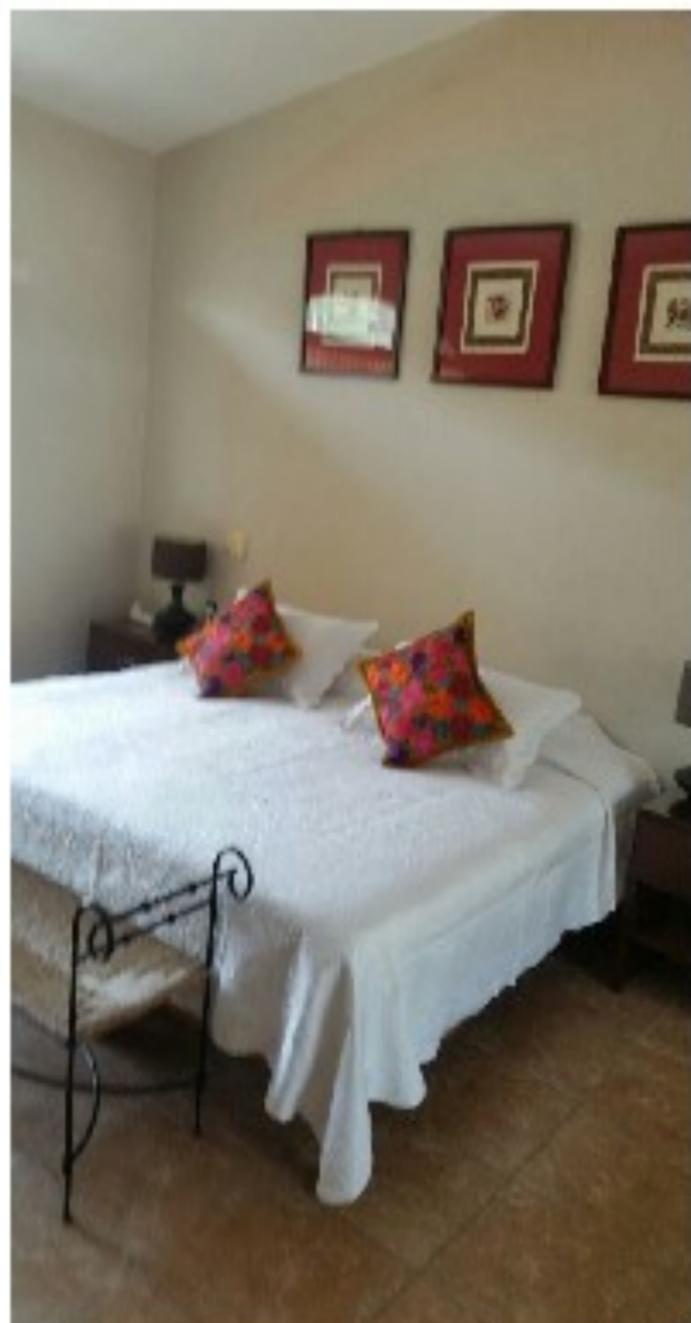
Ask about our rates for other lengths of stay.

Contact Yamil Achcar

yamil.achcar@gmail.com

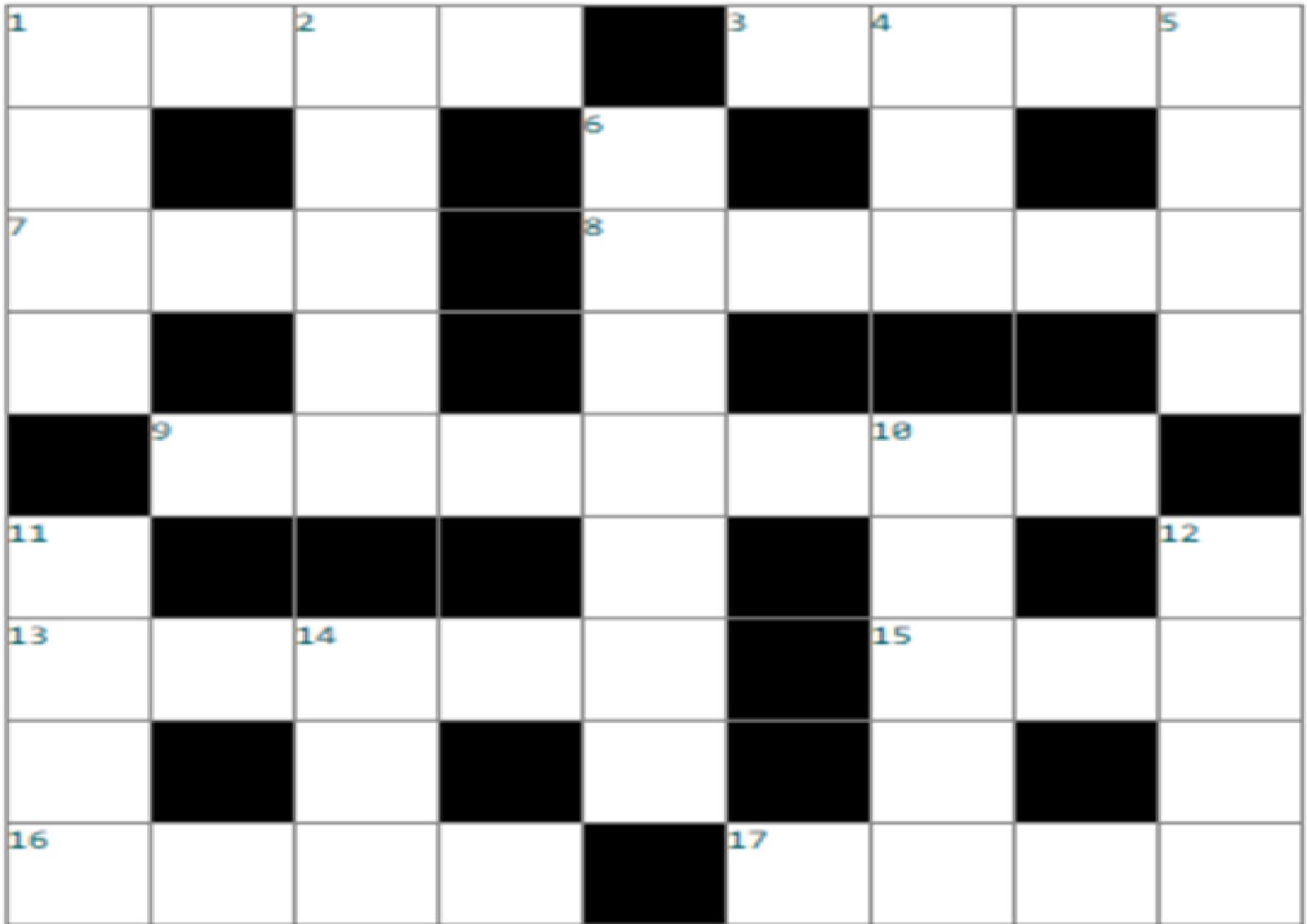
Phone or Whatsapp (+521) 314 102 4355, (+521) 314 106 0392

Landline (+52) 314 138 2725



Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition



Across

- 1 (she) doubted
- 3 which, what, of those mentioned
- 7 two
- 8 (I) brought
- 9 (they) will wet
- 13 (I) cried
- 15 anger
- 16 love
- 17 (I) ate

Down

- 1 finger
- 2 desire, something wished for; wish
- 4 (feminine of) a
- 5 to read
- 6 across (1,6)
- 10 attic
- 11 (I) was smelling
- 12 (I) exited
- 14 bear

Last month's crossword solution:



lexisrex.com

**Mexican Independence - ¡Viva México!**

from the Path to Citizenship series

The Mexican struggle for independence began with the Grito de Dolores (Cry of Dolores). In September of 1810, Miguel Hidalgo, the parish priest of the small town of Dolores in central Mexico, uttered the country’s cry for independence. He called not only for liberation from Spain, but also for the end of slavery and the return of lands to the indigenous inhabitants.

A highly educated creole, Hidalgo had read the works of Enlightenment writers and had been an important community organizer in Dolores. While Hidalgo’s efforts led to both the stripping of his priestly title and his gruesome execution, his cry set in motion the Mexican fight for independence.

Hidalgo’s visual trademarks were his baldness and religious dress—both shown in Antonio Serrano’s Portrait of Miguel Hidalgo. He is depicted inside his study, minimally decorated with books, a desk, and a small reproduction of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

While the library reflects Hidalgo’s erudition, the depiction of the iconic Virgin of Guadalupe alludes to both his faith and the image’s historical significance in the struggle for independence: Hidalgo marched with a banner decorated with the Virgin of

Guadalupe, a foil to the Virgin of los Remedios, which was used by the Spanish loyalists. In this way, the Virgin of Guadalupe became a symbol of Mexican resistance and independence, and was featured on the earliest Mexican flag.

After Hidalgo’s failed attempts at instigating a revolution, José María Morelos, another revolutionary priest, and the army general Agustín Iturbide continued the struggle (Iturbide had originally fought for the Spanish royalists, but he switched sides following his dismissal from the armed forces due to accusations of unwarranted violence and misuse of funds).

The Plan of Iguala, a proclamation which Iturbide authored together with the rebel leader Vicente Guerrero in 1821, proclaimed Mexico’s independence from Spain while reaffirming the country’s alliance with the Roman Catholic Church and establishing equal rights for both criollos and peninsulares. On August 24, 1821, with the signing of the Treaty of Córdoba, Spain finally recognized the independence of the First Mexican Empire, led by none other than Iturbide himself.

Source (images and article): SmartHistory.org

