

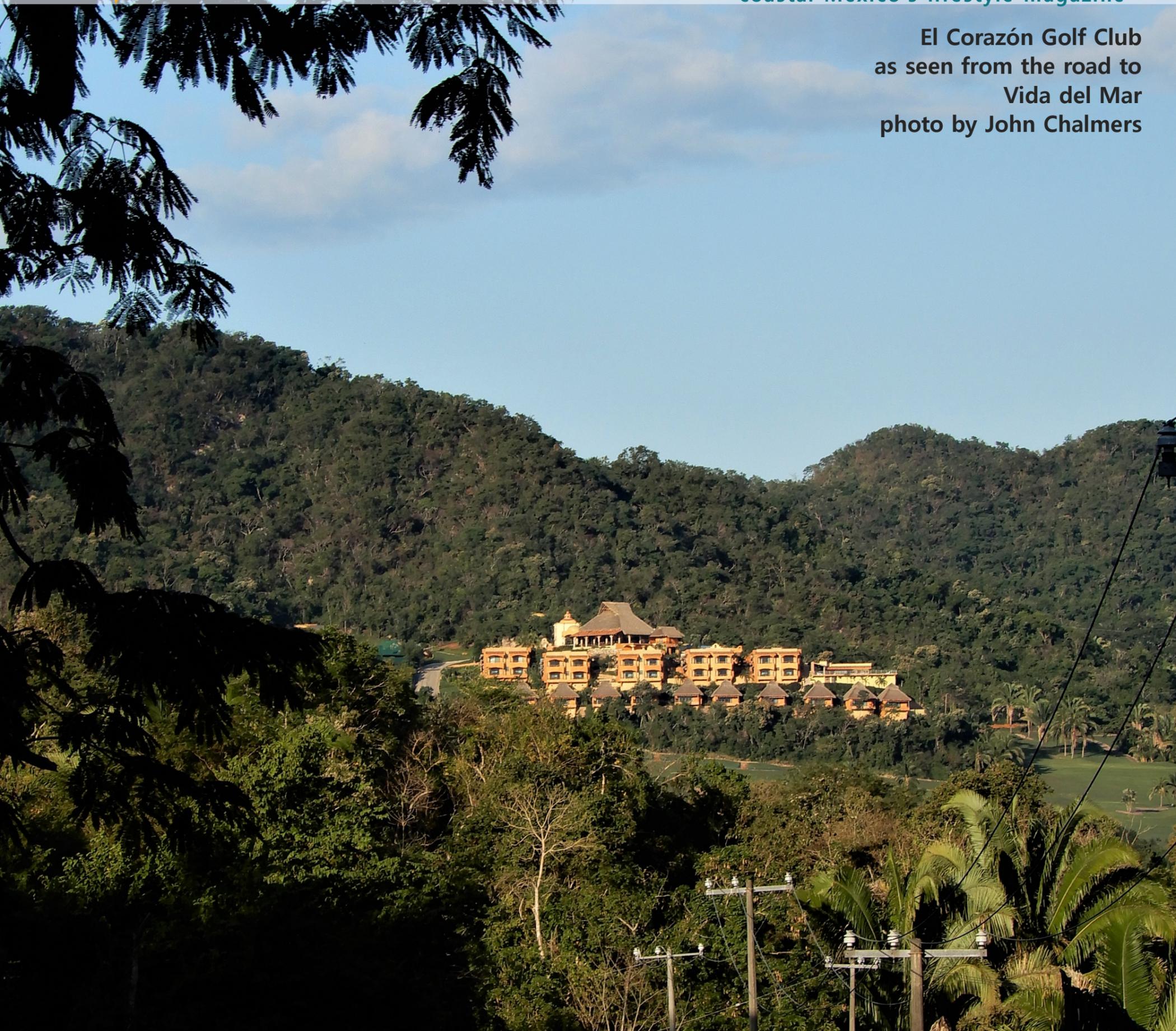


# Manzanillo SUN

January 2020

coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine

**El Corazón Golf Club  
as seen from the road to  
Vida del Mar  
photo by John Chalmers**



- Good Deeds**
- Findings in Nature**
- RV Travel**
- Nature's Wonders**
- History and Mythology**
- Recipe**
- Learn Spanish**
- Path to Citizenship**

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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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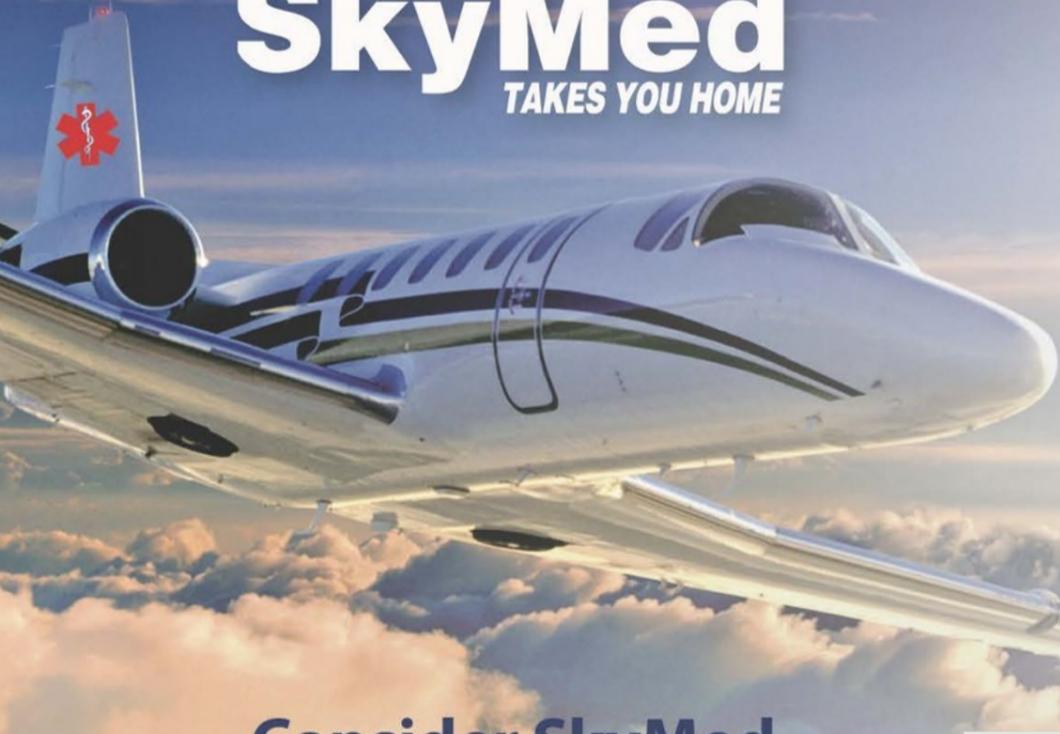
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## Celebration Under the Stars

story and photos by John Chalmers

On December 20, 2019, there was much to celebrate for Casa Hogar Los Angelitos (CHLA), in a dinner and dance performance staged at the Centro de Artes Los Angelitos (CALA). Billed as "A Christmas Night Under the Stars / Noche de Navidad Bajo Las Estrellas," the event featured a catered dinner followed by a Christmas pageant of music, song and dance to tell the story of Christmas.



Complete with shepherds, the Three Wise Men, angels, and King Herod, along with Mary, Joseph and the Christ child, the performance featured dozens of the children from Casa Hogar. They appeared in appropriate costumes for the staging produced through the Expressive Arts program of Casa Hogar.

Beginning with opening remarks from CHLA director, Dr. Guiber Núñez, and founder, Nancy Nystrom, some 200 guests from the Manzanillo area and winter resident snowbirds were in store for a splendid evening under the stars. In his remarks, Dr. Núñez said, "The purpose of Casa Hogar is to transform the lives of children." Indeed it has. Living at Casa Hogar, and receiving an education with purpose in life, are disadvantaged children, from tots to teens, who have been orphaned, abandoned, abused and neglected, but grow up in a loving environment in the best possible home situation.

The success of Casa Hogar, since it began in 1996, is seen today as a vibrant home, cultural and educational centre for some 75 young people, ranging from toddlers to those now attending and graduating from university, while still making

Casa Hogar their home. The youthful residents receive 24-hour care, with medical and dental needs, and education in English, and they attend public schools in the community.

For this special evening, there was more than Christmas to celebrate. In November 2019, a [Put the Roof On](#) campaign, in memory of the late Dick Oberman, ran from November 1 until Thanksgiving Day, by which time there was certainly cause for thanks! With a target of \$30,000 USD in donations, which was matched by supporters of Casa Hogar and friends of Dick, the goal was reached. There are now over \$60,000 USD to erect a roof for the CALA facility.

Don Carstensen, a member of the fund raising effort to Put the Roof On, says, "The campaign exceeded its financial goal. The roof will be 'Put On.' This result will permit the facilities of CALA to be more suitable for a broad range of performances, including those that will contribute to the financial welfare of CALA and Casa Hogar Los Angelitos. It, ultimately, is all about the children in the Manzanillo community and at CHLA."

...Celebration Under the Stars



Merchandise supporting CHLA included jewelry, cookbooks, gift hampers and CHLA baseball caps. Shopping at special events is part of the fun for diners!



Spending the winter at Vida del Mar and shopping before dinner, left to right are Faye Luscombe, Robin Robinson and the author's wife, Linda Chalmers.

In her opening remarks to the audience, Nancy Nystrom thanked all for coming and supporting Casa Hogar. "For the first time, many were able to see the potential of CALA as it becomes more beautiful with each new development," says Nancy. "Our children were so proud to be able to present their program as a gift for the community and we are looking forward to making this an annual Christmas event."

She added, "CALA represents the potential for future sustainability for Casa Hogar Los Angelitos, as well as a place where we can provide spectacular special programs for the Manzanillo community. Our dream to provide a cultural and educational center for Manzanillo is becoming a reality."

With the construction of the roof, that dream is coming true, and the roof will serve as a fine memorial to Dick Oberman, who was respected by his Manzanillo friends, business associates, friends at home in Iowa and those from the winter home he shared with his wife, Joyce, at Vida del Mar. "Dick was a long-time supporter of Casa Hogar Los Angelitos, with a heart for children in less fortunate circumstances, in supporting a solution that holds great promise to address their needs," says Don Carstensen.

While the stars of the Christmas celebration under the stars were the young performers, the success of the show is a result of a team effort. Musical direction was by Alfonso Borrego, and the dance performance was choreographed by Ballet Folklórico

director, Marisol González, and assistant director, Jorge Meza. Under their leadership the dedication, talent and professionalism of the young cast was clearly evident, as was the quality of their instruction.

The celebrations will continue on January 30, 2019, when the annual fund-raising benefit dinner with silent and live auction is held for the first time at CALA. The occasion is vital for ongoing support of CHLA.

Whether it is held this year under the stars or under a roof, once again it will feature a splendid folklórico performance of Mexican culture and history, presented in dance and music by the amazing and loveable cast from their Casa Hogar Los Angelitos home.

Nancy Nystrom expressed hope that the Christmas pageant may become an annual event. She also pointed out that the January 30 annual benefit night dinner and auction will be held at the CALA facility for the first time. By that time, the roof may be complete.

To learn more about Casa Hogar Los Angelitos, and how you can donate to support its work, visit the page of its parent organization, The Children's Foundation International, at [www.tcfcares.org](http://www.tcfcares.org).

you can reach John at [john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com](mailto:john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com)

... more pics follow

...Celebration Under the Stars



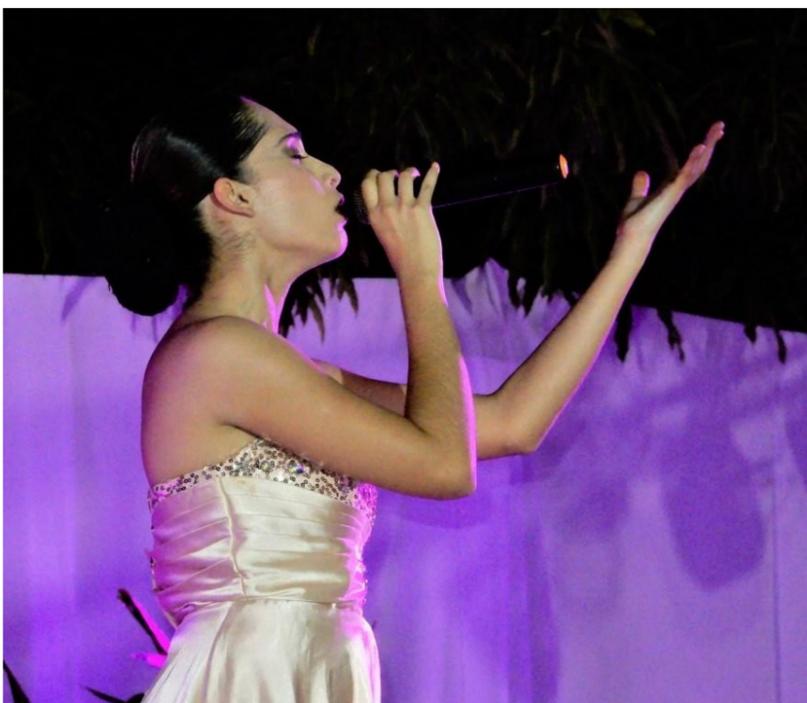
CHLA director, Guiber Núñez, left, and founder Nancy Nystrom welcomed all guests to the celebration and spoke of the purpose and future goals of Casa Hogar Los Angelitos.



In the first Christmas pageant at the Centro de Artes Los Angelitos, some 200 guests were treated to a fine dinner, and a special Christmas performance by the young people of Casa Hogar Los Angelitos.



Grace, beauty, costumes and precise performance by the girls and young men of Casa Hogar Los Angelitos all contribute to a great evening of entertainment.



Soloist (left), Karina Garcia Magaña, sang a stirring version of "O Holy Night" and, above, is seen singing with the children's choir under direction of CHLA's musical director, Alfonso Borrego.

...Celebration Under the Stars



At left, Mary is visited by an angel, and at right, King Herod meets with the Magi.



In this classic scene of the Christmas story, the shepherds visit Mary and Joseph in the stable where Christ was born.

...Celebration Under the Stars



Funds from the Put the Roof On campaign in memory of long-time supporter, Dick Oberman, will be used to build a roof over the stage at CALA, as the facility continues to expand and improve for the benefit of the broader Manzanillo community as a performance center.



Even after the performance concluded the evening, no one was in a rush to leave CALA, as the evening of Celebration Under the Stars provided an opportunity for all to visit and savour the special event.

For more information about The Children's Foundation International, Casa Hogar los Angelitos and Ballet Folklórico Los Angelitos, connect with them on Facebook.





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## Rip Currents, Not Rip Tides

by Terry Sovil

While in Manzanillo, what is better than to sit on the beach, or on your deck, and watch the ocean. So big. So beautiful. So mysterious. So great for a swim. Don't let a rip current turn a fun beach trip or swim into a problem.

### What is a Rip Current?

Rip currents are strong offshore flows that happen when breaking waves are pushing water up the beach face. The piled-up water must escape out to the sea as water seeks its own level. The return flow, or backwash, is generally relatively uniform along the beach so rip currents are not present. If the water has an area where it can flow back out to the ocean more easily, like a break in a sandbar, then a rip current may form. Rip currents are generally small in width but there can be several present at the same time, spaced along the shore.



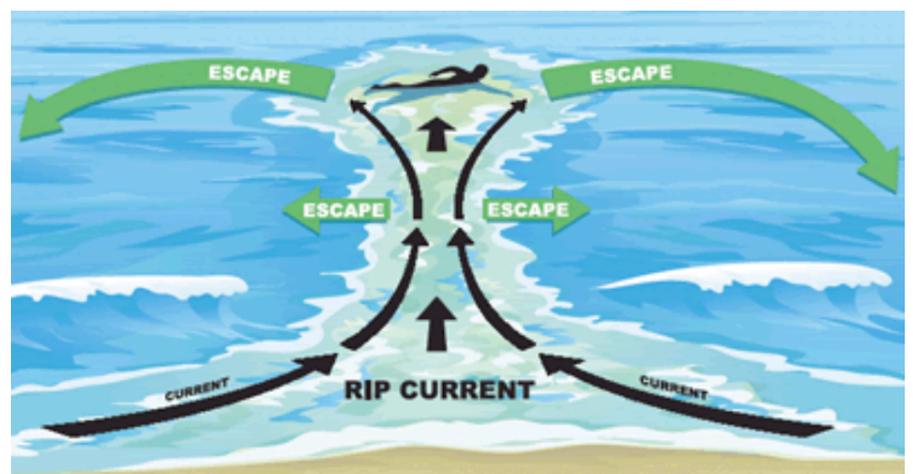
A rip current is a narrow channel of water flowing AWAY from the shore. They can be up to 30 meters or about 99 feet wide. A rip current can move as fast as 8 feet/2.5 meters per second. That's fast!

These currents are strong. They can overcome the strongest of swimmers. As waves come in and hit the shore, water builds up and has to go somewhere. The water often won't return the way it came in. It will take the path of least resistance.

You can detect a rip current in about knee-to-waist high water. It may be difficult to escape by walking back to shore against the current once you are in chest-deep water.



Rip currents do occur, regularly, in Manzanillo. Rip currents are the reason why some areas and countries have lifeguards in big beach areas. There are no lifeguards in Manzanillo, most of the year. About 100 people are killed yearly by rip currents in the USA alone. And 80% of lifeguard responses are for people caught in a rip current.



One way to help stay safe is to recognize the colors of flags on the beach. In Manzanillo, RED indicates a rip current or other hazard. YELLOW means conditions are rough. GREEN is all clear, as is no flag at all. If you are ever caught in a rip current, do not turn back into it to try to swim to shore. Swim PARALLEL to shore until you are out of the current.

...Rip Currents, Not Rip Tides

**What Is A Rip Tide?**

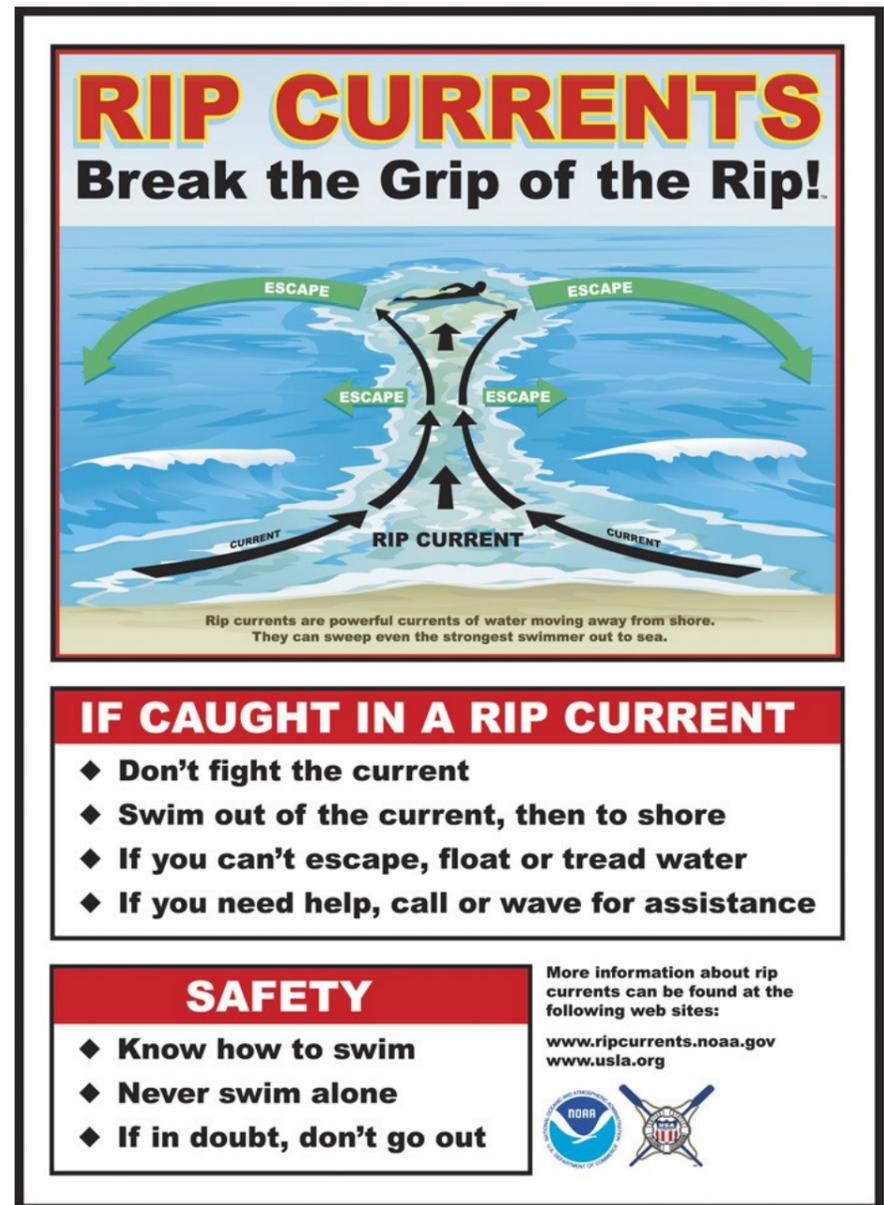
A rip tide is a powerful current caused by the tide pulling water through an inlet along a barrier beach. When there is a falling or ebbing tide, the water is flowing strongly through an inlet toward the ocean, especially one stabilized by jetties.

During slack tide, the water is not moving for a short time until the flooding or rising tide starts pushing the sea water landward through the inlet. Fishermen are aware of these tidal flows and make their plans accordingly. Rip tides also occur in constricted areas in bays and lagoons where there are no waves. These powerful reversing currents are also named tidal jets by coastal engineers and they carry large quantities of sand that form banks in the ocean opposite the inlet channel.

There are 4 "types" of rip tides. A flash rip forms suddenly and can disappear as fast, normally during a storm when wave conditions increase quickly. A fixed rip forms between sand bars and deeper water channels. They may last for days, weeks or even months. This is the most common rip tide. Mega rips are the largest and form during a hurricane or very heavy rain-storm. A permanent rip happens when there are physical obstacles that keep it there permanently, a pier, jetty, rock formation or coral reef for example.

A rip current is NOT like a rip tide. A rip current is not a tide at all, but a rip tide is water moving through inlets on a beach, harbor and estuaries. Rip currents form anywhere where breaking waves occur. This can include large lakes and those like the Great Lakes in the central east part of the USA bordering Canada. The bottom makes no difference, whether rocks or sand. When waves break strongly and then weakly at a different location, this causes the water to move in a circle and creates a narrow current that moves away from the shore. This is a rip current.

You should be able to identify a rip current. There are 3 signs: a choppy channel churning or foaming of water with a circular motion, a line of debris or even seaweed and sand moving out to sea and a disorganized pattern of incoming waves or a muddy color. They look like a "break" in the incoming tide. See the photo. If there is no lifeguard, look for other swimmers and, if none are there, be cautious of entering the water. Never go swimming alone on an empty beach!



If you should get caught in a rip current, don't panic. I know, "easy to say", but realize that the current will carry you out and then the current will fade. It will pull you farther from shore but not underwater. Don't struggle but swim parallel to shore. Yes, you will continue moving away from the shore but you will make headway in your swim.

Struggling and swimming against the current (back toward shore) is how most people die. If you can't swim out of the current, continue to tread water and float on your back. If you break free, swim back to shore on a diagonal path so you don't get caught again. Raise both hands and call for help if you need it. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution recommends the three R's: Relax, Raise the alarm, wait for Rescue.

Watch this 1:40 video and you will see some of the ways rip currents appear:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qZRIN30Ugo>

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

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***Tuesdays at Oasis***



## Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja

by Dan and Lisa Goy

A tour of Baja (Baja California and Baja California Sur states in Mexico) would not be complete without an opportunity to shop for those special items "*Hecho en México*" (Made in Mexico). Many RVers tell us they rated shopping at local markets, shops and beach vendors as one of the most rewarding travel experiences they encounter.

Sometimes these are gifts for friends and family, creating a new Mexican theme at home, adding a new mat or blanket to the RV or perhaps just something tangible to remind visitors of their wonderful Baja experience. The benefit of traveling in an RV is you have a lot more room to store your purchases and our experience is that folks do exactly that!



Good selection at Artesanos

Mexican vendors do love a good barter but, beware: if they feel you are trying to devalue their goods too much, they will become upset and may even refuse to trade with you. You also have to be aware that all shops are not created equal. In some stores, items are priced as the price you pay, although sometimes even this is not always true.

Generally speaking, you will find goods that don't have a price tag, at markets or shops in tourist areas, are subject to negotiation. Almost always, beach vendors (we have never found one that doesn't) will bargain.

Where you start and where you end up is totally in your control. Always keep in mind the incredible amount of effort and cost that goes into producing goods when considering how hard you want to bargain.

**We shop at many stops and locations across Baja on our tours. These are our favourite five (5):**

### La Bufadora

La Bufadora is a marine geyser or blowhole located on the Punta Banda Peninsula. We stay in an RV park in Punta Banda, about 10km (6 miles) away and have an excursion to this site. La Bufadora is one of the largest blowholes in North America, often shooting upwards more than 30 metres (100 ft) above sea level. The exhibit hall rooftop is approximately 24 metres (80 ft) above sea level and the blowhole frequently sprays above it. La Bufadora is a very popular tourist destination and regularly draws tourists visiting Ensenada, located roughly 30 kilometres (19 mi) to the north. On days when cruise ships visit Ensenada, several bus lines compete to bring tourists to the site. The last few miles of the drive are especially beautiful, with long vistas over the sea from cliff tops, but fog can sometimes obscure the views.



Dress vendor at La Bufadora

In addition to this unique geological water feature, there is what can only be described as a gauntlet of vendors, often selling regional arts and crafts, curios and food, that congregate in small shops crammed side-by-side along a narrow asphalted road to the blowhole.

Although this may be a little intimidating, there are great shopping opportunities here, including a good selection and terrific prices. **Do not take your RV here** unless it is a small one, really small.

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja

As you approach the entrance, you will have several parking attendants attempting to flag you in. Just keep going slowly! You can park at a municipal lot a short walk before the actual attraction for 25 pesos, saving you time and money and shopping on your terms. The vendors here are assertive and very active, however they are also very respectful and lots of fun. Just enjoy the experience.

**Bahía Concepción**

This bay is 23 miles long and the largest on Baja, located a short drive south of Mulegé and largely dominated by expats. The waters off most beaches are so warm, calm and shallow that even the most timid landlubbers enjoy frolicking in the waters of Bahía Concepción. The experience of camping on a beach in the Bay of Concepción so grows on RVers that many spend the entire winter. The "large island" that can be seen way across the bay from these beaches is actually a large barren peninsula. There are twelve (12) beaches used by many RVers, all dry camping (boondocking) and here solar power is king! Santispac, El Requesón, La Perla, Playa Los Cocos and El Coyote are the most popular with campers. All our groups now stay at Santispac.



Mercado de Artesanos

Many Mexican families work the beaches collecting camping fees, selling baking, fruits, vegetables and fresh seafood. Mulegé vendors sell hats, hammocks, blankets, carvings, t-shirts, jewellery and much more. The regular vendors are Adolfo, Pileo and Armando. Both Adolfo and Armando have shops in the village of Mulegé. Adolfo is famous for his standard sales pitch "What colour? How many? Almost free!" These are our friends and we always look forward to seeing them as they are to meet our new guests. This can be a short "no thank you"

and they quickly move on or, if you are interested, they can empty their entire stock onto the beach and, an hour later, you are still bartering!

**Artesanos**

Located just on the outskirts of **Cabo San Lucas** at Km 4 on Mexico 1, Artesanos offers a wide variety of furniture, pottery, copper, pewter, ceramics and much more, mostly made in Mexico. They have over 40,000 square feet of space and probably have the best selection of these items in all of Los Cabos. Artesanos began as just one man selling his wares next to a vacant lot. Due to its popularity, the business slowly and persistently grew until it evolved into the huge business that now occupies the same area.



Mercado de Artesanos

Artesanos is where homeowners and restaurateurs alike go, from throughout the area, to shop for Mexican furnishings, dishes, and glassware, along with colorful handicrafts and ornaments. We were first introduced to Artesanos years ago as it is only about 150 meters or yards past the Vagabundos Restaurant and Trailer Park (now closed). You should leave at least an hour to look through their vast variety and all prices are fixed, so no bargaining. **The prices are excellent and they are open 9 am – 2 pm Monday through Friday.**



Dan and Adolfo

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja

### Factory of Mexican Blankets

This shop is located at KM 69 on the west coast highway #19 between Cabo San Lucas and Todos Santos, just south of Pescadero, owned and operated by Efrén and Viviana Parada. There are many shops in Pescadero, a real diverse collection of cultural delights, including the best handcrafted products of Mexico mixed in with the usual array of souvenirs. We always look forward to this stop, as do our guests.

There is lots of parking across the highway for everyone and it is easy to see any traffic coming both ways, which is important with RVs. We usually give Efrén a heads up as to when we will arrive and he often has fresh sweet buns baking in his outside beehive oven, a nice touch that is very much appreciated.



Stacks of beautiful blankets!

Although they have this large roadside shop, their primary business is supplying handcrafted blankets, spreads and rugs to the major hotels and tourists shops in Los Cabos. Most of the products are actually made by the family business in Tlaxcala (we visited the family there in 2016) and ship to El Pescadero. They do have a large loom on site and Efrén does make some rugs on site. Sometimes the shop is staffed by his mom, a great cook and hard bargainer, for sure. **Bargain and barter is the *modus operandi* here. Be fair and we assure you the price will be right.** The selection is really outstanding.

### Ibarra's Pottery

This is one of the best-kept shopping secrets in La Paz. This is a family run ceramic pottery business, founded in 1958 by Mr. Julio Ibarra and his wife Juanita. They had both attended the Art School of San Carlos located in Pachuca, Hidalgo. In 1987, they moved to the Ciudad de La Paz. Their ceramic pieces have achieved national and international prestige, since this pottery

has reached all parts of the world. These exquisite ceramics come from a great family tradition known for their unique designs, by mixing lines, colors and strokes; these unrepeatable pieces are completely made by hand. Sadly, Julio passed away a couple of years ago.

This family-owned pottery studio has a large selection of beautiful ceramic goods, from small items (decorative tiles, kitchen items, dishes) to large pots and household decorative furnishings. Designs go from traditional to contemporary and you can actually watch potters working on site shaping the clay and painting the items. Prices are fixed, with a small markup if you use a credit card. They will also make items to order with a week or two turnaround.

Located four blocks inland from the Malecón at 625 Guillermo Prieto between Torre Iglesias and República. Each piece is individually hand painted or glazed, then fired, is lead-free and microwave safe. Open Monday to Saturday, from 9 am to 3 pm, please make sure you say hello to our friend Vicky who continues to operate the family business.

### Honourable mention

Of course, we stop at many more locations and shops than these and would be remiss if we did not mention the following:

- ✓ Luz Galván's Art Gallery at Guillermo's Place (**Bahía de Los Ángeles**)
- ✓ The Blown Glass Factory (**Cabo San Lucas**)
- ✓ Conchita's Curios Arts and Crafts (**Loreto**)
- ✓ Gecko's Curios, Gifts and Mexican Artesanías (**Loreto**)
- ✓ Art District (**San José Del Cabo**)
- ✓ Mercado Madero (**Historic Centre La Paz**)

Please remember that the people selling arts, crafts and artifacts are often artisans or vendors making a simple living and supporting a family. Some may also be the creators of the wares they are offering for sale, so any deep devaluation of their work might be taken personally. Be fair and reasonable and better discounts are always given when purchasing multiple items.

Enjoy the experience!

*Submitted by*

Dan and Lisa Goy

Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours

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

... more pics follow

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Blanket factory



Blanket room



Blanket loom



Artesanos in Los Cabos

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Vicky Ibarra and Dan



Blown glass factory in Cabo



Blanket factory



Glass factory in Cabo



...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Adolfo's nephew at Santispac



Locals market in La Paz



La Bufadora road



La Bufadora shop



Shops and more shops in La Bufadora

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Loom at KM 69, the blanket factory



Quality product at Efrén's



Mercado Madero in La Paz



Luz's art gallery at Bahía de los Ángeles



Vicky Ibarra

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Pileo and Lisa



Vivianne at the blanket factory



La Bufadora vendors



Wonderful selection at the blanket factory



The blown glass factory, Cabo San Lucas

...Five Favourite Places to Shop, Bargain and Barter on Baja



Santispac beach shopping



Beach shopping can take time



Merchant wares at La Bufadora



T-shirts anyone?



Visitors blowing glass



by Tommy Clarkson

**Yellow Ginger** *Hedychium flavescens*

**Family** *Zingiberaceae*

**Also known as** Yellow Ginger-Lily, Cream Garland-Lily or Cream Ginger

Walking through our gardens this morning, I pondered about which of my tropical plant family I should next write. As I do every time I walk down into them, I strolled past my potted Yellow Ginger on the Transition Terrace with its somewhat butterfly-shaped flowers. I was several steps beyond it when I asked myself, when I had written about this attractive mainstay - long a part of the beauty that constitutes Ola Brisa Gardens. Lo and behold, I realized, I never had . . . and fast discerned that a surprising few other tropical plant writers had as well! So, based on personal experience, supported by a few others, here we go.

I learned from Kirsten Albrecht Llamas' book "Tropical Flowering Plants" that the Yellow Ginger originated in northeastern India and Nepal. She and other botanical purists describe the *Hedychium flavescens* as a "perennial rhizomatous herb." In bright, filtered light, they grow to between six to ten feet (1.83–3.04 meters) preferring organically rich, well-draining soil. Seasonal, they will commence blooming with cooling evening temperatures. Depending upon one's plant, atop two-foot (.61 meter) long leaves, those beautiful, somewhat upright, elliptic lip shaped blooms may range from a pale to creamy yellow.



In bright, filtered light, they grow to between six to ten feet.

Graeme Teague, in his book, "Tropical and Garden Flower Identification," informs us that "The genus name derives from two ancient Greek words, *hedys* meaning "sweet" and *chios* meaning "snow." He also says that "*Hedychiums* are more cold hardy than most gingers, and are often called Hardy Ginger Lily." As an interesting aside, it may be worthy of noting that Sterling Macoboy, in "Tropical Flowers and Plants," shares that "The related Kahili Ginger (*Hedychium gardnerianum*) is . . . (even) more spectacular, producing eighteen inch spikes of scarlet and yellow blossoms." However, it is poisonous to animals, and can be fatal if enough of the plant is ingested.

Interestingly, one of the best and most complete descriptions of this plant was found online on the Philippine Medicinal Plants site, which said, and in this case I am not going to convert measurements from metric to standard, but may post a few botanical term definitions: "*Hedychium flavescens* is a robust perennial herbaceous herb with leafy shoots growing 1 to 3 meters high. Rhizomes are large and branching, thick and

...Yellow Ginger



What with the attractive flowers its leaves are actually rather plain.

fleshy, up to 3.5 centimeters in diameter. Leaves are stiff, green sessile [attached directly by its base], oblong to lanceolate, up to 60 centimeters long, and 12 centimeters wide. Flowers are fragrant, inflorescences erect, up to 20 centimeters long, 8 centimeters wide, loosely imbricate [arranged so as to allow overlapping, like roof tiles] with a yellowish corolla, and staminodal [a sterile or abortive stamen, frequently resembling a stamen without its anther tip] that is obcordate [heart shaped], claw-like, reddish yellow at base. Fruits are globular capsules with three valves, containing many seeds."

It goes on to elaborate that, its "oil has shown central nervous system tranquilizing effects and anthelmintic activities (with) studies (having) shown antiproliferative, antibacterial, antifungal, mosquito repellent properties." Beyond that, its "young buds and flowers are eaten or used as flavoring."

As to folkloric medicinal uses, "In the Philippines, the base of the stem (is) chewed or drunk as decoction for tonsillitis. In the Moluccas, juice from the stem (is) applied as a remedy for swellings. In Comoros, Africa, crushed rhizomes (are) used to treat fractures. In India, rhizomes (are) used by tribal groups of Bijar as (a) febrifuge, antirheumatic, tonic and stimulant.

In Manipur, India, rhizomes (are) used for treatment of various skin infections. A boiled extract of rhizome with salt (is) used as (a) gargle for throat swellings and also taken orally for abdominal swellings, colic and hemorrhoids. Crushed extract of fresh rhizome (is) used with honey for chest congestion, cough, asthma, and bronchitis."

As a nice addition to your garden, maintenance is minimal. One of your biggest chores will be to simply cut back the canes when they start to yellow. Most species can handle full, bright sun, but the flora will remain attractive longer in filtered light.

Other places much more than that is required inasmuch as, for instance, in New Zealand, it is considered an invasive weed!

Within the *Hedycium* genus – commonly called Ginger Lilies – are around fifty different species – all from Southeastern Asia and Indomalaysia.

Some have fragrant flowers from which oil is extracted for making perfume. However, sadly, ours does not. (*Might one say that ours has no "common scents?"*)

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## MESOAMERICAN CONNECTIONS

as told by Kirby Vickery

When people talk of the Mesoamerican Societies and their culture, we have a tendency to skim a little (actually a lot) and forget what was here in Mexico and further south before Sr. Hernán Cortés took it over in the name of the King of Spain and the Catholic Church.

What he did, and what he changed, was honorable to his own culture and time. With the prevalence of the Christian religion behind him, he was able to effect this major change on the entire face of the American continents, to include Central America, so much so that it has taken all this time, into the twenty-first century to be able to look back and see what actually happened with any kind of depth of understanding. I don't want to be pompous but, as a student of history, I have found that way too many stories in current text of the Americas have a tendency to start with explorers, like Columbus and Cortés while leaving out eons of time and culture out in the cold, so to speak.

We modern people shouldn't try to justify, nor condemn, this past, nor the people that acted within it because they did what they did with their societies behind them. Historians are charged with the responsibilities of reporting the past as it actually happened. What we are seeing is the result of a totally destroyed society(ies) at the hands of an old world invasion, greed and subsequent total domination of what was left of the civilizations of the New World at the time.

What I find confusing, even though its intent is the antithesis, is today's historical text speaking of this history in 'Eras.' They, meaning archeologists and learned historians, have the entire pre-Colombian history broken out into seven eras. One of them even has two names. This appears to help the student of Mesoamerica realize the history through the timelines and aid 'modern' folks in obtaining a grasp of the immensity of the culture that was on its downhill slide when Cortés got here.

What we are faced with is the realization that the thousands of years of societal growth, within the time frame from the initial crossing of the Beringia land bridge and that of Panama, into the various societies from the Abenaki in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, into today's world, all the way to the Kumiai, San Dieguito, Kiliwa, Pai Pai Cocopa and Kumeyaay In-



Figurines of Tlatilco

dians that settled the Baja peninsula. They did this all the way from 12,000BCE. The last to come into that arena (far western America and Baja California) were the 'Yumano' (now you know where that town got its name) speaking tribes. Several are still residing in Northern Mexico and Southern Arizona today with relatives all the way to the Mississippi river.

Each population thrust across this Beringia land bridge, then running South (and there were four of these thrusts or surges) did so not only at different times but in different places. For a long time, it was assumed that, as the weather cooled across the Beringia, the people crossing took more southern routes which meant their movement down through the North American Continent moved further westward. This meant that the east coast of Mexico was populated before the middle and before the west.

That may be true in the overall scheme of things, except that some of these people, whom were apparently attached to the sea, stuck to the western coastal route, from start to finish, even to the point of populating all the islands in the Pacific ocean. These are related to the peoples that settled the American West to include Baja California. Way before the Olmecs of eastern Mexico, these hunter-gatherers were populating most of Mexico without building anything more than a thatched hutch and a fish drying rack. Archeologists and historians have

...Mesoamerican Connections



Capacha culture vessel

a tendency to categorize groups of people into families and separate cultures based on what they left behind. Back that far, it is difficult to classify people when all you can find are little piles of fish skeletons mixed in with the shells of crustaceans, an occasional arrow or spear head or a pile of charcoal which once was a seaside fire.

There was one group of these hunter-gatherers that settled near modern-day San Javier and El Rosario. They spoke a language that is similar to that of the modern Yuman indigenous people. Among their notable practices was 'maroma.' These people would take a good-sized piece of meat and tie a string to it. Then each person would take a turn in swallowing it only

to have it pulled back up for the next in line to swallow. This would continue until the entire piece of meat would be ingested.



El Chanal, Colima

Two things prohibited these people from forming a giant culture as did the Olmecs all the way to the Aztecs. One was the lack of a common language or at least common enough to be written down. The other was their apparent lack of agriculture. This alone would keep these people from being able to form any centralized society as the Olmecs and apparently the Nahuatl speaking peoples did. But they were all connected throughout Mesoamerica. There is evidence that these shore people knew and traded with the people farther inland who would encase their dead in extensive tombs. These folks would also trade implements and art with still even more advanced peoples like the Tlatlico of the Mexico Valley who, in turn, would trade with the Capacha whose culture was centered in Colima, who traded even farther east from the coast with folks like La Campana.

Some of these isolated, former hunter-gathering sites have disappeared. Some have grown. When the entire area's population grew to a point where everyone knew about everyone else, trade ensued, thus aiding and supporting a major culture like the Olmecs or the Mayans.

I visited this site several years ago when they had no idea who built it. It is a wonderful day trip from Manzanillo and I would suggest doing your homework before going. The main site is located about six miles north of Colima and, as you walk onto it, you get a sense of history. Kinda hard to explain. But, if you go there, you'll know what I mean.

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

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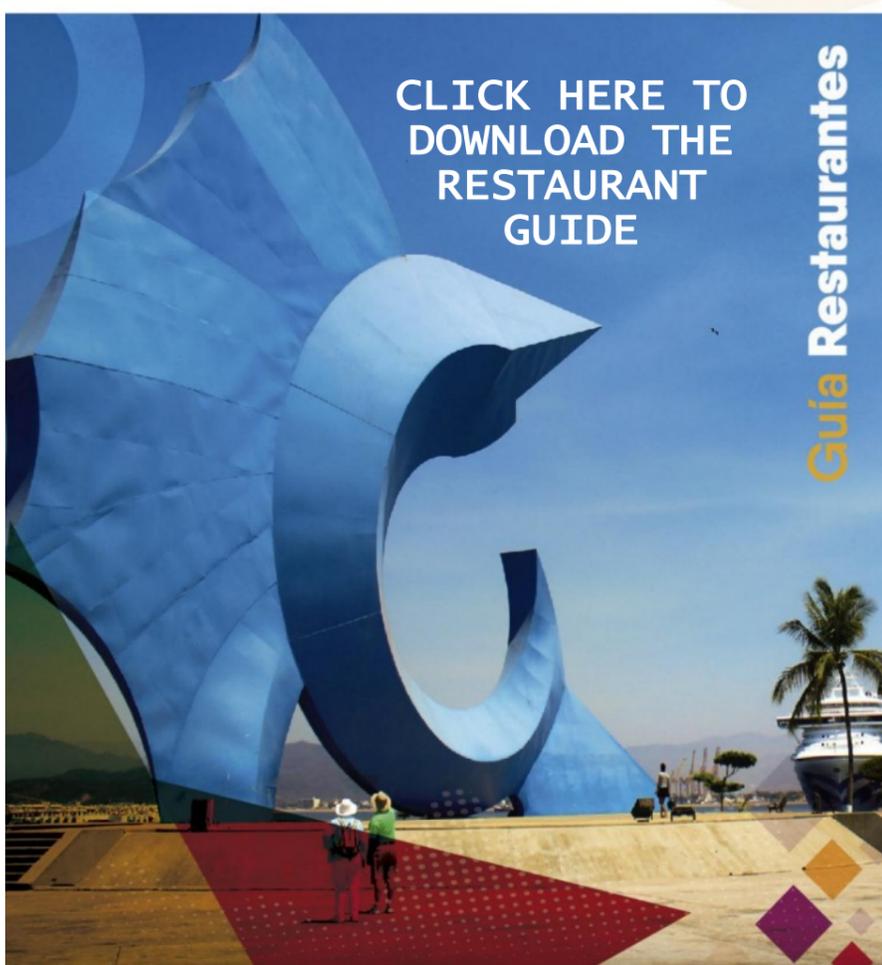
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by Tommy Clarkson

**Cascada Palm** *Chamaedorea cataractarum*

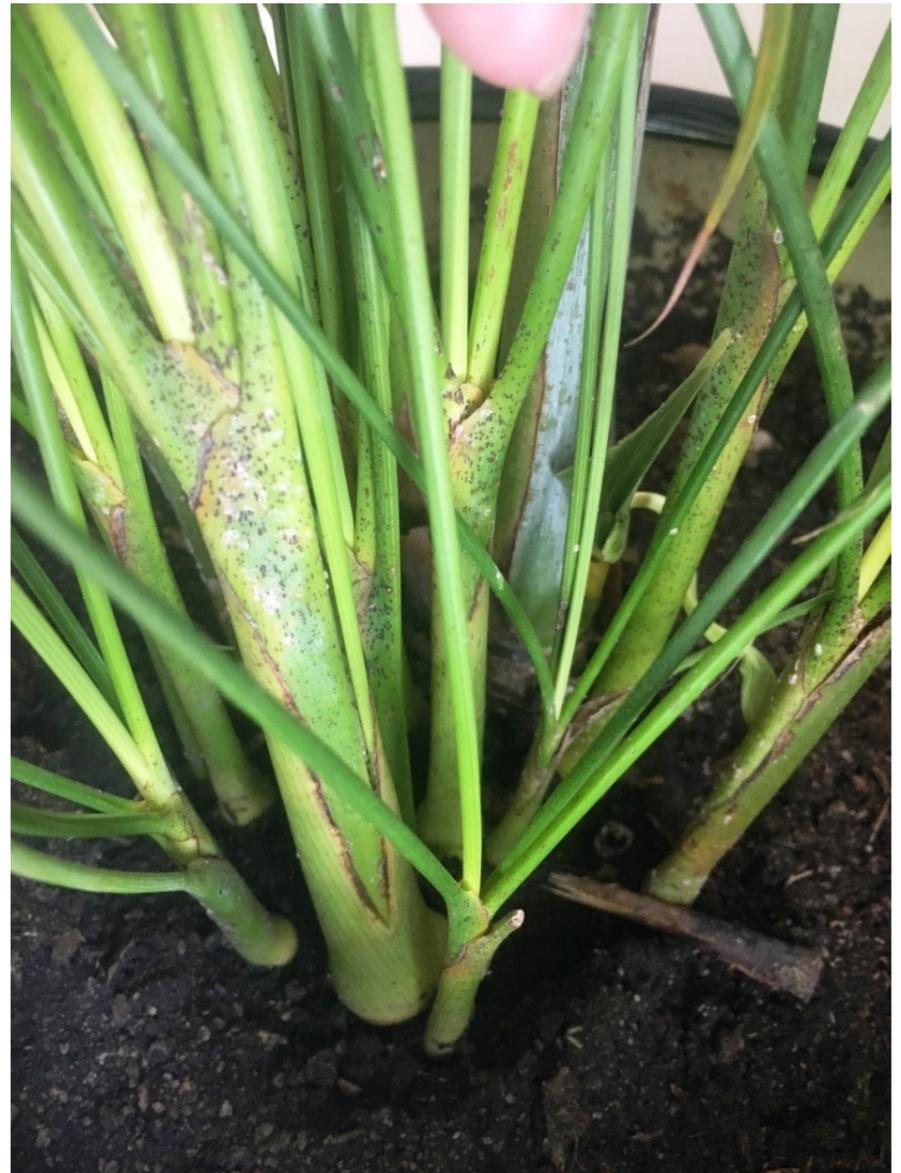
**Family** *Arecaceae*

**Also known as** Cat Palm or Cataract Palm

While having our specimen happily thriving as a potted, shade-appreciating, interior palm in the lower living room for perhaps ten years, I'd never gotten around to properly identifying it. It seemed somewhat obvious that it was in the *Chamaedorea* genus, but which of the some 100 species?

Several of these I've written about previously. In Volume I of "The Civilized Jungle," it was the Parlour Palm (*C. elegans*) and the Metallica Fishtail (*C. metallica*). In Volume II, it was the Bamboo Palm (*C. selfrizii*). Beyond these, I have three more in this genus: an unidentified, clustering species found a couple of hours from here close to a waterfall, somewhat near the small community of Canoas; another attractive solitary species; as well as an additional clustering species - both of which I have long since forgotten where I acquired them!

I've puzzled and have been pondering no little amount as to whether this unarmed, self-cleaning, clustering pinnate was what I call it above, a *C. elegans* (in a fine leaf form), a *C. hooperiana*, a *C. radicalis* or even a trunkless form of Radicalis Palm, *Chamaedorea radicalis* (which is also called/confused with a *C. pringlei* and *C. atrovirens* by some botanists and horticulturists). All can be found, in the wild, in Mexico and are exceedingly—understatement of the day - similar appearing.



Might the virtual trunklessness of this clustering species be a key to its proper identification?

In the "Guide to Landscape Palms," written by Alan W. Meerow, he described this small, virtually trunkless palm as follows, "Each stem splits just above the soil level and a beautiful, well-rounded clump is eventually formed . . . (it) is of easy culture and is useful as a low shrubby accent in the shaded garden (While also making) an attractive potted specimen. . . (it) is more tolerant of higher light levels . . .but will still bleach in sunny locations unless water and fertilizer are regularly provided."

David L. Jones states in "Palms throughout the World" that the Cascada Palm is a rheophyte (A plant that can grow in running water.) That makes sense as, perhaps, you are aware, *cascada* is Spanish for waterfall and, of course, cataract is a synonym for that same entity. Ours, I guess, gets its falling H<sub>2</sub>O vicariously in that it's placed but a couple of feet from our infinity pool, with the garden's closest other running water being the waterfall seven terraces below!

...Cascada Palm



Thee, extremely slow growers make great indoor palms.

In "Cultivated Palms of the World," Don and Anthony Ellison wrote about forty-two different species of *Chamaedorea*. And, just in case you weren't yet fully confused by the array of names, they state that *C. martiania* and *C. atrovirens* are synonyms for this species! They go on to say that the natural habitat of this "densely clumping and spreading palm" are Mexico's rainforests in which they can grow to a height of around five feet (1.52 meters). They further describe it as sometimes sporting "Ripe ¼ inch (.63 cm) in diameter fruit that is black and oval, capable of fresh seed germination in two to three months with bottom heat."

I then sought further, more detailed information from one of the more comprehensive botanical books written solely about this genus – "Chamaedorea Palms, The Species and Their Cultivation," by Donald Hodel. Regarding the *Chamaedorea cataractarum*, he writes that "it inhabits the banks of rivers and streams of the Atlantic slope of Mexico in the states of Oaxaca, Tabasco and Chiapas, occurring in or near water and being wholly or partially submerged during heavy rains and flood."

Hodel went on by saying "it is also unusual in its branching pattern. With age, plants tend to creep along the ground and over rocks with their horizontal stems branching in a dichoto-



The wider spacing between its leaflets separates this from some other similar appearing palms in this genus.

mous (the axis are divided into two branches) manner. This . . . results in thick clumps with a sturdy network of thick, horizontal stems which grow along the ground, anchoring the clump securely. Along with flexible leaves and leaflets that tend to bend and sway with an opposing force, the creeping and securely anchored stem enables (it) to grow and survive in and along streams where it is occasionally inundated by swiftly moving water." With ours potted and not in running water, this is a bit difficult to affirm.

This all noted (and admittedly, I'm still a bit befuddled myself), it is a highly flexible plant, adaptable to a variety of soil conditions, low to moderately drought tolerant if grown in shade and not a good shore plant.

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## Gelatina de Cilantro - Coriander Mousse

Make the perfect snack with this simple recipe of cilantro mousse with cream cheese. It looks great!

Time: 25 min.

Servings: 10

### Ingredients

- ✓ 2 tablespoons of gelatin powder or 1 packet
- ✓ 1/4 cup boiling water
- ✓ 1 bunch of washed and sanitized cilantro
- ✓ 1/2 onion
- ✓ 2 garlic cloves
- ✓ 1 8 ounce bar of cream cheese
- ✓ Salt to taste
- ✓ 1 tablespoon of chicken broth powder
- ✓ Pepper to taste
- ✓ 1/2 cup of evaporated milk
- ✓ 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- ✓ Crackers to enjoy it with
- ✓ 1/4 cup roasted cherry tomatoes or pimentos for decoration

### Directions

Hydrate the gelatin in the boiling water and let stand for 10 minutes.

Melt the gelatin in the microwave for 10 seconds.

Place the cream cheese with the cilantro, garlic cloves, onion, chicken broth powder, salt, pepper and evaporated milk in the blender.

Liquefy it until everything is well mixed.

Add the lemon juice and blend again.

Drip the gelatin (make sure it is hot) into the rest of the ingredients as it is being mixed.

Grease the mold.

Pour or fold the cilantro mixture into the mold and refrigerate for at least four hours.

Carefully unmold the cilantro mousse and serve it with cherry tomatoes (or pimentos) for a Christmas look (or top with anything else) and serve with crackers.

Source of article and image: [Cocina Delirante](http://Cocina Delirante)



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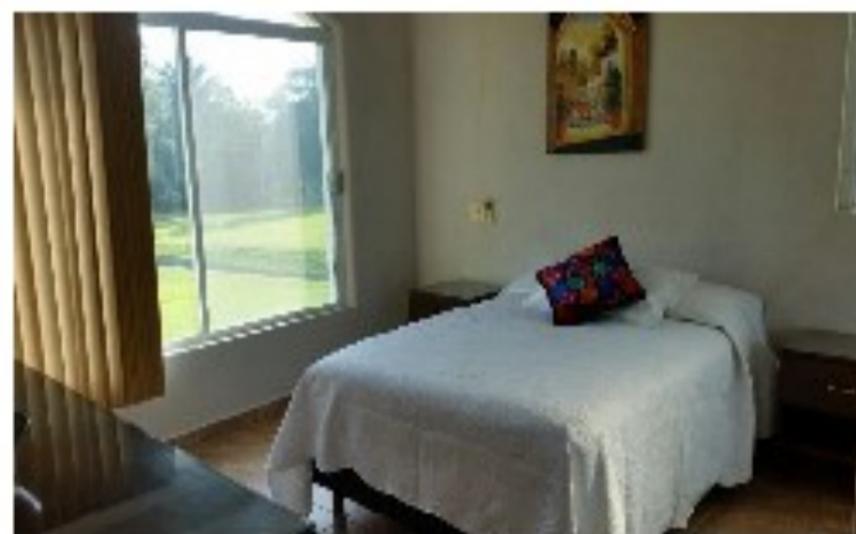
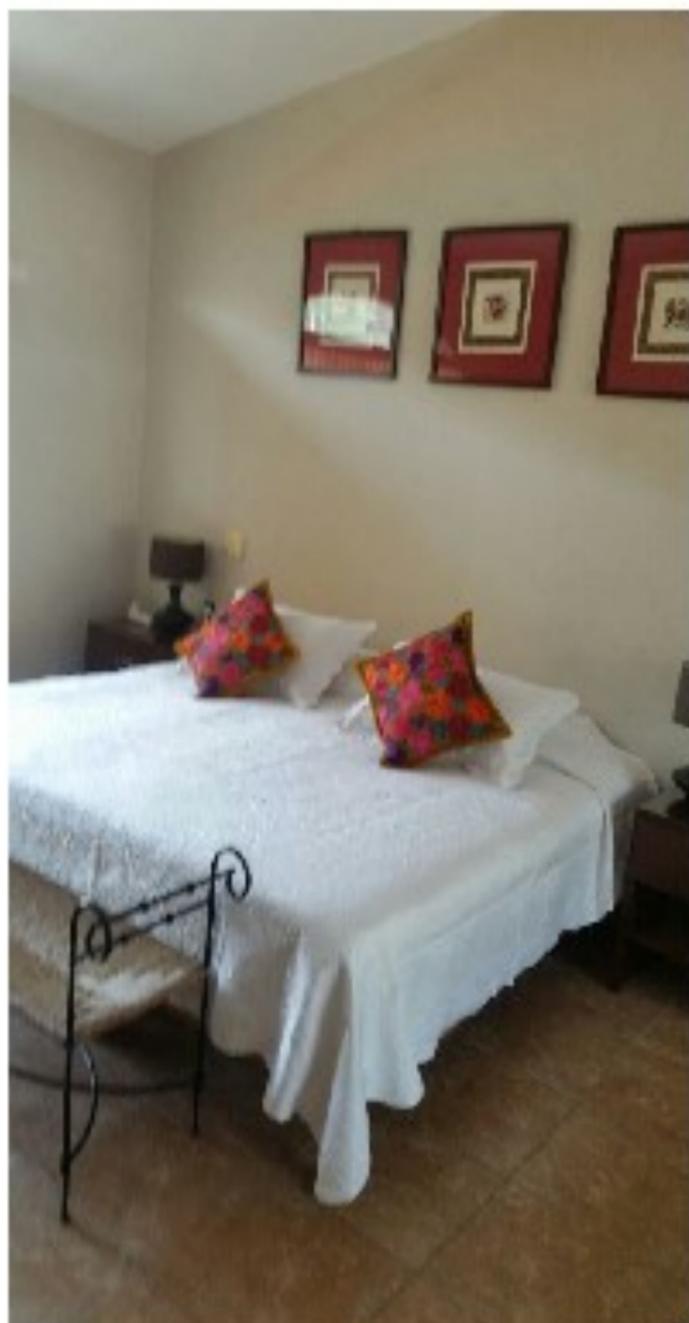
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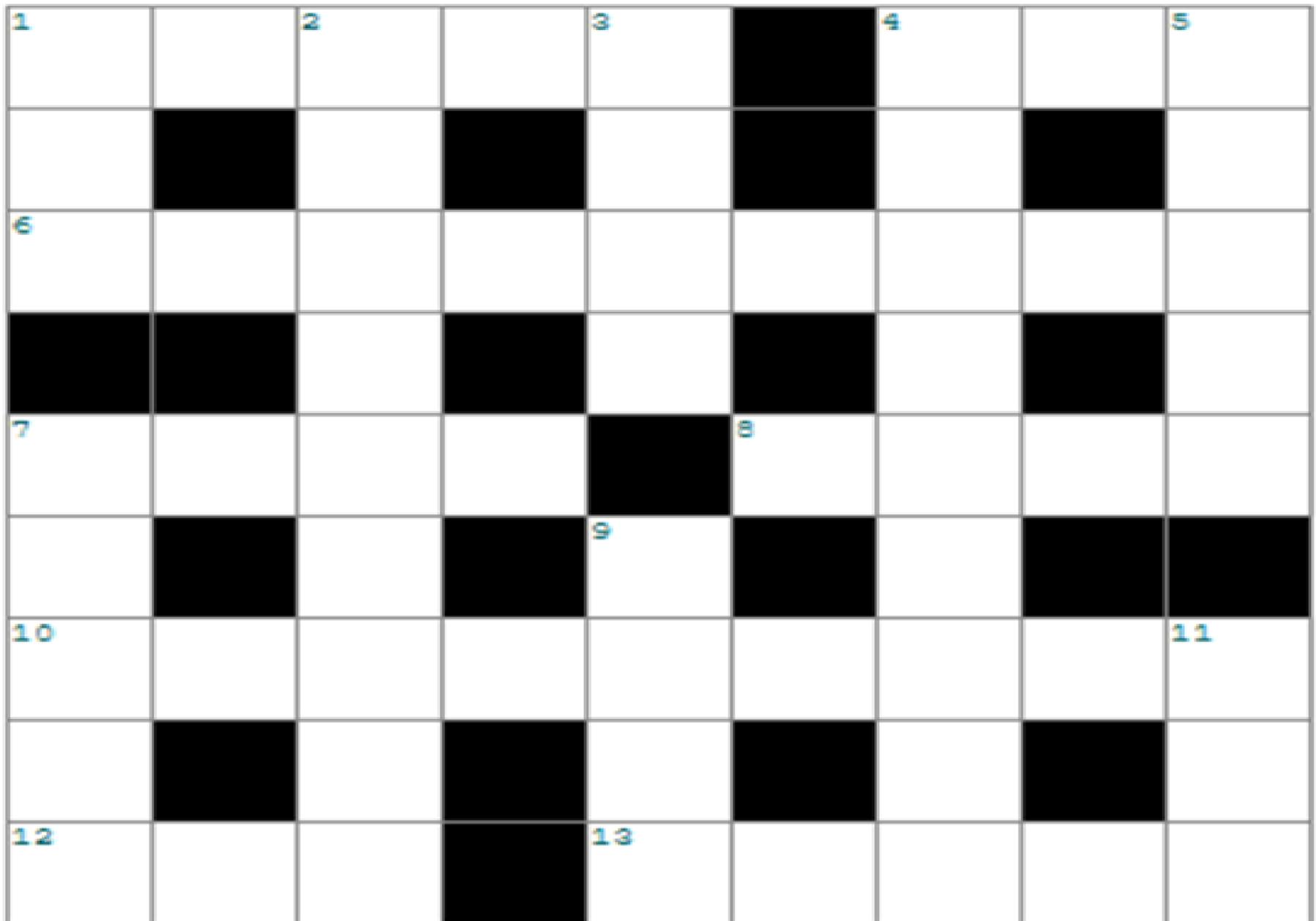
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Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition



Across

- 1 friend
- 4 river
- 6 (have) rented
- 7 gray
- 8 (I) burn
- 10 (they) bit
- 12 garlic
- 13 Monday

Down

- 1 lady, mistress of a household
- 2 left
- 3 (it) hated
- 4 (they) will reopen
- 5 autumn
- 7 prawn
- 9 honey
- 11 us; ourselves

Last month's crossword solution:



lexisrex.com

## Alberto Braniff

from the Path to Citizenship series

Alberto Braniff Ricard (8 December 1886 – 17 September 1966) was a pioneering Mexican airplane pilot. He is considered the first aviator in Latin America.

Braniff was born in Mexico City into a wealthy and powerful family during the Porfiriato. His father was the American industrialist Thomas Braniff and his mother was María Beltran Lorenza Ricard. His father was born in Staten Island, New York, to Irish immigrants, who arrived in Mexico as a superintendent of construction for the Mexico City-Veracruz railroad, lived through the Second Mexican Empire and eventually became an established member of the Mexican elite.

Alberto went to study in Europe, where aviation flourished, as he was a young adult. It was while in France that Braniff was able to acquire a French built airplane. Soon after, he shipped back to his home country, with his airplane aboard the ship.

Mexico during that era was a relatively new country in need of new achievements. After their country lost the Mexican-American War, Mexicans needed to look up to someone or to some type of success as a source of national pride. When Braniff returned home with his airplane, many Mexicans began to see him as a symbol of hope. Braniff, who had learned to fly the airplane while still in Europe, took it upon himself to become that source of pride.

Years before Braniff was born, a prominent Mexico City newspaper had predicted that it would be impossible to fly to that city because of its high altitude and thin air. The article was published during an era when aerostat popularity was rising in Europe and some Mexicans had successfully flown them in the northern areas of the country.



Pascual Orozco, Alberto Braniff, Pancho Villa and Peppino Garibaldi

The exact year remains unclear, but most historical articles report that Braniff flew his airplane over Mexico City between 1908 and 1910.

Apart from being the first pilot to fly an airplane over Mexico City, he made history by becoming both the first pilot to fly an airplane in Mexico and in Latin America.

Later on, other luminaries such as Argentina's Jorge Newbery and Peru's Jorge Chávez followed Braniff as famous Latin American aviators.

Alberto Braniff, by most accounts, led a quiet life after his achievement, but he lived long enough to see Benito Juárez International Airport begin to operate, and Mexican aviation's technical developments of the jet era.

Braniff died in Mexico City in 1966.

For the full story, see the source (images and article):

[Wikimedia](#)