

Manzanillo

August 2011

SUN

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

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Bahia de Manzanillo

Cover Photo courtesy of
Allan Marshall

Fish Life of Manzanillo

By Terry Sovil

The Barred Serrano

The Barred Serrano is found at depths from 20 feet to 200 feet. They have pale shades of brown to gray on their upper body, with a whitish lower body; darkish spots on dorsal and tail fins. They can be found from the Gulf of California and central Pacific Coast of Baja to Panama. They are solitary or form small groups that inhabit areas of sand and mixed rubble. They tend to ignore divers but will keep their distance and tend to retreat when approached. They are from the family of Sea Basses. The juveniles have a dusky stripe from head to upper tail base. Adults see the stripe fading and faint bars appear. They grow to a length of 3-5 inches with a maximum of 7 inches.



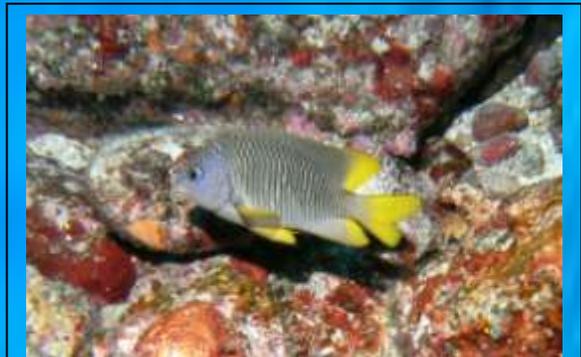
Beau Brummel Damsel fish

Beau Brummell Damsel fish are a very distinctive damselfish that are frequently seen in Manzanillo waters. Sporting shades of brown to gray with yellowish translucent pectoral fins. Frequently they are seen with scattered blue spots on their head, especially for the young adults, with narrow dark borders around the scales. The juveniles have a dark spot with bright blue border on upper tail base. These fish are from the family of Damsel fishes. They live in depths of 3' to 65'. They can be identified by their yellow to yellowish tail with wide rear borders on their dorsal and anal fins. Juveniles often have a blue upper body with yellow below and a dark blue spot with bright blue border which overlaps upper rear back and adjacent dorsal fin.

These fish are common along the Pacific Coast of the mainland of Mexico to Panama. They are solitary; inhabit rocky and coral reefs and rocky shorelines. Strongly territorial they will aggressively attempt to chase away all intruders including divers.

They grow from 2 ½" to 4 ½" with a maximum size of 6".

There are no cautions for divers but it is not uncommon for damselfish to nip at an ear or a hand to protect their territory.



Bullseye Electric Ray

These rays are common on many dive sites in Manzanillo. They are easily identified by the large bull's-eye marking on the center of their back. They are from the family of Electric Rays. Their features include being tan to light brown with a darkish snout; covered with small black spots and a number of black and gold to yellowish irregular markings; on rare occasions they lack all markings except the bull's eye. Two large rounded dorsal fins behind the disc are on the rear body with a rounded paddle-like tail. The rays are occasional visitors from central and southern Gulf of California and southern Pacific Coast of Baja to Panama; also south to northern Peru and Malpelo Island. They are solitary, rest or partially bury on sand and rubble bottoms. They tend to be



inactive during the day; forage at night by "hopping" about on ventral fins (located just behind disc). They appear unconcerned if approached by divers and do not move unless molested. Their size ranges from 5-8 inches reaching a maximum of 10 inches including their tail. If touched, these electric rays can deliver a mild (14-37 volt) electric shock

Cornetfish

Found at depths from 0-80 feet they are long, have a thin head and body with a long tail filament. Their mouths are small. They are solitary or hover in polarized schools. Alternately they hover and swim above rocky reefs and boulder-strewn slopes and sometimes just below the surface. They tend to ignore divers, but move away when approached. Occasionally they are curious and approach motionless divers. They are from the family of Cornet fishes. They feature silvery blue to blue-green to green tints on their back. They have a silvery white underbelly. They have two thin blue stripes on their back and side. They are common in the Gulf of California and southern Pacific Coast of Baja to Panama. Most grow from 1-1 ½" to 3" and some to a maximum of 4".



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By the Water

By: Suzanne A. Marshall

I've always thought that my long 'love affair' with being by the ocean in a tropical climate was attributable to the fact that I am Canadian and was born in the middle of the vast rolling prairies. Yes, the winters are very harsh but there is also a wild vast beauty which leads to the Rocky Mountains and many beautiful valleys, rivers, streams and fresh water lakes which I love and cherish. It's stunningly beautiful in a different way. Still, the older I got the more I continued to dream of one day retiring by the seaside, never really believing that it was more than a 'pipe dream'. What is it about the seas that lure so many people round the world to their shorelines?

Through a little searching on the internet, I've learned that roughly half the world's population lives within a few kilometres of the oceans. Of course there are all the industries tied to fishing, shipping and tourism that invites working families and builds seaside communities all around the continents. People born to Island nations and seaside cities might give no thought about their proximity to these tidal waters. It's part of their environment, not necessarily taken for granted but accepted as the norm. But speak to someone who has been away from it for a length of time, and they yearn to return, they are missing the seaside.



On many sunset walks down the long sandy beach here in Manzanillo, I have reflected on these thoughts. On any given evening, I see many local young lovers holding hands and watching the sun go down. There is one popular stretch of beach where there is a concrete sea wall that once bordered a hotel and is now a vacant lot. The wall is actually worn smooth by the continuous use of couples sitting there and taking in the romance of the bay. There are many dazzling sunsets here breaking under the dramatic cloud banks that gather over the sea at night. As the sun sets, the lights of homes and hotels situated in the hills over-looking the bay come on and the silhouettes of several large ships at anchor make the view even more intriguing. Is it the ultimate romantic spot? You bet! But it's still so much more than that.

For me, there is an undeniable magnetic force of power about the ocean. The crashing waves and the retreating surf are irresistible. The cooling breeze is fresh and moist. Here there is serenity and a sense of the vastness of the universe. I am not a religious person but I would describe the feeling as spiritual, soul soothing and peaceful. Here, your troubles and the stresses of life melt away for a while and life is absolutely beautiful. I highly recommend a walk on the beach by the ocean as a regular physical and mental therapy. Share it with someone really special!



To Apostille or not to Apostille

Freda Rummford



Often we foreigners have become totally bewildered in the requirements of pieces of paper as “official documents” when the person one is dealing with is facing a computer!! Many times I have uttered, to whoever was nearby and cared to listen, that this reminded me greatly of England during the Second World War. Everywhere one turned in those days, a rubber stamp a postage stamp and a piece of paper was needed. What the purpose of the postage stamp was I never did find out but I heard often of “stamp duty” so perhaps the connection was there.

In turn, it was told to me on several occasions by a friend in the US Diplomatic Service, that officialdom be as it may, if ever a person was in trouble in any part of the world, regardless of nationality, the best option was ALWAYS to go to the British Embassy or Consulate first. They never asked questions until afterwards. When other countries wanted forms and dockets, the British Foreign Service had their act together and would get the job or emergency dealt with immediately.

I always thought he was just being nice, because I remembered all of the paperwork and queues my parents became so used to and how they stuck me in one line while they each took another to see which went faster, then hopped accordingly.

Today, I have found that what was said by my old friend is correct. The British Foreign Service must have a policy of all personnel to have been a boy scout or a girl guide with the motto “Be prepared”!

I have just come home from a notary office in Manzanillo in total bemusement because my Marriage Certificate of 55 years is not considered a sufficiently legal document and I needed a notarisation document to prove authenticity and also the guarantor needed to be guaranteed an authentic notarising person. (An Apostille). I did not know what I was going to do.

We left England over 45 years ago. I am not going back any day soon, do not have any relatives in England able to research this for me and in any case I have the original certificate in my sticky little hands. Any notary would need to see it in front of them to be able to verify it is a true document! This piece of paper showing and proving

my marital status has been seen by countless officials around the world and has always been sufficient evidence. Not only that, I am named on the deeds of the house that are under investigation due to my husband’s death, so why is it so vital now to prove I was married. What if I weren’t married, what would happen then?

In total confusion I am running options through my head but decide before I do anything I should check the British Embassy website. Almost the first thing I see is “Help for British Nationals” then “Living in Mexico” and last and absolutely not least “How to Legalise a document”. They can do it! They have been there before!! Not only that, I can contact the correct office in the UK via email to help me get an Apostille!!! I am saved.

Well, not quite, I have written for instructions and hope that soon this will be solved. But I feel easier.

But a word to the wise, dear British Nationals (and others) living in Mexico, “**Be prepared**”.

Now! Hold all thoughts, the office in Milton Keynes which deals with this situation is closed permanently and such matters cannot be dealt with other than by mailing direct!

British Govt. site. For information on subject <http://ukinmexico.fco.gov.uk/en/help-for-british-nationals/living-in-mexico/>





Tiza y Pizarra

A SHORT LESSON ON SPEAKING SPANISH.

By Sra. Martha Martinez

In Spanish the letter H is silent. Here's how to pronounce some words, contrary to almost all other letters. The "U" being an exception in some cases. Also keep in mind that the "J" in Spanish is pronounced like the "H" in English.

Chihuahua	(chi ua ua)	One of the largest states in Mexico/breed of dog
Hago	(ago)	I do
Hazlo	(azlo)	do it
Hecho	(echo)	done, event (legal term)
Halago	(alago)	praise; a compliment
Herida	(erida)	wound
Hembra	(embra)	when referring to female animals
Ahijado/a	(aihado)	godson/goddaughter
Hoja	(oja)	sheet of paper; leaf; blade
Hogar	(ogar)	home
Hervir	(ervir)	boil
Homro	(ombro)	shoulder
Hombre	(ombre)	man
Ahí	(ai)	there
Alhaja	(alaha)	jewel





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Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

Letter from the Editor

This month it has been extremely hot in Manzanillo as the humidity levels continue to rise. Work is taking a back seat as the call of the swimming pool beckons. Elsewhere we hear there is rain, rain, rain and cooler than usual temperatures, perhaps we are still in the right place, even though as we drip, we wonder.

This month we are introducing a couple of new writers to our Sun family with yet another to follow soon.

Martha Elizabeth Martinez a teacher of the English Language for many years in Mexican Schools and Universities in Hermosillo, has now moved to Manzanillo and the schools here. She is offering some useful Spanish tidbits for those of us who are linguistically challenged. Any particular aspect of Spanish you need to know about, let us know and she can tell us how to say it.

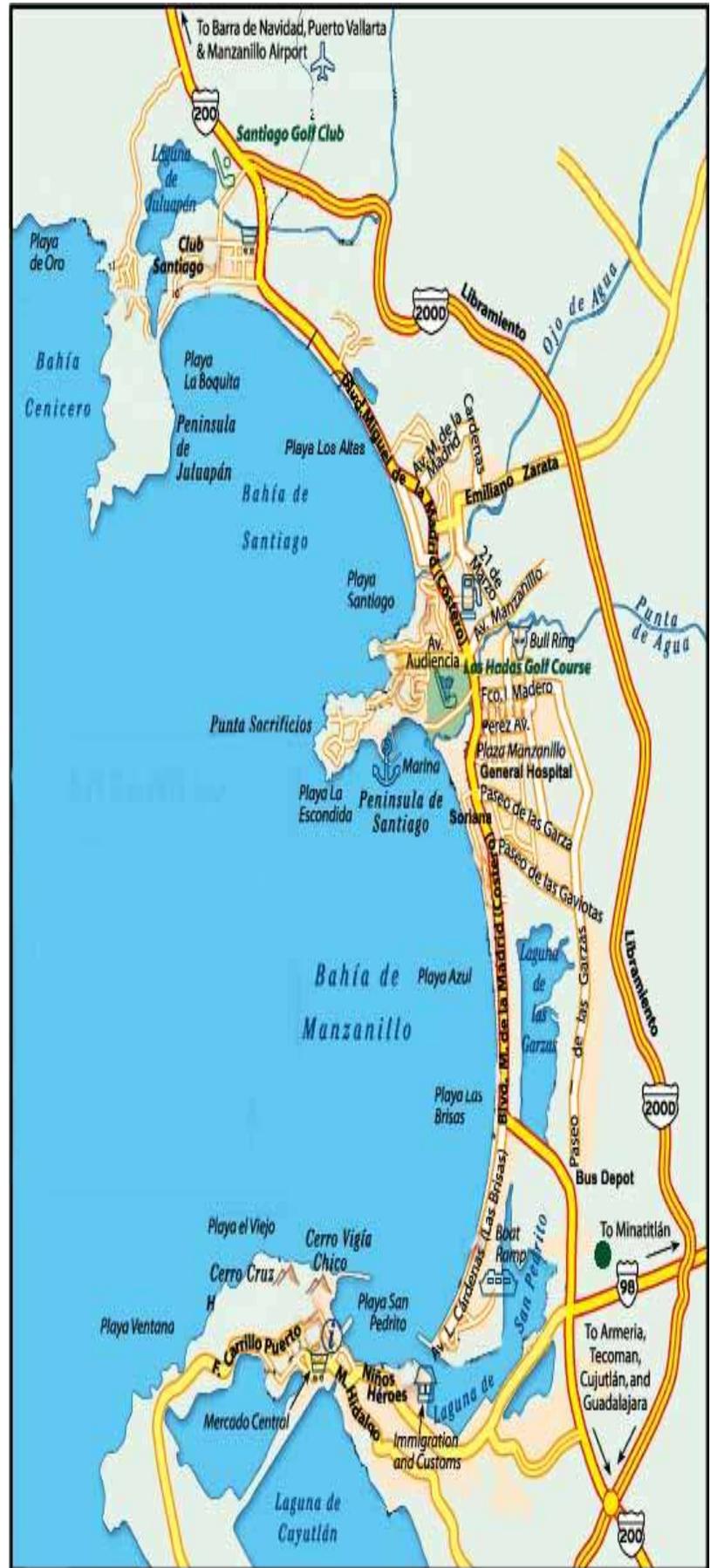
April Pepper Lopez, is also a teacher in Manzanillo schools, has a very young family and is offering insights on living in a foreign country as a single parent with small children. We have had many queries on what to do in Mexico when one has a young family with school age children and we welcome her input.

The new rules on Vehicle importation and requirements for legal documents are vital information and should be saved in your "Mexico" files for future use.

What else would you like to hear about? We have a growing band of writers who will do the digging for you. Also we welcome more writers. Have ideas but too shy to write it yourself? Let us help you. We can be ghost writers too.

This has been an interesting issue to put together and we hope you find it so as well. The congratulations on our magazine continue to grow and we thank you all for your helpful comments.

Freda Rumford,
Editor





WILD CARD WILD CARD

by April Pepper López

Taking the bus in Manzanillo is wonderfully easy. Driving a car would probably top the list of *Best Ways to Get Around* but it's a reliable option. Buses come every few minutes and get you where you want to go with ease (provided you're not travelling with small children, when it's raining or when you're already late) and what could occasionally be called alarming speed.

Bus drivers themselves are generally in good spirits considering they drive around all day without air conditioning. I can remember one morning leaving the house with no coins, just a \$200.00 peso bill. The first driver at 6:30 am didn't have change for my bill, but as I began to step off the bus unable to pay my fare he stopped me with a smile and said *Mañana* and let me on his bus for free.

Later than afternoon I attempted to board a second bus to get to my second job still with my \$200.00 peso bill in hand. Same thing happened....*Mañana*. After returning to my first job to finish my shift, and then finally taking the bus home that evening, I had stepped off my fourth bus that day, with the same \$200.00 peso bill in hand and the fourth *Mañana* still echoing in my ears.

There's something so neighbourly about what happened to me that day that I have really come to think of my bus drivers and I as understanding a little about one another. I don't think they'd put *Bus Driver* at the top of a list entitled *My Dream Jobs* anymore than I would put *Riding the Bus* at the top of my *Greatest Ways to Get to Work* list.

I think we each understand that none of us are particularly enjoying ourselves when we see one another, and that's enough to make us exchange warm smiles.

These days I carry a government issued card that gets me a 50% discount on the bus. Being an underpaid teacher has its rewards. Comically, a 50% discount is fitting for me as a person of my height and build really only receives half the space required to sit down on the buses here anyway. This is especially evident on my way home from work while I sit *side-saddle* with my 2 preschoolers, their 2 backpacks and my own book bag sardined onto one bus seat with 113 other passengers on board at the hottest time of the day. One typically hot afternoon we board the bus, all three of us stack ourselves onto one seat and I try not to take up half the aisle with my legs when I hear this:

(offensive expletive) *Gringa!*



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I look up to see the bus driver gesture to me as he continues yelling to no one in particular about the *Gringa* who doesn't think she should have to pay full price like everyone else...blah blah blah.

If I had been by myself I probably wouldn't have done anything, except maybe smile brightly at my fellow passengers as they stared at me while I pretend not to understand their back and forth about me. But on this day, while my tired and sweaty toddlers sat on what lap I could muster for them listening to these strangers go on about what a cheap *Gringa* their mother was, I did something.

I'd love to tell you that I marched right up to him and gave him a piece of my mind. But instead, I told him in Spanish that I thought he was a rude man and I got off his bus. I caught another bus home that day, and when I got there I cried. I'm not a cheap *Gringa*, I'm a generous person accused of being the opposite by one of the very same bus drivers with whom I thought I had an understanding.

Remember guys? I know your job is tough, you know riding the bus isn't always ideal? We have an understanding! We're neighbourly!

Sigh Should I spend less time worrying about what the bus driving community thinks of me? Probably. It's just that sometimes a person wants to be just another person on the bus and not 'The Cheap White Person' on the bus.

You know?

Maybe I get a smile and a *Mañana* and ride the bus for free, maybe I get called a cheap *gringa* and step off the bus in tears, or maybe he just says *buenos dias* back to me, and accepts my discounted fare. Whichever the case, my daily commute in Manzanillo is definitely a Wild Card and the Wild Card always makes the hand more exciting.



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Long Term Rentals.....

How to Find them and Enjoy Doing So

By Cheryl Weaver

OK - So you've decided to come to Mexico, or you've been here a little while and want to change addresses, but in neither case are you a buyer at this point. But you're not a vacationer either - you sort of want to grow shallow roots to see how it fits or you're here short term but longer than a couple months. How do you find that special place? How is renting long term different in Mexico than it is in the States? Properties for sale are easy to locate - vacation rentals at \$800/week are as well. But if you are looking for a month to month rental or want to lease a place at a reasonable and competitive rate, there are few things to know that will make the right place easier to find.

In years past, property managers and landlords made all their money in the height of the season, and didn't even care about leaving it empty the rest of the year, even enjoying it themselves when they needed a break. Regulars would return year after year wanting the same unit so it would feel more like home. Now with the dismal economy and publicity focusing on the narco wars, it has affected Mexico tourism so more and more vacationers are MIA these days or will not pay the exorbitant prices commanded in the past. Everyone seems to be waiting for things to get better on both sides of the border which, it appears, is going to be later rather than sooner.

An empty unit is a liability. From a security standpoint, it invites trouble. Closed up in a humid hot climate rapidly takes its toll, and even if a vacationer did come along, what shape are they going to find the place when they walk in? The maintenance of a vacation rental is high - people come to relax and enjoy their time away from responsibility. They may not be as careful as in their own home and justify a little looser attitude to the fact they are on vacation and paying a premium for their lodging. The last thing they will do is fix something minor that unattended, can grow into a significant problem. They most likely will not complain - after all they're leaving shortly. If it's a bad enough problem, though, they may call and want a refund, claiming they won't stay with _____ not working/leaking/malfunctioning. Or they do stay and that pesky chronic off and on problem with the air conditioning justifies them asking for a discount or they'll contribute to Trip Advisor with a

negative review while they're on the plane flying home with nothing better to do. And how many people do you think they will tell? Bad news spreads like wild fire.

As a result, many owners are converting their vacation places to month to month rentals, or even a year's lease with option to renew. Although the monthly rent may be a fraction of what they would normally earn during the high season as a vacation rental, the predictable steady income matches their predictable bills associated with owning a place in Mexico and renting full time makes for one less pressure to come up with the money necessary to hang on to the property. A tenant is much more apt to report necessary maintenance before it becomes a major repair. Their presence secures the property from vandalism, burglary or even worse yet, squatters. With foreclosures at an all time high, homelessness has driven many people to desperate measures. And as far as I know, Trip Advisor does not take renter reviews....yet.

So how do you find the landlord that is willing to consider month-to-month rentals or leases for his former vacation rental?

First of all, what time of the year do you want to move in? How long will you stay? Approaching an owner during the low season or finding out the last time the unit was rented can be lead to possible negotiation for long term rental, even if it wasn't on their mind. Do some research as to comparable properties and make them an offer. Mention the advantages to them having a long term tenant and do not be shy about suggesting terms. Many owners have no month to month rental experience and are skeptical that it will really benefit them. Come prepared with references and answers to their questions. Offer proof of income before they ask.

Contact vacation rental property managers and ask to see the unit. After the tour, ask how long it has been empty, if a long term rental is possible, make an offer as to how much you would pay if you could rent it. Get the owner's contact info before you leave in case the agent tells you on the spot there's no interest. Don't believe it until you hear it from the owner.

In Mexico, many rentals are listed in Spanish and few quote a rent rate. That's so there is room for negotiations but it



makes it hard to know if you're in the ballpark of something you can afford. Ask if it is under your ceiling amount. You'll know from the answer if you should invest any more of your time. Be forthright about children/pets and see if you can find out if the owner lives locally to the property. How are repairs handled? In case of an emergency, how is that handled?

If you find the place that is just right and you really see yourself renting for a long time, **MAKE SURE THE OWNER UNDERSTANDS YOU MAY RENT FOR YEARS TO COME.** It is too tempting for them to move you in and when the high rollers come along with cash, come to you saying "Mamacita" needs the apartment and they need you to move out. Rental disputes necessitate a lawyer so just because you have a signed contract doesn't guarantee you anything. Owners traditionally keep the electricity in their name, even if you pay the bill, so they very easily (but not legally) can get you to move out.

Clarify exactly how maintenance will be handled and at what standard you expect - it may not be the same as you are used to. Mexican property owners most likely paid cash for the property and struggled to save enough to buy it. Fixing it up perfectly for you and keeping it that way may not be the priority - keeping ownership of it is. Taxes, utilities they pay, insurance, etc. are the first

things they will pay before fixing your leaky faucet. It may drive you crazy to hear it "ploink" all night but they live with it all the time and it is more acceptable to waste the water than to be short their contribution to the church on Sunday. Report any problems you find when you first move in - don't let it go. They very well may already know about it but their former tenant lived with it and never complained -- maybe you will too and the money saved will surely be contributed to the church next Sunday.

If you rent from a property manager be very careful to get the owner's contact information and include them on all communications including acknowledging rent paid each month. they may never acknowledge your communications but you have a record and will avoid the "He said, she said" game with the property manager in the middle. Be wary if you are refused this information - "the owner doesn't want to be bothered - just deal with us." This is a red flag that you do not want to get involved.

Happy Home Hunting!

Ask friends and acquaintances for leads. Ask the taxi driver and the clerk at the store. Ask the gardener. Word of mouth can get you the best information. Advertising in the paper or internet is expensive and many owners want to rent personally.



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Mexico...Past & Present

Manzanillo and its Unknown Past

By David Fitzpatrick

We tend to think of Manzanillo as a modern city with relatively little history. One has only to drive down Boulevard Miguel de la Madrid to see that there is nothing much that dates from before about 1970. It may come as a surprise, therefore, to learn that Manzanillo was one of the earliest cities settled by the Conquistadores in the 16th century, and before that it had been a major center for many centuries in pre-Columbian Mexico.

It is known that this region was inhabited as early as 2000 B.C. by a people called the Otomis. They were displaced by other nations and subsequently a number of peoples succeeded each other over the centuries¹. In the 13th or 14th century, this region was conquered by the Tarascos, a nation related to the Aztecs of Central Mexico. At the time of the Spaniards arrival in the early 16th Century, the Tarascos ruled the second largest empire in Mesoamerica, after the Aztecs. They governed a vast area stretching from the State of Mexico to Guanajuato and from the shores of Lake Chapala to the Pacific Coast. Their capital was "Tzintzuntzan", at, or near, present day Colima. An important city in their kingdom (perhaps the second largest) was the fishing center – and already the seaport - of "Tlacotla", meaning "place where there are conch shells", located on the present day site of Manzanillo.

Soon after his arrival in Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) in 1520, the Spanish commander, Hernàn de Cortez, heard of this mighty kingdom to the west. He ventured as far as Tzintzuntzan where the local people told him fabulous tales of Chinese traders putting into port at Tlacotla (Manzanillo). He therefore ordered the conquest of the region, but on this occasion, did not go all the way to the coast himself. In 1522, the sea captain Gonzalo de Sandoval, under orders from Cortez, explored the Pacific Coast looking for safe harbours and even sites where ship-yards could be built. He dropped anchor in the Bay of Salagua and set up temporary headquarters in a small, protected cove where he remained for a year. At one point, he received the local chieftains on the beach and granted



Gonzalo de Sandoval



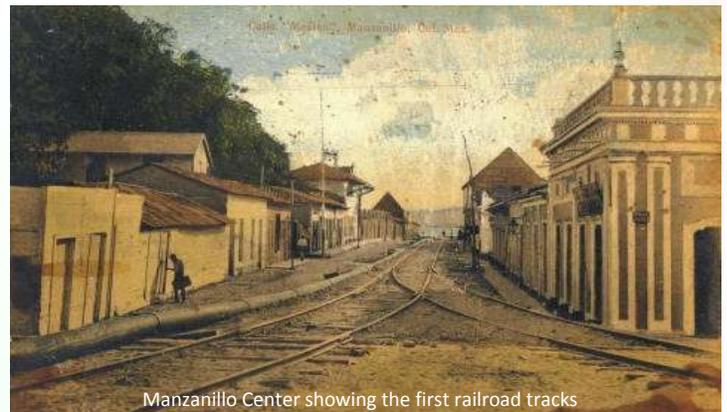
Hernàn de Cortez

them an "audience" as though he were a king. To this day, the beach is called the "Playa de la Audencia".

It was not until 13 years later that Cortez finally explored the area personally. In 1535, reacting to rumors that a Portuguese fleet was assembling in the waters off Manzanillo, he led an expedition to the area. He established the headquarters of his defensive force at the northern end of a bay which he named "Bahia de Santiago".

During the following decades, Manzanillo became a major port for Spanish ships sailing for the Philippines, and other points in the Orient. It was also a point of departure for expeditions to Baja California, and other destinations on the Mexican Coast. Pirates from Britain, France, Holland, and Portugal habitually hovered in the open ocean just off the Manzanillo Coast in hopes of plundering the richly laden galleons coming and going from the port.

The first ship-yard in Latin America was constructed at Manzanillo in the middle of the sixteenth century, taking advantage of the copious supply of Manzanilla trees (from which the city was to take its name) in the surrounding forests. The ships built here were soon to constitute the back-bone of the Spanish fleet in the Pacific.

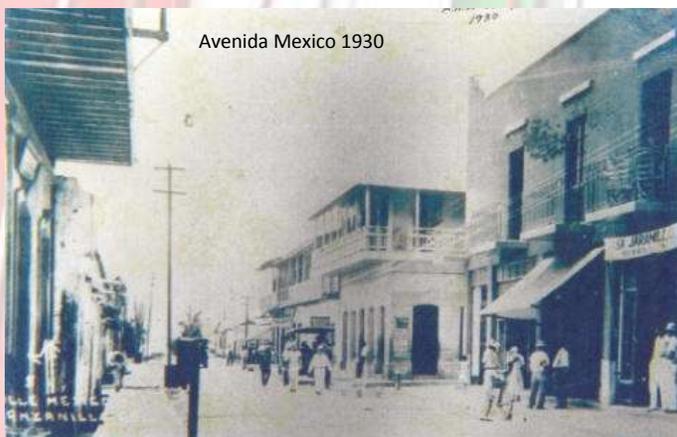


Manzanillo Center showing the first railroad tracks



In 1540, Colima was connected by road to Mexico City. Soon thereafter, the road was pushed through to Manzanillo. The port of Manzanillo and the land route to Mexico City were to serve as important links in the Spanish Crown's transportation system, connecting the Orient and the Pacific Coast to Central Mexico and ultimately, to Spain.

By the middle of the century, Manzanillo was developing rapidly and everything indicated that it would soon grow into a major city. But then came one of those unaccountable decisions often made by dilettantish officials sitting comfortably in offices in Europe, and innocent of any real understanding of their far-flung empires: In 1561, an official decree from the King of Spain declared that henceforth there would be only **one** official port of entry to Mexico on the Pacific Coast. This, it was announced, would be Acapulco.

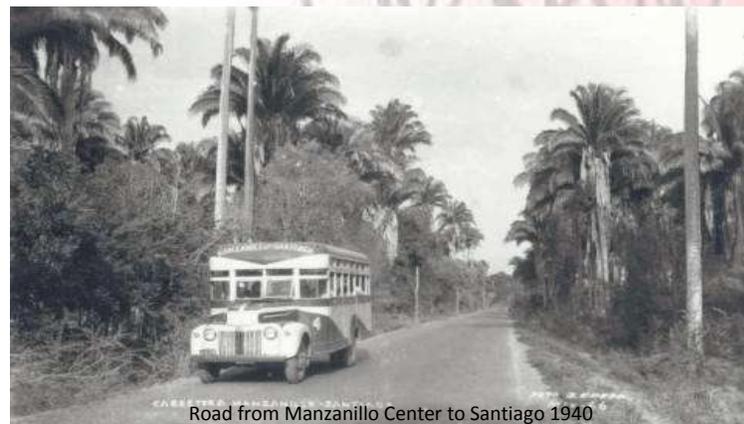


Avenida Mexico 1930

In one swift stroke, the bright hopes of all other ports on the coast were extinguished. One and all, they fell back to the status of isolated fishing villages and slept for more than two centuries. It was not until the dawn of the modern age that Manzanillo began to regain the size and importance it had enjoyed in the sixteenth century.

The re-awakening occurred only when the Industrial Revolution came knocking on the door. The Manzanillenses were reminded that they were part of a much greater world when the first telegraph wires came through in 1869. For several decades their connection to the outside world - consisting only of the telegraph - remained tenuous indeed. But in 1908, the railway made its appearance. And this always works a profound change on a community. It was suddenly only a few hours' travel from Guadalajara, a city of whose existence Manzanillo had been only vaguely

aware. Visits to Mexico City and indeed to all of Mexico were now within the possibilities of the average citizen. More important, Manzanillo was once again an important link in a vast transportation network connecting the Orient, America and Europe. At long last, a 250-year old error was corrected: Manzanillo was proclaimed an official port of entry into Mexico.

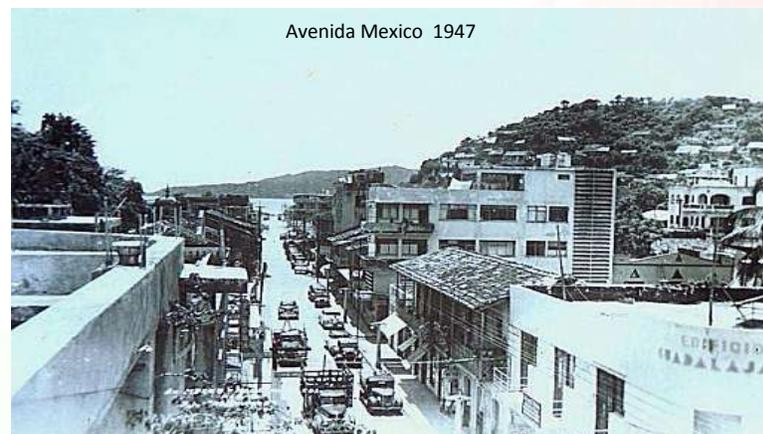


Road from Manzanillo Center to Santiago 1940

In the twentieth century, the harbour of Manzanillo was dredged, deepened, and enlarged in order to accommodate the largest of ocean-going vessels. This lengthy, ongoing process is part of our own daily experience as the twenty-first century advances.

If Manzanillo became aware of the great world, beyond the horizon, the great world was also taking note of Manzanillo and the charms it had to offer. Tourists began to arrive from all parts of Mexico, not to mention Canada, the United States, and Europe.

Today, we are witnessing the slow awakening of the Sleeping Beauty from her centuries-long slumber. We are front-row observers as a long dormant city finally takes its place among the major centers of the country - takes the place it would have assumed four centuries ago - had it not been for some short-sighted officials in Europe.



Avenida Mexico 1947





The Streets of Manzanillo

Terry Sovil



year old balding merchant named Aquiles Serdán who was a leader in the Anti-ReElectionist movement. In 1908 Madero had published a book that called for honest elections. The book didn't advocate removing Díaz but of removing his very unpopular vice-present (whom had originally been chosen to make keeping Díaz more palatable). This book became the match that ignited reformers all over Mexico who began forming Anti-Reelectionist clubs and calling for the end of the long control of Mexico by Díaz.

Aguiles Serdán was a very active member of this movement and boldly promoted Madero's cause. He was joined by his sister, Carmen, who used the pseudonym of Marcos Serrato while distributing anti-government pamphlets in order to throw off Díaz's security teams.

In planning the revolution, Serdán worked with Emiliano Zapata along with Madero. He enlisted a follower, medical student and fellow Puebla citizen Juan Andrew Almazán, to act as liaison between himself and Zapata.

Serdán traveled to San Antonio, Texas on the eve of the revolution to confer with Madero. They agreed that Serdán should return to Puebla and stockpile arms in his home. After the meeting, disguised as a grieving widow, he made his way home where his family had already converted the house into an arsenal. On November 18, Puebla police Chief Miguel Cabrera, on a tip that arms were stockpiled there, organized a force of 400 soldiers and 100 police officers to raid the Serdán's home. There were just

Aguiles Serdán

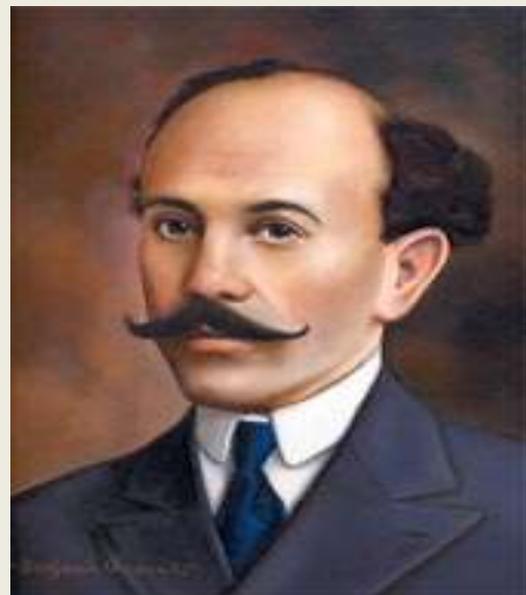
November 1, 1876 – November 18, 1910

Aguiles Serdán Alatraste (November 1, 1876 – November 18, 1910), was born in the city of Puebla, Puebla. He is known as a politician who opposed Porfirio Díaz in the Mexican Revolution while supporting Francisco I. Madero and Emiliano Zapata.

Serdán is vitally important because of his support for Madero and eventually became Madero's first martyr in the revolution. Madero was an unlikely revolutionary as he came from one of Mexico's richest families but he mounted opposition against Porfirio Díaz's iron fisted 35 year rule. Madero himself was a small man, five foot three and referred to by Díaz as "the little madman" (el loquito). Madero was a teetotaler; spiritualist and a vegetarian in a culture where both drinking and eating meat were the macho things to do. Madero's objection to another six-year term by Díaz was met with scorn.

Díaz finally jailed Madero, whom he regarded as a pest, in June 1910 but Madero's family released him on bail. That October, Díaz was declared the winner of the presidency in a rigged election. Madero had, in the meantime, taken refuge in the United States of America whilst making plans to return to Mexico at the head of an armed revolution. This was the November 20th movement, later annually celebrated as Revolution Day.

The first engagement took place two days before Madero crossed back into Mexico. The central figure being a 34



six defenders: Serdán, his wife, mother, sister Carmen, brother Máximo and a family friend, a student named Jesús Nieto. Despite the overwhelming odds the defenders did not give up.

Carmen was wounded and went up to a balcony to challenge the watching crowds. Serdán was killed after holing up in the basement, fighting to his death. Máximo and Jesús were also killed and the women then taken prisoner. Carmen survived her wounds and was released from prison after Madero's victory over Diaz. When General Huerta staged a counter-revolution and overthrew Madero, Carmen served as a nurse in a field hospital, later returning to Puebla to raise the children of her two slain brothers. She died in 1948.

The Serdán home, at 4 Santa Clara Street, Puebla, was converted to a Regional Museum of the Mexican Revolution in 1960 to mark the 50th anniversary of Madero's rising. It commemorated the deeds of Aquiles Serdán and his family and is still a museum with everything just as he left it before being killed. The northern municipality of Aquiles Serdán, Chihuahua was renamed in his honor in 1932.

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DVD REGIONAL CODES

DVD players have region codes locked within them that act as monitors for preventing piracy of DVD's. This is the complete list of regions and if you cannot play your DVD, this is probably the reason. The best DVD to purchase is, obviously 0 as it covers all regions, so no matter where you purchase your movies they can be watched.

To watch Canadian or U.S. made movie DVD's it is probably the best to use a DVD player from those countries. If you buy a DVD player in Mexico, in all probability you will not be able to watch them. But the pirated DVD's in the market will be just fine. Do check the regions when making your purchase.

Some DVD's can have the regions unlocked but not all.

Region	Countries
0	No Region Coding
1	United States of America, Canada
2	Europe, including France, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, Japan and South Africa
3	Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Borneo and Indonesia
4	Australia and New Zealand, Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America
5	India, Africa, Russia and former USSR countries
6	Peoples Republic of China
7	Unused
8	Airlines/Cruise Ships
0	REGION 0 or REGION ALL -- Discs are uncoded and can be played Worldwide, however, PAL discs must be played in a PAL-compatible unit and NTSC discs must be played in an NTSC-compatible unit.

DVD unlock for regional codes

This site will give the unlock numbers for many DVD players

http://www.dvddemystifiziert.de/codefree_en/ig.html

*However, as a reaction to the popularity of Code-Free DVD players, "Hollywood" has instituted another layer of coding on region1 DVDs called RCE (Regional Coding Enhancement) which prevents selected region1 DVDs from playing even on Code-Free DVD players. However, RCE is only implemented on some Region 1 discs, and not on discs from other regions.

The NTSC/PAL Factor*

There is additional hitch in this madness. Since the world is also divided into the NTSC and PAL video systems, the consumer may need a multi-system TV to access DVDs pressed in one of these systems. Although this is difficult in the U.S. market, where all video is based on the NTSC system, most consumers in Europe and some other parts of the world do own Televisions that can view DVDs pressed in either NTSC or PAL.

*(excerpts borrowed from www.About.com)





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DID YOU KNOW

Roasted Chicken skin is OK to eat, according to a recent Chatelaine Magazine. Besides having mostly unsaturated fat, it contains valuable proteins, minerals and vitamins. Just watch the accompanying bread rolls and dessert, they add the calories.

Aspartame is 180 times sweeter than sugar.

- Baked potatoes** are a good energy food for dieters. They contain more potassium than a banana and, with lots of choices for toppings, can make a good well rounded meal.
- 1 teaspoon of butter is 36 calories
 - 1 ounce of cheddar cheese is 113 calories
 - 1/2 cup broccoli is 27 calories
 - 2 slices of chopped bacon are 82 calories
 - 2 tablespoons of reduced fat sour cream have 40 calories

Cucumber is a wonderful ant killer. Just leave several slices around a known ant nest or path and they will disappear - rapidly. It is also safe to leave around with pets.

The hole in the Ozone layer above Antarctica is actually shrinking in dimensions. There is no ozone depletion over Australia currently but the UV Index is generally 16 in Cairns and Darwin and half of that in Melbourne. There is less chance of getting skin cancer in Mexico in comparison than down under but that does not mean that skin protection should not be used daily.

The correct motor oil in your car will increase the longevity of your car. Using anything different will do more than lower your gas mileage; it can ruin your engine. Check the manual if unsure of what to use.

That the United States of Mexico, once upon a time, included Colorado, Utah, Arizona, California, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana.

Modern Mexico covers almost 2 million square kilometers (over 760,000 sq mi), is the fifth-largest country in the Americas and the 14th largest independent nation in the world.

Mexico's population in 2011 according to the recent poll is stated to be 113,724,226 people; almost 10 million more than in 2003.

Mexico City and Guadalajara, population combined equal that of Canada.
Canada 34,349,236 (2011) Mexico 2 cities 36,540,000 (2009)



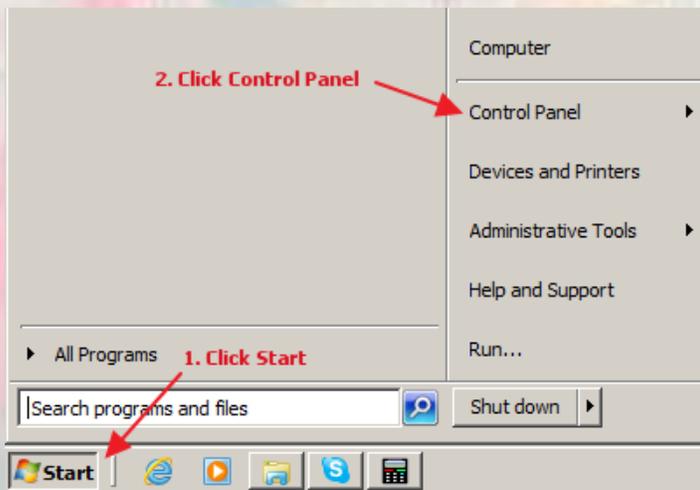
Office BYTES!

Single-clicking Your Mouse

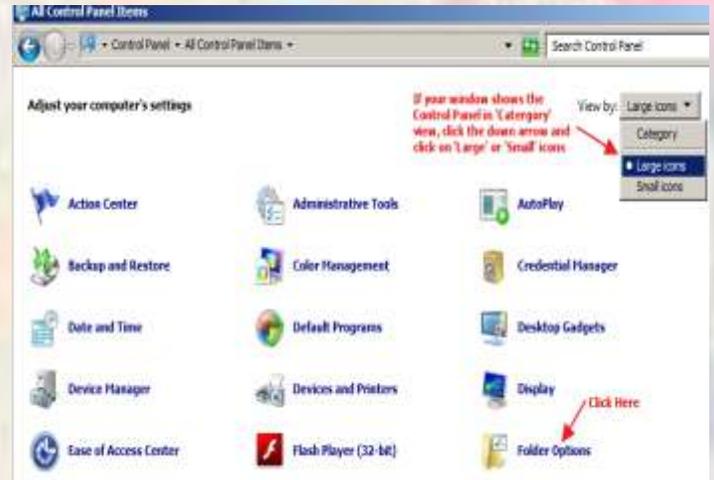
by Vivian Molick

For as long as I have been using computers the 'norm' was to double-click on a file or folder to open it. If you spend a considerable amount of time on the computer like I do, it can really get to be a lot of clicking. Wouldn't it be nice if you didn't have to do all that double-clicking? Wouldn't it be nice if you could just single-click on files or folders? Well, you can and I'm going to tell you how! I'm using Windows 7 for this tutorial, but it also works on Windows XP. The only difference is in the way the Control Panel looks, but I have made a note (**) where applicable.

First, click on **Start (1)** and then click on **Control Panel (2)**.



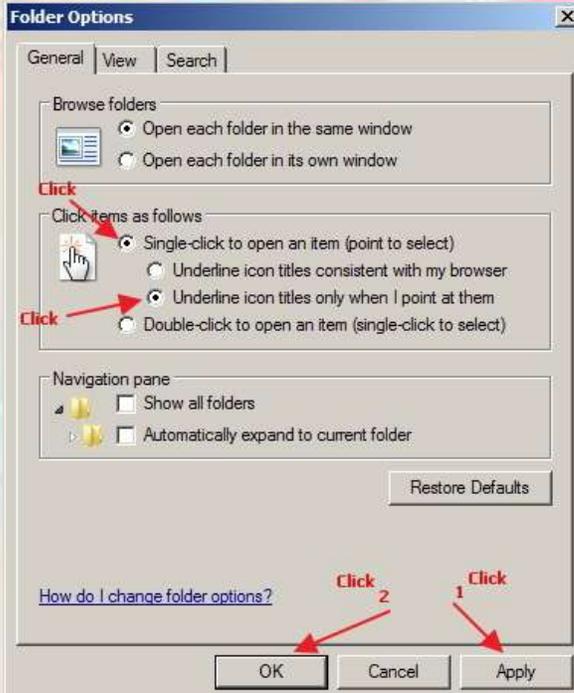
If your Control panel is in 'Category' view, you will have to click the 'down' arrow next to the heading 'View by:' (on the right side of window) and click on either the 'Small icons' or 'Large icons' options. When the new window opens you should be able to see ALL of the items in your Control Panel. Click on the **Folder Options** icon... this is where we will be able to tell Windows how to open our files.



**If you are using Windows XP etc, your Control Panel window will look similar to the image below. As you will see, you can change the view of the Control Panel on the left side of the window instead of the right side like in the Windows 7 image. You do NOT want the window in 'Category' view...you will want it to be in the view that you can see ALL of the items contained in the Control Panel.



In the **Folder Options** window you need to click on the 'Single-click to open an item (point to select)' option under the 'Click items as follows' heading. Also, under that heading, click 'Underline icon titles only when I point at them'. Now, click **Apply (1)** and **OK (2)**.



look the same, but now when you move your mouse pointer over an item it will highlight. If you *click* on an item *once* it is going to **open** instead of just being selected. One thing that will be different; if you need to change the name of a file, you will need to right-click on the file to get a menu that gives you the option to click 'Rename' instead of the selecting and then clicking on a the file name to bring up the flashing cursor with the file highlighted to type a new name. But, how many times do you change the name of a file compared to how many times you might your click your mouse in any one session on the computer?

So, if you work on the computer a lot; selecting and clicking on numerous files, this method could literally save you thousands of clicks (for your finger **and** lots of time) and it will also help your mouse live a little longer as a result of less clicking. If you decide that you don't like this method, it's very easy to just go back into the Control Panel, click on Folder Options, and then change back to the double-click option again.

If you closed your Control Panel window, open it again. Everything looks the same, right? Yes, everything will

Who knew it could be that easy! Happy clicking, or should I say 'not so much' clicking.

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Yes- You Can Have Your Cake and Eat It, Too!

Don't feel you can't have cake on your birthday just because you are eating healthier. Heck, you can have cake more than once a year if you make wise choices most of the time! I love to eat and I love to eat things that aren't good for me like fried food and desserts. But, I also want to be slim and healthy so what's a girl to do? You don't have to give up ALL of your favorite foods when you decide to "get healthy." There are a few foods (like anything with trans-fats) that you should never eat, but for the most part, with a few easy modifications and some self-control- you CAN be healthy and still enjoy what you eat.

Michelle Obama, a big proponent of nutrition and crusader against childhood obesity was recently spotted eating a hamburger, fries, and a milk shake and some media outlets went crazy. "How dare she eat this" they screamed, "she's telling us what to do and look what she's doing!" She knew this would be the reaction and used it to let people know that eating a big ol' fatty meal *once in awhile* is ok if you typically have a healthy diet and get plenty of exercise. Again, everything in moderation.

There are SO many Choices...help me shop!

Where to start? Look at the nutrition label, not the front of the box or can. Marketers tells us that licorice is fat free but no one is going to be healthy eating Twizzlers. The cereal box tells us Raisin Bran is 100% Natural but it fails to tout the very high sugar and sodium content.

When you see the words "Natural" on packaging, keep in mind that poison ivy is also natural so you need to read the label for more information. Instead of Raisin Bran, buy Special K with Protein and add your own raisins. Speaking of Special K, bypass the varieties with added fruit-type stuff and add your own fresh fruit. It's cheaper and much healthier. Another tip for the cereal aisle- Buy plain old oatmeal and add fruit or yogurt for toppings. The ingredient list on oatmeal should have one item: 100% Natural whole grain rolled oats. The ingredient list on the flavored, pre-packaged variety reads like a chemistry book.

A quick reference guide to the nutrition label, these are very simplified. I will get into this more in depth next month.

- 1- Look at the serving size and then the calories. Serving sizes are very deceptive. Who eats ½ cup of ice cream? Do the math according to how much you will actually eat
- 2- If the product contains trans fats- don't buy it
- 3- Ingredients are listed from most to least. If the first 5 ingredients contain sugar/sugar products, think twice about it. Buy items that have a short list of ingredients.
- 4- Sodium is a KILLER. Current guidelines are 2,300 mg per day, but 1,600 mg per day is even better. Our typical diet is loaded with sodium, opt for low salt varieties and don't grab the shaker.

What about claims of low fat?

When fat is taken out, something needs to be added and in the case of most grocery items like peanut butter and salad dressings, that item is sugar. Regular peanut butter is healthier than low fat and the calories are the same. Salad dressing is not a healthy item in any form but if you must use it, go with a lower calorie version. Dip your fork into the dressing, then your salad- you will be amazed at how little you use and you will never miss it. Low fat in the dairy aisle is a different story. Any chance you have to buy low or reduced fat cheese, milk, sour cream, etc. , do it. When the fat is removed, it is made more nutritious by lowering the saturated fats and calories. Even better- look for low-sodium, reduced fat cheese.

Can you still eat bread if you are trying to lose weight? There are lots of low-carb, no-carb diets out there and they do work in



Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine
FITNESS and HEALTH



the short term but I like carbs so I still eat them, in moderation, of course! White bread is on my list of never-eat foods, it is basically paste and does nothing for you nutritionally. Look for *whole grain* on the label and don't buy any bread that contains high fructose corn syrup. Let's see if you can get by with just half a bun or 1 slice of bread on your sandwich. Add a big piece of



lettuce on the top if you need something to hang on to! White pasta is also on the Never list. If you haven't tried whole grain pasta, give it a shot, you won't miss the white pasta and your body will thank you for not loading it with more glue!

Veggies for Non-Veggie Lovers!



Everyone I know is now on the Green Smoothie Kick- it curbs cravings, gives you tons of fiber and vitamins, is low cal and easy to make, this sounds like a win-win-win! Even if you don't like green vegetables, give

this a try- trust me, you'll like it! Be sure to wash everything thoroughly to get rid of any chemical residue and dirt.

Original Green Smoothie (yes, it is REALLY green!)

- 1 bunch Kale, romaine, spinach, or other dark green leafy vegetable
- 1 ripe banana, peeled and sliced
- 1 cup strawberries, washed with stems on
- 1 cup water
- BLEND until desired consistency.

This makes about 4 servings, store the rest in the refrigerator. Give leftovers a good stir before enjoying. This is the basic recipe, have fun testing your own combinations of greens and fruit. I haven't tried mango, but I bet it would be excellent with some romaine and banana.

Let me know what you think. E-mail me at karzlo@gmail.com or visit my blog <http://vivalavida-karen.blogspot.com/>

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In time for the Heat

With the heat of summer comes much perspiration, moisture that needs to be replaced. Try these delicious blender drinks that are a few of the summer line up from Real Simple magazine and experiment with your favourite flavours..

Directions for all drinks

- Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth and frothy.



Mango Gingerberry Raspberry Spinach Carrot

Mango Smoothy (Real Simple)

Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped ripe mango
- 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- 1/2 cup ice
- 1/4 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey

Raspberry Nut Smoothy (Real Simple)

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup low-fat milk
- 3/4 cup frozen raspberries
- 1/2 banana
- 1 tablespoon natural almond or peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon agave nectar or honey

Spinach, Grape, & Coconut Smoothie (Real Simple)

Ingredients

- 1 cup seedless green grapes
- 1 cup packed baby spinach
- 1/2 cup ice
- 1/4 cup coconut milk

Gingery Berry and Oat Smoothie (Real Simple)

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt

(Gingerberry cont..)

- 1/2 cup ice
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

Directions

- First place the oats and 1/2 cup water in a blender.
- Let soak until the oats have softened, about 15 minutes. Then follow above directions above

Fruit soups

When on a cruise many years ago, we were absolutely delighted with the chilled fruit soups that we had never had before. Almost all fruits can be used in various combinations and if what you choose to use is not a really juicy fruit, add a little ginger ale or OJ which will bring the moisture out. I have gone on line to check out recipes and the following are from All **Recipes.com**, where I can often find a good recipe.

Mango Gazpacho

Ingredients

- 2 cups 1/4-inch-diced fresh mangoes
- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 seedless cucumber, cut into 1/4-inch dice
- 1 small red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1/4" dice
- 1 small onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice
- 2 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, basil or cilantro
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Process mangos, orange juice and oil in a blender or food processor until pureed. Transfer to a medium bowl, along with remaining ingredients. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

(Can be made several hours before serving.)

Strawberry soup

Ingredients

- 2 pints strawberries
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom

Directions

In a blender, combine the strawberries, yogurt, orange juice, sugar, water and cardamom. Puree until well mixed. Chill and serve.

CERAMIC

TILE ART

by Robert Hill

MURALIST - PAINTER
DESIGNER - TEACHER
Manzanillo, Colima, Mexico



Recent wall mural by Robert Hill



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POOLS - BAR TOPS
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Hummingbird



Prehispanic Bird Design



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CONTACT ROBERT AT rmayfordhill@hotmail.com



GETTING A MEXICAN DRIVER'S LICENSE

By Robert Hill

Getting a Mexican driver's license was one of the most delightful experiences I have had in Manzanillo, but this was 10 years ago when things were a good deal more *Mexican* than they are now, and a lot more fun.

In those days the Transportation Department was in an upstairs office on the narrow street which parallels the railroad in Manzanillo Centro. There was an unmarked wooden door which opened to a steep flight of stairs, making it seem like you were about to enter Fernando's Hideaway. Upstairs there were lots of people waiting in line at the windows for vehicle registrations, and off to the right a separate room for people like me, who had come to get a driver's license.

I had brought my friend Ramón along as an interpreter and we sat on some plastic chairs along the wall to await our turn. After about 15 minutes we were motioned to the counter where we answered a few questions and produced the standard documents; Passport, FM-3, Curp card, utility bill, etc.

The next step was for me to take a written exam covering Mexican traffic laws, which was the main reason I brought Ramón along. However, the woman in charge of giving the exams did not want Ramón to help me, and with her big smile kept saying "*no problema, tu puedes*" (no problem, you can do it!) Obviously, I did not share Maria's optimism that with my very limited Spanish, I would be able to read, much less understand, a written exam of Mexican traffic laws. Nevertheless, Maria seemed to have taken a somewhat maternal interest in this gringo who wanted a Mexican driver's license, and she led me to a computer console and sat me down in front of it.

She proceeded to boot up the test so that I could see the first question, in a multiple choice format with 4 possible responses, numbered 1 through 4. It might as well have been in Mandarin Chinese as I had no idea of what the question was, let alone the right answer. She was standing close to me on the left and at that time she nudged my left arm. I glanced down and saw that she had extended 2 fingers on her right hand, so I dutifully punched 2 as my response and the program advanced to the next question. And so it went for about 20 questions as I would pretend to be

reading each one, then glance down at Maria's fingers for the right answer. When I finished the test Maria gleefully announced to the whole office that this Americano got a perfect score!

Her co-workers were all laughing and applauding, so it was obvious that they were in on the scam. After having my photo taken I was directed into a small, private office for an eye examination, and met the "eye doctor" who spoke pretty good English. There was an eye chart on the wall with the big "E", but not much else in the way of equipment for giving eye exams. The Eye Doc was a jovial sort who was more interested in talking about Las Vegas, where I came from, than my eyesight.

Finally, he told me that he was an official with Cruz Roja (Mexican Red Cross) and that I had 2 choices: He could give me an eye exam or I could make a donation to Cruz Roja. I asked him if 50 pesos would be OK and he said fine, you have perfect eyesight but you must wear your glasses when driving.

After paying the fee of \$500 pesos I was finished, but had to return in about 10 days for the actual license, laminated in plastic, and good for 5 years. A nice feature of the Mexican driver's license is that on the back of it appears the name and phone number of a person you wish to be contacted in case of an emergency.

I have had my license renewed twice since then, each time for 5 years, but now the Transportation Department has been moved to the new Municipal Government office complex near the Coca Cola plant. The process for getting a driver's license has been streamlined and is much more efficient, but not nearly as much fun.

As long as you renew it before the expiration date you do not have to re-take the test, and you will be out of there in about 15 minutes with a new one, laminated with a new photo and ready to go... still \$500 pesos. There was no problem with the U.S. authorities at the border with my Mexican license nor with Car Rental companies in the States, and I assume it is the same in Canada. (*Ed: it is.*)

I had another related experience about 9 years ago which illustrates how things have changed over the past decade, with respect to driving. After a brief border run to Brownsville, TX, I headed south again on the main *autopista* going toward Mexico City.

About 50 miles south of the border I was waved through



one of the military checkpoints, and continued on a few miles down the highway, doing about 70. All of a sudden I saw a car in my mirrors with red lights flashing, coming up on me at a very high rate of speed. It had to be doing better than 100 mph, so I eased to the right expecting it to pass me like a speeding bullet. Instead, it pulled in behind me with red lights still flashing, so I slowed and stopped on the shoulder of the highway.

My mind was racing trying to think of what in the world I had done to warrant getting pulled over by the *Federales!* The officer got out of his cruiser and came to my door with the window down. He said (in English) "Sorry to bother you but I need to ask you some questions". Now I was *really* wondering what I had done that would make the *Federales* want to question me ? With a big smile he explained that he had seen my Nevada license plates at the checkpoint, and that he was planning to take his wife and 3 kids

to Las Vegas for a vacation, and could I please recommend a good hotel for them to stay at? At this point I breathed a big sigh of relief and smiled back at him.

Turns out he had a lot of questions about Las Vegas, and I recommended that he take his family to the Circus Circus Hotel on the Strip, as it was inexpensive and had a lot of fun attractions for the kids. He was very grateful and asked me where I was headed. I told him I was going to San Miguel De Allende for a few days, then on to Guanajuato, Tonalá, and then home to Manzanillo. He said his *compañeros* would be watching out for me along the way. He then took out one of his cards, wrote something on the back of it and gave it to me, saying, "if you have any problems with the *policia*, show them this card". I assured him I would, we shook hands, and said "adios". I kept that card for a long time but never had a reason to use it.

Since that time in 2002, things have become a lot more problematic with respect to driving in some parts of Mexico, due to the *narcotraficantes*. I hope and pray that one day soon things will return to the way they were a decade ago.



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Temporary Vehicle Importation Permits



The customs laws pertaining to the importation of personal vehicles into Mexico are currently undergoing a dramatic change. At this time, it appears that those vehicles already in Mexico and covered by the owners FM3 are **not** affected **until** such time as such vehicles leave the country temporarily and then return! Upon re-entry they will be liable for the new importation charges. (Unless the old sticker has not been handed in.)

As outlined in last months Sun, the fees for importation have increased substantially. They range from US\$200 to US\$400, here we issue a warning for Canadian travellers, although the currency exchange for the Canadian dollar is higher at the moment this writer was charged CAN\$452 when returning to Mexico with a new car very recently. Protests fell upon deaf ears, so be prepared. That this rate is currently fluctuating is really not much help as it changes almost by the nano-second.

It seems to be misunderstood that persons with an FM2 may not own or drive a foreign plated car unless the registered FM3 owner is in the car. It may be worth re-considering which visa suits your needs the best. As for the most part, unless considering applying for citizenship and FM3 allows all of the same privileges as those of the FM2 without the restrictions, this is the one that should be primarily considered.

At the end of this article, the previous law for vehicle is included and although it is under reconstruction will give a good outline of all current rules. In all cases pertaining to law in Mexico, it is subject to instantaneous change with little warning and nothing contained in this article should be considered cast in stone.

Those people whom have Mexican/American citizenship are under a very sharp sword. They are limited to entering the country with their foreign plated car just once a year, As they are supposed to take it out at six months this can cause real aggravation. One lady attempting a re-entry was refused permission and then told that if she wished to have the car in Mexico all year she would be better to renounce her Mexican citizenship and take an FM3. It is known that others in similar situation have had more than one entry each year, so obviously she encountered the agent with empire building in the making.

The new laws state that when the registered owner of the new import renews their FM3, each year, they must also go to the local Aduenales (customs office) to have the car importation extended. In most cases this will be a matter of form, but if extension is denied for whatever reason, the car must exit and re-enter. **THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO CARS IN THE COUNTRY PRIOR TO JUNE 2011**, which entered Mexico under the previous system. Do note however, that this can change and without much warning

***(We at the Manzanillo Sun will try to keep abreast of any changes and alert everyone as quickly as possible.)**



When the new FM3 cards were issued we were told that they may not have to be renewed each year, with the car situation as it is at the moment, this is not the case. Make sure to renew in good time so that all can be covered in good time.

When paying for the importation car tax upon re-entering Mexico, to use the credit card is still the best way to go. If you come and go throughout the year, refunds can be made more easily than when paying with cash. The initial fee will just turn over it is not required to pay the entry fee more than once if extension is given.

In actual fact, this time upon re-entering Mexico with all of the required duplicates (they do need to see all original documents too) it was much easier than in the past.

New changes are also coming with immigration laws and these will have to be watched very carefully. Not knowing the law is not considered an excuse unfortunately.

The "Banderas News" has information which can be viewed at the following links :

<http://yucalandia.wordpress.com/driving-in-mexico-issues-fun/importing-driving-a-car-in-mexico/>

<http://www.banderasnews.com/1106/nb-mexicoimmigrationlaws.htm>

NEW IMPORTATION FEES

Vehicle Year Model:.....Amount to be paid in Mexican Pesos*

2007 and later.....USD \$400
2001 until 2006.....USD \$300
2000 and earlier.....USD \$200

*Peso amounts are based on applicable exchange rate

This deposit is compulsory and can be paid by credit card, debit card, or cash (in US Dollars only).



CUSTOMS LAW OF MEXICO Article 106

Importations of vehicles into Mexico are not permitted with the exception of those designed for personal use only.

1. **For up to one month:** towed trailers, semi trailers, towed platform beds designed for transportation of shipping containers
2. **For six month duration**
 - a) Foreign visitors personal transportation to be used only by them or their employees.
 - b) Goods intended for personal use only
 - c) Diplomatic vehicles for use of employees of Commissions and Consul offices, or for use of Mexican civil servants in certain capacities and imported with tax exemptions.
 - d) Samples and sample books for presentation of goods to be imported, providing they meet rules and requirements of customs laws.
 - e) For Mexican individuals who work and have permanent residence abroad. Their vehicle importation is limited to one entry per year. Whilst this vehicle has restricted entry and may remain for only six months it may be driven by any family member who also has permanent residence abroad.
- 3) **For one year.**
 - a) Transportation vehicles for International Conventions or Congresses
 - b) Vehicle donated for sports events, Universities or



Charitable Organisations who are authorised by law to receive them.

- c) Vehicles and Equipment for the purpose of cinematography and only imported for one year duration.
- d) Vehicles and Equipment designed for Diplomatic purposes with reciprocal arrangements by International Treaty.
- e) Various Merchandise qualified as diplomatic property under the same qualification as above.

4) For the term of the visa validity

- a) Vehicles which are the property of visitors and imported temporarily into the country for personal use only. This is confined to one vehicle only per individual. Anyone may drive the vehicle providing that the registered owner is in the vehicle at the same time.
- b) (this clause is indecipherable.)

5) For ten (10) years.

- a) Containers
- b) Airplanes and helicopters destined for use by the Airlines for passengers within Mexico when registered with Ministry. This must be renewed every February.
- c) Boats destined for passenger transport, commercial fishing boats, Naval vessels. Recreational yachts or sailboats of more than 4 metres in length, including registered boat trailers.
- d) Motor Homes, mobile homes or trailers either towed or transported on flat bed trucks for personal use by foreign owner and his immediate family only. No Mexican nationals.
- e) Railroad cars destined for importation of goods by Internationally registered carriers. These will be allowed multiple entries into the country. Also vehicles for the maintenance of these transporters & railroad carriers will be allowed multiple entries. All must have correct and up to date papers for continued use and transportation into and within the country.

All of the above must be returned to the country of origin upon cessation of being required in Mexico by the registered owner or upon the registered owners personal visa expiration or conclusion.

***The above is designed to be a guideline only as the actual wording on the document is very difficult to translate with accuracy. The original Article 106, in Spanish, should be referred to for necessary legalities should they arise.



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