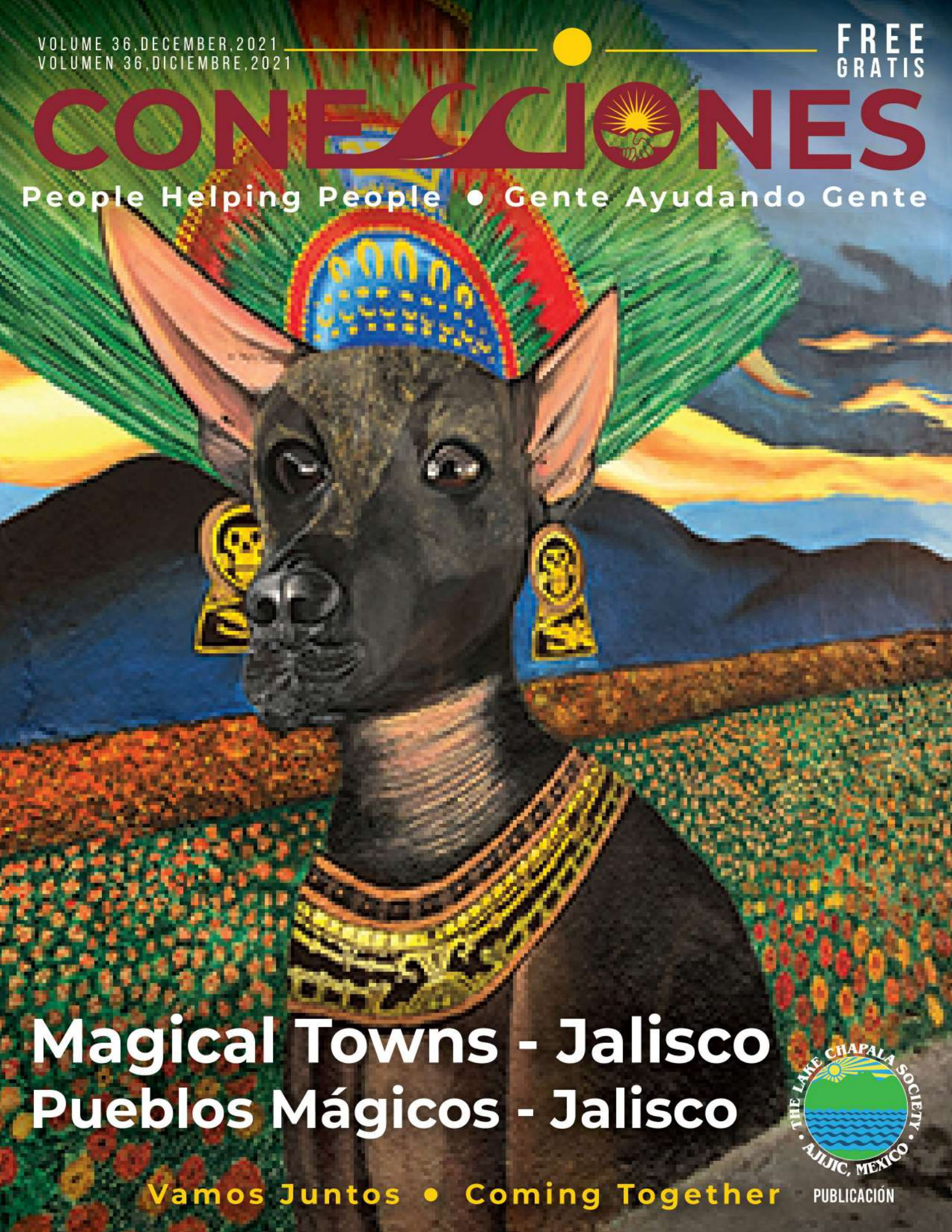


VOLUME 36, DECEMBER, 2021
VOLUMEN 36, DICIEMBRE, 2021

FREE
GRATIS

CONEXIONES

People Helping People • Gente Ayudando Gente



Magical Towns - Jalisco
Pueblos Mágicos - Jalisco

Vamos Juntos • Coming Together



PUBLICACIÓN



Steve Balfour presents A benefit for Lake Chapala Society

Concerts in the Park

Holiday Concert

Enrique
De Allende
with
3 musicians

DEC 18TH
2:30 AND 5:00 PM SHOWS



Saturday, December 18th
Shows at 2:30 and 5:00 PM
VIP Table seating \$600
General seating \$450
Show at Lake Chapala Society

Tickets available at the Lake Chapala Society
10:00 - 1:30 Monday through Saturday
Or visit the website LakeChapalaSociety.com
Email SB4LCS@Gmail.com



The Lake Chapala Society

Mission & Vision

— Our mission is to promote the active participation of Lakeside's inhabitants to improve their quality of life lakeside.

— Our vision is a future where all Lakeside residents continually have a role in enriching the community's quality of life, vitality and prosperity through the exchange of knowledge, expertise, culture, heritage & language.

— Nuestra Misión es promover la activa participación de los residentes de la Ribera de Chapala, para mejorar la calidad de vida en la comunidad.

— Nuestra Visión es un futuro donde todos los residentes de La Ribera participen continuamente en mejorar la calidad de vida, vitalidad y prosperidad de la comunidad a través del intercambio de conocimiento, experiencia, cultura, patrimonio y lenguaje.

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Conecciones Team

The magazine's name, Conecciones — Connections in English — reflects its purpose, which is to enable the Lake Chapala Society to connect with its community. / El nombre de la revista Conecciones refleja su propósito, favorecer la conexión de The Lake Chapala Society con la comunidad.

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Translations / Traducciones: Diana Ayala y Neri Navarro

Conecciones welcomes submissions of articles from Lakeside authors — we reserve the right to edit as necessary. Submissions should be in MS Word 600 words, and should be directed to submissions@lakechapalasociety.com. Advertisement inquiries should be directed to ventas@lakechapalasociety.com.

Propuestas de artículos para la revista Conecciones. Nos reservamos el derecho de editar según sea necesario. Las consultas deben dirigirse a editor@lakechapalasociety.com. Las consultas sobre publicidad deben dirigirse a ventas@lakechapalasociety.com.

All prices include free design work except business card ads. All ads/ad information must be submitted by the 10th of the month for inclusion in the next month's magazine. Send to sales@lakechapalasociety.com / Todos los precios incluyen el trabajo de diseño gratuito, excepto los anuncios de tarjetas de presentación. Todos los anuncios/información de anuncios deben ser enviados antes del día 10 del mes para su inclusión en la revista del mes siguiente. Enviar a ventas@lakechapalasociety.com

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COVER: Harriet Hart

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The Lake Chapala Society

President's Message

This has been an incredible two years for us here at Lake Chapala Society and I am sure for most of you as well.

About 20 months ago we had planned for a very progressive and impactful Annual General Meeting for March 2020. We planned on announcing a new computer system that would lead to better customer service and more efficient support for our programs. We were ready to announce the kick off of a Capital Campaign that in phase one would allow us to move forward with the purchase of the Molinari house, which is surrounded by LCS on 3 sides. A decision that had lots of logic behind it.

To be honest, I have never enjoyed the role of complaint department. The role I cherish is that of a person who steps up, says yes, I can, takes on challenges and is not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get to work. While some others enjoy talk, I believe in action.

In order to get us on a firm path, a path forward which serves to better the community, I need your help. I need people that are solution people. People who don't focus on the negative, but the opportunity to make things better. People who are not afraid of a challenge. We have the direction, we have the ideas, we have the vision. We just need people who can play a role and bring or create the resources we need to take us into the New Year.

If you have what it takes to travel the road ahead, I would love to have you on that path with us. Please drop me an email and let's get together. president@lakechapalasociety.com

I know that we are all looking forward to a much better 2022. One that allows us to both collaborate with the Mexican community in a meaningful way and also a year that can allow each of our members to grow and enjoy this rich community and experiences.

We have a lot of things in the works here at LCS and

hope we can count on you! To make a meaningful, year end gift please go to our website www.lakechapalasociety.com . To donate your time and talents in the new year please look under Activities for the volunteer registration link. To share thoughts with our Executive Director, send him an email executivedirector@lakechapalasociety.com or with me directly president@lakechapalasociety.com

We offer to you our very best and heartfelt wishes during this year end holiday season.

Steve Balfour
President

Call for Submissions and Volunteers

Since January 2019 LCS has published a magazine titled *Conecciones*, to reflect the ongoing positive cultural exchange between the foreign and Mexican communities living at lakeside and to highlight the contributions and efforts of the Lake Chapala Society to the quality of life of our residents.

Conecciones showcases the writing, artwork and photography of the talented and creative people in our community. We publish feature articles, short fiction, poetry and personal essays and strive for the highest literary standards. Our aim is to be informative and pertinent.

If you are interested in helping LCS publish this quality magazine, let Volunteer Coordinator Barbara Marchant at LCS know. We need writers, photographers, and sales representatives.

The Lake Chapala Society

Mensaje del Presidente

Estos han sido dos años increíbles para nosotros aquí Lake Chapala Society y estoy seguro que para la mayoría de ustedes también.

Hace unos 20 meses habíamos planeado una asamblea anual muy progresiva e impactante para marzo de 2020. Teníamos planeado anunciar un nuevo sistema informático que llevaría a un mejor servicio al cliente y un apoyo más eficiente para nuestros programas. Estábamos listos para anunciar el inicio de una Campaña de Capital que, en su primera fase, nos permitiría avanzar en la compra de la casa Molinari, que está rodeada por LCS en 3 lados. Una decisión que tenía mucha lógica detrás.

Para ser honesto, nunca he disfrutado del papel del departamento de quejas. El papel que aprecio es el de una persona que da un paso al frente, dice sí puede, asume retos y no tiene miedo de arremangarse y ponerse a trabajar. Mientras que a otros les gusta hablar, yo creo en la acción.

Para que vayamos por un camino firme, un camino hacia adelante que sirva para mejorar la comunidad, necesito tu ayuda. Necesito personas que sean gente de soluciones. Gente que no se centre en lo negativo, sino en la oportunidad de mejorar las cosas. Gente que no tenga miedo a los retos. Tenemos la dirección, tenemos las ideas, tenemos la visión. Sólo necesitamos personas que puedan desempeñar un papel y aportar o crear los recursos que necesitamos para entrar en el nuevo año.

Si tienes lo necesario para recorrer el camino que tenemos por delante, me encantaría tenerte en ese camino con nosotros. Por favor, envíame un correo electrónico y reunámonos.
president@lakechapalasociety.com

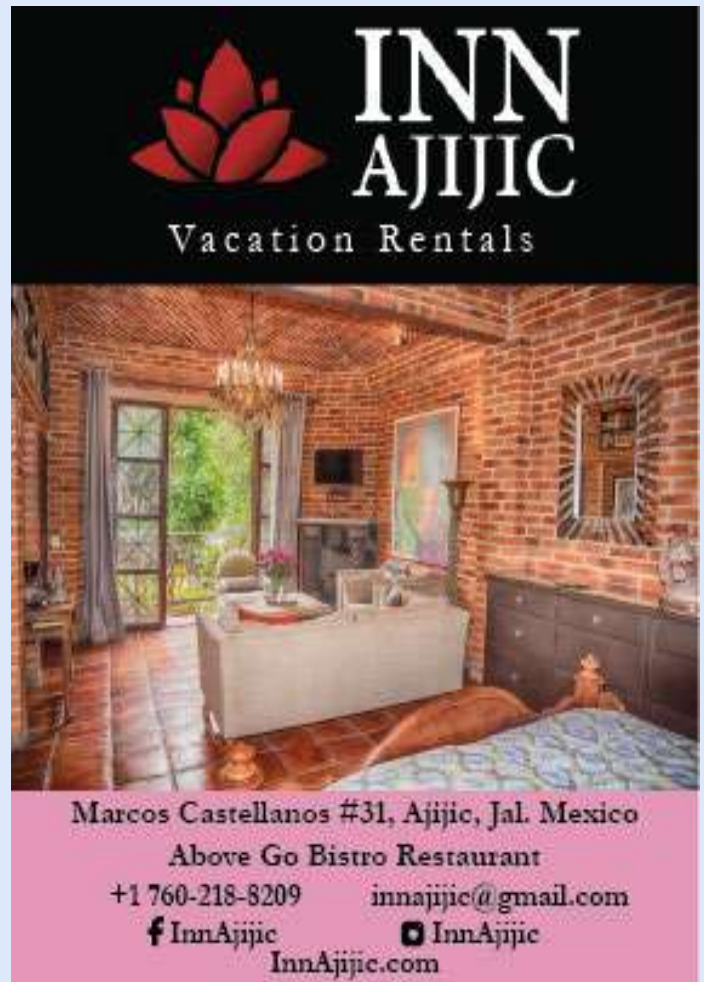
Sé que todos esperamos un 2022 mucho mejor. Uno que nos permita colaborar con la comunidad mexicana de manera significativa y también un año que pueda permitir a cada uno de nuestros miembros crecer y disfrutar de esta rica comunidad y experiencias.

Tenemos muchas cosas en marcha aquí en LCS y esperamos poder contar con ustedes. Para hacer una donación significativa, de fin de año, por favor vaya a nuestro sitio web www.lakechapalasociety.com.

Para donar su tiempo y talento en el nuevo año, por favor busque en Actividades el enlace de registro de voluntarios. Para compartir pensamientos con nuestro Director Ejecutivo, envíale un correo electrónico executivedirector@lakechapalasociety.com o conmigo directamente president@lakechapalasociety.com

Les ofrecemos nuestros mejores y más sinceros deseos durante estas fiestas de fin de año.

Steve Balfour
Presidente



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SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, THE HEART OF MEXICO

BY SECRETARIA DE TURISMO GUANAJUATO

San Miguel de Allende, "The Heart of Mexico," is located in the north of the beautiful state of Guanajuato, considered the Forge of National Independence and cradle of illustrious men, a colonial jewel that stands out for the warmth and generosity of its people. Its historical, cultural, gastronomic and architectural wealth have dazzled hundreds of people over the years, and made it one of the most recognized places worldwide, and a World Heritage City.

The recognition obtained by UNESCO was also given to the *Villa Protectora de San Miguel* and its Sanctuary of Jesus de Nazareno in Atotonilco, a rural San Miguel community located 15 minutes north on the highway to the city of Dolores Hidalgo. A novohispanic temple that stands out for its XVIII century murals and architectural details, it is popularly recognized as the Sistine Chapel of America. About 5,000 people from different parts of the world, attracted by its incredible architecture and beautiful murals visit every week.

This area is also important for its thermal water spas, undoubtedly the perfect place to achieve a state of relaxation, peace and coexistence with nature, with amazing and unique spaces to enjoy with the family.

One of the distinctions of this destination is that throughout the year there are Cultural and Gastronomic Festivals, which are internationally recognized for their quality. In addition to celebrate with joy the traditions and popular festivities, another important attraction are the local customs and traditions since the fervor of its people impresses locals and strangers. Among the most important are the feast of the Patron Saint San Miguel Archangel, *La Santa Cruz*, *El Señor de La*

Conquista, the *Convite de Locos*, the Day of the Dead Festivity, the Festivity of the Holy Virgin of Loreto and the *Fiestas Patrias*.

We cannot overlook the fact that many people have been fascinated by the taste and diversity of culinary styles that have contributed to San Miguel's fame. Strolling through its cobblestone and picturesque streets, you can find restaurants offering Mexican, Italian, international, Creole-Cajun, French, fusion, seafood, to mention a few, of course with a high gastronomic quality that will please even the most demanding palates, as we have nationally and internationally recognized chefs who have fallen in love with and have taken up residence in this magical city.

San Miguel de Allende is a destination of great importance to the wine industry, thanks to the fruitfulness of its soil. Several houses and wineries in the region have been given the task of working hard to present top quality wines in unique wineries and vineyards, which invite you to enjoy unforgettable experiences.

In this destination you can also enjoy nature, adventure and ecotourism activities. There are several tour operators that offer horseback riding tours to large cliffs, hills and rivers. You can ride through the streets of San Miguel on an ATV with your family, or visit the natural areas on excursions.

For the more adventurous you can visit the "*Parque de Aventuras, San Miguel*" where you can cross a canyon

on several zip lines and a suspension bridge 150 meters high.

Undoubtedly San Miguel de Allende is a tourist destination par excellence at both national and international levels, It is a place that has it all and that you must visit.

Come to San Miguel de Allende in Guanajuato and live great experiences.



SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, “EL CORAZÓN DE MÉXICO”

POR SECRETARÍA DE TURISMO GUANAJUATO

San Miguel de Allende “El Corazón de México” ubicado al norte del hermoso estado de Guanajuato, considerado Fragua de la Independencia Nacional y cuna de hombres ilustres, joya colonial que se distingue por la calidez y generosidad de su gente, su riqueza histórica, cultural, gastronómico y arquitectónica que ha deslumbrado a cientos de personas a través de los años, lo ha convertido en uno de los lugares más reconocidos a nivel mundial y Ciudad Patrimonio de la Humanidad.

El reconocimiento obtenido de Patrimonio por la UNESCO se dio también a la Villa Protectora de San Miguel y su Santuario de Jesús de Nazareno en Atotonilco, comunidad rural san miguelense ubicada a 15 minutos orientación norte sobre la carretera a la ciudad de Dolores Hidalgo. Un templo novohispano que resalta por sus murales del siglo XVIII y detalles arquitectónicos, lo cual lo reconoce popularmente, como la capilla Sixtina de América. Este lugar recibe cada semana cerca de 5,000 personas de diversas partes del mundo, atraídas por su increíble arquitectura y sus hermosos murales.

Además esta zona es importante por sus balnearios de agua termal, sin duda el lugar perfecto para lograr un estado de relajación, paz y convivencia con la naturaleza, con espacios asombrosos y únicos para disfrutar en familia.

Una de distinciones más con la que cuenta este destino, es que en todo el año se llevan a cabo Festivales Culturales y Gastronómicos, que son reconocidos a nivel internacional por la calidad con la que se desarrollan, además de festejar con júbilo las tradiciones y festividades populares, otro atractivo importante son las costumbres y tradiciones locales ya que el fervor de su gente impresiona a propios y extraños, entre las más importantes se encuentran, la fiesta del Santo Patrono San Miguel Arcángel, La Santa Cruz, El Señor de La Conquista, el Convite de Locos, Festividad del

Día de Muertos, Festividad de la Santísima Virgen de Loreto y las Fiestas Patrias.

No podemos pasar por alto que mucha gente ha quedado fascinada por el buen sabor y diversidad de estilos culinarios que han acrecentado la fama de San Miguel. Al pasear por sus empedradas y pintorescas calles podemos encontrar restaurantes que ofrecen comida mexicana, italiana, internacional, criolla-cajun, francesa, fusión, productos del mar, por mencionar algunas, por supuesto con una alta calidad gastronómica que darán gusto hasta los paladares más exigentes ya que contamos chefs reconocidos a nivel nacional e internacional que han quedado enamorados y han tomado como residencia esta mágica ciudad. San Miguel de Allende es un destino de suma importancia en el ámbito vitivinícola, gracias a lo fructífero de sus tierras, varias casa y bodegas productoras de la región, se han dado a la tarea de trabajar arduamente para presentar vinos de primera calidad en bodegas y viñedos únicos, que te invitan a vivir experiencias inolvidables.

En este destino también puedes realizar actividades de naturaleza, aventura y ecoturismo, hay varios tours operadores que ofrecen recorridos a caballo por grandes riscos, cerros y ríos, puedes recorrer las calles de San Miguel en cuatrimoto con tu familia, o visitar las zonas naturales en excursiones.

Para los más aventureros pueden visitar el “Parque de Aventuras, San Miguel” en donde puedes cruzar un cañón en varias tirolesas y un puente colgante a 150 metros de altura.

Sin lugar a dudas San Miguel de Allende es un destino turístico por excelencia a nivel nacional e internacional, es un lugar que lo tiene todo y que debes visitar para quedar enamorado.

Ven a San Miguel de Allende en Guanajuato y Vive Grandes Historias.





According to our Mexican neighbors and friends, you'll have a wonderful new year filled with love, luck, wealth, travel, and protection from evil if you'll just observe a tried and true Mexican New Year's custom.

» For Love—Wear red underwear when the clock strikes 12. Look for racks full of lacy red under things in local stores.

» For Luck—Eat 12 grapes as the clock tolls midnight for 12 months of good luck.

» For Wealth—Make sure your bills are up to date and there is money in your wallet on New Year's Eve to ensure that you'll have no money worries all year.

» For Travel—Pack a suitcase and when the clock strikes 12 carry the bag around the block--the number of rounds you make will determine the number of trips in the New Year.

» For Protection—Cleanse your home and your life at the New Year. You can buy amulets, packets of steel filings, salt, colored candles, horseshoes wrapped with red thread and other aids for luck, love and happiness from herb vendors in area specialty shops and tianguis (street market).

» For Abundance—Stock the pantry--starting the year with plenty means having plenty all year long.

There are many other ways to ensure good luck, all year long. Perhaps some of these tips will influence your good fortune during the coming year:

» Sprinkle salt in the doorway or driveway of your business or home and put a basil plant at the door to ensure good clientele, good luck and success. A sage plant keeps out deadbeats, the disgruntled and *brujas* (witches).

» Eat the burned section of a tortilla to ensure good luck.

» Wear a necklace of garlic, or carry a chestnut (buckeye) for good luck. You can buy the chestnuts adorned with red yarn tassels and pictures of saints.

» To rid your house of bad luck, sprinkle salt on the floor and sweep the house from the back door to the front. Then to bring good luck into the house, mop the house with salt water, working from the front door to the back.

It's just as important to avoid back luck—and we've learned from our Mexican friends that not all bad luck may be randomly produced. We've heard that spells of bad luck can be the results of angering the *brujas*. You'll also hear that *brujas* are sometimes hired to put spells of bad luck on others. Here are some tips to avoid bad luck—and the work of the *brujas*.

» The groom attracts bad luck if he steps on or jumps over the train of the bride's dress.

» If a bride wears pearls, she will cry all through her marriage.

» It's bad luck if the guests do not consume all the tequila at a wedding.

» Tuesday the 13th is the day of bad luck and danger in Mexico. You'll be ok on Friday the 13th, but avoid travel on Tuesday the 13th.

» You bring bad luck to a home when you refuse the food or drink you are offered by your hosts.

» You attract bad luck if you sleep with your back to the door of the bedroom.

» Spilled salt indicates the arrival of company or upcoming bad luck. Toss a pinch of salt over the shoulder as a preventative.

» Put a bucket, broom and a sage plant at the front door at night to keep out evil spirits and *brujas*.

» Don't talk about *brujas* on Tuesdays or Fridays. They are strongest on those days and can overhear conversations and make bad luck for you.

Have a Happy New Year filled with luck, love, abundance and other things bright and beautiful.

Enjoy
30% better speech understanding
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Según nuestros vecinos y amigos mexicanos, tendrás un maravilloso año nuevo lleno de amor, suerte, riqueza, viajes y protección contra el mal si observas las costumbres mexicanas de Año Nuevo de probada eficacia.

- » Para el amor: Lleva ropa interior roja cuando el reloj marque las 12. Busque estantes llenos de ropa interior roja de encaje en las tiendas locales.
- » Para la Suerte-Come 12 uvas cuando el reloj marque la medianoche para tener 12 meses de buena suerte.
- » Para la riqueza-Asegúrese de que sus cuentas están al día y de que hay dinero en su cartera en Nochevieja para asegurarse de que no tendrá problemas de dinero durante todo el año.
- » Para los viajes: prepare una maleta y cuando el reloj marque las 12, llévela alrededor de la manzana; el número de vueltas que dé determinará el número de viajes en el nuevo año.
- » Para la protección-Limpia tu casa y tu vida en el Año Nuevo. Puedes comprar amuletos, paquetes de limaduras de acero, sal, velas de colores, herramientas envueltas con hilo rojo y otras ayudas para la suerte, el amor y la felicidad en los vendedores de hierbas de las tiendas especializadas de la zona y en los tianguis.
- » Para la Abundancia-Abastece la despensa--empezar el año con abundancia significa tener abundancia todo el año.

Hay muchas otras maneras de asegurar la buena suerte, durante todo el año. Tal vez algunos de estos consejos influyan en su buena suerte durante el próximo año:

- » Espolvoree sal en la puerta o en la entrada de su negocio o casa y ponga una planta de albahaca en la puerta para asegurarse una buena clientela, buena suerte y éxito. Una planta de salvia aleja a los morosos, a los descontentos y a las brujas.
- » Comer la parte quemada de una tortilla asegura la buena suerte.
- » Lleve un collar de ajos o una castaña para

la buena suerte. Se pueden comprar las castañas adornadas con borlas de hilo rojo e imágenes de santos.

» Para librar tu casa de la mala suerte, espolvorea sal en el suelo y barre la casa desde la puerta trasera hasta la delantera. Luego, para atraer la buena suerte a la casa, friega la casa con agua salada, trabajando desde la puerta principal hacia la trasera.

Es igualmente importante evitar la mala suerte, y hemos aprendido de nuestros amigos mexicanos que no toda la mala suerte se produce al azar. Hemos oído que las rachas de mala suerte pueden ser el resultado de enfadar a las brujas. También hemos oído que las brujas a veces son contratadas para poner hechizos de mala suerte en otros. Aquí tienes algunos consejos para evitar la mala suerte y el trabajo de las brujas.

- » El novio atrae la mala suerte si pisa o salta la cola del vestido de la novia.
- » Si la novia lleva perlas, llorará durante toda la boda.
- » Da mala suerte que los invitados no consuman todo el tequila en una boda.
- » El martes 13 es el día de la mala suerte y el peligro en México. Estarás bien el viernes 13, pero evita viajar el martes 13.
- » Atraes la mala suerte a una casa cuando rechazas la comida o la bebida que te ofrecen tus anfitriones.
- » Atraes la mala suerte si duermes de espaldas a la puerta del dormitorio.
- » La sal derramada indica la llegada de compañía o de mala suerte. Lanza una pizca de sal por encima del hombro como medida preventiva.
- » Coloca una cubeta, una escoba y una planta de salvia en la puerta de entrada por la noche para alejar a los malos espíritus y a las brujas.
- » No hables de brujas los martes ni los viernes. Son más fuertes en esos días y pueden escuchar las conversaciones y dar mala suerte.

Que tengas un feliz año nuevo lleno de suerte, amor, abundancia y otras cosas brillantes y hermosas.

Ajijic: A Review

By Harriet Hart

Ajijic is a novel by Patricio Fernández Cortina that uses our village for its setting and title. *Ajijic* is described as a retirement destination for “foreigners” and a fishing village for Mexican nationals, a place where the two cultures connect, rather than collide, and a center of art and music for all.

In the novel, Roberto/Bob, the protagonist, struggles to find his identity. His American father abandoned his Mexican mother before he was born, but acknowledged his paternity by bestowing a fortune upon him when he became an adult. It was sufficient to build a lavish home in La Floresta and enable him to lead a life of solitary leisure, with butler Juan Sibilino taking care of practicalities, and the local book store, La Renga, keeping him supplied with reading material.

He befriends two expats, New Yorker Sugar, a musician, and Canadian, Niagara, an intellectually inclined retired publisher, and their wives Patti and Ava. These parental figures attempt to guide Bob and discourage his plan to find and confront his biological father. Bob reads and rereads “Homer’s *Odyssey*”, and is determined to begin his own quest, asking himself if New York City could be his true homeland. “Of course, that thought was absurd because he was Mexican, he felt completely Mexican, from *Ajijic*, but his origin winked at his soul and tempted him to think about whether Ithaca was *Ajijic* or New York or the heart of his father...” (195)

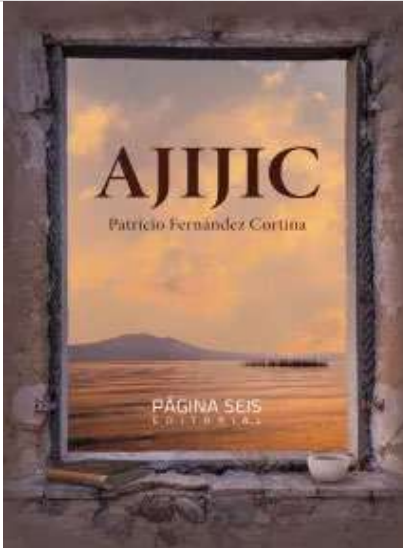
The theme of the novel is the universal struggle to claim one’s rightful place in the world. Bob is a man from two cultures, American and Mexican, two locations, New York City and *Ajijic*. With no early parental guidance, he lived an isolated boyhood, and grew to manhood with a burning need to find out who he really is. Bob claims he created himself by reading, making fictional characters his role models in a life where he had so few.

This is a book for bibliophiles. It begins in a bookstore, and literary references are sprinkled throughout. Near the end, Niagara says: “Without books we are nothing. Through them we can live two lives. This one that we can see, which is hard and complex, and the other one that belongs to dreams, which we access through literature and our own imagination. That second life will always be better, and it makes real life more bearable...”

Vivid description is one of the author’s strong points. If the reader doesn’t already live in *Ajijic*, they will certainly want to after they finished the book. Fernández Corti-

na describes the bookstore, various restaurants, and meals taken in them with colorful detail. *La Bodega* gets an entire chapter by itself for being the scene of a dance competition.

And the descriptions are coupled with interesting observations. For example, Mexicans and foreigners competing in this dance competition cause contestant Amelia to reflect on how “music unites us and makes us happy.” The audience toasts the dancers in recognition of “the union of cultures that settled in the lands of *Ajijic* and on the banks of (Lake) Chapala.



Readers will recognize the canopy of trees leading into town, the lakeshore with its *malecon*, the cobblestone streets and lush vegetation: “towering ash trees, jacarandas, and flamboyant trees that intertwined their branches in the open space of the sky , , ,” Stately Mount García stands guard. We visit La Floresta and Six Corners and walk along Morelos and Independencia Streets.

The philosophical reader will enjoy all the reflections and musings that make up a major portion of the novel. Many are on the big issues like the meaning and brevity of life, but others are about smaller subjects. For example, Bob on the importance of architecture, says: “a house was a sanctuary, a monastery for the soul, a place that should be capable of moving us with the simplicity of its beauty, its light, its serenity, and that’s why the spaces and garden are so important.”

Fernández Cortina uses literature and music as “the nets that supports the plot, like the nets of the fishermen . . .” At times this is highly effective, such as when Bob listens to Bruce Springsteen’s *My Home Town* in a bar in New York City and the lyrics send him into a reverie about riding around the city as a small boy with his father in his blue Bentley. The song lyrics create a mirror of his fantasies. However, I found that this constant interplay of song and book titles and quotations with the narrative distracting. Reading this book made me sorry that I hadn’t tried harder to learn Spanish so I could have read it in the original. There were moments of great beauty in the author’s use of language, but I suspect many were lost in translation.

Let’s accept Bob’s invitation when he says, “I want to get to know you and be able to tell you my story.” You can get to know Patricio Fernández Cortina and hear him read at a book launch to be held at the Lake Chapala Society on Wednesday, December 8th at 2 p.m. I encourage bibliophiles and *Ajijic aficionados* alike to attend. Copies of *Ajijic* will be available to purchase in both English and Spanish.



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Christmas Eve Salad

By Harriet Hart

According to cookbook author Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz, the most popular salad in Mexico is *Ensalada de Noch Buena* or Christmas Eve Salad, which is traditionally eaten on Christmas Eve, when feasting and gift exchanges are customary. The Christmas Eve supper is served after midnight mass, and is the culmination of a series of parties that mark this “most sustained and joyous of all the Mexican fiestas.” Here is her recipe:

3 beets, cooked and chopped
 3 oranges, peeled and sectioned
 2 jicamas, chopped
 3 bananas, peeled and sliced
 3 slices of fresh pineapple cut into cubes
 Shredded lettuce
 ½ cup chopped peanuts
 Seeds from 1 pomegranate
 1-cup mayonnaise

Mix the beets, oranges, jicamas, bananas and pineapple together and chill.

Line a bowl with lettuce, fill the center with the chilled mixture, and garnish with the peanuts and pomegranate seeds. Serve the mayonnaise separately.

Ponche Navideño

This recipe calls for some traditional ingredients, such as cinnamon, *tejocotes* (a small yellow fruit that resembles wild apples), *piloncillo* (unrefined whole cane sugar), pieces of sugar cane and seasonal fruits.

In a large pot, boil water, cinnamon sticks, cloves, tamarind, and *tejocotes*. After boils, lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes until the *tejocotes* are soft. Remove the *tejocotes* from the heat, peel, remove hard ends, cut in half, and deseed. Return them to the pot. Add guavas, apples, pears, sugar cane, prunes, orange slices, and *piloncillo*.

Simmer for at least 30 minutes, stirring gently. Discard cinnamon sticks and cloves. Ladle into cups. Brandy or tequila can be added, making it *ponche con piquete* (punch with a sting).!



Ensalada de Nochebuena

Por Harriet Hart

La ensalada más popular en México es la Ensalada de Noch Buena, que se come tradicionalmente en Nochebuena, cuando se acostumbra a festejar e intercambiar regalos. La cena de Nochebuena se sirve después de la misa de medianoche, y es la culminación de una serie de fiestas que marcan esta “la más sostenida y alegre de todas las fiestas mexicanas”. Aquí tienes su receta:

3 remolachas, cocidas y picadas
 3 naranjas, peladas y seccionadas
 2 jicamas, picadas
 3 plátanos, pelados y cortados en rodajas
 3 rodajas de piña fresca cortadas en cubos
 Lechuga rallada
 ½ taza de cacahuets picados
 emillas de 1 granada
 1 taza de mayonesa

Mezcla las remolachas, las naranjas, las jicamas, los plátanos y la piña y refrigera.

Forrar un bol con lechuga, rellenar el centro con la mezcla enfriada y decorar con los cacahuets y los granos de granada. Sirva la mayonesa por separado.

Ponche Navideño

Esta receta requiere algunos ingredientes tradicionales, como canela, *tejocotes*, *piloncillo*, pedazos de caña de azúcar y frutas de temporada.

En una olla grande, hierva el agua, las ramas de canela, los clavos, el tamarindo y los *tejocotes*. Después de hervir, baja el fuego y cocina a fuego lento durante 10 minutos hasta que los *tejocotes* estén blandos. Retira los *tejocotes* del fuego, péralos, quítales los extremos duros, córtalos por la mitad y quítales las semillas. Devuélvelos a la olla. Añade las guayabas, las manzanas, las peras, la caña de azúcar, las ciruelas pasas, las rodajas de naranja y el *piloncillo*.

Cocinar a fuego lento por lo menos 30 minutos, revolviendo suavemente. Deseche las ramas de canela y los clavos de olor. Servir en tazas. Se le puede agregar brandy o tequila para que sea un ponche con piquete.



WRITINGS FROM WILKES

These writings are from the LCS Wilkes Center, or Biblioteca, a beehive of activity, Galeana 18 in Ajijic, two blocks from the LCS main campus. For 20 years, a cadre of volunteers have taught ESL to the Mexican Community, gratis. There are several levels of study. Volunteer teacher and author Carol Bowman recently asked her Level 4 students to try their hands at creative writing. We are proud to announce that Writings from the Wilkes will become a regular feature of this magazine. We will not edit these pieces as a way of demonstrating how much progress these talented, hard working students have made.

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT AND CELEBRATION By Lucelia Cevallos

In my extended family, we used to gather at church on Christmas Eve; years ago, the Mass was at midnight and it is called “*Misa de gallo*”, but now it is celebrated earlier.

After mass we have a happy family reunion all together. My father-in-law has eight kids, now all are married with kids and some grand-kids. The patio is prepared and well decorated for the occasion. The table is 10 meters long and it has a one-piece special tablecloth. The Christmas dinner is based on the old and traditional family menu and it is prepared and served by the ladies.

We don't forget that we are celebrating the birth of Baby Jesús and the importance of that for us. Always an image of him is present and all together around the table, we have a prayer and blessing.

After the dinner each single family sings a “*Villancico*”, where someone uses musical instruments, others wear special hats or clothes, etc. but each year it is something different. It is joyful moment and we enjoy it very much.

The following activity is also special. We have a gift exchange, but the gift must be made; and never bought. To participate is optional, but almost everybody signs to be part of it. During the first days on December we have the raffle of names. It gives us time to design and make it.

The gift exchange begins with a lot of expectation when the first person starts describing who will receive the gift. Everybody is guessing who it is and anxiously waiting until the gift is unwrapped.

Sometimes the gift is something strange or sophisticated and requires an explication, others could look very simple but really they are not because each one was made with love, and had the time used to define it, and when you are thinking of the person, his or her activities, favorite color, hobbies or personality and for sure trying to make something different, special and unique.

We spend lots of time admiring all the creations because everyone uses their own talent and creativity and always the gifts are so special.

Now I am remembering some of them, such as:

- ✿ embroidered works or knitted scarfs, sewed aprons or clothes.
- ✿ a picture mounted in a frame specially decorated or made with recycled material. A painting realized from someone with that facility.
- ✿ collages of pictures of the person where many of the pictures bring nice memories or sometimes the pictures were not shown before.
- ✿ cookies or desserts made from scratch.
- ✿ collars and jewelry assembled with her favorite color.
- ✿ sophisticated keys holders.
- ✿ wood works.
- ✿ some toys, a hat rack.
- ✿ a memory game with family pictures. A chess board armed with small tiles and the pieces made with nuts and bolts.
- ✿ a big piece of cardboard with a drawing made for one of the little kids.
- ✿ and many, many more.

Of course, we expend hours enjoying the company and the night. Some of the little ones fall asleep, but for all of us, the last activity is to clear and clean the patio, pick up all the belongings, help to fold chairs and tables, do the dishes, distribute the leftovers because we always cook big quantities to share and reheat the next day, and finally congratulate everybody. I am sure that each Christmas celebration is remembered as unique.

Have you made your Christmas gifts? If no, I really encourage you to do that. You can have the experience of gift to your loved ones something material filled with real love for your presence in it.

I wish you a Merry and special Christmas and blessed 2022 year.





The *Pueblos Magicos* Program was created in Mexico in 2001 to recognize those localities with high tourist potential whose richness and cultural, architectural, urban, natural, and gastronomic legacy tended to be developed in a sustainable way, without impairment of material or immaterial wealth.

In Mexico, the states that host most of these *Pueblos Magicos* are:

State	Number of Pueblos Magicos
Estado de México	10
Puebla	10
Jalisco	9
Michoacán	9

The year recognition of each one in Jalisco is shown below:

- 2002 Tapalpa
- 2003 Tequila
- 2005 Mazamitla
- 2011 San Sebastián del Oeste
- 2012 Lagos de Moreno
- 2015 Mascota
- 2015 Talpa de Allende
- 2018 Tlaquepaque
- 2020 Ajijic

TAPALPA

It was the first *Pueblo Magico* in the State of Jalisco. It is located approximately two hours by car from Ajijic. In addition to its scenic beauty, tranquility, and its historical and cultural richness, Tapalpa is characterized by its cobbled streets, houses with white facades, and red tile roofs.

Among its most important attractions, these stand out: “*Las Piedrotas*”.

» The Historical Center, where you will find: the Parish Church of *San Antonio de Padua*, the

Church of *Nuestra Señora De Guadalupe*, the handicraft market and restaurants where you can taste roast lamb, chard *tamale* with green sauce, *pegoste*, a typical sweet, and pomegranate punch, traditional from the Southern Region of Jalisco.

TEQUILA

Located 1½ hours by car from Ajijic, it is the birthplace of the most representative drink of Mexico in the world. It is part of the *Agave Landscape*, declared a Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Among its tourist attractions, you will find the Parish Church of *Santiago Apóstol*, the *National Museum of Tequila*, the *Juan Beckmann Gallardo Cultural Center*, and factories where you can learn about the process of making tequila. You will also have the opportunity to carry out outdoor activities such as horseback riding, hiking, and canyoneering in *Los Azules* waterfall; you can stay in boutique hotels and be tempted by the exquisite and wide gastronomic offerings.

MAZAMITLA

It is the most popular destination on the *Sierra del Tigre* route, located approximately 1¾ hours from Ajijic. It belongs to the Southeast Region and is recognized for its cabins, its classic lodging model. It is one of the best destinations for being in contact with nature, whether you want to rest or seek adventurous sports, Mazamitla is ideal. Some of the places you can enjoy are the *El Salto* waterfall and the downtown area, where you will find restaurants that offer typical dishes such as *El bote*, *Corundas*, traditional punches, and seasonal fruit sweets.

In addition, you will enjoy parks like “*Mundo Aventura*” and “*El Tecolote*” where you can enjoy adventure activities.

SAN SEBASTIAN DEL OESTE

It is recognized as a *Pueblo Magico* since 2011, is located at a distance of almost five hours from Ajijic and 1¾ hours from Puerto Vallarta. It emerged as a booming mining



city in the 19th century thanks to foreign intervention, where the production of gold and silver was the main driver of the economy in the municipality. At that time, 49 mines were active. We recommend you visit the *Cerro de la Bufa*, a natural viewpoint overlooking the mountains and *Bahía de Banderas*, eat at *Jardín Nebulosa*, a restaurant with unique culinary selection, and finally enjoy the local coffee at *Quinta Mary*.

LAGOS DE MORENO

Located northeast of Jalisco, approximately 2½ hours from Ajijic, it is one of the most beautiful and best-preserved colonial cities in Jalisco. Its historical center and bridge over the Lagos River were recognized as a World Heritage Site in 2010 as being part of the *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*. During your visit to this *Pueblo Mágico*, you will admire the architectural work of the Parish Church of *Nuestra Señora de la Asunción*, visit the Museum of Sacred Art, the majestic *Templo de Calvario*, the traditional *Haciendas: Sepulveda, La Cantera, La Troje*, and *Hacienda La Labor*, to mention some that you can also visit on a horseback riding tour.



Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco

MASCOTA

Inside the Coastal Region and the Western Sierra is Mascota, a *Pueblo Mágico* that invites from the outset to enjoy adventure and ecotourism activities. You will find this destination at a distance of 3¾ hours by car from Ajijic. You can try activities like motocross rides, boat rides, and even fishing. Of its attractions, we recommend visiting the *Corrinchis* dam, the *Juanacatlán lagoon*, and if you are interested in history, the State Museum of Archeology. The visit to the Unfinished Temple of the Precious Blood is a must stop in Mascota. Traveling to this destination is a reason to enjoy the *raicilla*, a traditional drink made from *agave* and which recently obtained a designation of origin.

TALPA DE ALLENDE

It belongs to the Western Coast-Sierra Region and is the anchor destination of the Pilgrim's Route. It is an average distance of 3¾ hours by car from Ajijic. It is one of the most important destinations for religious tourism in Jalisco due to its Basilica of the Virgin of Our Lady of the Rosary, which receives around 4 million visitors a year and pilgrimages from different towns. Many of the faithful start the route from the municipality of Ameca. Talpa de Allende is an interesting combination of religious and cultural destination with and nature tourism, since it is home to the largest maple forest in Latin America.



TLAQUEPAQUE

It is the only *Pueblo Mágico* located within the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara, just one hour from Ajijic. It is recognized nationally and internationally for the quality of its handicrafts, among which baked clay and blown glass are distinguished. We suggest you visit the *El Refugio* Cultural Center, contemplate the Parish Church of *San Pedro Apóstol*, the *Sanctuary de La Soledad*, the *Pantaleón Panduro* Museum, and walk along the *Independencia* Avenue, where you will find handicraft shops, galleries, and a wide choice of restaurants. Your visit to this destination should be completed with a stop at *Parián* to taste traditional dishes and a refreshing *Cazuela* (drink based on citrus and tequila).

AJIJIC

Ajijic is synonymous with calm. It was recently recognized as a *Pueblo Mágico* in 2020. This picturesque destination is famous for its spring weather all year-round. In Ajijic, you can also enjoy exquisite gastronomic experiences in its renowned national and international restaurants, in addition to admiring the various murals that embellish the streets of the town.

Of the outdoor activities available, these stand out: horseback riding in *La Floresta*, boat rides or kayaking on the lake, hiking in the *Sierra Madre*, and bird watching.

More information:

<https://visitjalisco.com.mx/aventuras/pueblos-magicos/>

<https://visitariberadechapala.com/>

<https://visitguadalajara.com/>

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TREASURE THIS MOMENT

—WE'LL BE BY YOUR SIDE—

We'll be here, whatever you need.

Ajijic: Carr. Chapala Jojotepec 19A
Centro Ajijic Jalisco 45920
Phone: 376 766 5978

Taak Ajijic Center: Zaragoza 23 Centro Ajijic
Jalisco 45920
Phone 376 766 4055

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ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Pull
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Office & Library Hours: Monday to Saturday 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Grounds open: Lakeside Gate: Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Main Gate: Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:50 p.m. | Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.

*Open to the Public ** US Citizens (S) Sign up (C) Member card (M) LCS members only

LESSONS (M)

Basic Principles of Drawing/Painting	T 9-11
Email jorge.garcia003@gmail.com	
Bordado Artistico (Spanish)	M+W+F 4-6
Children's Art	SAT 10-12 Invitation only
Exercise	M+W+F 9-9:50
Hurachess Club*	SAT 12-1*
Intermediate Hatha Yoga	T+TH 2-3:30
Intro to Lakeside Zoom	9-12, Dec. 17
Introduction to Lakeside	9-12, Dec 13
Introduction to Spanish (S)	7,14,21 Dec.12-1:30, Cost
Line Dancing, redheadinmexico@gmail.com	T + TH 10-11:15
Low Impact Aerobics	M+W 10-11
Mudlarks Pottery Introduction to Ceramics (S)	M+F 11-1
Limited to 3 people. Cost + registration	
Mudlarks Pottery Open Studios (S)	M+F 10-2
PEP & Prueba Mexico Series (S)	See the LCS website + Cost
Portraiture for Beginners (S)	TH 12-1:30
zoearmiger@gmail.com to register	
Scottish Country Dancing	TH 11:30-1:30
Stretch & Balance, harry_bertram@hotmail.com	T+TH 8:45-9:45
Spanish in Action classes	

See LCS website or in the office for more info

(español en acción)	See LCS website/more info.
Spanish a la carta Online program,	lcs.tech.training@gmail.com
Tech Help via Email	
Write to a Prompt Writers' Group	TH 10-12

LIBRARIES (M)

Book Library	M-Sat 10-1:30
DVD, Books on Tape & Library of Congress Talking Books.	
To order books on-line, you must use a computer or a tablet/iPad. It is not possible to order using a cell phone. Go to lakechapalasociety.com & select libraries/English.	

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (M)

Bridge4Fun	T+F 1-4:30
Discussion Group	W 12-1:30
English/Spanish Conversation* Open to public	Sat 12-1:30*
Everyday Mindfulness Zoom, barbarahildt@gmail.com	M 10:00
Game Group	TH 1-4
HOT Science Zoom, hotsciencelcs@gmail.com	T 1:45
Scrabble	F 11:30-1:30
Tournament Scrabble	T 12-1:50

HEALTH INSURANCE*

Hospital San Antonio	TH 10-12
IMSS & Immigration Services	M+T 10-1
Call for Appointment 333-157-9472 No sign up	
La Pueblita	2nd & 4th T 10-12
Lakeside Insurance	T+TH 11-2

HEALTH & LEGAL SERVICES*

Becerra Immigration	TH 10:30-12:30
InterCam Banking Services	M-F 10-1
Optometrist Claravision (S)	TH 9-4
Call for appointment 331-411-1178	
Skin Cancer Screening (S)	2nd+4th W 10-12:30
Sign up at LCS office	
Solbes & Solbes	2nd Monday 10-12

SERVICE & SUPPORT GROUPS *

Al-Anon (Spanish)	M 6-7:30, W 5:30-7:30
ASA Board Meeting	Last W, 10:30-12
Dementia Support Group	T 11:30-1:30
Diabetes Support Group	Zoom, 1st F 11:00
welchk4diabetes@gmail.com	
Information Desk	M-Sat 10-1:30
Lakeside AA	M+TH 4:30-5:30
Needle Pushers	T 10-11:45
Open Circle	Sun 10:30-11:30
Pueblo Magico	M 6-9
Toastmasters	M 7-9

NEW ACTIVITIES:

- **Dementia Support Group:** Tuesdays, 11:30-1:30, Maestro patio (old smoking patio). Join our caregiver's support group. The goal is to offer caring support for those dealing with spouses who have dementia. We will get acquainted; share stories and offer positive examples of things we have found to be helpful. Contact Cathey Merrill, 713-253-3537, mexamigos@att.net
- **La Pueblita** returns on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 10-12 on the blue umbrella patio to discuss living options and membership plans for residential living at the La Pueblita.
- **Mudlarks Pottery Introduction to Ceramics:** Open to members, covers basic hand building techniques, glazing & finishing. Meets Monday & Friday, 11 am to 1 pm. Fee: Per calendar month: \$500 MN, plus \$500 MN for 12 pounds of clay. Registration limited to 6 participants, register after the 25th of the previous month.
- **Mudlarks Pottery Open Studio:** Open to members who have completed one month Introduction to Ceramics — chance to work independently. Meets Monday & Friday, 10am-2pm. Fee: Per calendar month: \$500 MN. Clay may be purchased as needed, \$500 MN for 12 pounds. Registration for Open Studios is any time.
- **Solbes & Solbes**, the 2nd Monday of the month from 10-12 on the Blue Umbrella patio area. Legal assistance in civil, family and criminal matters. Everything related to wills, divorces and all kind of contracts.

**THE LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNOUNCES
THE NEILL JAMES AWARD**

The Board of Directors of The Lake Chapala Society ("LCS") has established the Neill James Award to honor those who have made a significant contribution to The Lake Chapala Society. It is named after the benefactress who bequeathed a major part of our lovely campus to LCS. This is an award bestowed on its recipients by the Board of Directors to recognize an individual who has met the following criteria for this award:

Recipient should have made a major contribution to fostering and advancing the Vision and Mission Statements as embodied in the Constitution of The Lake Chapala Society.

Recipient should have made a major contribution to promoting the ongoing existence of The Lake Chapala Society through individual effort involving contributions of time, energy, effort and/or financial support.

Recipient should embody the Values as detailed in the Constitution of The Lake Chapala Society.

The first recipient of this award is Howard Feldstein, posthumously, for his contributions in helping to draft the 2010 LCS Constitution, his four years of service as LCS President during an initially tumultuous time for LCS and, even after that, his subsequent service on the Board as chairman of the Campus Committee and later as Vice President. Howard was one of the individuals involved in drafting, as well as working to get adopted by the membership, our current Lake Chapala Society Constitution. The award will be presented to Howard's widow Maria.

The second recipient is Steve Balfour for his service as Executive Director and then Executive Director and President until a new Executive Director could be recruited and hired. Steve became even more involved with LCS during the difficult Covid-19 period when the campus was shut down and activities were forced to cease due to the pandemic. Steve was instrumental in keeping the staff of LCS employed and paid by focusing on a donation campaign in the first year of the pandemic and by instituting the Concerts in the Park series during the current year.

The several campaigns for donations during 2020 and 2021 along with the Concerts in the Park series initiated by Steve, have made the difference in LCS being able to continue to pay its employees and maintain the LCS campus and gardens. These two very successful programs have allowed LCS to survive during these two extremely difficult years.

INTRODUCTION TO LAKESIDE

RACHEL MCMILLEN

Online \$400 Friday Dec 17 From 9 am to 12 pm

In person \$600

Monday, Dec 13 From 9 am to 12 pm

Where exactly is Lakeside, Lakeside Communities, Ajijic Village, Fiestas and LCS. Health & Medical, Eating Out - Eating In, Money - Banks & ATM's, Churches, Entertainment & Recreation, Transportation, Accommodation & Utilities. There's always a world to know.

INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH

INEZ DYER

Tuesday, Dec 07, 14 & 21

Fee: \$350

From 12 noon to 1:30 pm

3-sessions class. The instructor will introduce learners to Spanish pronunciation, some vocabulary and social protocols.

**MAKE YOUR OWN
PIÑATA FOR CHRISTMAS**

Monday, Dec 6 & Wednesday, Dec 8

Fee: \$500

from 10am to 1:30pm

We will use clay jars and paper to create with our hands our piñata and have it ready for the posadas.

Come and learn the process and join the behind-the-scene process of making a piñata.

MEXICAN MANNERS

ALFREDO PÉREZ

Thursday, Dec 9

Fee: \$350

from 1 - 3:30pm

Cultural shock is a normal part of life when you move to another country. Learn why the behaviour of your new neighbors differs from your own. Our intention it help you understand cultural differences and promote real and positive coexistence.

Enrollment at LCS Office or LakeChapalaSociety.com
MEMBERS ONLY. Registration requires payment. There is no refund.
We will follow COVID protocols with no exception.



ATTENTION BIBLIOPHILES

By Cate Howell

Since the theme to this month's Conecciones is travel, we are focusing on what we have to offer both real travelers and armchair travelers for those who can no longer visit far off locations. We have a wide variety of travel guides, such as Rick Steves', *Moon*, *Lonely Planet*, *Frommer's*, the *Rough Guide*, *Fodor's*, *AAA*, *Eyewitness Travel*, and *National Geographic* for almost 100 countries around the world and a complete shelf in the Mexico collection of guides for travelling inside Mexico. Some of these are a few years old, as they are all donated to us, but the basic listings of places to see, places to stay, how to get from here to there, are most likely going to be very helpful. And if you are an armchair traveler, it doesn't really make a big difference how current it is, you can still enjoy reading about the sites around the world that draw tourists and travelers alike. All of our travel guides in both the main collection and the Mexico collection can be found at Dewey number 910 in the non-fiction shelves, arranged alphabetically by the country covered in the guide.

And if you want to read about others' adventures in foreign climes, the numbers in the Dewey 911-919 shelves have many stories of foreign travel, by both contemporary and no-longer-alive travelers, as far back as Marco Polo in the 13th century! There are also some beautiful books of color photographs of destinations around the globe. If you have already traveled or are hoping to soon, check out these travel guides and photo books to enjoy sights that the world has to offer.

Finally, some changes to the way books in the Mexico collection and Local Authors collection are shelved. All fiction in these two collections are now in the regular fiction shelves in Rooms 1 and 2, filed the same way by author's last name. Just look for the Mexican flag on the spine for Mexico collection books and the purple/lavender label on the spine for Local Authors fiction books. These books are being integrated into the regular fiction collections, since members have not known, or asked for help, in looking for these books on the back shelves in Room 3.

A MUSHROOM WORKSHOP

KSENIA KLIMOV Thursday, Dec 9
Fee: \$600 from 11am to 2pm

The course will be practical and theoretical. Learn about Fungi kingdom, their properties and how to grow them and inoculate a bucket with mycelium of oyster mushrooms, which can be taken home to cultivate their own mushrooms in a period of 20-40 days.

HOLY MOLE!

ANA MORENO Wednesday, Dec 15
Fee: \$520 from 10am to 12pm

Join in this celebration, let's learn about the origins of mole and their variants. Let's prepare 3 types of mole you can make at home and celebrate.

MEXICAN SALSAS

ANA MORENO Wednesday, Dec 15
Fee: \$400 from 2 to 3:30pm

Learn how some of the favorite Mexican salsas in the region are made. What ingredients you need, how and where to buy them. How Mexicans use them. What food you can dress with them.

BEANS, BEANS THE MUSICAL FRUIT!

ANA MORENO Thursday, Dec 16
Fee: \$500 from 11am to 1pm

Learn to prepare charro, drunken, red, fried, piggy and "with morisqueta" beans, what accompanies them and how to serve them! - Toot, Toot! See you there.

Enrollment at LCS Office or LakeChapalaSociety.com
MEMBERS ONLY. Registration requires payment. There is no refund.
We will follow COVID protocols with no exception.



We kick off our Annual Fund Week of Giving campaign to raise \$50,000.00 dollars, to help support our annual programs.

Annual Fund Week

A WEEK TO MAKE PROJECTS HAPPEN

GI♥INGTUESDAY

♥ #undíaparadar
MEXICO

IS HERE!

Please join The Lake Chapala Society for **“A week to make projects happen”** as we unite in moving forward to ensure a bright future for LCS. We need your support so we can continue offering our programs and expand our efforts to reach out to the various communities that create the Lakeside experience. With your help, LCS will be able to create an even more permanent transformation; with more programs, more student aid scholarships, more community collaborations, more social and cultural activities for members, and more educational programs; all this as we head into the new year.

A year with great hope.



Our mission is to promote the active participation of Lakeside’s communities to improve the quality of life for all our neighbors. We hope you will join us on this very special day and be an important part of our good work.



[Donate](#)



There's always a need.... 2021 Year End Appeal



Niños Incapacitados, despite the Covid 19 pandemic, has continued to provide high quality medical assistance to seriously ill children in 2021. We are very grateful that we have been able to continue our life-saving work. As we look forward and plan for the future, we want to assure that the children we serve can rely on us for necessary long-term help. We are maintaining our high standards of care, but we need your help.

We have set a goal of \$1 million pesos for the 2021-22 Year End Appeal.



Through the generosity of several anonymous donors, we have received a commitment of \$175,000 pesos to match any donations received as part of our Year End Appeal.



As we approach year-end and the holiday season, please consider making a donation so that we can continue to support life-changing medical treatments for our local children.



We hope you will join us and our dedicated clinic volunteers to ensure that we continue to provide medical help for children who could not, without our help, obtain medical care.

You can donate on-line through Amistad Canada to obtain a tax receipt if you are Canadian. If you are an American citizen, you can donate through The Foundation for Lake Chapala Charities and receive a tax receipt. Please see our website for tax receipt options by clicking on the DONATE page. If you wish to donate by cheque, email Larry Wynant at treasurer.ppni@gmail.com. All donations will go to the medical needs of our children.

We thank you for your help and assistance. We hope for your continued good health and safety.

Board of Directors
Ninos Incapacitados

Please donate

www.programaninos.com



El Programa de Pueblos Mágicos tuvo origen en 2001 a nivel nacional con el fin de reconocer a aquellas localidades de alto potencial turístico del ámbito nacional cuya riqueza y legado cultural, arquitectónica, urbana, natural y gastronómica tendieran a ser desarrolladas de manera sustentable y sin menoscabo de su riqueza material e inmaterial.

Los Estados que albergan mayor cantidad de Pueblos Mágicos, son:

Estado	Total de Pueblos Mágicos
Estado de México	10
Puebla	10
Jalisco	9
Michoacán	9

De acuerdo a los nombramientos que se han recibido en Jalisco, a continuación se muestra el año de reconocimiento de cada uno.

- 2002 Tapalpa
- 2003 Tequila
- 2005 Mazamitla
- 2011 San Sebastián del Oeste
- 2012 Lagos de Moreno
- 2015 Mascota
- 2015 Talpa de Allende
- 2018 Tlaquepaque
- 2020 Ajijic

TAPALPA

Fue el primer Pueblo Mágico en el Estado de Jalisco. Se encuentra aproximadamente a dos horas en automóvil desde Ajijic. Es característico por sus calles empedradas, casas de fachada blanca y techos de teja roja. Además de su belleza paisajística, tranquilidad y su riqueza histórico - cultural. Entre sus atractivos más importantes, destaca:

- El Valde los enigmas: mejor conocido como "Las Piedrotas".
- El centro histórico, donde encontrarás: la parroquia de San Antonio de Padua, el templo de Nuestra Sra. De Guadalupe, el mercado de artesanías y restaurantes donde podrás degustar borrego asado, tamal de acelga con salsa verde, el pegoste como dulce típico y el ponche de granada, tradicional de la Región Sur de Jalisco.

TEQUILA

Ubicado en la Región Valles, a una hora y media en automóvil desde Ajijic. Es cuna de la bebida más representativa de México en el mundo, su territorio forma parte del Paisaje Agavero, declarado Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad por la UNESCO.

Entre sus atractivos turísticos encontrarás: la Parroquia de Santiago Apóstol, el Museo Nacional del Tequila, el Centro Cultural Juan Beckman Gallardo, fabricas donde puedes conocer el proceso de elaboración del destilado de agave y realizar actividades al aire libre como: paseo a caballo, senderismo y cañonismo en la cascada "Los Azules", puedes hospedarte en hoteles boutique y fascinarte con la exquisita y amplia oferta gastronómica.



MAZAMITLA

Es la estrella de la ruta Sierra del Tigre, localizado a aproximadamente una hora y cuarenta y cinco minutos desde Ajijic. Pertenece a la Región Sureste y es reconocido por sus cabañas como el clásico modelo de hospedaje. Es uno de los mejores destinos para estar en contacto con la naturaleza, ya sea que quieras descansar o busques deportes de aventura, Mazamitla es ideal. Algunos de los sitios que puedes disfrutar son: la cascada "El Salto", la plaza principal y la zona centro, donde encontrarás restaurantes que ofrecen platillos típicos como "el bote", las corundas, los tradicionales ponches, conservas y dulces de frutas de temporada. Además de los parques como "Mundo Aventura" y "El Tecolote" donde puedes realizar actividades de aventura.



SAN SEBASTIAN DEL OESTE

San Sebastián del Oeste, reconocido como Pueblo Mágico desde 2011, se encuentra a una distancia de casi cinco horas desde Ajijic. Surgió como pueblo minero con auge en el siglo XIX gracias a la intervención extranjera; siendo la producción de oro y plata el principal impulsor de la economía del municipio. Se dice que en ese momento, se mantenían activas 49 minas. Entre las actividades que puedes realizar, te recomendamos visitar el cerro de la bufa, un mirador natural con vista a la sierra y Bahía de Banderas, comer en “Jardín Nebulosa” cuya propuesta gastronómica es única, por último disfruta del café local en “Quinta Mary”.

LAGOS DE MORENO

Localizado al noreste de Jalisco, a un aproximado de dos horas y media desde Ajijic. Es una de las ciudades coloniales más hermosas y mejor conservadas de Jalisco, cuyo centro histórico y puente sobre el río Lagos fueron nombrados Patrimonio Mundial por la UNESCO en 2010, además de formar parte del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. En tu visita a este Pueblo Mágico, admira la obra arquitectónica de la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, conoce el Museo de Arte Sacro, el magestuoso Templo del Calvario, las tradicionales Haciendas, Sepulveda, La Cantera, La Troje y Hacienda La Labor por mencionar algunas de ellas que puedes recorrer mediante cabalgata.



MASCOTA

Al interior de la Región Costa y de la sierra Occidental se encuentra Mascota, Pueblo Mágico que invita desde el primer minuto a la aventura y actividades de ecoturismo. Encontrarás este destino a una distancia de tres horas y cuarenta y cinco minutos en automóvil desde Ajijic. Puedes realizar actividades como paseos en motocross, paseos en lancha e incluso pescar. De sus atractivos, te recomendamos visitar la presa Corrinchis, la laguna de Juanacatlán y

si te interesa la historia, el Museo Estatal de Arqueología, la visita al Templo Inconcluso de la Preciosa Sangre es sin duda parada obligada en Mascota, viajar a este destino jalisciense es motivo de disfrutar la raicilla, bebida tradicional orgullosamente de Jalisco a partir del agave y que, recientemente, obtuvo su denominación de origen.

TALPA DE ALLENDE

Pertence a la Región Costa-Sierra Occidental y es el destino ancla de la ruta del Peregrino. Se encuentra a una distancia promedio de tres horas y cuarenta y cinco minutos en automóvil desde Ajijic. Es uno de los principales destinos de Turismo Religioso en Jalisco, gracias al Santuario de la Virgen de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, que recibe alrededor de 4 millones de visitantes al año y peregrinaciones provenientes de diferentes poblados, muchos de los fieles inician la ruta desde Ameca. Talpa de Allende ofrece una interesante combinación de destino religioso, con oferta cultural y de turismo de naturaleza al albergar el bosque más grande maples de Latinoamérica.

TLAQUEPAQUE

Es el único Pueblo Mágico localizado dentro del Área Metropolitana de Jalisco, a tan solo una hora desde Ajijic. Es reconocido a nivel nacional e internacional por la calidad en la elaboración de artesanías, entre las que se distinguen el barro cocido y el vidrio soplado. Tu visita a este destino debe completarse con una parada en el Parián para degustar de un amplio menú de platillos tradicionales y una típica y refrescante cazuela (bebida a base de cítricos y tequila), visitar el Centro Cultural El Refugio, contemplar la Parroquia de San Pedro Apóstol, el Santuario de la Soledad y el Museo Pantaleón Panduro y recorrer el Andador Independencia, donde encontrarás tiendas de artesanías, galerías y amplia oferta gastronómica.

AJIJIC

Recientemente obtuvo su reconocimiento como Pueblo Mágico en 2020. Ajijic es sinónimo de calma. Este pintoresco destino es famoso por gozar de un clima primaveral todo el año. En Ajijic podrás también disfrutar de exquisitas propuestas gastronómicas en sus reconocidos restaurantes de comida nacional e internacional, además de admirar los diversos murales que embellecen las calles del poblado. De las actividades al aire libre que puedes realizar, destaca, paseo a caballo en la Floresta, paseo en lancha o práctica de kayak, senderismo y avistamiento de aves migratorias.

Páginas de consulta y apoyo:

<https://visitjalisco.com.mx/aventuras/pueblos-magicos/>

<https://visitariberadechapala.com/>

<https://visitguadalajara.com/>

ATOTONILCO

By John Scherber

Coming and going from our home this time of year, September, we often have to drive across the bridge over the Río Laja without being able to see it. We know it's there, or at least, we hope it is. We simply read the turbulent currents of the river as they pass over it on the way to the reservoir for San Miguel de Allende in the south, twenty minutes away when the passage is clear.

The Río Laja is the western border of the major pilgrim-age village of Atotonilco. For about eight months out of the year it is dry. You can walk miles of it in this area without scuffing your Sunday shoes. But when the rains begin in June, anything can happen. In 2018, the Laja, which is normally about twenty or thirty feet wide in rainy season, was deluged by the release of water from a reservoir upstream, and it filled the width of the Valley, about 450 feet wide. Our house stands on a white hard-stone bluff overlooking that valley, with 35 kilometer views into the mountains beyond. My writing study sits eight feet back from a 100 foot drop.

Atotonilco was an important place to the indigenous people before the arrival of the Spanish in the 1540s. The nearby hot springs were part of that appeal. The Catholic missionaries often selected sites with pre-established significance to build churches, since the locals already regarded those places as sacred. In 1743 they erected a church dedicated to Jesus of Nazareth. It offered several side chapels. The extensive cloister that was attached is now a mass of ruined arches with unique character.

This church, soon informally named "el Santuario", quickly developed a reputation for perceived miraculous occurrences, and became a preferred location for special events. One of these was the wedding of the scion of a noble local family in San Miguel, Ignacio Allende, in 1793. He was an officer in the colonial army.

When Napoleon invaded Spain in 1808, King Charles IV was soon desperate for money. At that time there was no banking system as such in Mexico (then called New Spain), and the Church, with its vast holdings of bequests and property, was the principal source of loans for agriculture and business. The King forced the Church to call in all these loans and give the government the proceeds. This confiscation of capital destroyed the Mexican economy and quickly caused a famine.

One of the families damaged by this was the Hidalgos, who operated an agricultural hacienda near the town of Dolores. One of the sons was Father Miguel Hidalgo, who



was pastor of the principal church in Dolores. The family was virtually ruined by the loan cancellation.

On September 16, 1810, Father Hidalgo led several thousand of his mostly indigenous followers into Atotonilco. There, in the open area before the Santuario, he met with Ignacio Allende and several hundred of his uniformed troops. From the interior of the church, they removed a painting of the Virgin of Guadalupe and attached it to a pole for use as a battle standard. Then they marched to San Miguel, where they were joined by the Aldama brothers and several other prominent insurgents. There they took over City Hall, now called the Old Presidencia, and proclaimed the independence of New Spain, renaming it Mexico in the process. Both Allende and Hidalgo were captured in battle and executed less than a year later, but they each had their names added to that of their hometown, San Miguel de Allende and Dolores Hidalgo.



Today the business of Atotonilco is religion. Its historical significance, combined with the centuries of reverence paid to the Santuario make it one of the major pilgrimage destinations in all of Mexico. The interior of the church is lavishly decorated with ceiling frescos that have led some to all it "the Sistine Chapel of Mexico," perhaps a forgivable exaggeration. The streets are lined with vendors' booths offering devotional articles of carved wood and metalwork, clothing, and every possible kind of souvenir. Few places offer such a fully articulated sense of "Old Mexico."

The high point of the many celebrations that take place here every year are the Fiestas Patrias, the remembrance of those heady days on September 15 and 16 of 1810 that launched the nation of Mexico in its own right, and ultimately set the example for a chain of other revolutionary activity that swept through the Spanish domains in Central and South America in the years that followed. The rockets and other explosives go on far into the night. On our perch on the edge of the Río Laja to the west we are just far enough away so that shutting the doors makes it possible to sleep on holidays. The bottom line for us in living here is the simplicity, the pastoral beauty, and the respect for tradition.



Al ir y venir de nuestra casa en esta época del año, septiembre, a menudo tenemos que conducir por el puente sobre el Río Laja sin poder verlo. Sabemos que está ahí, o al menos, esperamos que lo esté. Nos limitamos a leer las turbulentas corrientes del río cuando pasan por encima de el de camino al embalse de San Miguel de Allende, en el sur, a veinte minutos de distancia cuando el paso está despejado.

El Río Laja es el límite occidental del gran pueblo de peregrinación de Atotonilco. Durante unos ocho meses del año está seco. En esta zona se pueden recorrer kilómetros sin que se rayen los zapatos de los domingos.

Pero cuando comienzan las lluvias en junio, puede pasar cualquier cosa. En 2018, el Laja, que normalmente tiene unos seis o siete metros de ancho en época de lluvias, se vio desbordado por la liberación de agua de un embalse aguas arriba, y llenó todo el ancho del Valle, unos 450 metros de ancho. Nuestra casa se encuentra en un acantilado de piedra blanca que domina el valle, con vistas de 35 kilómetros a las montañas de más allá. Mi estudio de escritura se encuentra a dos metros de una caída de 30 metros.

Atotonilco era un lugar importante para los indígenas antes de la llegada de los españoles en la década de 1540. Las aguas termales cercanas eran parte de ese atractivo. Los misioneros católicos solían elegir lugares con un significado preestablecido para construir iglesias, ya que los lugareños consideraban esos lugares como sagrados. En 1743 levantaron una iglesia dedicada a Jesús de Nazaret. Tenía varias capillas laterales. El extenso claustro que se adjuntó es ahora una masa de arcos en ruinas con un carácter único.

Esta iglesia, que pronto recibió el nombre informal de “el Santuario”, pronto adquirió fama de percibir sucesos milagrosos, y se convirtió en el lugar preferido para celebrar eventos especiales. Uno de ellos fue la boda del vástago de una noble familia local de San Miguel, Ignacio Allende, en 1793. Era un oficial del ejército colonial.

Cuando Napoleón invadió España en 1808, el rey Carlos IV no tardó en estar desesperado por conseguir dinero. En aquella época no existía un sistema bancario como tal en México (entonces llamada Nueva España), y la Iglesia, con sus vastas posesiones de legados y propiedades, era la principal fuente de préstamos para la agricultura y los negocios. El Rey obligó a la Iglesia a reclamar todos estos préstamos y a entre-

gar al gobierno los ingresos. Esta confiscación de capitales destruyó la economía mexicana y provocó rápidamente una hambruna.

Una de las familias perjudicadas fue la de los Hidalgo, que explotaban una hacienda agrícola cerca de la ciudad de Dolores. Uno de los hijos era el padre Miguel Hidalgo, que era párroco de la iglesia principal de Dolores. La familia quedó prácticamente arruinada por la cancelación del préstamo.

El 16 de septiembre de 1810, el padre Hidalgo condujo a varios miles de sus seguidores, en su mayoría indígenas, a Atotonilco. Allí, en el área abierta antes del Santuario, se reunió con Ignacio Allende y varios cientos de sus tropas uniformadas. Del interior de la iglesia, sacaron un cuadro de la Virgen de Guadalupe y lo ataron a un poste para usarlo como estandarte de batalla. Luego marcharon a San Miguel, donde se les unieron los hermanos Aldama y varios otros insurgentes prominentes. Allí tomaron el Ayuntamiento, ahora llamado Presidencia Vieja, y proclamaron la independencia de la Nueva España, rebautizándola como México. Tanto Allende como Hidalgo fueron capturados en la batalla y ejecutados menos de un año después, pero a cada uno se le añadió su nombre al de su ciudad natal, San Miguel de Allende y Dolores Hidalgo.

Hoy en día, el negocio de Atotonilco es la religión. Su importancia histórica, combinada con los siglos de veneración al Santuario, lo convierten en uno de los principales destinos de peregrinación de todo México. El interior de la iglesia está profusamente decorado con frescos en el techo que han llevado a algunos a llamarla “la Capilla Sixtina de México”, una exageración quizás perdonable. Las calles están repletas de puestos de vendedores que ofrecen artículos de devoción de madera tallada y metal, ropa y todo tipo de recuerdos. Pocos lugares ofrecen una sensación tan completa del “Viejo México”.

El punto álgido de las numerosas celebraciones que tienen lugar aquí cada año son las Fiestas Patrias, el recuerdo de aquellos embriagadores días del 15 y 16 de septiembre de 1810 que lanzaron la nación de México por derecho propio y que, en última instancia, sirvieron de ejemplo para una cadena de otras actividades revolucionarias que se extendieron por los dominios españoles de América Central y del Sur en los años siguientes. Los cohetes y otros explosivos continúan hasta bien entrada la noche. En nuestra casa al borde del Río Laja, al oeste, estamos lo suficientemente lejos como para que al cerrar las puertas se pueda dormir en vacaciones. Para nosotros, lo más importante de vivir aquí es la sencillez, la belleza pastoral y el respeto a la tradición.



Comala — The White Town

By Rachel McMillen



The small state of Colima just two-and-a-half hours west of Lakeside, is often referred to as “The Hawaii of Mexico,” where residents and visitors alike can drive from an active volcano, through tropical jungles, to internationally known surf breaks in under an hour and then return home to enjoy a vibrant tradition of art and culture.

The state capital, also called Colima, is a thriving city of 420,000 with an elevation of approximately 1,800 feet (550 meters). Close by, the Colima volcano rises some 13,000 feet to tower over the rich lands and communities below, one of which is the pueblo magico of Comala.

For a small town with only 21,000 inhabitants, Comala has a great deal to recommend it. Once known as Ajuchitlán, or Valley of the Flowers, Comala is famous not only as the setting for Juan Rulfo’s novel, *Pedro Páramo*, but also for its bread, coffee and tatemado, a delicious pork dish with a thick sauce made from roasted guajillo chilles.

Set in a valley almost in the shadow of the volcano, the rich earth and warm weather support orchards of papaya, mamey, guayaba, banana and almonds as well as vast fields of coffee bushes. No wonder ponche, a mildly alcoholic fruit drink made in fourteen different flavors, is a major industry!

Comala, known as the ‘White Town’ after it painted all its houses white in order to declare its neutrality during the Cristero revolution of the late 1920’s, was made a Pueblo Magico in 2002. In the center of the town sits the lovely Plaza de Armas with a central kiosk or gazebo imported from Germany and gothic-style iron benches created by Alejandro Rangel, the famous set and furniture designer, painter and graphic illustrator.

Alejandro Rangel lived and worked in the Ex-hacienda de Nogueras, located in a tiny community just a few minutes outside Comala that in the 18th century was the site of a huge sugar plan-

tation and mill. While much of the original land was sold off, Rangel donated the remaining buildings to the university of Colima and they now form the Centro Cultural de Nogueras. Here, in the old mill itself, the Museo Universitario Alejandro Rangel houses an impressive collection of pre-hispanic ceramic pieces as well as many examples of Rangel’s work including both paintings and furniture. The furniture design known today as Rangelino is still popular and may be seen in many of Mexico’s embassies.

The rambling gardens behind the Museo are also maintained and operated by the University as an Eco-Park where students and visitors alike can wander paths lined with tall bamboo and native trees and plants of all kinds whose branches are home to flocks of birds and iguanas.

Back in the plaza, watched over by the parroquia (church) of San Miguel Arcángel and serenaded by the gentle sounds coming from cantera-stone fountains, a bronze statue of author Juan Rulfo reclines on one of the Rangel benches as crowds gather in the restaurants under Las Portales (The Arches) for famous Comala snacks and a sip or two of ponche laced with mezcal.

On weekends, many head off to Suchitlán, just nine kilometers away, to browse the artisan offerings—wooden masks, oate furniture, woven baskets and beautiful carved wooden furniture are all made there—or to eat at one of the top-rated restaurants. Others continue on to the Hacienda de San Antonio, an old Porfirian coffee producing center with both an excellent restaurant and luxurious accommodations. Still others will head to either the Carrizalillo or the La Maria Lagoons, beautiful natural places where they can take a boat ride or simply relax.

As for me, I’m going to sit out under a parota tree on the bank of the river that runs behind my house and enjoy some delicious cinnamon-laced pan de Comala, delivered hot and fresh to my door every evening by Pancho, the motor-cycle riding baker!





Comala - La ciudad blanca

Por Rachel McMillen

El pequeño estado de Colima, a sólo dos horas y media al oeste de Lakeside, se conoce a menudo como “El Hawaii de México”, donde los residentes y visitantes por igual pueden conducir desde un volcán activo, a través de selvas tropicales, a los descansos de surf internacionalmente conocidos en menos de una hora y luego regresar a casa para disfrutar del arte tradicional y cultura.

La capital del estado, también llamada Colima, es una próspera ciudad de 420,000 habitantes con una altitud de aproximadamente 550 metros sobre el nivel del mar. Cerca de allí, el volcán de Colima se eleva unos 4,000 metros sobre ricas tierras y diversas comunidades, una de las cuales es el pueblo mágico de Comala.

Para ser un pequeño pueblo de sólo 21,000 habitantes, Comala tiene mucho que ofrecer. Antaño conocido como Ajuchitlán, o Valle de las Flores, Comala es famoso no sólo por ser el escenario de Pedro Páramo la novela de Juan Rulfo, sino también por su pan, su café y su tatemado, un delicioso plato de carne de cerdo con una espesa salsa hecha con chiles guajillos asados.

Enclavado en un valle casi a la sombra del volcán, la rica tierra y el clima cálido sustentan huertos de papaya, mamey, guayaba, plátano y almendras, así como vastos campos de arbustos de café. No es de extrañar que el ponche, una bebida frutal ligeramente alcohólica elaborada en catorce sabores diferentes, sea una industria importante.

Comala, conocido como el “Pueblo Blanco” por haber pintado todas sus casas de blanco para declarar su neutralidad durante la revolución cristera de finales de los años 20, fue declarado Pueblo Mágico en 2002. En el centro de la ciudad se encuentra la encantadora Plaza de Armas con un quiosco central o glorieta importada de Alemania y bancos de hierro de estilo gótico creados por Alejandro Rangel, el famoso escénografo y diseñador de muebles, pintor e ilustrador gráfico.

Alejandro Rangel vivió y trabajó en la Exhacienda de Nogueras, situada en una diminuta comunidad a pocos minutos de Comala que en el siglo XVIII fue el lugar de una enorme plantación de azúcar y un molino. Aunque gran parte del terreno original se vendió, Rangel donó los edificios restantes a la Universidad de Colima y ahora forman el Centro Cultural de Nogueras. Aquí, en el antiguo ingenio, el Museo Universitario Alejandro Rangel alberga una impresionante colección de piezas de cerámica prehispánica,

así como muchos ejemplos de la obra de Rangel, tanto de pintura como de mobiliario. El diseño de muebles conocido hoy como Rangelino sigue siendo popular y puede verse en muchas de las embajadas de México.

Los jardines detrás del Museo son mantenidos y operados por la Universidad como un Eco-Parque donde los estudiantes y los visitantes pueden pasear por los senderos alineados con bambúes altos y árboles nativos y plantas de todo tipo cuyas ramas son el hogar de bandadas de pájaros e iguanas.



De vuelta a la plaza, custodiada por la parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel y serenada por los suaves sonidos de las fuentes de cantera, una estatua de bronce del escritor Juan Rulfo se reclina en una de las bancas de Rangel, mientras la gente se reúne en los restaurantes bajo Los Portales para degustar los famosos bocadillos de Comala y uno o dos sorbos de ponche con mezcal.

Los fines de semana, muchos se dirigen a Suchitlán, a sólo nueve kilómetros de distancia, para ver la oferta de artesanía -máscaras de madera, muebles de otate, cestas tejidas y hermosos muebles de madera tallada que se fabrican allí- o para comer en uno de los restaurantes mejor valorados. Otros se dirigen a la Hacienda de San Antonio, un antiguo centro cafetero porfiriano con un excelente restaurante y un lujoso alojamiento. Otros se dirigen a las lagunas de Carrizalillo o de La María, hermosos lugares naturales donde pueden dar un paseo en barco o simplemente relajarse.

Yo, por mi parte, me sentaré bajo una parota en la orilla del río que pasa por detrás de mi casa y disfrutaré de un delicioso pan de Comala con canela, que Pancho, el panadero en moto, me entrega todas las tardes caliente y fresco en mi puerta.

The Origins of Mexico's Piñatas & Posadas

By Carol L Bowman

During the Christmas season in Mexico, gatherings called *posadas* where guests break *piñatas*, remain familiar yuletide activities. But how many people know the origin of these Mexican cultural events?

No Mexican party is complete until guests take turns swinging a stick at a paper-mache figure called a *piñata*. Excitement rushes when it breaks open and candy and small toys spill out. The fascinating history behind this practice originated before the 12th Century in Asia. Brightly colored paper figures of cows, oxen and buffalo, filled with seeds, were suspended from trees on Chinese New Year. Individuals struck the hanging shapes with a rod until the seeds fell to the ground; then burned the seeds and spread the ashes over the soil for a windfall planting season. Marco Polo, intrigued by this custom, brought the paper creations to Italy in the 13th century.

By the 14th Century, the Italians replaced the animal figures with a clay jar, called a *pignata*, meaning fragile pot. They introduced the breaking of the filled vessel as a celebration for the first Sunday of Lent. As the practice circulated throughout Catholic Europe, the Spanish decorated the *piñata* with tinsel, colored paper and ribbon and expanded its Lenten role with a ceremony known as the Dance of the *Piñata*.

Finally, Spanish Missionaries brought the *piñata* to the New World, as a tool to convert indigenous people to Catholicism. Both the Aztecs and the Maya used the breaking of clay pots in different ceremonies. The Aztecs broke a pot filled with offerings over the figure head of their God of War, the treasures falling on the God's feet. The Maya, always interested in games, blindfolded the participant to make striking the suspended jug more challenging.

The missionaries realized the close correlation and used the *piñata* to successfully persuade the masses. They introduced a seven-coned paper-mache star-like figure to represent the seven deadly sins. Breaking the *piñata* represented triumph of good over evil and the goodies inside symbolized the temptation against wealth and pleasure.

Covering the eyes of *piñata* participants signified Blind Faith. The other two theological virtues, Hope and Charity were equally symbolized. The clay vessel full of offerings hanging above toward heaven, and the individual yearning for the prize represented Hope. Sharing offerings from the broken pot symbolized the Charity of blessings and gifts from God.

A statue of a monk hitting a *piñata* stands in Acolman,

Mexico, the first location where this custom took place. The tradition of making these paper-mache creations by hand in all shapes and sizes currently continues unabated in San José, Buena Vista, near Mexico City.

The original deadly sins, seven-point-star *piñata* is saved exclusively for use in the daily religious processions of the *posada* that take place in every town and village in Mexico, nine days before Christmas.

The origin of the Mexican, Christmas *posada* dates back 400 years, but the roots of this re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem can be traced to 10th century Europe. Plays of biblical events staged for the masses helped to explain Catholic doctrines to the illiterate.

In 1586, Augustinian Friar Diego de Soria in Acolman, Mexico requested a Papal Bull from Pope Sixtus V for Christmas bonus Masses. This Friar organized the first *posada* in Mexico, and coined the term which means 'inn or shelter' in Spanish. Held every day from December 16 to 24, each *posada* coincided with the nine-day journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, and their plea for shelter along the way. Originally played-out only in churches, these processions spread to *haciendas*, and then to neighborhood communities by the 18th Century.

A gathering of the faithful begins each evening and is led by adults or children portraying Mary and Joseph. They proceed through the streets and knock on doors asking for shelter. This process evolves entirely through song and carols. Joseph sings the first part, requesting lodging and the family inside the home responds back in song that "there is no room." This continues until they reach the 'designated house' for that night, where Mary and Joseph and the throng following them are invited into the home. Here, after religious reciting, everyone celebrates eating *tamales* and drinking *ponche* or *atole*. Finally, the seven-point *piñata* is broken! This same spectacle takes place every night until *Noche Buena*, Christmas Eve.

In Ajijic, Mary and Joseph typically lead the procession on donkeys. Neighborhood committees select the families who will invite the procession in and help to provide the food and drink. Secular Christmas parties held between the 16th and 24th are referred to as '*pre-posadas*.'

Now you know the history of going to a *posada* and breaking a *piñata*. Enjoy these timeless Mexican Christmas traditions with new understanding. .



Durante la temporada navideña en México, las posadas, en las que los invitados rompen *piñatas*, siguen siendo actividades navideñas familiares. Pero, ¿cuántas personas conocen el origen de estos eventos culturales mexicanos?

Piñatas

Ninguna fiesta mexicana está completa hasta que los invitados se turnan para golpear una figura de papel maché llamada piñata. La emoción se desborda cuando se rompe y se derraman caramelos y pequeños juguetes. La fascinante historia de esta práctica se originó antes del siglo XII en Asia. En el Año Nuevo chino se colgaban de los árboles figuras de papel de colores brillantes de vacas, bueyes y búfalos, rellenas de semillas. Los individuos golpeaban las figuras colgantes con una vara hasta que las semillas caían al suelo; luego quemaban las semillas y esparcían las cenizas sobre la tierra para una temporada de siembra de viento. Marco Polo, intrigado por esta costumbre, llevó las creaciones de papel a Italia en el siglo XIII.

En el siglo XIV, los italianos sustituyeron las figuras de animales por una jarra de arcilla, llamada pignata, que significa olla frágil. Introdujeron la rotura de la vasija llena como celebración del primer domingo de Cuaresma. Cuando la práctica se extendió por toda la Europa católica, los españoles decoraron la piñata con oropel, papel de colores y cintas y ampliaron su función cuaresmal con una ceremonia conocida como el Baile de la Piñata.

Finalmente, los misioneros españoles llevaron la piñata al Nuevo Mundo, como herramienta para convertir a los indígenas al catolicismo. Tanto los aztecas como los mayas utilizaban la rotura de vasijas de barro en diferentes ceremonias. Los aztecas rompían una olla llena de ofrendas sobre la cabeza de su Dios de la Guerra, cayendo los tesoros a los pies del Dios. Los mayas, siempre interesados en los juegos, vendaban los ojos al participante para que golpear la jarra suspendida fuera más difícil.

Los misioneros se dieron cuenta de la estrecha correlación y utilizaron la piñata para persuadir con éxito a las masas. Introdujeron una figura en forma de estrella de papel maché con siete conos para representar los siete pecados capitales. Romper la piñata representaba el triunfo del bien sobre el mal y las golosinas de su interior simbolizaban la tentación contra la riqueza y el placer.

Cubrir los ojos de los participantes en la piñata significaba la fe ciega. Las otras dos virtudes teologales, la Esperanza y la Caridad, estaban igualmente simbolizadas. La vasija de barro llena de ofrendas que colgaba hacia el cielo y el individuo que anhelaba el premio representaban la Esperanza. El reparto de ofrendas de la vasija rota simbolizaba la Caridad de las bendiciones y los regalos de Dios.

Una estatua de un monje golpeando una piñata se encuentra en Acolman, México, el primer lugar donde se realizó esta costumbre. La tradición de fabricar a mano estas creaciones de papel maché de todas las formas y tamaños continúa actualmente sin interrupción en San José de Buena Vista, cerca de Ciudad de México.

El origen de las piñatas y las posadas en México

Por Carol L Bowman

La piñata original de los pecados capitales, de siete puntas, se guarda exclusivamente para su uso en las procesiones religiosas diarias de la posada que tienen lugar en todas las ciudades y pueblos de México, nueve días antes de la Navidad.

Posadas

El origen de la posada navideña mexicana se remonta a 400 años atrás, pero las raíces de esta representan el viaje de María y José de Nazaret a Belén que se remontan a la Europa del siglo X. Las representaciones de acontecimientos bíblicos para las masas ayudaban a explicar las doctrinas católicas a los analfabetos.

En 1586, el fraile agustino Diego de Soria en Acolman, México, solicitó una bula al Papa Sixto V para las misas de aguinaldo. Este fraile organizó la primera posada en México, y acuñó el término que significa “posada o albergue” en español. Cada posada, que se celebraba del 16 al 24 de diciembre, coincidía con el viaje de nueve días de José y María a Belén y su petición de refugio en el camino. Estas procesiones, que en un principio sólo se celebraban en las iglesias, se extendieron a las haciendas y, en el siglo XVIII, a las comunidades de vecinos.

Cada noche comienza una reunión de fieles encabezada por adultos o niños que representan a María y José. Recorren las calles y llaman a las puertas pidiendo refugio. Este proceso se desarrolla íntegramente a través de canciones y villancicos. José canta la primera parte, solicitando alojamiento, y la familia que está dentro de la casa responde cantando que “no hay sitio”. Esto continúa hasta que llegan a la “casa designada” para esa noche, donde María y José y la multitud que los sigue son invitados a entrar en el hogar. Aquí, después de la recitación religiosa, todos celebran comiendo tamales y bebiendo ponche o atole. Finalmente, se rompe la piñata de siete puntas. Este mismo espectáculo tiene lugar todas las noches hasta la Noche Buena.

En Ajijic, María y José suelen encabezar la procesión en burros. Los comités de vecinos seleccionan a las familias que invitarán a la procesión y ayudan a proporcionar la comida y la bebida. Las fiestas seculares de Navidad que se celebran entre el 16 y el 24 se denominan “preposadas”. Ahora ya conoces la historia de ir a una posada y romper una piñata. Disfruta de estas eternas tradiciones navideñas mexicanas con un nuevo significado.

Corn husks and Christmas

By Marianne Carlson

Corn was domesticated from a grass called *teocintle* by the peoples of Meso-America approximately 10,000 years ago. For Mexicans, maize is not a crop, but a deep cultural symbol essential to daily life. It isn't just the primary basis of daily Mexican meals, it's a food that is alive with history and filled with meaning. Here, corn is "the food with which the gods chose to feed mankind." It is a symbol of Mexico itself.

There is nothing wasted in the raising of corn. Every element is used, from the silks for medicine to the fungus on the kernels (*huitlacoche*). After the harvest, for centuries cultures have woven and braided the corn husks into dolls and toys for children. Although corn husk dolls were considered a children's toy, they were sometimes used during healing ceremonies or to ward off evil dream spirits. Many thought these dolls had magical charms that helped protect the home, livestock, crop, and overall health.

One of the most popular Mexican Christmas decorations is the *nacimiento*, or nativity scene. Corn husk *nacimientos* in all sizes and designs can be found in the tianguis in around the lake as the holidays near. While similar to other nativity scenes from around the world, the Mexican *nacimiento* has a special flavor and can be very elaborate and include street vendors, musicians, buildings, special characters such as a rooster to crow at the birth of Jesus and Lucifer to lure away the shepherds on their journey. New pieces might

be added each year for a truly remarkable display.

If you enjoy day trips, one I might suggest is to San Cristóbal Zapotitlán on the other side of Lake Chapala. Here the women weave flowers, *catrinas*, baskets, etc. using palm, corn husks or dried *ocochal* (pine needles). Less than 100 years ago, the women of San Cristóbal began weaving these natural materials into saleable items that allowed them to contribute to their family's economy. Some of the women are members of the Corazón de Maíz Cooperativa and work together in a small cultural center.

As you enter San Cristóbal on their main road, drive all the way to the end of the street and turn left. Continue on for a few blocks and then ask a woman on the street where Carmen Osorio lives. If you're more organized than me, you might wish to call her before you leave at 333 477 8987 to inquire if she will be home to show you her wonderful corn husk flowers. I recently purchased hundreds of her flowers for a friend's anniversary party in Houston, Texas. Attendees at the event had never seen flowers like these — they were a huge sensation!

If you like poinsettias, ask Carmen if she has any available. Few people realize that the poinsettia, the most recognized flower of Christmas, is a native plant of Mexico. Decorating for any occasion with corn husk flowers, dolls, etc. adds an "authenticity" to the event — still handmade, colorful and unique.

A parting thought — traditional corn husk dolls have no face — a reminder never to think you're better than someone else.



Hoja de Maíz y Navidad

By Marianne Carlson

El maíz fue domesticado a partir de una hierba llamada teocintle por los pueblos de Mesoamérica hace aproximadamente 10,000 años. Para los mexicanos, el maíz no es un cultivo, sino un profundo símbolo cultural esencial para la vida cotidiana. No sólo es la base principal de las comidas diarias de los mexicanos, sino que es un alimento lleno de historia y significado. Aquí, el maíz es “el alimento con el que los dioses eligieron alimentar a la humanidad”. Es un símbolo del propio México.

No se desperdicia nada en la crianza del maíz. Se aprovechan todos los elementos, desde las sedas para la medicina hasta los hongos de los granos (huitlacoche). Después de la cosecha, durante siglos las culturas han tejido y trenzado las hojas de maíz para hacer muñecas y juguetes para los niños. Aunque las muñecas de hoja de maíz se consideraban un juguete, a veces se utilizaban durante las ceremonias de curación o para alejar a los espíritus malignos de los sueños. Muchos pensaban que estos muñecos tenían encantos mágicos que ayudaban a proteger el hogar, el ganado, la cosecha y la salud en general.

Uno de los adornos navideños mexicanos más populares es el nacimiento. A medida que se acercan las fiestas, se pueden encontrar nacimientos de hojas de maíz de todos los tamaños y diseños en los tianguis de los alrededores. Aunque es similar a otros nacimientos de todo el mundo, el nacimiento mexicano tiene un sabor especial y puede ser muy elaborado e incluir vendedores ambulantes, músicos, edificios, personajes especiales como un gallo que canta en el nacimiento de Jesús y Lucifer que atrae a los pastores en su viaje. Cada año se añaden nuevas piezas para lograr un despliegue realmente extraordinario.

Si le gustan las excursiones de un día, le sugiero que vaya a San Cristóbal Zapotitlán, al otro lado del lago de Chapala. Aquí las mujeres tejen flores, catrinas, cestas, etc. con palma, hojas de maíz u ocochal seco. Hace menos de 100 años, las mujeres de San Cristóbal comenzaron a tejer estos materiales naturales para convertirlos en artículos vendibles que les permitieran contribuir a la economía familiar. Algunas de las mujeres son miembros de la Cooperativa Corazón de Maíz y trabajan juntas en un pequeño centro cultural.

Al entrar en San Cristóbal por su carretera principal, conduzca hasta el final de la calle y gire a la izquierda. Siga unas cuantas cuadras y pregunte a una mujer en la calle dónde vive Carmen Osorio. Si eres más organizado que yo, tal vez quieras llamarla antes de salir al 333 477 8987 para preguntar si estará en casa para mostrarte sus maravillosas flores de hoja de maíz. Hace poco compré cientos de sus flores para la fiesta de aniversario de un amigo en Houston, Texas. Los asistentes al evento nunca habían visto flores como éstas - ¡fueron una gran sensación!



Si te gustan las Noche buenas, pregunta a Carmen si tiene alguna disponible. Poca gente sabe que la Noche buena, la flor más reconocida de la Navidad, es una planta nativa de México. La decoración para cualquier ocasión con flores de hoja de maíz, muñecos, etc. añade una “autenticidad” al evento - todavía hecho a mano, colorido y único.

Un pensamiento de despedida - las muñecas tradicionales de hoja de maíz no tienen cara - un recordatorio de que nunca debes pensar que eres mejor que otra persona.

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The Day of the Innocents

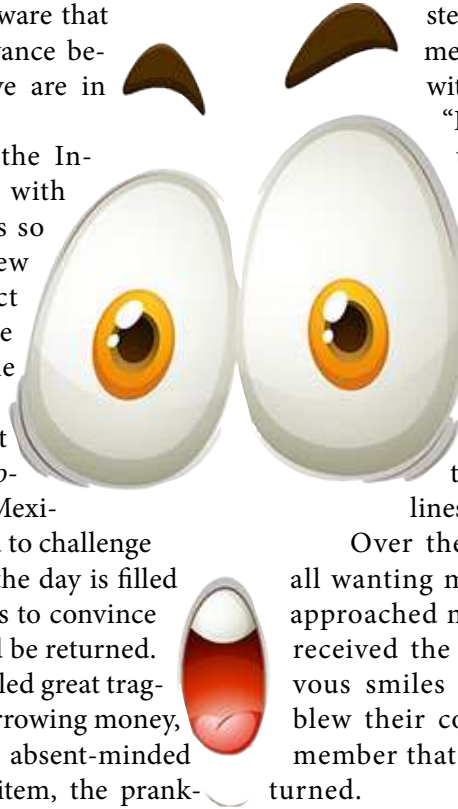
By Judy King

Beware! Area expats who are unaware that there is a prank-filled holiday observance between Christmas and New Year's Eve are in danger of making costly decisions.

The observance of the Day of the Innocents on December 28 originated with King Herod of biblical fame. He was so upset by the news of the birth of a new king (Jesus) that he issued an edict that resulted in the killing of all the male infants and young boys in the land.

The playful, teasing traditions that have evolved on the *Día de los Inocentes* are typical of the propensity of Mexicans to laugh in the face of tragedy and to challenge intimidating fears. In modern times, the day is filled with pranks, jokes and fantastic stories to convince the naïve to lend items that never need be returned.

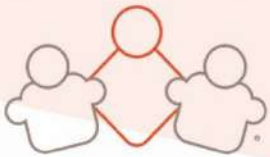
Notes sent in Victorian times detailed great tragedies or problems that necessitated borrowing money, tools, or household items. When the absent-minded friend naively loaned the requested item, the prank-



ster sent a gift of sweets or miniature toys in memory of the innocents lost to King Herod with another note poking fun and saying, "Innocent little dove who allowed yourself to be deceived, knowing that on this day, nothing should be lent."

Much of the tradition is reminiscent of April Fool's Day. During the early years of this century, newspapers, including the "Guadalajara Reporter" have printed their December 28 edition upside down, with the front page on what is normally the last page and sometimes with outlandish and fanciful headlines and stories.

Over the years, friends, maids and gardeners, all wanting me to loan them some small item, have approached me. My suspicions were aroused when I received the unusual request and spotted mischievous smiles and twinkling eyes which completely blew their cover, and gave me enough time to remember that on this day things lent need not be returned.



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