

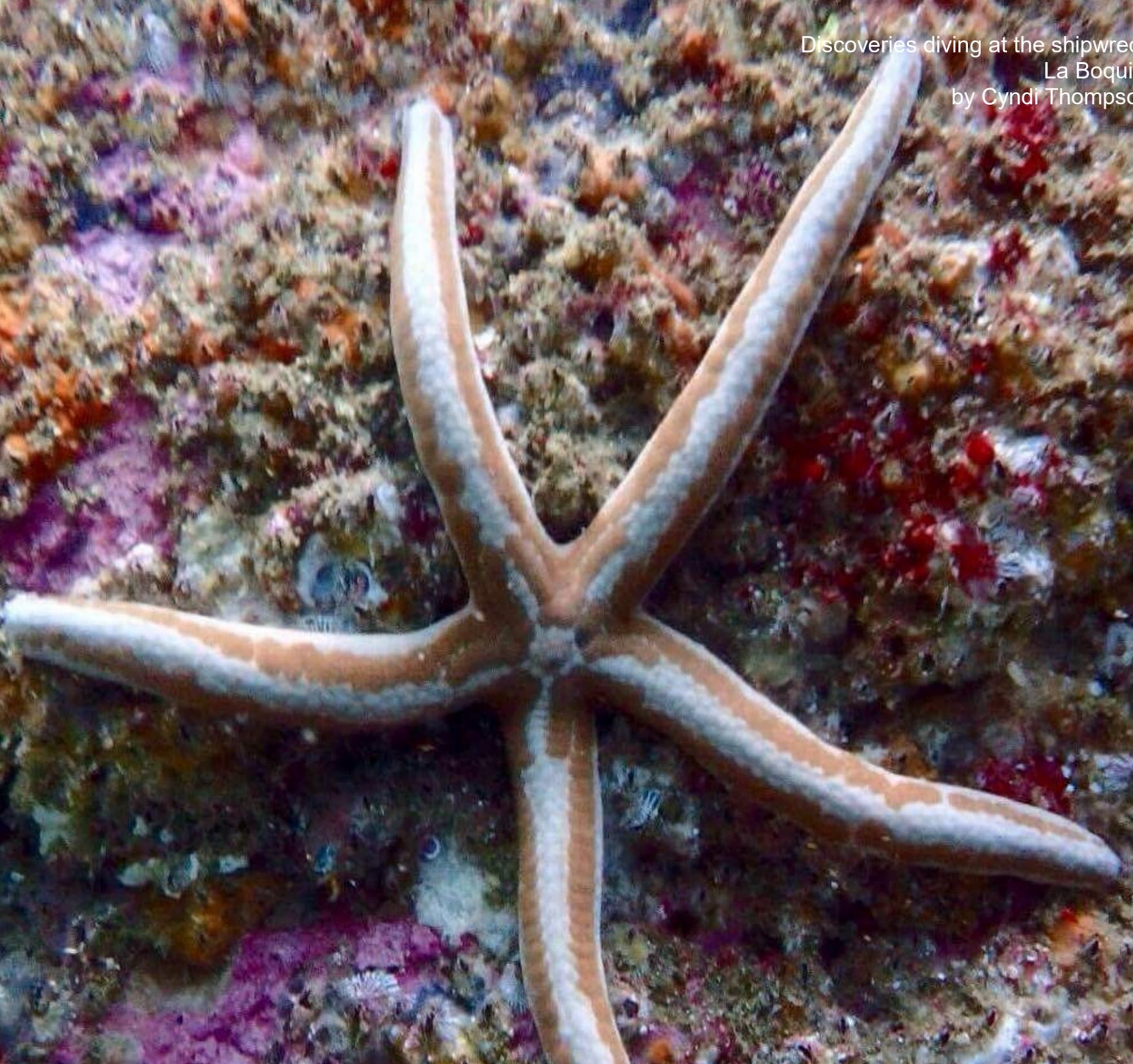


# Manzanillo SUN

coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine

December 2016

Discoveries diving at the shipwreck  
La Boquita  
by Cyndi Thompson



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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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"The Civilized Jungle"

**A Celebration for Those Who Left Before Us**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

with photos by Allan Yanitski and Suzanne A. Marshall

This year brought our first opportunity to be involved in the Mexican celebrations called Day of the Dead. In past years, we hadn't returned from Canada soon enough or had the opportunity to enjoy an organized celebration.

We joined Dra. Elizabeth Torres (University of Colima, Manzanillo), her dancers and organizers for a mid-day celebration at Rancho Los Manantiales on November 1st. Following a caravan of cars from a local parking lot, we entered the ranch gates located in the nearby hills and found ourselves in a quiet oasis away from the distraction of the streets and traffic.

A beautifully-decorated, large, shady shelter awaited us. With the smell of food in the air, we found tables and chairs and a dance area in the center where we could all observe the traditional and ancient festivities.



Dancer with feathered headdress

The dance floor area itself was framed with corn husks, marigolds and flower petals, all laid out in a beautiful display. Dra. Torres explained the ancient customs to us as she and her dancers stood in traditional costumes and beautifully-festooning, feathered head regalia. In Mexico, it is a time to remember and celebrate the family members and friends that have passed away.

Rather than a baleful event, it is a celebration of their memories and lives and the peace they have now found. Alters and shrines are laid out for receiving food and flowers in their memories. The celebrations in Mexico are actually a two-day event with the first day celebrating the children and the second day for the adults.

With the sounds of ancient drumming and the blowing of conch shells, the pre-Columbian dancers began their rhythmic steps and performed several dances for us, each with increasing fervor. Once completed, we all quietly walked through the trees to a shrine by a small pond to make our offerings to the spirits



Dancers

and memories of our loved ones. A man began to sing a lovely ballad in Spanish as he strummed his guitar. It was a truly spiritual moment amidst the trees and grasses. This was a wonderful experience for me as I placed my flowers and remembered



Pre-Columbian dancers

(Continued on page 2)

(Day of the Dead - Continued from page 1)



Introduction to the celebration

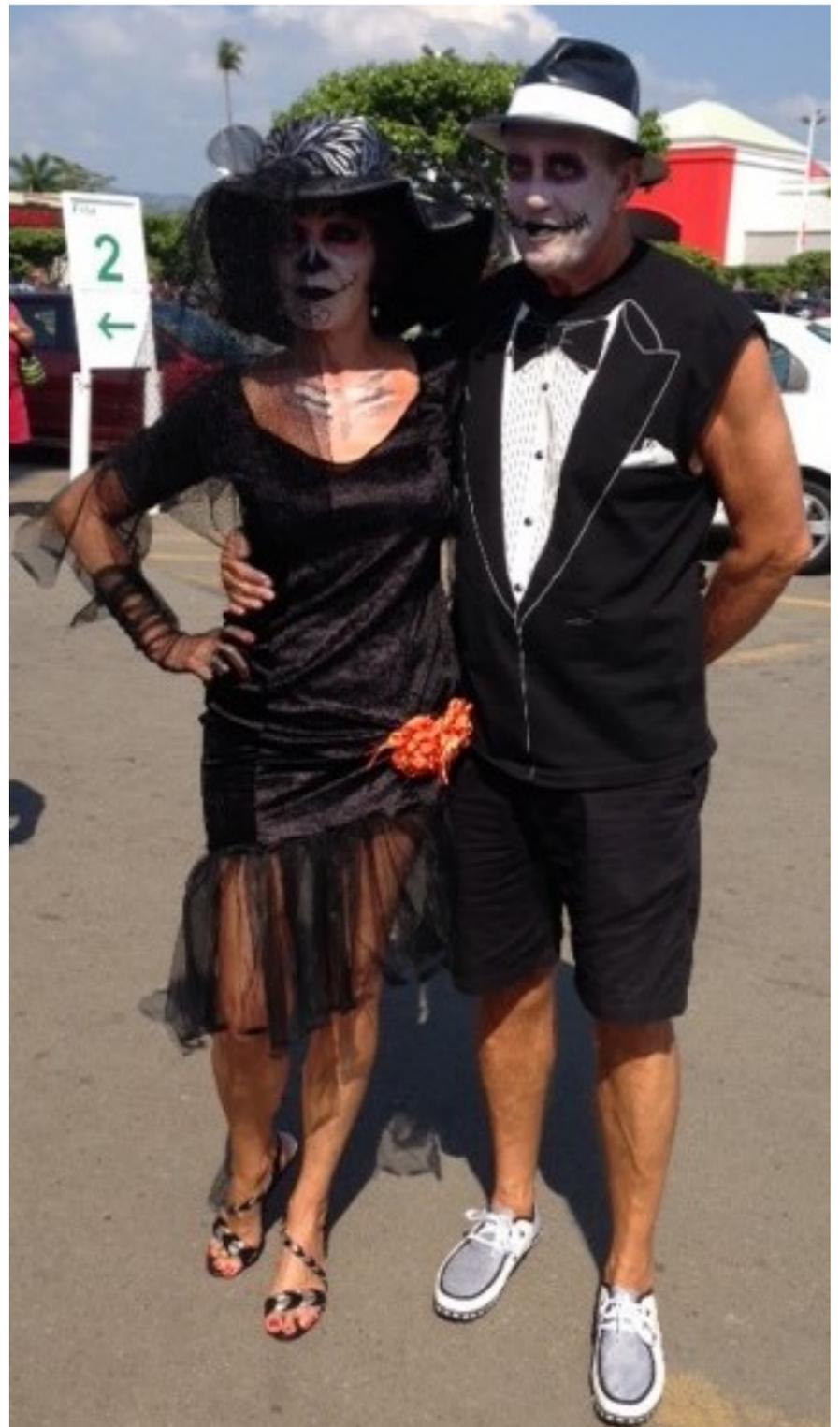


Dancers getting read to perform

my own loved ones and felt somehow more closely reconnected to them for a while.

To the sound of beautiful music, we then returned through the trees to the shelter where we enjoyed the delicious tamales and an array of fruit and drinks that were waiting for us.

My personal impression of these Mexican celebrations is how joyfully they embrace what could otherwise be such a macabre event. Yes, they are playful with the displays of skeletons all about and some celebrants dress up in ghoulish deathly make-up and costume but it's all done with a sense of humor, joy and celebration. I am told that in some neighborhoods, as in Canada and the US, the children also dress in costumes and go calling door to door for treats and candy.



Day of the Dead costumes

Throughout Mexico, The Day of The Dead brings celebration to countless cemeteries and gatherings. ¡Qué bueno!

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



by Tommy Clarkson

**African Iris**, *Dietes bicolor* (Sometimes confused with, or incorrectly called, *Dietes vegeta*, *Dietes Moraea* and *Dietes iridioides*)

Family: *Iridaceae*

Also known as: Spanish Iris, Peacock Iris, Butterfly Iris, Fort-night Iris, Bicolor Iris, Yellow Wild Iris, Evergreen Iris and Peacock Flower

*(I seem to have a numbskull knack for picking out plants that I like and want to incorporate into the Ola Brisa Gardens plant family about which little has, heretofore, been written. The African Iris is just such a species! Beyond that, like so many tropical plants, I've learned over the course of my studying and growing them, there is significant misunderstanding and debate as to their proper botanical place and name.)*

Horticulturist Dr. Douglas F. Welsh, of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, states that "Confusion over (the) correct naming of these African plants occurred when the large plant group known as *Moraea* was split and renamed: those with evergreen rhizomes were now *Dietes*, and those having corms were left in the *Moraea* group."

The genus name "Dietes" is comes from the Greek word "dis" meaning twice and "etes" means an associate and refers to the position of this genus between its two relatives, *Moraea* and *Iris*.

*(Ya' got all of that? It may be on the mid-term test or, at the*

*very least, a conversation starter for your next block party!)*

If nothing else, any plant that is liked by bees, butterflies and birds has got to be OK with me! The African Iris is such a plant.

At a more basic and down-home level, the *Dietes* family is comprised of some six species of rhizomatous herbs that originated in the tropical environs of southeastern Africa. Tough little, self-seeding characters, they are quite resistant to pests and gardeners alike, being difficult to remove from their adopted *terra firma* home once they've fully set up residency! Beyond that, it germinates easily and can tolerate a wide spectrum of growing conditions.



Barely a day old and this African Iris bloom is already starting to curl up!

The small, beautiful flowers last but one day, however – *fear not* - others follow throughout the year. The flowers close by midday, except on overcast days (*and Irish holidays I may choose to observe!*) These dainty, profusely-blooming, small, pale yellow, bi-sexual flowers feature a dark brown spot at their base.

The *Dietes bicolor* will bloom less vigorously in wetter environs or where the evenings are warm. Yet it can withstand short periods of cold weather.

Typical of Irises, its sword-shaped leaves are arranged in an equitant (fan-shaped) manner. These ¼ to 3/8 inch- (.4 – 1 cm) wide linear, grass-like leaves range from twenty-four to

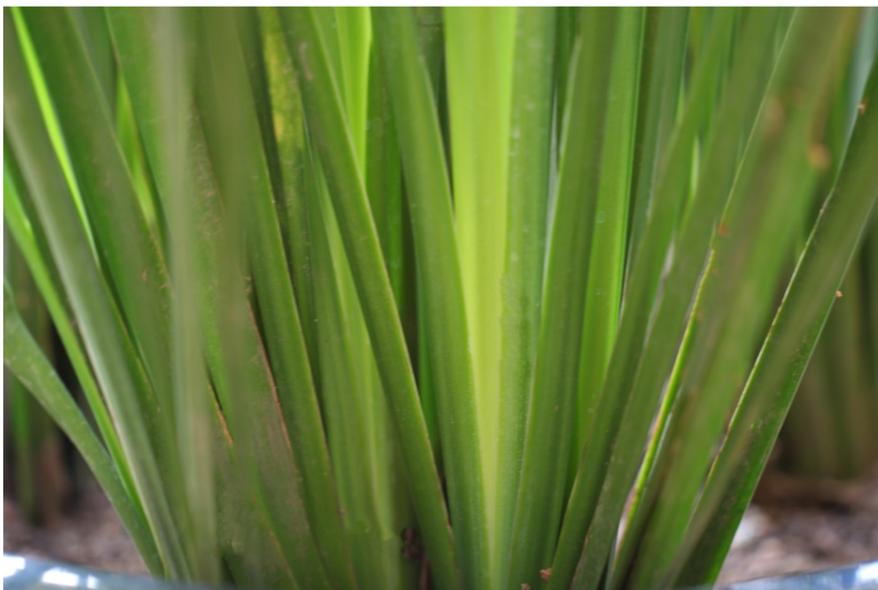
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(African Iris — Continued from page 3)

forty-eight inches (60–120 cm) tall.

Plant them where they can enjoy full or partial sun and water moderately. Down below, they generally prefer sandy, loamy and silty soil but, in all reality, are not all that fussy as to soil type in which they are planted.

Like Banana or Hibiscus plants, when a stem has stopped flowering, it should be cut back to the ground level.



We have since moved ours to where it can receive a bit more sun each day

As to purported uses of the African Iris, infusions made from the inner part of the rhizome, taken orally or via enemas, is thought to treat dysentery; in some cultures, the rhizomes are used during childbirth or for hypertension; and ground rhizomes are ingredients in tonics for ailing goats. (*I kid you not!*) Regarding folklore - calling this a Rain Iris - some folks believe that the flowering of this plant presages rain.

In Africa, some subscribe to the belief that, if one had been to a funeral or entered a house with a corpse, it was imperative that they chew the African Iris rhizome and spit on the ground so as to cast out bad luck. Failure to do so, the belief so went, meant that an immediate member of one's family would soon die.

The African Iris can be effectively used as a border plant, beside pools, mass planted, or strategically placed in an oriental garden. One might wish to seek out a plant or two of the larger flowered White Wild Iris (*Dietes grandiflora*) and plant them in a complementary manner.



Its thick, wide linear, grass-like leaves range from twenty-four to forty-eight inches tall

As regards some of its relations, *Dietes vegata* presents itself in large, grassy clumps with numerous three-inch (7.62 cm) pale, yellow flowers marked with yellow and violet. The cultivars called 'Orange Drops' and 'Lemon Drops' are actually *Dietes* hybrids. The *Dietes iridioides* is rather similar in appearance to the *Dietes bicolor* but has blue or purple streaks emanating from the center of the flower.

Bottom line: Interesting plant!

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**Avoid Mistakes Now; Live a Happy Retirement Later**

by Yann Kostic

It's easy to make financial mistakes when you're young, because you can generally recover from them over time. Unfortunately, the same can't be said as you approach retirement, when you'll have less room for error. With that in mind, here are five mistakes that are easy to make heading into, or during, retirement.

**Waiting too long to start saving.** If you save aggressively in your twenties, those gains will compound over forty or more years. But the later you start saving, the harder it gets to accumulate a nest egg with which you're comfortable.

**Not saving enough.** Some of us are disciplined savers who live below our means and put away a good amount for retirement. Most of us are not. Indeed, the savings rate today is around 6%, about half what it was in the 1960s. So as you approach retirement, it's a good idea to make do with less and save more.

**Ignore tax consequences.** Every dollar you pay in taxes is a dollar you could have potentially saved and invested. So consider tax-advantaged accounts, such as 401(k) plans and individual retirement accounts (IRAs).

**Being too aggressive.** Being too aggressive late in your retirement planning can be disastrous, and it's easy to do when we've saved too little. Many investors try and compensate for a lack of savings and low returns on safer investments such as cash and bonds by taking on more risk.

**Being too conservative.** On the other hand, having too little in riskier investments can also be disastrous. Stocks are usually the best long-term growth vehicle, but other investments can fall into this category as well - real estate, for example, and commodities. Regardless of how you take on risk, you'll likely need at least a little, depending on your time horizon - more when it's longer, less when it's shorter.

The takeaway: don't make mistakes now that will affect your lifestyle later.

Yann Kostic is an Investment Advisor (RIA) and Money Manager with Atlantis Wealth Management. Yann specializes in retirees (or soon to be), self-reliant women and expats in Mexico. Atlantis Wealth Management has relationships with international custodians allowing multiple foreign currencies in a single account. Yann splits his time between the Lake Chapala area, Manzanillo and Central Florida. Comments, questions or to request his newsletter, "News you can use" contact him at [yannk@atlantisgrp.com](mailto:yannk@atlantisgrp.com), in the US at (321) 574-1521 or in Mexico, (376) 106-1613



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by Tommy Clarkson

### Mexican Rosewood, *Cordia elaeagnoides*

Family: *Boraginaceae*

Also known as: Mayan Rosewood, *Barcino*, Mexico Bocote or *Bocote*

*(This is an attractive tropical tree. It is moderately sized. It has a brown trunk, green leaves and, in season, is all but covered in small, stunningly white flowers. The preceding three short sentences are significantly more than one can find in the vast preponderance of tropical botanical books regarding the Mexican Rosewood. For whatever reason, virtually no one has, heretofore, striven to describe it! So, we shall so endeavor!)*

On the other hand, when folks come to our home or gardens to visit, probably one of the most commonly asked about trees, growing wild on the hillsides, are the *Cordia eleagnoides*. On the steep slope back, beyond and above our home, toward the north, they appear as giant snow balls amid the tropical green when their millions of flowers bloom. While they grow in great proliferation, other than in exotic wood publications and online sites, little has been written about them. Around here, the locals call these beauties *Barcino*.

But, let's start with what we do know for sure about this interesting tree: There are around 320 species of bushes, trees

and woody vines in the *Cordia* genus; That genus' name honors German botanist and pharmacist Valerius Cordus (1515-1544); The *Cordia elaeagnoides* is a tree which can grow from twenty to thirty-three feet (6.10-10.06 meters) tall; It comes from central/southern Mexico and Central America; Even though its stunning, cut wood has the appearance of Rosewood, it is not in the *Dalbergia* genus or *Fabaceae* or *Leguminosae* families; And that wood is, indeed, very beautiful!



From the distance these look like piles of snow amid the tropical greenery

Confirming the latter, our pal, Dr. Mark Olson-Zunica, of the University of Mexico's Biological Institute describes this tree's wood as, "*Very pretty and heavy, with a dark heartwood that's a specialty of local furniture on the coast* (in this area)." He's correct.

It is a favorite for cabinetmaking, decorative veneer work, a most striking flooring, spectacular-in-appearance furniture and interior trim, as well as joinery and turnery. (*No, those latter two weren't an Irish marathon dance team in the 30's!*)

We'll proceed a bit further with this discussion of the visual nature of its wood. The professionals on the Hobbit House – which is a "*non-commercial site focusing on color-correct pictures of exotic and domestic woods*" - has some very good descriptions regarding the Mexican Rosewood. Firstly, in that its color seems to be one of its major draws, the

(Continued on page 7)

(Mexican Rosewood — Continued from page 6)

writer says, "Reports on color are all over the map, but the one that fits my experience is (that it) ranges from tan to golden brown to pale golden yellow, with irregular dark brown streaks. Other(s) say the streaks can be red, or green, or some say black, and that the heartwood is variously 'tobacco' colored, dark brown, nearly white, red, and red brown, take your pick . . . The heartwood is reportedly rather sharply demarcated from the grayish or yellowish sapwood . . . (while its grain) "varies from straight to roey (mottled or streaked).

On this, there seems to be universal agreement. Some also say shallowly-interlocked grain. Generally it contains wonderfully curvy lines and swirls."



Those "floral snowflakes" are most interesting-looking when seen up close

The beautiful, contrasting grain patterns reminds me, quite a bit, of one of my favorite woods from when I did a bit of woodworking, Cocobolo (*Dalbergia retusa*). (Some purveyors of exotic lumber confuse these two different trees while yet others add Indian Rosewood (*Dalbergia sissoo*) to this confused mix.

The first of these, Cocobolo, is a most interesting wood weighing sixty-five pounds per cubic foot, air dry - twice as much as cherry - and, is so dense that it will not float. But - forgive me - I (*all too easily*) get side-tracked when talking about plants!

Though small in size, the old, browned blossoms of the Mexican Rosewood are copious in number. As a result, it probably doesn't make the greatest of trees for one's backyard because of all this vegetative litter.



For all that ado about the Mexican Rosewood's flowers, its leaves are, well, rather pedestrian!

Lastly - and I know you have eagerly awaited this scientific tidbit - according to an article entitled "*The hydroquinone terpenoids of Cordia elaeagnoides*" published by the Royal Society of Chemistry, "*Five new geranyl-hydroquinone derived compounds have been isolated from the ether extract of Cordia elaeagnoides (Boraginaceae) heartwood . . . The structural character of the compounds adds information to expand the earlier-proposed biogenetic pathway for the geranyl-hydroquinone and geranyl-benzoquinones in Cordia.*"

Now with that weighty information and thirty pesos, you might just get a shot of tequila somewhere!

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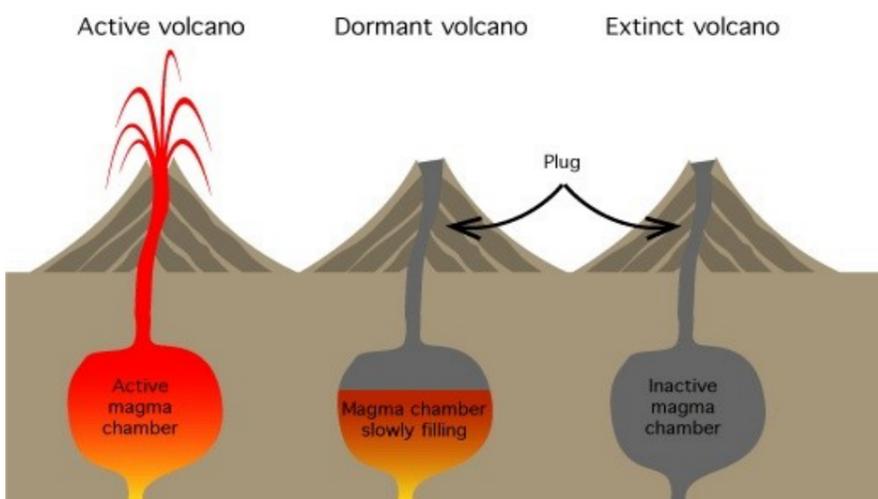
## Volcanoes / Volcanes

by Terry Sovil

A volcano (singular, volcanoes plural; Spanish volcán or volcanes) is a mountain which opens down into the earth to a pool of molten rock. When pressure builds up, an eruption can occur, causing gas and rock to shoot up through the opening and spill over or fill the air with smoke and fragments. An eruption can cause hot ash flow, mudslides, avalanches, falling ash, floods, lava flows and lateral blasts. They have also been known to cause tsunamis, floods, earthquakes, mud flows and falling rock. Volcanoes form when the magma from within the Earth works to the surface. Then it erupts to form a lava flow and ash deposits. Over time it will get bigger.

Volcanoes have been categorized into three types:

1. Active – one that has recently erupted, in the past 10,000 years, and may erupt again.
2. Dormant – one that hasn't erupted for a long time, in the past 10,000 years, but still may erupt again, although unlikely.
3. Extinct – One that erupted thousands of years ago with no possibility of more eruptions, we think.



Volcanoes erupt because the Earth's crust, made of huge slabs called plates, fit together much like a jigsaw puzzle. Sometimes these plates can move and drift. This is plate tectonics and the friction causes the earthquakes and eruptions near the edges of the plate.

The theory of plate tectonics is one of continents drifting from place to place and breaking apart. During this process they grind against each other. This theory is supported by much evidence. The Earth's crust is many thin, rigid plates that move in

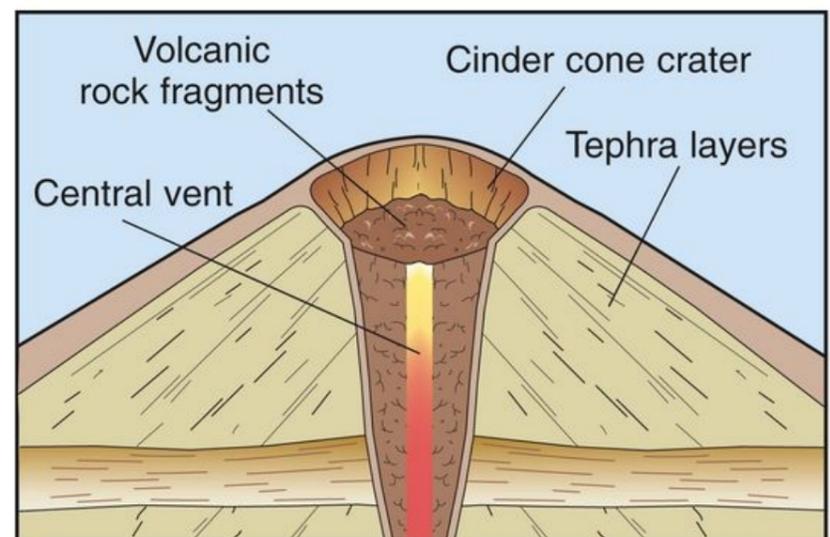
many directions at varying speeds. When they crash, or pull apart, it results in earthquakes.

There are more than 1500 active volcanoes on the Earth. We know of about 80 that are under the oceans. Mexico's volcanoes are part of the Pacific Ring of Fire. They have formed on the North American continental tectonic plate. The most active are Popocatepetl (located in the states of Puebla, Mexico, and Morelos, in Central Mexico) and Colima. El Chichón erupted in 1982 and is now dormant. That cooled the world's climate the following year!

Mexico's volcanoes are located as follows:

- Baja California, Northwest Mexico and Mexican Islands: 16 volcanoes, 3 probably extinct, 13 dormant
- Western and Central Mexico: 24 volcanoes, 19 dormant, 3 probably extinct, 2 erupting (Colima and Popocatepetl)
- Southern Mexico: 2 volcanoes, dormant

So, beyond the categories of Active, Dormant and Extinct are there other types? Yes there are: cinder cones, composite (also frequently called stratovolcano), shield volcanoes and lava volcanoes.

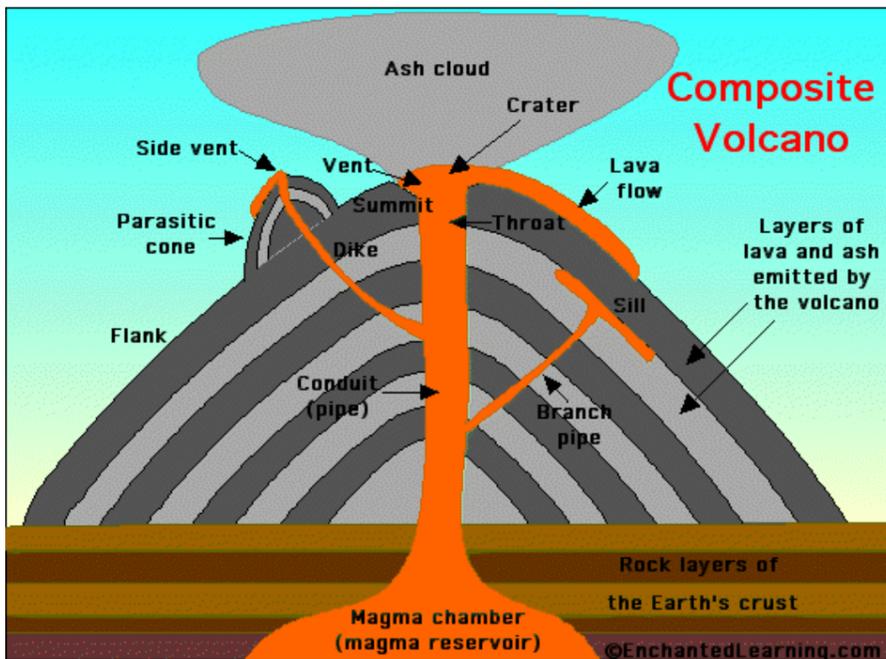


- Cinder cones – circular or oval cones that are comprised of lava fragments from a single eruption that were blown into the air and fallen around the vent.
- Composite or Stratovolcano – are steep sided and made up of layers of volcanic rock usually from high viscosity lava, ash and rock debris. The Colima volcano fits here. Some of the most powerful and destructive volcanoes in human history have been stratovolcanoes.

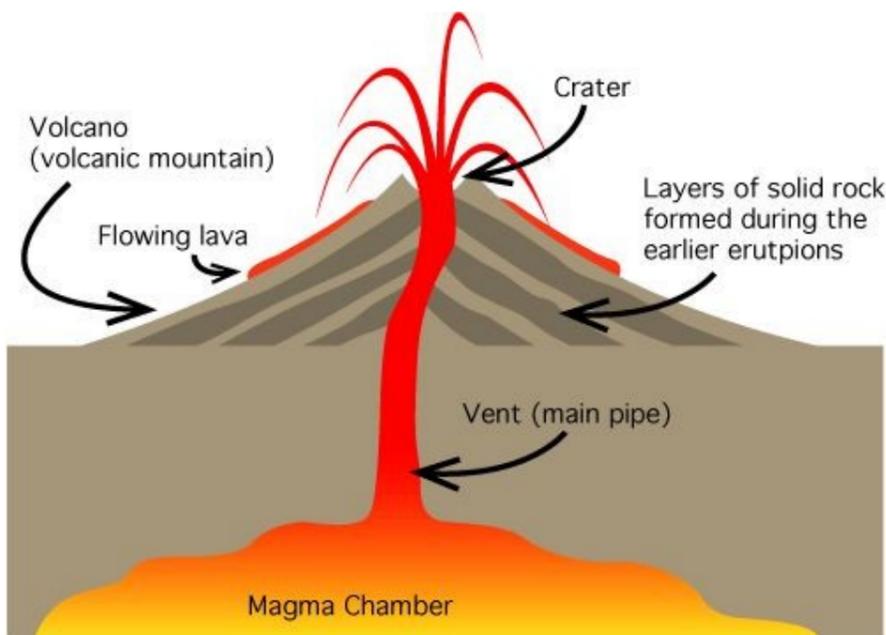
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(Volcanoes — Continued from page 8)

- Shield–shaped like a bowl or shield in the middle, with long gentle slopes made of basaltic lava flows. Basalt lava flows are called flood basalts.
- Lava–domes are formed when the lava erupting is thick and cannot flow, making a steep-sided mound as the lava piles near the vent.



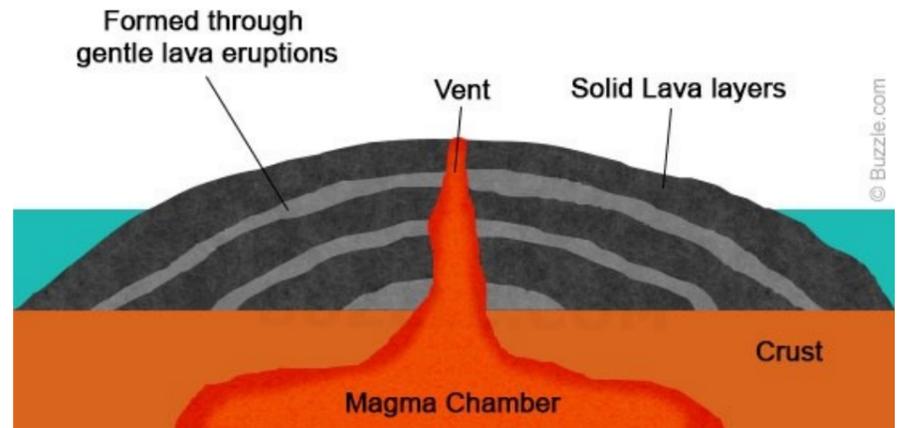
So what is lava vs. magma? Magma is the liquid rock inside a volcano. Lava is liquid rock (magma) flowing out of a volcano. Fresh lava will glow red to white hot as it flows. Lava cools off very slowly as it is a poor conductor of heat. The flows slow down and thicken as they harden. Can lava flow fast? Yes! It is called a pyroclastic flow. Fluidized mix of solid to semi-solid fragments and hot gases flow down the side of a volcano. They are heavier than air and move much like an avalanche (snow).



They are fiercely hot with toxic gases and move at hurricane-force speeds. This is the most deadly of all volcanic eruptions. There is also a "lahar". This is a mudflow or debris flow composed of pyroclastic material, rocky debris and water. It flows

down from a volcano, usually along a river valley. Its consistency and actions are much like cement. It is liquid when moving but when it stops it turns hard, just like cement. This can cause as much destruction as lava.

### The Anatomy of a Shield Volcano



### The Ring of Fire

The Pacific Ring of Fire is an area that has frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that circle the basin of the Pacific Ocean. There are 425 volcanoes which is over 50% of the world's active and dormant volcanoes. 90% of the world's earthquakes and 81% of the world's largest earthquakes occur along the Ring of Fire.



### Colima's Volcano

Latitude: 19.51, Longitude: 103.62, Elevation: 4100m or 13,450 feet, Stratovolcano or composite volcano. It is located about 125 km (75 miles) south of Guadalajara and just outside Colima City near Comala. It is the most active volcano in Mexico. The Colima Volcanic Complex is made of two main stratovolcanoes.

(Continued on page 10)

(Volcanoes — Continued from page 9)



The older of Colima's is called Nevado de Colima and has an elevation of 4,200m / 13,780 feet. The younger volcano, Volcán de Fuego (Volcano of Fire) is about 200 meters / 655 feet smaller and is located 5 km / 3 miles south of Nevado de Colima.

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



## Make Christmas Really Special

by Suzanne A. Marshall

If you are in Manzanillo over the Christmas season, this is your opportunity to be involved in a wonderful event put on especially for the children in the area. It takes place December 24th in the afternoon at a local neighborhood school ground.

Last year my husband and I offered our assistance and found ourselves amidst hundreds of anticipating children. Dressed in their finest dresses and shirts, all those happy faces were treated to entertainment, the breaking of piñatas and great food and drinks.



Kids catching loot from the piñata



First Christmas Party piñata

Each child received a quality gift and all those beaming smiles really made our Christmas. I might add that we met some very nice people there too, all working together and keeping the festivities under control.

Our volunteers need your assistance. Donations to the party fund will defray the costs of food and gifts. There is also a need for additional people to help run the event such as serving food, cleaning up and the general organization that such a celebration entails. Further details regarding the location and transportation will be made available as the event planning progresses.

If you can help out, please contact the following organizers:

- Jimmy and Barbara Brown at (314) 334-1201 (home)
- Dennis and Linda Breun (314) 334-7927 (home), 314-133-1630 cell

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



Children's Christmas Party 2015

**Doctor Strange**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

Starring: Benedict Cumberbatch, Rachel McAdams, Tilda Swinton, Chiwetel Ejiofor  
 Director: Scott Derrickson

*"A former neurosurgeon embarks on a journey of healing only to be drawn into the world of the mystic arts ."*

This is another Marvel comic book movie based on the character of Dr. Strange, originally introduced in the early 1960's. It's not typically the type of movie that would garner my interest but I was quite intrigued by the cast of Benedict Cumberbatch and Tilda Swinton. Both actors are well known for strong roles and performances and I assumed that there had to be something good about the film. In fact, Cumberbatch was busy performing Shakespearean productions when the role was offered to him; quite a contrast in my mind. It also speaks to his acting abilities.

Again, it's another popular action movie, with special effects beyond comprehension, so the attraction for the younger set is going to be very high. Granted, that does not describe me at all. But, I have to say the characters of these two actors were very well done and the American accent from Cumberbatch was flawless. This always amazes me. So the movie is a romp into the mystical world of the 'Ancient One' also really well done by Swinton. The movie managed to capture me in its fantasy

world and take me on a fictional journey that I quite enjoyed. In fact, this action movie is definitely one of the better ones I have seen. The viewing audiences feel the same way and at this time the ratings on IMDB are 8/10 based on 117,428 viewers. It appears to be a box office hit.



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## Aztec Stones and Rocks

by Kirby Vickery

Quetzalcoatl gave life to the people of the fifth sun by gathering the bones of a man and woman who had survived the long flood and sprinkling them with his own blood. The gods created the world with blood and required the sacrifice of human blood to keep it intact. Some day, the fifth sun will meet its end in an all-destroying earthquake. [There is the key word: earthquake. Think of lotsa falling stones and rocks.]

### Tezcatlipoca and the Toltecs

Tezcatlipoca was a Toltec god before he was adopted by the Aztecs. He possessed a magical mirror that allowed him to see inside people's hearts, and the Aztecs considered themselves his slaves. In his animal form, he was a jaguar. His dual nature caused him to bring good fortune sometimes and misery at other times.

Our story begins when he took the form of an Indian of the name of Toueyo (Toveyo) and turned his steps to the palace of Uemac, chief of the Toltecs. King Uemac had a daughter so fair that she was desired in marriage by many of the Toltecs, but all to no purpose, as her father refused her hand to one and all.

The princess, after seeing and literally drinking in the false Toueyo passing her father's palace, fell deeply in love with him, and she ranted and raved about this young man so much that she became seriously ill because of her longing for him. Uemac, hearing of her continual outburst, came to her apartments and inquired of her servant women as to the cause of her illness. They told him that it was because of her sudden passion which had seized her for the Indian who had recently come that way. Uemac at once gave orders for the arrest of Toueyo, and he was brought before him.

"Whence come you?" inquired Uemac of his prisoner, who was very scantily attired.

"Lord, I am a stranger, and I have come to these parts to sell green paint," replied Tezcatlipoca.

"Why are you dressed in this fashion? Why do you



not wear a cloak?" asked the chief.

"My lord, I follow the custom of my country," replied Tezcatlipoca.

"You have inspired a passion in the breast of my daughter," said Uemac. "What should be done to you for thus disgracing me?"

"Slay me! I care not," said the cunning Tezcatlipoca.

"Nay," replied Uemac, "for if I slay you my daughter will perish. Go to her and say that she may wed you and be happy."

Now the marriage of Toueyo, to the daughter of Uemac, aroused much discontent among the Toltecs; and they murmured among themselves, and said: "Wherefore did Uemac give his daughter to this Toueyo?" Uemac, having got wind of these murmurings, resolved to distract the attention of the Toltecs by making war upon the neighbouring state of Coatepec.

The Toltecs assembled, armed for battle and, having arrived at the country of the men of Coatepec, they placed Toueyo in ambush with his body-servants, hoping that he would be slain by their adversaries. But Toueyo and his men killed a large number of the enemy and put them to flight.

His triumph was celebrated by Uemac with much ceremony. Knightly plumes of both plants and birds were placed upon his head and his body was painted with red and yellow. This was an honour reserved for those who distinguished themselves in battle.

Tezcatlipoca's next step was to announce that he was giving a great feast in honour of Toueyo, to which all the people for miles around were invited. Great crowds assembled and danced and sang in the city to the sound of the drums. Tezcatlipoca sang to them and forced them to beat the rhythm of his song with their feet. Faster and faster the people danced, until the pace became so furious that they were driven to madness. At this point in time, they lost their footing and tumbled helter-skelter down a deep ravine. At the bottom, they were changed into rocks. Others, in attempting to cross a stone bridge, also lost their balance and found themselves into the water below only to be changed into stones as well.

(Continued on page 14)

(Aztec Stones and Rocks - Continued from page 13)

On another occasion, Tezcatlipoca presented himself as a valiant warrior named Tequiua and invited all the inhabitants of Tollan and its environs to come to the flower-garden called Xochitla. When assembled there, he attacked them with a hoe and slew a great number, and others in panic crushed their comrades to death.



Tezcatlipoca and Tlaca-huepan (the son of the Aztec emperor Moctezuma II), on another occasion, repaired to the market-place of Tollan, the former holding in the palm of his hand a small

infant whom he caused to dance, weave and bob and to frolic in the most humorous manner. This infant was, in reality, Huitzilopochtli, the Nahua god of war.

At this sight, the Toltecs crowded upon one another for the purpose of getting a better view and their eagerness resulted in many being crushed to death. So enraged were the Toltecs at this that, upon the advice of Tlaca-huepan, they slew both Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli.

When this had been done, the bodies of the slain gods gave forth such malevolent stench that thousands the Toltecs died of the pandemic. The god Tlaca-huepan then advised them to cast out the bodies before even worse things should befall them, but on their attempting to do so, they discovered their weight to be so great that they could not move.

Hundreds wound cords around the corpses, but the strands broke and those who pulled upon them fell and died suddenly, tumbling one upon the other, and suffocating those upon whom they collapsed.



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

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**"The Sky is Falling" Chicken Little**

by Señor Tech

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This site has been debunking false rumours and urban legends for over 15 years. In the search area, type in the subject title of the alleged warning and see what is revealed.

I don't know how many times I have returned emails to friends and family explaining that the warnings are a hoax. Now you will be able to set your mind at ease as well.

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## Palenque

By Dan and Lisa Goy, exclusive to Manzanillo Sun

### Day 40-44 February 15th to 19th

We were off at 8:30 am sharp to Palenque, first on Hwy 186 starting out from the campground near Escarcega. The drive was good, although we always move slowly when we encounter villages, travelling from the state of Quintana Roo thru Tabasco into Chiapas.



Palenque bound

We had quite the greeting when entering Chiapas, no "Welcome to Chiapas", instead we drove into a massive security facility and submitted passports, vehicle registration, import permits and VIN Numbers were checked. Interesting to say the least.



Entering the town of Palenque

We arrived in Palenque, the town, and decided to return for groceries. Our destination was the MayaBell Campground which has beautiful surroundings, right in the heart of the jungle with clean washrooms, showers, a pool and a nice restaurant. We set up and went for a swim, then into town for some supplies.



Great pool at the Mayabell Campground

The next morning, we were off to the Palenque Archeological site, led by the Steinforts, which is exceptional to see in this jungle setting. With no big crowds and mostly European tourists, the site itself is massive. To date only 5% of the existing structures have been uncovered, sitting on approximately 1 square mile.



Getting settled at the campground

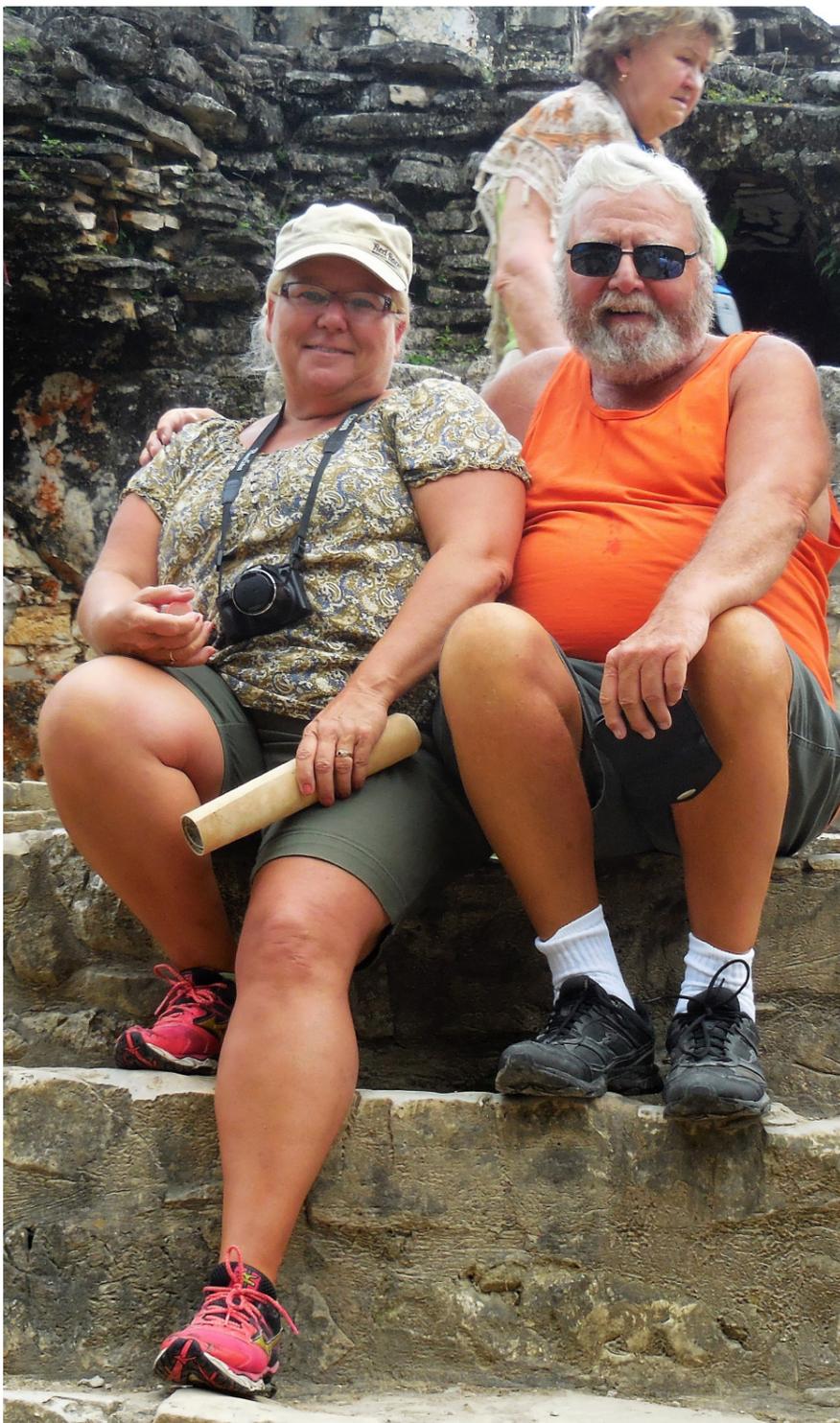


Dan in front of Mislá Ha, Mike and Kelly below

(Continued on page 17)

(Palenque — Continued from page 16)

Over 1500 structures remain beneath the jungle on the mountainside into the valley. The weather was changing and, before you knew it, the rain was upon us. Lisa and I went swimming in the pool back at MayaBell during one of these downpours. What a fabulous experience! It rained heavily off and on the rest of the afternoon and overnight, however we were greeted with lots of blue sky in the morning.



Lisa and Dan

At 10:00 am the group headed out in the Baja Amigos Colectivo to Misal Ha, a very popular waterfall and possible swimming location not far away from Palenque. We enjoyed some terrific scenery on our short drive as we climbed for 200' (75m) to almost 1000' (300m) into the jungle.

We arrived at the sign and were greeted by some folks collecting \$10 pesos per person for entry, ejido members. Travelling another 2 or 3 km we came across another collection, this time

\$20 pesos per person. Apparently the road to the falls crosses two (2) different ejido lands, hence the two different collection points. \$30 pesos is just more than \$2 Canadian or \$1.50 USD, certainly not much. The falls were worth every penny or, in this case, peso.



Lulu checking out the Howler monkeys

They were very impressive as they thundered down, at least 100', probably more than 30m. There was a walkway behind them that was deafening. You walk up the other side from below however, with the recent heavy rain, these stairs were also a waterfall. It looked a bit sketchy. Swimming was possible but the walk to the pools was very slippery and the water very turbid, also likely from the heavy rains. Kelly found some great bumper stickers at a little shop on site.

We returned back to Palenque as some folks needed an ATM and a couple of supplies. Later Mike offered to take his truck down the road for some agua purificada refills. I went along. The rest of the day was



(Continued on page 18)

(Palenque — Continued from page 17)

taken up mostly by a siesta until the Howler monkeys arrived poolside and circled up close and personal in the trees, very cool, lots of howling as well. Lulu was curious but also frightened as were all the other dogs.



Palenque pyramid

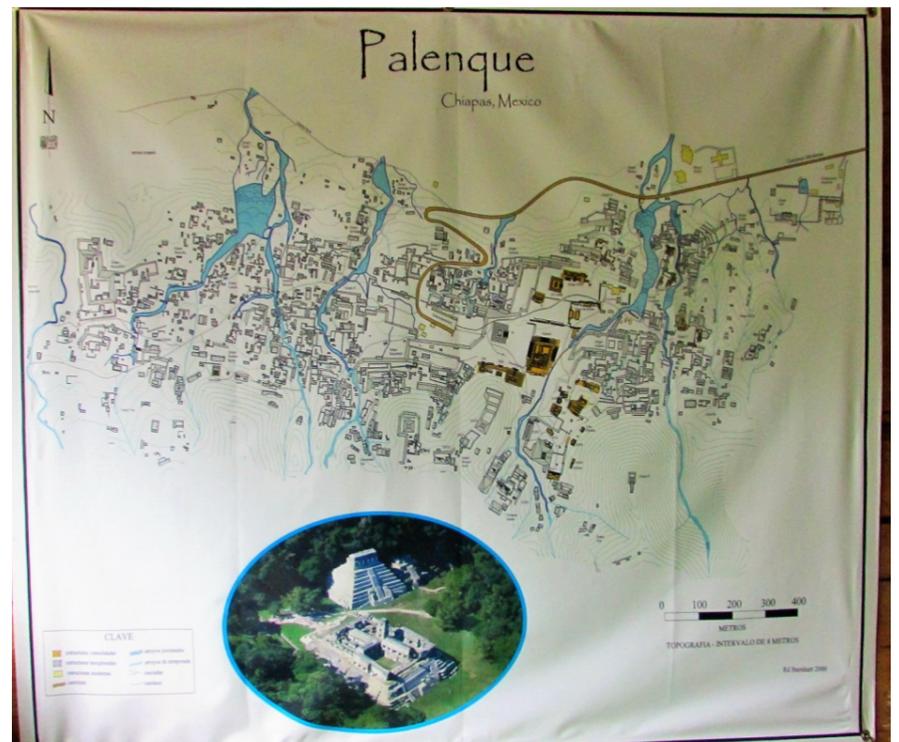
**Palenque** (Spanish pronunciation: [pa'lenke], Yucatec Maya: B'ak' /bà :k'/) was a Maya city state in southern Mexico that flourished in the 7th century. The Palenque ruins date from ca. 226 BC to ca. AD 799. After its decline, it was absorbed into the jungle of cedar, mahogany, and sapodilla trees, but has since been excavated and restored and is now a famous archaeological site attracting thousands of visitors. It is located near the Usumacinta River in the Mexican state of Chiapas, about 130 km (81 mi) south of Ciudad del Carmen, 150 m (164 yd) above sea level. It averages a humid 26°C (79°F) with roughly 2160 mm (85 in) of rain a year.



The Palenque Palace

Palenque is a medium-sized archeological site, much smaller than such huge sites as Tikal, Chichen Itza, or Copán, but it

contains some of the finest architecture, sculpture, roof comb and bas-relief carvings that the Mayas produced. Much of the history of Palenque has been reconstructed from reading the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the many monuments; historians now have a long sequence of the ruling dynasty of Palenque in the 5th century and extensive knowledge of the city-state's rivalry with other states such as Calakmul and Toniná. The most famous ruler of Palenque was K'inich Janaab Pakal, or Pacal the Great, whose tomb has been found and excavated in the Temple of the Inscriptions.



Only 5% of Palenque is visible

### Abandonment

During the 8th century, B'aakal came under increasing stress, in concert with most other Classic Mayan city-states and there was no new elite construction in the ceremonial center some-time after 800. An agricultural population continued to live here for a few generations then the site was abandoned and was slowly grown over by the forest. The district was very sparsely populated when the Spanish first arrived in the 1520s. Occasionally city-state lords were women. Lady Sak Kuk ruled at Palenque for at least three years starting in 612 CE, before she passed her title to her son. However, these female rulers were accorded male attributes. Thus, these women became more masculine as they assumed roles that were typically male roles.

### Modern investigations

Palenque is perhaps the most studied and written-about of Maya sites. After de la Nada's brief account of the ruins, no attention was paid to them until 1773 when one Don Ramón de Ordoñez y Aguilar examined Palenque and sent a report to the Capitán General in Antigua, Guatemala, a further examination was made in 1784 saying that the ruins were of particular inter-

(Continued on page 19)

(Palenque - Continued from page 18)

est, so two years later, surveyor and architect Antonio Bernasconi was sent with a small military force under Colonel Antonio del Río to examine the site in more detail.



Palenque beauty

Del Rio's forces smashed through several walls to see what could be found, doing a fair amount of damage to the Palace, while Bernasconi made the first map of the site as well as drawing copies of a few of the bas-relief figures and sculptures. Draughtsman Luciano Castañeda made more drawings in 1807, and a book on Palenque, *Descriptions of the Ruins of an Ancient City*, discovered near Palenque, was published in London in 1822, based on the reports of those last two expeditions together with engravings based on Bernasconi and Castañeda's drawings; two more publications in 1834 contained descriptions and drawings based on the same sources.

Juan Galindo visited Palenque in 1831, and filed a report with the Central American government. He was the first to note that the figures depicted in Palenque's ancient art looked like the local native Americans; some other early explorers, even years later, attributed the site to such distant peoples as Egyptians,

Polynesians, or the Lost Tribes of Israel.



Road to the Palenque pyramid

Starting in 1832, Jean Frederic Waldeck spent two years at Palenque making numerous drawings, but most of his work was not published until 1866. Meanwhile the site was visited in 1840 first by Patrick Walker and Herbert Caddy on a mission from the governor of British Honduras, and then by John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood who published an illustrated account the following year which was greatly superior to the previous accounts of the ruins.



This surprised Lisa!

Claude-Joseph Désiré Charnay took the first photographs of Palenque in 1858, and returned in 1881-1882. Alfred Maudslay encamped at the ruins in 1890-1891 and took extensive photographs of all the art and inscriptions he could find and made paper and plaster molds of many of the inscriptions and detailed maps and drawings, setting a high standard for all future investigators to follow. Maudslay learned the technique of making the papier mache molds of the sculptures from Frenchman

(Continued on page 20)

(Palenque - Continued from page 19)

Désiré Charnay.

Several other expeditions visited the ruins before Frans Blom of Tulane University in 1923, who made superior maps of both the main site and various previously-neglected outlying ruins and filed a report for the Mexican government on recommendations on work that could be done to preserve the ruins.

From 1949 through 1952, Alberto Ruz Lhuillier supervised excavations and consolidations of the site for Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH); it was Ruz Lhuillier who was the first person to gaze upon Pacal the Great's tomb in over a thousand years. Ruz worked for four years at the Temple of Inscriptions before unearthing the tomb. Further INAH work was done in lead by Jorge Acosta into the 1970s.

In 1973, the first of the very productive Palenque Mesa Redonda (Round table) conferences was held here on the inspiration of Merle Greene Robertson; thereafter every few years leading Mayanists would meet at Palenque to discuss and examine new findings in the field. Meanwhile Robertson was conducting a detailed examination of all art at Palenque, including recording all the traces of color on the sculptures. The 1970s also saw a small museum built at the site.



Up on the Palenque ruin

**By 2005, the discovered area covered up to 2.5 km<sup>2</sup> (1 sq mi), but it is estimated that less than 10% of the total area of the city is explored, leaving more than a thousand structures still covered by jungle.**

Submitted by Dan and Lisa Goy  
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**Child Tax Credit...**

**Why Many US Expat Families Qualify**

by John Ohe of Hola Expat  
exclusively for Manzanillo Sun

The child tax credit is a great benefit provided by the US government to American families with children under the age of 17. The credit or "tax refund" can be worth up to \$1,000 per child, **even if you did not pay any US taxes in that particular year**. Most households with moderate income can qualify for this benefit. However, one must file a tax return in order to claim the refund.

The basic example illustrating the child tax credit is as follows:

- Family with 2 small children
- One parent (US person) earns income of \$20K
- Other parent (non-US person) earns income of \$25K – not reported on US tax return
- US parent files tax return – reporting \$20K in income

Gross Income	\$20K
Standard Deductions and Exemptions (approximate)	\$22K
Taxable Income	none
Child Tax Credit	\$2K

Families that qualify for the child tax credit **can back file up to 3 years** – the refund amount can be considerable.

Effective 2015 tax year, the rules have changed with respect to the child tax credit, when the foreign earned income exclusion (FEIE) is exercised. **The presence of the FEIE on a tax return invalidates the refundable child tax credit.** A potential work-around is to file separate returns (when both parents are US persons), with the lower-earning parent reporting the children on his/her return. While this approach is slightly more complicated, it preserves the child tax credit in many instances.

One final point: To claim the child tax credit, one needs to have a social security number for each child. Obtaining a social security number in the US is the easiest option, and can often be done within a day or two.

For more information on the child tax credit and other tax-related issues, visit us at: [holaexpat.com](http://holaexpat.com).

*Disclaimer: The answers provided in this article are for general information, and should not be construed as personal tax advice. Tax laws and regulations change frequently, and their application can vary widely based on the specific facts and circumstances involved.*



This article was written by John Ohe – IRS Enrolled Agent and CFA. John is a partner at Hola Expat, a firm that specializes in tax services for US expats. If you would like to submit a question, email: [info@holaexpat.com](mailto:info@holaexpat.com).



**Sopa Tarasca**

**Ingredients**

- 1 medium tomato, roughly chopped
- 1 small white onion, thinly sliced
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 4 ancho chiles, stems and seeds removed
- 7 corn tortillas
- 4 tablespoons safflower or canola oil (plus more for frying)
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 1 stem of epazote (optional)
- 1/8 teaspoon dried oregano
- grated queso fresco (optional)
- 3 limes, sliced
- salt

Pour a few cups of boiling water into a bowl. Add one of the ancho chiles. Weight the chile down with a small plate or cup. Let it hang out for 10 minutes or so. When done, remove the chile and transfer the flesh to a blender along with the tomato, onion, garlic, 1 corn tortilla torn into pieces, and 1/2 cup of water. Blend until it is a smooth puree.

Add 1 tablespoon of the oil to a large pot over high heat. When very hot, dump in the pureed mixture. Stir often for 8 minutes. It should have reduced down to a paste.

Pour in the chicken broth and add the epazote (if using). Bring mixture to a simmer and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes.

Place strips of fried tortilla and chile in some bowls, and ladle on the soup. Sprinkle some cheese if you have it on top of the soup and drizzle in some fresh lime juice.

Source: [seriouseats.com](http://seriouseats.com)



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Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition

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

Across

- 1 (he, she) had, possessed, (you/usted) had, possessed
- 3 on foot (1,3)
- 7 green
- 8 foot
- 9 horse
- 13 eye
- 14 fear, awe
- 16 (they) used to be, (you/ustedes) used to be
- 17 corrupt, broken

Last month's crossword solution:

Down

- 1 (I) had, possessed
- 2 to see
- 4 paper
- 5 (you/tú) are
- 6 (you/usted) lifted, (he, she) lifted
- 10 now
- 11 (you/usted) put, (he, she) puts
- 12 cold
- 15 mine, my

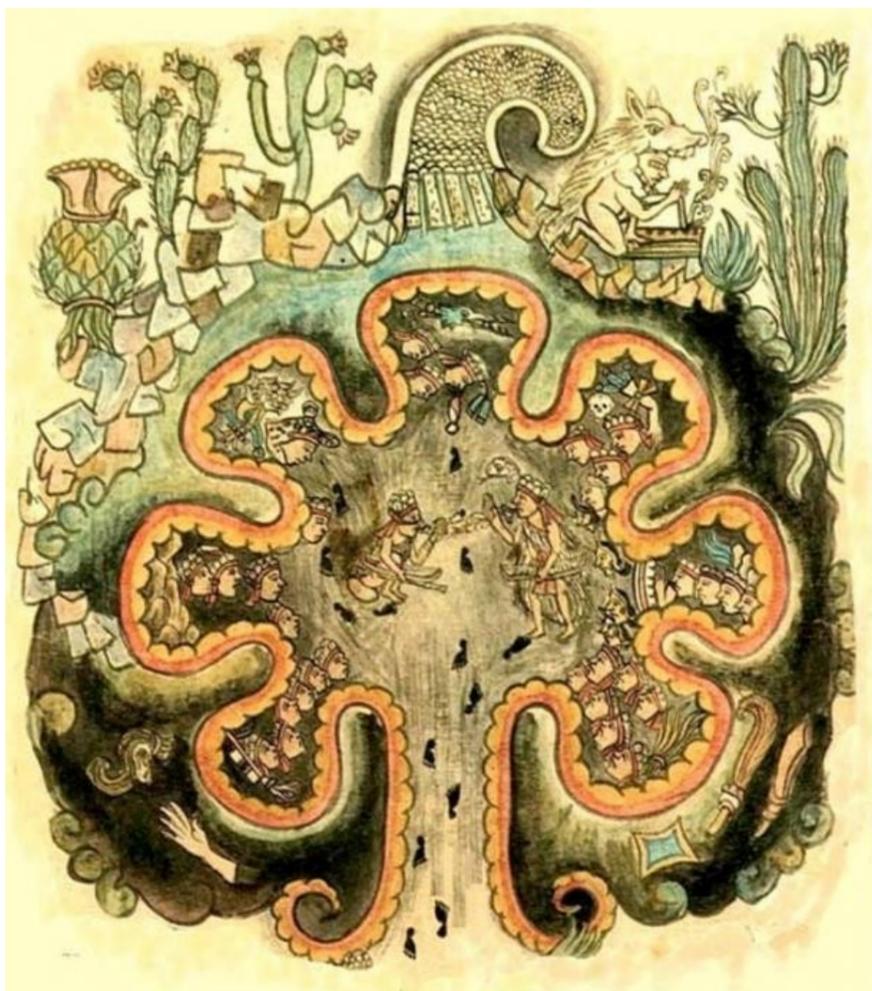
1	a	2	g	o		3	c	4	a	í	5	a	
e		r		6	o		u					l	
7	e	r	a		8	f	í	n	a	l			
r		v			í							í	
		9	m	e	r	c	a	10	d	o			
11	a				í				e			12	g
13	l	14	e	v	a			15	s	e	r		
m		s		l				d				í	
16	a	v	e	r			17	s	e	í	s		

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### Aztlán

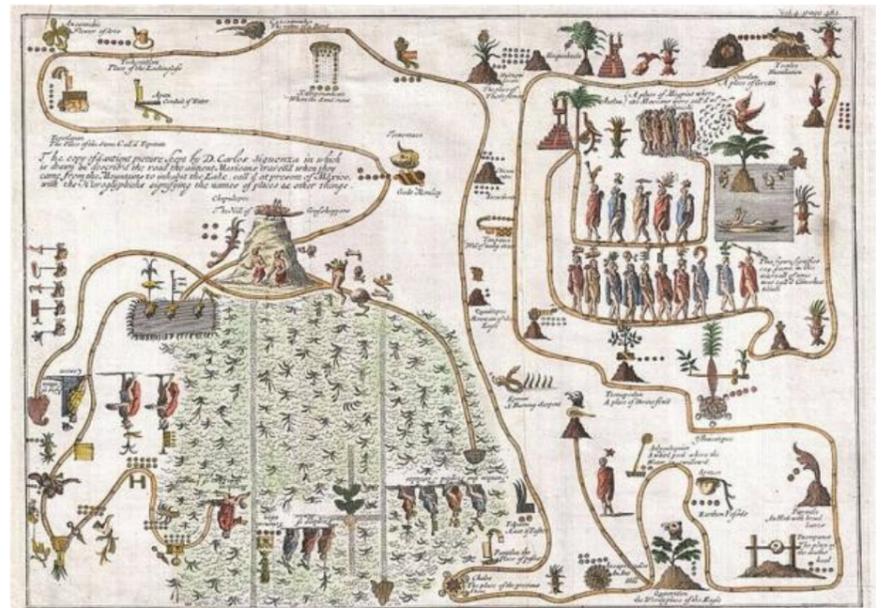
from the Path to Citizenship series

Aztlán (from Nahuatl: Aztlan, [ast͡laːn]) is the legendary ancestral home of the Aztec peoples. Aztecah is the Nahuatl word for "people from Aztlán". The place, Aztlán, is mentioned in several ethnohistorical sources dating from the colonial period, and each of them give different lists of the different tribal groups who participated in the migration from Aztlán to central Mexico, but the Mexica who went on to found Mexico-Tenochtitlán are mentioned in all of the accounts. Historians have speculated about the possible location of Aztlán and tend to place it either in northwestern Mexico or the southwest US, although there are doubts about whether the place is purely mythical or represents a historical reality.



The mythical Aztlán - from Ancient Origins

The various descriptions of Aztlán apparently contradict each other. While some legends describe Aztlán as a paradise, the Codex Aubin says that the Aztecs were subject to a tyrannical elite called the Azteca Chicomoztoca. Guided by their priest, the Aztec fled, and, on the road, their god Huitzilopochtli forbade them to call themselves Azteca, telling them that they should be known as Mexica. Ironically, scholars of the 19th century - in particular Alexander von Humboldt and William H. Prescott - would name them Aztec. Humboldt's suggestion was widely adopted in the 19th century as a way to avoid confusion between modern Mexicans and the pre-Hispanic civilization.



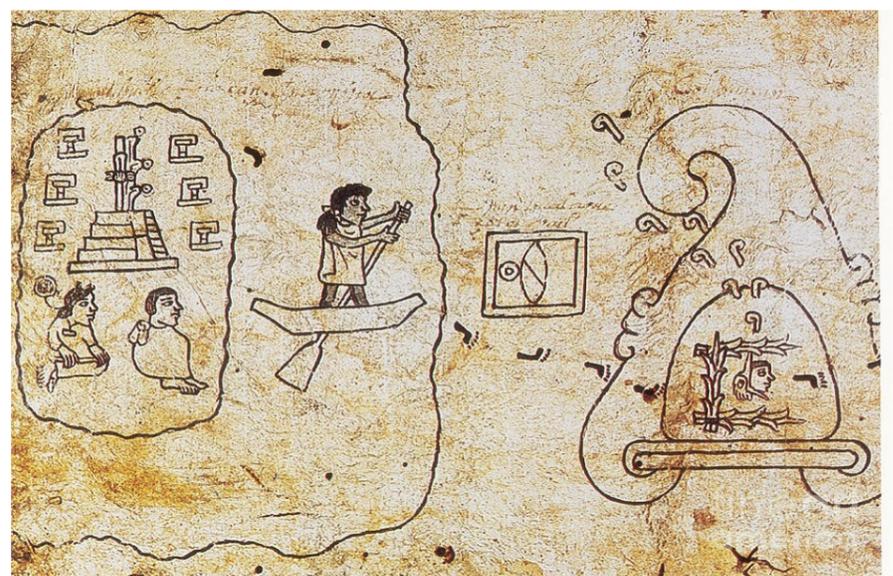
Ancestral home to the Aztec peoples - Aztlán - from Ancient Origins

Two city-states reputedly had an Aztec foundation:

- Tepaneca—now Azcapotzalco, a delegación (borough) of the Mexican Federal District—Mexico City.
- Matlatzinca—who spoke the Otomian language.

Cristobal del Castillo mentions in his book "Fragmentos de la Obra General Sobre Historia de los Mexicanos", that the lake around the Aztlán island was called Metztlipapan or "Lake of the moon."

According to Aztec legends, of the many tribes that migrated, the Mexica tribe emigrated last. When they arrived at their new homeland, the present-day Valley of Mexico, all available land had been taken, and they were forced to squat on the edge of Lake Texcoco.



Aztec journey from Aztlán - Codex

source: [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org)

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



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