

# CONEXIONES

People Helping People • Gente Ayudando Gente

## Crafting Heritage: Inside Mexico's Top Art Fair

Elaborando Patrimonio:  
Dentro de la Feria de Arte  
Más Importante de México

Bilingual Publication  
Publicación Bilingüe





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# President's Message

Hola! It is an exciting time on The Lake Chapala Society campus as we prepare to **welcome back our “snowbird” community**. Heading into high season, LCS has scheduled dozens of classes, programs, services, and entertainment opportunities that you can find on our website.

Newcomers and many of our returning members and supporters will **see the upgrades** to the campus for the first time, including the beautiful new baño facilities, refurbishment of the Blue Patio, the Neill James house, the gardens and koi ponds, and more.

While you aren't required to be an LCS member to use the facilities or attend most programs, I **sincerely ask you to join or rejoin if you're not a member**.

Beyond supporting LCS, your membership fees help us pay for financial aid for local students, ESL classes, the Children's Art Program (including classes in photography and ceramics), and cultural events bringing the expat and Mexican communities together to support our mission:

*The mission of The Lake Chapala Society is to promote the active participation of Lakesides' inhabitants to improve their quality of life. By making this commitment, we signal to the community that our focus is based not just on expatriates, but everyone living at Lakeside.*



Children's Art Summer Camp; Photo by D. Medrano

We're excited that **membership has rebounded to very close to pre-pandemic levels**, and programs and events are getting back into full swing. But **this revenue isn't enough** to cover our monthly expenses and continue the work **necessary to maintain and improve our aging infrastructure**, and to achieve the other ambitious goals set forth in LCS 2.0.

**It's donations that make up the difference**, and LCS needs your help right now. This year we witnessed a distinct drop in donations. But now that the election is behind us, we hope we can count on you, to support our need to move LCS forward.

To address our revenue shortfall, I have initiated a **President's Challenge to the LCS Board of Directors**. I have donated and raised \$40,000 pesos. I have challenged our remaining Board members to do the same by year's end. Many have already met this challenge. In turn, I am extending this challenge to you.

In January, we will celebrate **the 70th. anniversary of the founding** of what is now LCS in 1955. **Please join us in becoming members and in supporting our wonderful community!**

Warmly,  
Yoly  
Yolanda Martínez Llamas.  
LCS President

## 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 and 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.

## Board of Directors

**President/Presidente:** Yolanda Martínez Llamas

**Vice President/Vice Presidente:** Greg DiStefano

**Secretary/Secretario:** Mike Platt

**Treasurer/Tesorero:** Tim Boardman

**Directors/Directores:** Greg Custer, Madera Glenn, Linda Goman, Steve Graham, John Henry, Hunter Johnson, Leon Felipe Muñoz, George Radford.

## Conecciones Team

The magazine’s name, Conecciones - Connections in English - reflects its purpose, which is to enable the Lake Chapala Society to connect with the Lakeside community.

*El nombre de la revista Conecciones refleja su propósito, favorecer la conexión de The Lake Chapala Society con la comunidad.*

**Publisher/Editorial:** Lake Chapala Society

**Managing Editor:** Sandra Baird

**Assistant Managing Editor:** Catherine Austill

**Associate Editors/Editores asociados:** Harriet Hart, Diana Hunt

**Production, Art & Design/ Producción, Arte y Diseño:**

Domitza Medrano

**Translations/Traducciones:** LCS

## Editorial inquiries

Conecciones welcomes submissions of articles from Lakeside authors. We reserve the right to edit as necessary. Submissions should be in MS Word approximately 600 words and should be directed to: [editor@lcsac.org](mailto:editor@lcsac.org)

*Conecciones agradece el envío de artículos. Nos reservamos el derecho de editarlos si es necesario. Los envíos deben ser en MS Word de 600 palabras aproximadamente y deben dirigirse a: [editor@lcsac.org](mailto:editor@lcsac.org)*

## Conecciones Advertising Prices Precios de los Anuncios 2024

	Cost / Precio
Back cover / Contraportada (8.5 x 11”/ 21.5 x 28 cm)	\$6,600 MXN
Inside front & back cover / Contraportada interna (8.5”x11”/ 21.5 x 28 cm)	\$6,060 MXN
Full page / Página completa (7.8 x 10.2”/ 20 x 26 cm)	\$4,590 MXN
1/2 page / 1/2 página (4.7 x 7.2”/ 12 x 18.5 cm)	\$2,775 MXN
1/4 page / 1/4 página (3.5 x 4.7”/ 9 x 12 cm)	\$1,465 MXN
1/8 page-business card / 1/8 página-tarjeta de presentación (3.5 x 2”/ 9 x 5 cm)	\$510 MXN

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### Cover: Feria Mestros del Arte

All prices include IVA. All ads must be submitted by the 10th of the month for inclusion in the next month’s magazine. Send to [sales@lcsac.org](mailto:sales@lcsac.org)

*Todos los precios incluyen IVA. Todos los anuncios deben ser enviados antes del día 10 del mes para su inclusión en la revista del mes siguiente. Enviar a [sales@lcsac.org](mailto:sales@lcsac.org)*

# Mensaje de la Presidenta

¡Hola! Es un momento emocionante en el campus de The Lake Chapala Society mientras nos preparamos para dar la **bienvenida de nuevo a nuestra comunidad de "snowbirds"**. Al entrar en la temporada alta, LCS ha programado docenas de clases, programas, servicios y oportunidades de entretenimiento que puedes encontrar en nuestro sitio web.

Los recién llegados y muchos de nuestros miembros y seguidores que regresan verán por primera vez **las mejoras en el campus**, incluyendo las hermosas nuevas instalaciones de baños, la renovación del Patio Azul, la casa de Neill James, los jardines y estanques de koi, y mucho más.

Aunque no es necesario ser miembro de LCS para usar las instalaciones o asistir a la mayoría de los programas, **te pido sinceramente que te unas o te reincorpores si aún no eres miembro.**

Más allá de apoyar a LCS, tus cuotas de membresía nos ayudan a financiar becas para estudiantes locales, clases de inglés como segundo idioma, el Programa de Arte Infantil (que incluye clases de fotografía y cerámica), y eventos culturales que unen a las comunidades expatriada y mexicana, apoyando nuestra misión:



Campamento de Arte para niños; Foto por D. Medrano

La misión de The Lake Chapala Society es promover la participación activa de los habitantes de Lakeside para mejorar su calidad de vida. Al hacer este compromiso, señalamos a la comunidad que nuestro enfoque no está solo en los expatriados, sino en todos los que viven en Lakeside.

Estamos emocionados de que **la membresía haya recuperado casi los niveles previos a la pandemia**, y los programas y eventos están volviendo a toda marcha. **Pero estos ingresos no son suficientes** para cubrir nuestros gastos mensuales ni continuar con el trabajo **necesario para mantener y mejorar nuestra infraestructura** envejecida, así como para lograr los otros ambiciosos objetivos establecidos en LCS 2.0.

**Son las donaciones las que marcan la diferencia**, y LCS necesita tu ayuda ahora mismo. Este año hemos presenciado una

caída notable en las donaciones. Pero ahora que las elecciones han pasado, esperamos poder contar contigo para apoyar nuestra necesidad de hacer avanzar a LCS.

Para abordar nuestra falta de ingresos, he iniciado un **Desafío de la Presidenta dirigido a la Junta Directiva de LCS**. He donado y recaudado \$40,000 pesos. He desafiado a los demás miembros de la Junta a hacer lo mismo antes de fin de año. Muchos ya han aceptado este desafío. A su vez, extendiendo este desafío a ti.

En enero, **celebraremos el 70° aniversario de la fundación** de lo que hoy es LCS en 1955. **¡Únete a nosotros convirtiéndote en miembro y apoyando a nuestra maravillosa comunidad!**

Con cariño,  
Yoly  
Yolanda Martínez Llamas  
Presidenta de LCS



# LIFE ON MEDICARE

THE MEDICARE IN MEXICO EXPERTS

Advertisement

patient. If Medicare medical services and billing can be managed by a local hospital or provider, the patient can simply focus on getting better.”

Life On Medicare also offers complementary Medicare health insurance coverage review services to help minimize costs associated with unforeseen medical circumstances. “Medicare Advantage, for example, does not ask members about pre-existing conditions. To qualify, a person must have Medicare A & B and a U.S. residential address on file with Social Security,” explains DAgostino. “Regarding full insurance coverage, if an Expat’s illness requires them to return to the U.S. or Canada for covered medical conditions, SkyMed evacuation Medevac membership can provide them additional peace of mind and financial security for the member and family.”

SkyMed plans cover patient transportation back home to their full insurance coverage and hospital of their choice, where they can receive treatments and recover with friends and family members. SkyMed can also transport patients back to Mexico, and in certain cases, transport family members to be with the patient if they choose not to evacuate or are not able to.

## Make informed decisions about your medical care

It is important to understand any changes to your current Medicare plan and any potential health care challenges before you decide on coverage for 2025. Take this opportunity to let Life On Medicare help you re-evaluate how your Medicare coverage fits your current health care needs, lifestyle and budget.

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## MEDICARE BENEFIT COVERAGE TO-DO:

### Review Changes, Assess Needs, Get Trusted Advice

Medicare is complicated! Navigating through the [Medicare.Gov](https://www.Medicare.gov) web site or the Medicare and You Handbook can easily result in an overwhelming sense of confusion, anxiety and frustration, and can raise more questions than you may have had when you started.

Medicare’s Annual Enrollment Period for 2025 coverage runs October 15 through December 7, 2024. American’s 65+ years of age can join, change or drop certain Medicare plans during this period.

Coverage changes in 2025 can mean a significant variation in premiums, copayments and covered drugs. Out-of-pocket spending caps, expanded mental health and family caregiver services, and lifetime maximums are some of the changes that need to be considered when evaluating plans for 2025.

Some plans will no longer be offered next year -- the number of Medicare Advantage plans drops from approximately 4,000 to about 3,000 plans. Recent natural disasters have impacted the distribution and receipt of the Annual Notice of Change that Medicare members should have received in September – leaving some members unsure if their current plans will even be available in 2025.

### Navigate with a knowledgeable resource

A knowledgeable licensed Medicare broker, like Michael DAgostino, can help you navigate your options during open enrollment. “We look at a person’s existing coverage, review any changes in that coverage for next year, assess their medical and medication needs, understand their residency status and travel plans, and help them find the most cost-effective way to manage their needs,” explains DAgostino, founder of Life On Medicare.

DAgostino and his team at Life On Medicare have been providing personalized Medicare services to Expats in the Chapala area for eight years. Licensed in health insurance benefits to take care of clients in all 50 states, his team is updated on changes in coverage across Medicare and Advantage plans based on U.S. ZIP Code.

DAgostino leverages his 20+ years of Medicare insurance experience and his years Lakeside, to help Expats maximize their coverage Lakeside. “If a Medicare member wants or needs to use their insurance in the Chapala area, we make sure that plan is accepted by emergency and/or urgent medical services in the area,” explains DAgostino. “Ideally, any necessary medical services that may be covered by a Medicare plan’s out-of-country coverage, would be considered as part of a Chapala-area provider’s care for a



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### THE LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY IN AJIJIC

November 12 | November 20 | December 3  
@ 3:00PM



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## Medicare Support for Expats

If you're over 65 and living in Mexico, make sure your Medicare benefits are working for you here. Learn how to access coverage and get expert advice tailored to expats.

## Upcoming Seminars in Ajijic



- November 4 & 18  
at American Legion @ 11:30am
- November 12 & 20  
at Lake Chapala Society @ 1:00pm



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**Paige DAgostino**



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# STAYING CONNECTED ACROSS THE MILES

By Harriet Hart

There are many reasons why families and close friends become separated geographically. Kids go away to university, job opportunities become available in different cities or countries, or at retirement folks move to different locales. Many LCS members have willingly packed their bags and come to Lakeside from elsewhere, only to discover we miss the people we left behind.

It is important to stay connected with those we love, and technology makes staying in touch easy.

## CONNECT VIRTUALLY

Affordable Mexican cell phone plans allow us to make unlimited long distance phone calls all over North America. For those of us with iPhones, FaceTime is a great option. I personally prefer seeing my family members to just hearing them. Every Sunday, I call my son just to chat.

When I did an informal survey of my friends, most of them use FaceTime. But there are a variety of communications options, including email, text, WhatsApp (messages, calls and/or video), Facebook (photos and posts), Facebook Messenger (text and/or video), and Zoom calls. The trick is to choose the one that works best for you and commit to using it on a regular basis.

## CONNECT IN PERSON

A second strategy is vacationing together. When my husband and I first retired to Ajijic, family and friends were eager to visit us out of a combination of curiosity and the idea of a “free” vacation to Mexico in the winter. Many family members and friends accepted my invitation. Twenty years later, I still regularly extend invitations, and many are repeat houseguests. I have also organized group holidays at the coast, renting a place in Puerto Vallarta or La Manzanilla.



*Harriet Hart with Son and Granddaughters on vacation in British Columbia*

Those of us fortunate enough to call Mexico home can also plan vacations up north (or elsewhere). When my grandchildren were small, I made it a practice to visit every six months; now as we all get older, I find once a year works well. This coming March I am off to Victoria -- where my son and children live. My favorite cousin will be there and asked me if I would consider planning my visit while she was also in town. Why not? When I was growing up, I used to wonder why my mother always planned her trips with someone to visit at her destination; now I understand completely.

Try to celebrate important occasions while you are traveling. A good idea is to plan your family visits to coincide with an event like a family birthday or anniversary, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Christmas or Easter. One October 31st my grandchild-

dren were quite impressed with my costume (including Day of the Dead tights and Katrina mask) as I handed out treats at their door. It was fun touring the town with them when it was lit up and decorated with ghosts and goblins, witches and werewolves.

## CONNECT WITH ONLINE SHOPPING

Gift-giving is a great way to stay connected – to remind somebody that you are thinking about them. Online shopping platforms such as Amazon make gift-giving simple. You can opt for gift wrapping and include a note with your online order. Just make sure you plan well in advance.

Subscriptions to online greeting card services such as JibJab, American Greetings, Hallmark, Blue Mountain and 123Greetings make it very easy to send a card for any reason.

## MAKE AN EFFORT

When asked how she stays connected to family and friends, my friend Barbara Hildt points out that it is up to us to reach out.

“My children and grandchildren have very busy lives,” says Barbara. “I don’t expect them to call or write messages. I appreciate knowing how they are, so I may send a brief message asking about them and tell them I’d love to FaceTime when they have time and feel like catching up. I don’t want them to feel anything except love coming from me -- no expectation, no worry, no anxiety.”

After a FaceTime with any of her kids, Barbara says she feels happiness that may last for hours or days. “What matters is the quality of our connection, not the frequency of the communication I have with my kids and their families.”

To ensure that your connections are meaningful, share your news with loved ones. Let them know what’s going on in your life and how you feel about it. I recently lost a beloved pet and called my son to let him know. Give your family glimpses into your life and listen carefully when they return the favor. Being a loving family via long distance is possible.



# PSSSST ... SAVE

# THE DATE AND ...

don't tell anyone (except your best friends) that January 12, 2025 will be an epic event at LCS . Neill James' 130th. birthday celebration!

We need volunteers for EVERYTHING... from fundraising to research to decorating and baking. If you're interested, contact Betti at: **[NJamesCelebration@lcsac.org](mailto:NJamesCelebration@lcsac.org)**

# VIVA THE VINO!

It's an exciting time for the wine industry in Mexico! Numerous brands and types of wines have experienced sustained growth and popularity of their excellent vintages. I'm enlisting experts on Mexican wines to help lead us through the vines! Meet Lorena Hernandez and Fabian Jauregui of Vinitacora.

Lorena goes by her artist's name "Vionda." She's written several excellent books that I encourage you to read. Many brands widely recognize and use them for marketing. Along with the incredible knowledge you'll gain, she shares her passions for art by having illustrated the books.

Guadalajara natives, Lorena and Fabian began their voyage into the wine industry in Mexico many years ago and have become recognized professionals. Lorena is a Certified Sommelier, WSET, AWE (American Wine Expert) by Napa Valley Wine Academy, worldwide Sommelier Association y Organización Nacional de Sommeliers de México (ONSOM). Fabian holds an MBA in Wine Business.

Mexican Culture has shifted away from only having sparkling wines for celebrations, to enjoying several types of wines, regularly. "Consumers are preferring less complex wines in favor of fresh and youthful wines." Rose and white wines have become commonplace, and Orange Wine is trending nicely, too.

The commercial wine industry in Mexico evolved primarily from a Napa influenced style. Now, Mexicans are experts in developing their own styles of wines and they've become very creative. Not only creative on their own, but from collaborating with professionals coming from around the world to work in the Mexico wine industry. Here, producers have the freedom to be more creative in experimenting and developing products because of the industry's lack of regulations. The days of only having wines that are 1970s-80's Napa inspired products are fading.

Consumers outpace exports, so Mexico sells most of the wines it produces within the country. Wine drinkers consume approximately 1.3 liters per person annually. There are 17 states in Mexico that produce wines. The largest producers are Baja, Querétaro, Coahuila, Guanajuato, and Aguascalientes.

Fabian, once a non-drinker of wine, explained that Lorena enlightened him on the significance of trying out many wines to identify his preferred tastes. A defining moment was when she bought 3 bottles of the same wine, but each was a different vintage. Through that experience, he gained insight into how wines can evolve and vary from one year to the next.

While personal preferences differ, here are some top picks from different regions.

By Neal Williamson

## BAJA CALIFORNIA REGION:

Adobe Guadalupe / Rafael (red blend - Cab S. & Nebbiolo)

## BODEGAS DE SANTO TOMAS:

Único (cab s & Tempranillo blend)

VENA CAVA (Sauvignon Blanc)

## COAHUILA WINE REGION:

Casa Madero (Syrah Reserve)

Bodegas del viento (Pinot Noir)

Amonites (Chardonnay)

## QUERÉTARO WINE REGION:

Cava 57 / Palomas Brut nature (cava style)

Vinaltura (Gewurztraminer)

Bodegas Vaiven (Viognier)

## AGUASCALIENTES WINE REGION:

Anónimo (Riesling)

Santa Elena / Sophie (Cabernet franc)

Vinícola El Aguaje /Reborujo (Malbec)

## GUANAJUATO:

Viñedos San Miguel (Syrah)

Pájaro Azul (red blend)

Tres Raíces (Grenache)

After experiencing the pleasure of these exquisite wines, I am excited to continue my wine journey through Mexico's vineyards.

Salud!

contacto@vinitacora.mx

Instagram: Vinitacora\_mx

Facebook: Vinitacora.mx

*\*Find out more about Lorena's books. Available on USA & Mexico Amazon, their online store and at **La Pasaña restaurant in Ajijic.***

<https://vinitacora.mx/>

<https://www.amazon.com.mx/Vinitacora-Vin%C3%ADcolas-California-biling%C3%BCe-Ensenada/dp/173427672X/>

[https://youtu.be/cTE49IHtaJQ?si=jK-OG6RH3WNSXZ\\_IS](https://youtu.be/cTE49IHtaJQ?si=jK-OG6RH3WNSXZ_IS)

*Other Useful links; CMV consejo mexicano vitivinícola, Provino Baja California, Clúster Vitivinícola de Querétaro, Vinos de coahuila, Somos Vid Aguascalientes, uva y vino de Guanajuato.*



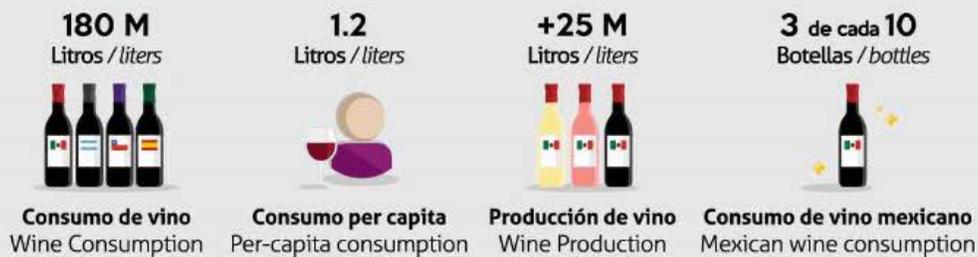
# VINO MEXICANO

## MEXICO'S WINE INDUSTRY



### Consumo de vino en México

Wine consumption in Mexico



### En comparación con EUA / Compared to the U.S.



source: Vinitacora Baja California 2024 vinitacora.mx



# Luxury On the Lake

By Harriet Hart

Sometimes you can find the best getaways right in your own backyard. Recently six women writers held a writing retreat at Quinta San Carlos, a luxury wedding and conference center just 16 miles from Ajijic. This was our second visit, the first in 2019 before COVID turned us all into hermits. And now, five years later, we gathered to spend two days and nights there without the hassle and expense of flying or driving long distances.

Quinta San Carlos is on the lakeshore in the neighboring village of San Pedro Testistan. Sales Manager Francisco Xavier Suarez Valasquez, our host, offered me a tour of the grounds where I discovered a large conference facility that seats 200 auditorium style and 84 at tables. Our smaller meeting room (once the disco) is cozier and perfect for smaller groups. The center offers 47 sleeping rooms, including a recently built new structure with ultra modern décor. Furthermore, the center offers a chapel where weddings can be held, a restaurant, and the Ladnilena, a lakefront brick structure with a glass front, which serves as the venue for wedding receptions.

Francisco, also the wedding planner, showed me impressive photos from an elaborate wedding held

this past February. At the wedding reception, guests were welcomed by a one-of-a-kind dance floor that was meticulously hand-painted. Elegant flower arrangements adorned the dining tables, and papel picado featuring the names of the bride and groom added a personal touch. Additionally, origami birds gracefully hung from the ceiling, creating a whimsical atmosphere.

The facility hosts large companies like Pepsi, Bimbo, Santander and Bonafont that hold annual general meetings, Christmas parties, and strategic planning sessions there. It also caters to small groups such as ours. Regardless of the size of the gathering, the venue treats everyone as a special guest. The facility employs thirty-five local people to keep the glorious gardens looking as lush as they do, as well as to cook, clean and serve meals. “It takes an army to put on a big wedding,” he told me. When needed, they import extra staff from Guadalajara.

This is a family-owned enterprise that began thirty years ago when the Bon family bought a chunk of undeveloped lakefront farm property and saw its potential. Over time, they have turned into a paradise for guests. As a writer, I consulted my thesaurus for help to describe the gardens.

Leafy and lush, tranquil and enchanting—all these adjectives apply to the grounds at Quinta San Carlos.

The central courtyard contains a hot tub and a swimming pool, along with several comfortable canopied seating places for meetings of families and friends and lovers.

Although usually fully booked for events on the weekends, during the week, both hotel and restaurant are open for reservations or walk-in trade.

Rooms contain all the amenities: hairdryers, irons, portable ironing tables, large screen TVs and even coffee makers.

In the evening, people light fire pits near the lakeshore and set up a nearby table that contains tubs of Mexican corn with all the traditional fixings, as well as marshmallows and long sticks to roast them over the campfire.

Why go to Quinta San Carlos? It’s an easy, convenient way to get away from it all and feel pampered! It offers an opportunity to be in a beautiful, natural setting removed from the traffic and noise of our daily lives. We six writers who arrived stressed out left forty-eight hours later refreshed and ready to be creative once more.

**For more information or to book your own retreat or work session, contact Francisco Suarez at 333 153 5222.**



Barriga braids H

# Crafting Heritage:

## INSIDE MEXICO'S TOP ART FAIR

By Diana Hunt

Twenty-two years ago, Marianne Carlson was the sole organizer, artist-finder and PR person of the **Feria de Maestros del Arte**. She was determined not to let the indigenous artistic methods die out for lack of sales. She hosted an art show in Chapala. In her search for master artisans still creating their specialties, Marianne drove to remote corners of Mexico. It wasn't long before she needed a lot of help.

Today she has a volunteer staff plus an Artist Selection Committee that seeks artists from throughout Mexico balancing of crafts, cultures and states. Local art coordinators reside in Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Michoacán.



Marianne Carlson, founder of Maestros del Arte Fair

Being an art coordinator requires an eye for outstanding art, persistence, detective and organizational skills — and sometimes requires a diplomatic nature. For example, coordinator Mary Jacobs lives near Pátzcuaro in Michoacán, and has driven to every part of the state. “Whenever I go to these small towns, people want to feed me. I am a vegetarian, but I have learned to eat what they serve. So, I am now a ‘hypocritical-tarian’.”

In explaining how she works, she said, “You must plan, find the artists, set up appointments, drive perhaps three hours, and then evaluate their work. We try to balance out each type of art, although textiles and ceramics are most common.”



Mariano Valadez

Closer to the time of the Feria, transportation has to be arranged. Will they come to Pátzcuaro to take the arranged bus, or will they choose to come on their own? Do they know the rules of the Feria? Who is accompanying the artist? Who is their host once at the Feria?

“It is an honor to meet these artisans and learn the styles of their arts,” Mary concluded. “The Feria is a wonderful opportunity for them because not only do they have a much larger audience of buyers, but gallery and store owners at the Feria are scouting for new artists.”

Brigitte Ordoquy, the coordinator from Chiapas, is involved in the arts and helps those indigenous people who display talent by making their art available to a wider audience. She highlighted the cultural difficulties these artisans face when coming to Chapala.

“Indigenous people often have a hard time when they first come to the Feria,” Brigitte said. “First, the women rarely go out unless it is with their husbands or another woman, and they rarely have traveled



textiles Teofila Barriga



carvings Herrera

from their village. They are content to eat rice and beans with tortillas most days, maybe with some vegetables they grow themselves.” The tortilla, of course, is the vehicle to get food to mouth — they eat with their hands.

So, imagine coming to Chapala, the first time out of their village, staying in the house of a gringa and being served different food every day on plates with knives and forks. Then, when it is time to go to bed — usually hungry — they are confronted with sheets. They are used to sleeping in their blankets. What to do? Often, they wrap in their rebozos and sleep on the floor. While Feria volunteers try to educate the hosts, such embarrassing situations can occur.

Chiapas is home to one of the largest indigenous populations in Mexico with about one-fourth of the population not speaking Spanish but



Juan & Feliciano made a sale

rather Mayan dialects, Tzotzil, Tzeltal or other related languages.

“Generally an artisan can come two years in a row,” Brigitte clarified. “The first year they are here, they learn how things work and what items sell best. By the second year, they are more prepared and more confident.”

Some people find it surprising that the artwork is so expensive. But they are not taking into consideration what goes into making each unique piece of indigenous art. For example, potters in the town of Patamban, Michoacán, must be born in that town to access the ejido land to dig the right clay and to find the right wood. The pottery is fired two times in a gas kiln, lead free, over a high fire. Each firing costs the potter \$7000 to 8,000 pesos. It can take months to finish a piece, but every item is one of a kind. The result is a phenomenal piece of indigenous art.

This Feria de Maestros del Arte carries the highest quality merchandise in Mexico. Local coordinators vet all artisans before inviting them to sell their art. In contrast, government-sponsored ferias must accept all applicants, which can lead to inconsistent quality.

Most of the artisans are women, but that is changing. Now men are learning the various crafts from the women to help carry on the indigenous traditions.

The Feria de Maestros del Arte stands as a testament to the dedication and passion of its founder, Marianne Carlson, and her team of coordinators and volunteers. Through their efforts, Mexico’s rich cultural heritage and the skills of its master artisans are not only preserved but also celebrated on a grand stage.

As the Feria continues to grow and adapt, it remains committed to showcasing the highest quality craftsmanship and providing invaluable opportunities for artists to reach wider audiences.

**This labor of love ensures that these timeless traditions thrive, enriching both the artisans and those who appreciate their work.**



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**Grounds open:** Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm / Saturday 9:00 am to 2 pm

**\*Open to the Public**

**(S) Sign up**

**(C) Member card**

**(M) LCS members only**

**LESSONS (M)**

Being Love & Bliss Meditation	W 10:15-11:15
Bordado Artístico (Spanish)	M+W+F 4-6
Children's Art - Open to all (Children 5 years & under must be accompanied by an adult)	Sat 10-12
Children's Huara Chess Club	Sat 10-12
Crochet Class	TH 12-2
Exercise	M+W+F 9-9:50
Gentle Yoga & Body Awareness	W 10-10:50
Intermediate Hatha Yoga	T 2-3:30
Iyengar Yoga	F 11-12
Learn to Knit	T 11-12:30
Line Dancing, <a href="mailto:gail@doughertynet.com">gail@doughertynet.com</a>	T + TH 10-11:15
Move to the Beat	M 10-11
Mudlarks Pottery Open Studio	M + F 10-2
NIA Fitness Seasonal	F 10-10:50
Stretch & Balance Resumes February <i>harry_bertram@hotmail.com</i>	M + TH 8:45-9:45
Spanish in Action classes (español en acción) See LCS website or in the office for more info	
Tech Help via Email <i>lcs.tech.training@gmail.com</i>	
Write to a Prompt Writers' Group	TH10-12

**LIBRARIES (M)**

Book + DVD Libraries	M-Sat 10-2
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 <a href="http://lakechapalasociety.com">lakechapalasociety.com</a> & select libraries/English.	

**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (M)**

American Mah Jongg	TH 10-1
Bridge For Fun -Resumes November	F 1-4:30
Discussion Group	W 11:30-1
Duplicate Bridge	W 1-4
English/Spanish Conversation* (Open to public)	Sat 12-1:30*
Everyday Mindfulness	M 10:30-12
Game Group	TH 1-5
Open Circle	S 10:30

Scrabble	F 11:30-1:30
TED Talks - Resume	1st TH 12:30-1:45
Tournament Scrabble	T 12-1:50
UFO Cafe Discussion Group	3rd T 1:30-3:30

**HEALTH INSURANCE\***

Hospital San Antonio	TH 10:30-12:30
IMSS & Immigration Services Call Veronica for an appointment 333-157-9472	M+T 11-1:30
Lakeside Insurance	T+TH 11-2
Ribera Medical Center	T 10:30-12:30
Shiatsu Chair Massage By appointment only, call 331-604-0971	1st & 3rd TH 10-12

**HEALTH & LEGAL SERVICES\***

Audiology Oir Bien- hearing care specialists (Consultation fee) Call for appointment 332-945-3267	M+W+F 9-3
Becerra Immigration	TH 10:30-12:30
Blood Pressure Screenings -seasonal	F 10-12
Finestra Investment Consulting	3rd TH 10-1
Intercam Banking Services	M - F 10-1
Optometrist Claravision Call for appointment 331-411-1178	TH 9-4
Solbes & Solbes	2nd M 10-12
SkyMed	1st W 11-1

**SERVICE & SUPPORT GROUPS \***

AA Women's Meeting	T 4-5
AI-Anon (Spanish)	M 6-7:30, W 5:30-7:30
Caregivers of Spouses with Dementia (Support Group)	T 11-12:30
Diabetes Support Group contact <a href="mailto:welchk4diabetes@gmail.com">welchk4diabetes@gmail.com</a>	Zoom 1st F 1:00
Information Desk	M-Sat 10-2
AA Open Meeting	M+TH 4-5
Needle Pushers	T 10-11:45
Toastmasters	M 7-9



# The Lake Chapala Society **CLASSES**

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## Mexican Manners and More

By **Victor Camarena**

- Wednesday, November 6
  - Wednesday, December 4
  - Wednesday, January 8 & 13
- 10:00 am to 12:30 pm

General fee: \$760



## Tools for Pronunciation : Speak - and Hear - Spanish Better!

By **Gareth Collingwood**  
Wednesday, Nov 6, 13 and 20  
10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$860

In this three-session course, students will master the phonology (the sounds) of Spanish. Lose your foreign accent! Avoid potentially embarrassing or confusing situations! Understand all the Spanish you hear as you go about your day!

## Introduction to Spanish

By **Inez Dayer & Christine Wysock**

- Thursday, Nov 7, 14 & 21
  - Thursday, Dec 5, 12 & 19
- 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$790

This three-session class is for people without any Spanish language background. Your instructor will introduce you to Spanish pronunciation, basic vocabulary and social protocols.



## Getting your Jalisco Driver's License... Without Losing Your Mind

By **Victor Camarena**

- Wednesday, Nov 13 CLASS  
9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Wednesday, Nov 20 TEST  
visit to the Secretaria de Transporte
- Wednesday, Jan 15 CLASS  
9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Wednesday, Jan 22 TEST  
visit to the Secretaria de Transporte

General fee: \$850

In this class, participants will learn all the requirements to obtain Jalisco's drivers License.

## Latin American Short Story Workshop

By **Mario Z Puglisi**

Wednesday, Nov 20, 27, and  
Dec 4, 11 & 18

2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

General fee: \$1,500

Join us and elevate your writing skills in our five-session Workshop. Explore literary history, master creative techniques, and study renowned authors while crafting your own narrative voice.



## The Art and Science of Longevity: Lifespan and Healthspan

By **Dan Bunger**

Monday Dec 11 & 18

2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

General fee: \$650

In this two-session course, participants will discover how proper nutrition, and exercise can enhance both lifespan and "healthspan" ensuring vitality in the golden years. Learn how small changes can lead to significant benefits, regardless of your current health and fitness level.

## FREE CLASS

## HIV/ AIDS History, Progress and Challenges

(Honoring World AIDS Day)

By **Victor Camarena**

Friday, November 29

2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Free class! Discover the origin of the pandemic, medical advances and current challenges. We will also explore the social factors that make its eradication and its disproportionate impact on minorities difficult. Don't miss it!



**NOVEMBER**  
**SUNDAY MORNING**  
**10:30 IN THE GARDEN AT**  
**LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY**



**NOVEMBER**  
**3RD**

**Greg Kemp**  
Learning Love



**NOVEMBER**  
**10TH**

**Michael Hogan**  
"Deaf Cat in the Rain" and  
other stories



**NOVEMBER**  
**17TH**

**Robert Case**  
Wings, Guns, and Coming of Age in  
America



**NOVEMBER**  
**24TH**

**Nancy T Navarro**  
Capturing History: The Pioneering  
Expat Who Lived a Second Life in Ajijic

## In Our Library:

By Deb Gang - LCS Librarian

During this month of celebrating Canadian and U.S. Thanksgivings, your LCS library volunteers are thankful for the new library system that we implemented last month. The transition went smoothly, and the new system does so many things that the old system could not do. It is also easier to use!

Many of you have received and are using your new library cards. If you don't have your new card yet, ask for it the next time you come to the library. The best feature of the new system is the ability to search our catalog from home. You can see if a book you want is in our inventory and if it is available to borrow. You can even place a hold on a book that is already checked out!

To access the catalog, use the URL that is on your library card. The website is <https://lcs.koha.theke.io>. The website defaults to Spanish but you can change to English by clicking on the bottom left screen.

Login in from the top right corner -- your login is your email address.

You will need to request to change your password. After you set up your password, you can renew books anytime.

### Mexican Folk Art

November is also the month when Lakeside celebrates the annual return of the Feria del Maestros. Our featured books this month focus on art, artists and crafts of all types. We have several books focused on the arts in Mexico, including *Embroidery of Mexico and Guatemala*, *Mexican Folk Art*, *Oaxaca Wood Carving*, *Mexican Tiles*, and *Casa Manana* -- a museum dedicated to Mexican traditional handicrafts.

*Mexican Cartonera: Paper Paste and Fiesta* is another interesting book in our collection. Before you go to the Feria to buy a special piece of art, stop by the library to learn more about Mexican arts and crafts. Or come by to learn more about a piece of art you may have purchased at the Feria.

No list of Mexican art would be complete without mentioning Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. We have books featuring both their art and biographies of their lives. Closer to home, we have a book by local author and artist Janice Kimball. Her book, *Joy of Art*, is an introduction to fine art and is full of many wonderful stories -- all of her books are worth exploring.

Have a wonderful month! Happy reading, shopping and celebrating!

# TOURS

## THANKSGIVING SHOPPING COSTCO, SAM'S AND GALERÍAS 360 MALL

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19**  
10:00am to 6:00pm

**GENERAL FEE: \$1,100**



Let LCS help you with your Thanksgiving shopping. Enjoy a comfortable trip to major retailers including Costco, Sam's and Galerías 360 mall (Liverpool, Sears) and excellent restaurants such as Cheesecake Factory and PF Chang. Travel in the comfort of a bus or a sprinter

## GUADALAJARA ZOO

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3**  
10:00am to 6:00pm

**GENERAL FEE: \$1,199**



Embark on a thrilling adventure with our all-inclusive tour! Enjoy seamless transportation from Ajjic, explore the Zoo with captivating bird presentations, delve into the Australian Village, Rainforest, and more. Don't forget your camera for unforgettable moments. Comfortable shoes and a hat recommended.

## GUADALAJARA CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16**  
3:00pm to 10:00pm

**GENERAL FEE: \$920**



Enjoy a magical Christmas experience in downtown Guadalajara. Stroll among dazzling lights, explore craft markets and live the spirit of the season with music, decorations and delicious treats in every corner. The perfect celebration to create unforgettable memories!



**We will depart from La Floresta sculpture**

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**DEC**  
**6&7**  
**12TO**  
**5PM**

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LCS Children's Art Christmas Cards, and more!



*Sinatra for the* 

# HOLIDAYS

*with Spencer Day*

## A SWINGIN' CHRISTMAS

**Sunday December 8**  
**Show at 1:30 pm**



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Monday through Saturday,  
or at [LakeChapalaSociety.com](http://LakeChapalaSociety.com)



**LCS-5**

[www.lakechapalasociety.com](http://www.lakechapalasociety.com)



*Prudencio Guzman with mask*

# Elaborando Patrimonio: Dentro de la Feria de Arte Más Importante de México

Por Diana Hunt

Hace veintidós años, Marianne Carlson era la única organizadora, buscadora de artistas y encargada de relaciones públicas de la **Feria de Maestros del Arte**. Estaba decidida a no dejar que los métodos artísticos indígenas se extinguieran por falta de ventas. Organizó una exposición de arte en Chapa-la. En su búsqueda de maestros artesanos que aún crean sus especialidades, Marianne condujo a rincones remotos de México. No pasó mucho tiempo antes de que necesitara mucha ayuda.

Hoy en día cuenta con un equipo de voluntarios y un Comité de Selección de Artistas que busca artesanos de todo México, equilibrando artesanías, culturas y estados. Los coordinadores de arte locales residen en Chiapas, Oaxaca y Michoacán.

Ser coordinador de arte requiere un ojo para el arte excepcional, persistencia, habilidades de investigación y organización, y, a veces, un carácter diplomático. Por ejemplo, la coordinadora Mary Jacobs vive cerca de Pátzcuaro, en Michoacán, y ha recorrido cada parte del estado. "Cada vez que voy a estos pequeños pueblos, la gente quiere alimentarme. Soy vegetariana, pero he aprendido a comer lo que me sirven. Así que ahora soy una 'hipócrita-tari-ana'", bromeó.

Al explicar cómo trabaja, dijo: "Tienes que planear, encontrar a los artistas, hacer citas, conducir quizás tres horas, y luego evaluar su trabajo. Tratamos de equilibrar cada tipo de arte, aunque los textiles y la cerámica son los más comunes".

Cerca de la fecha de la Feria, se debe organizar el transporte. ¿Vendrán a Pátzcuaro para tomar



Camacho Pottery



Daughter Pelayo Espinoza

el autobús programado o elegirán venir por su cuenta? ¿Conocen las reglas de la Feria? ¿Quién acompaña al artista? ¿Quién es su anfitrión una vez en la Feria?

“Es un honor conocer a estos artesanos y aprender los estilos de sus artes”, concluyó Mary. “La Feria es una oportunidad maravillosa para ellos porque no solo tienen un público mucho más amplio de compradores, sino que los dueños de galerías y tiendas en la Feria están buscando nuevos artistas”.

Brigitte Ordoquy, la coordinadora de Chiapas, está involucrada en las artes y ayuda a las personas indígenas que muestran talento al hacer que su arte esté disponible para un público más amplio. Resaltó las dificultades culturales que enfrentan estos artesanos al venir a Chapala.

“A menudo, las personas indígenas tienen dificultades cuando vienen por primera vez a la Feria”, dijo Brigitte. “Primero, las mujeres rara vez salen a menos que sea con sus esposos u otra mujer, y rara vez han viajado fuera de su aldea. Se conforman con comer arroz y frijoles con tortillas la mayoría de los días, tal vez con algunas verduras que cultivan ellos mismos”. La tortilla, por supuesto, es el vehículo para llevar la comida a la boca; comen con las manos.

Así que imagina llegar a Chapala, la primera vez fuera de su aldea, quedarse en la casa de una gringa y que les sirvan comida diferente cada

día en platos con cuchillos y tenedores. Luego, cuando es hora de dormir, usualmente con hambre, se enfrentan a sábanas. Están acostumbrados a dormir en sus cobijas. ¿Qué hacer? A menudo se envuelven en sus rebozos y duermen en el suelo. Aunque los voluntarios de la Feria intentan educar a los anfitriones, pueden ocurrir situaciones embarazosas.

Chiapas es hogar de una de las poblaciones indígenas más grandes de México, con aproximadamente una cuarta parte de la población que no habla español, sino dialectos mayas como el tzotzil, el tzeltal u otros idiomas relacionados.

“Generalmente, un artesano puede venir dos años seguidos”, aclaró Brigitte. “El primer año que están aquí, aprenden cómo funcionan las cosas y qué artículos se venden mejor. Para el segundo año, están más preparados y más confiados”.

Algunas personas encuentran sorprendente que las obras de arte sean tan caras. Pero no toman en cuenta lo que implica hacer cada pieza única de arte indígena. Por ejemplo, los alfareros en el pueblo de Patamban, Michoacán, deben haber nacido en ese pueblo para tener acceso a la tierra ejidal para excavar la arcilla adecuada y encontrar la madera correcta. La cerámica se cuece dos veces en un horno de gas, sin plomo, a alta temperatura. Cada cocción le cuesta al alfarero entre 7,000 y 8,000 pesos. Terminar una pieza puede llevar meses, pero cada artículo es único. El

resultado es una pieza fenomenal de arte indígena.

Esta Feria de Maestros del Arte ofrece la mercancía de la más alta calidad en México. Los coordinadores locales verifican a todos los artesanos antes de invitarlos a vender su arte. En contraste, las ferias patrocinadas por el gobierno deben aceptar a todos los solicitantes, lo que puede llevar a una calidad inconsistente.

La mayoría de los artesanos son mujeres, pero eso está cambiando. Ahora los hombres están aprendiendo las diversas artesanías de las mujeres para ayudar a mantener las tradiciones indígenas.

La Feria de Maestros del Arte es un testimonio de la dedicación y pasión de su fundadora, Marianne Carlson, y su equipo de coordinadores y voluntarios. Gracias a sus esfuerzos, el rico patrimonio cultural de México y las habilidades de sus maestros artesanos no solo se preservan, sino que también se celebran en un escenario grandioso.

**A medida que la Feria continúa creciendo y adaptándose, sigue comprometida a mostrar la artesanía de la más alta calidad y brindar oportunidades invaluable para que los artistas lleguen a un público más amplio. Esta labor de amor asegura que estas tradiciones atemporales prosperen, enriqueciendo tanto a los artesanos como a quienes aprecian su trabajo.**

# EDUCATION AND CULTURE

## Thanksgiving at the Lake Chapala Society: A Celebration of Community and Education

By: Victor Camarena

Thanksgiving celebrations are not only a time for gratitude but also an opportunity to reflect on the importance of community, education, and culture. At the heart of Ajijic, Jalisco, the Lake Chapala Society (LCS) has taken this spirit to new heights, particularly through its Education & Culture Department, which is dedicated to empowering both the expat and the Mexican community. LCS brings people together to celebrate not just this holiday, but also the progress made through educational initiatives that bridge cultural and social gaps.

LCS Education and Culture Department has a clear mission: to educate and empower the expat community living in Ajijic while also providing crucial support to the local Mexican population. The department offers a variety of programs, workshops, classes and experiences that cater to the educational needs of both groups.

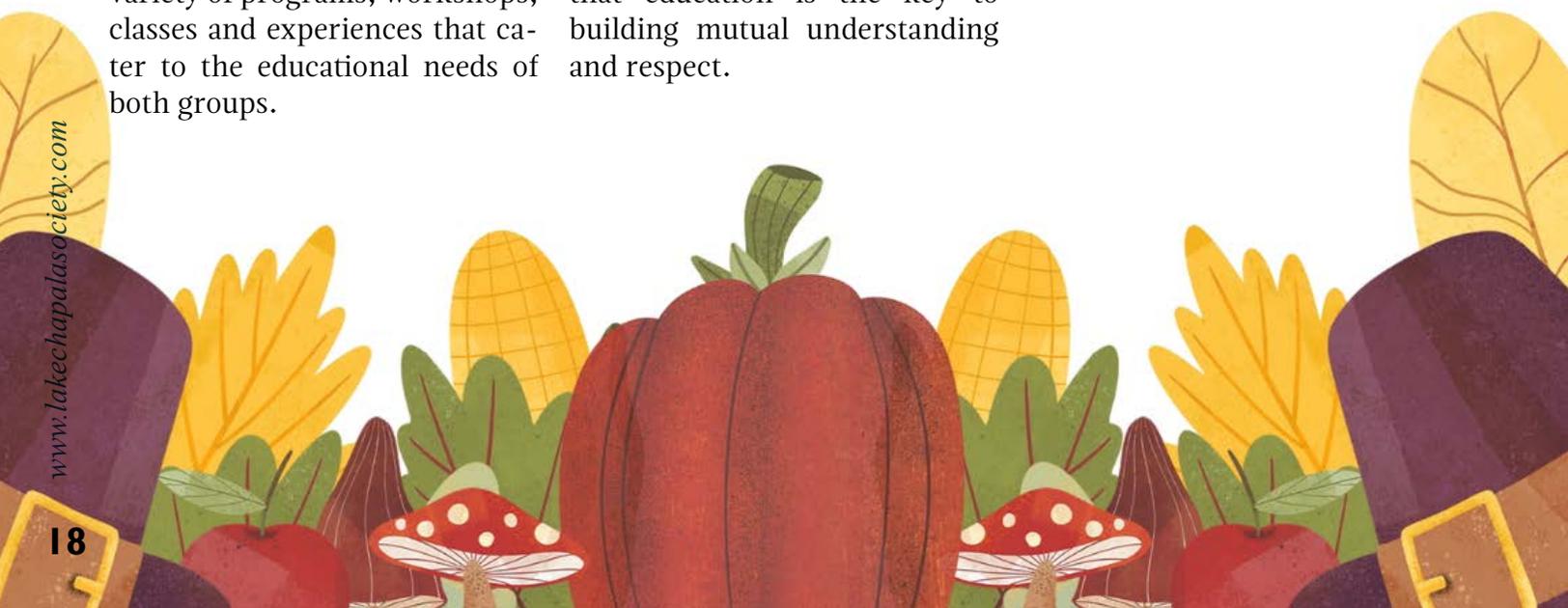
For the expat community, the goal is to enhance their experience of living in Mexico by offering language courses, cultural awareness seminars, and practical skills workshops. From Spanish classes to lessons on navigating Mexican manners and bureaucracy, LCS ensures that expats not only integrate more easily into the local culture but also to enjoy it and contribute meaningfully to it.

The department is equally committed to supporting the Mexican community by offering many initiatives, including Student Aid Program, English-language classes, and a robust Children's Art Program. These activities aim to enhance career opportunities, improve quality of life, and foster a sense of shared community between locals and expats. LCS believes that education is the key to building mutual understanding and respect.

The Thanksgiving holiday serves as a reminder of the shared values of gratitude and generosity. By bringing together people from diverse backgrounds, LCS creates an atmosphere of collaboration. Many expats, feeling thankful for the warmth and welcome they've received in Ajijic, see this as the perfect opportunity to volunteer and donate their time, skills, and resources to support local educational efforts.

The genuine spirit of Thanksgiving at the Lake Chapala Society lies in mutual empowerment and strengthening the bonds between both cultures.

For more information, please email:  
[education@lcsac.org](mailto:education@lcsac.org)



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# EDUCACIÓN Y CULTURA

## Acción de Gracias en The Lake Chapala Society: Una Celebración de Comunidad y Educación

Por Víctor Camarena

La celebración del Día de Acción de Gracias no es sólo un momento de gratitud, sino también una oportunidad para reflexionar sobre la importancia de la comunidad, la educación y la cultura. En el corazón de Ajijic, Jalisco, la Lake Chapala Society (LCS) ha llevado este espíritu a nuevas dimensiones, en particular a través de su Departamento de Educación y Cultura, que se dedica a capacitar tanto a la comunidad de expatriados como a la mexicana. LCS reúne a las comunidades para celebrar no sólo esta festividad, sino también los avances logrados a través de iniciativas educativas que reducen las distancias culturales y sociales.

El Departamento de Educación y Cultura de LCS tiene una misión clara: educar y empoderar a la comunidad de expatriados que residen en Ajijic, al tiempo que proporciona un apoyo crucial a la población local mexicana. El departamento ofrece una variedad de programas, talleres, clases y experiencias que satisfacen las necesidades educativas de ambos grupos.

Para la comunidad de expatriados, el objetivo es mejorar su experiencia de vida en México ofreciendo cursos de idiomas, seminarios de sensibilización cultural y talleres de habilidades prácticas. Desde clases de español hasta lecciones sobre cómo desenvolverse en la burocracia y los modales mexicanos, LCS se asegura de que los expatriados no sólo se integren más fácilmente en la cultura local, sino que también la disfruten y contribuyan significativamente a ella.

Por otro lado, el departamento está igualmente comprometido con el apoyo a la comunidad mexicana ofreciendo numerosas iniciativas, entre ellas el Programa de Apoyo Estudiantil, clases de inglés y un sólido Programa de Arte Infantil. El objetivo de estas actividades es aumentar las oportunidades profesionales, mejorar la calidad de vida y fomentar un sentimiento de comunidad compartida entre la población local y los expatriados. LCS cree que la educación es la clave para fomentar el entendimiento y el respeto mutuos.

La festividad de Acción de Gracias sirve para recordar los valores compartidos de gratitud y generosidad. Al reunir a personas de diversos orígenes, LCS crea un ambiente de colaboración. Muchos expatriados, sintiéndose agradecidos por la calidez y la bienvenida que han recibido en Ajijic, ven esto como la oportunidad perfecta para ofrecerse como voluntarios y donar su tiempo, habilidades y recursos para apoyar los esfuerzos educativos locales.

El verdadero espíritu del Día de Acción de Gracias en LCS radica en el empoderamiento mutuo y el fortalecimiento de los lazos entre ambas culturas. Para más información, envíe un correo electrónico a [education@lcsac.org](mailto:education@lcsac.org)





*Perseidas 2015; Photo by Crosswinds*

## THE ART OF CAPTURING STARS:

# A Guide to Astrophotography

By Marcel Barajas

*Scan and Enjoy!*  
*Astro-Timelapse 2020*  
*Northeastern Mexico*



When I first started taking pictures of stars, I did not know how to use a professional camera. After 12 years of photographing the sky, I have learned many lessons and refined my techniques, which may be useful to anybody interested in capturing the stars in pictures.

### **BEFORE RUSHING TO BUY A CAMERA, I RECOMMEND FAMILIARIZING YOURSELF WITH CONSTELLATIONS AND PLANETS.**

As an amateur astronomy enthusiast with my first professional camera, I had to learn how to navigate the night sky. This will make your introduction to astrophotography much smoother.

Once you are comfortable identifying constellations and planets with the naked eye, you can start thinking about your camera purchase. There's no need to buy a new camera right away. It may be more economical and less intimidating to purchase a second-hand



Cabaña; Photo by Crosswinds

camera so you can get acquainted with the equipment without making a significant investment. If you have photographer friends, consider buying a camera of the same brand as theirs so you can share lenses and experiment with different results.

### **I RECOMMEND A LENS WITH AN APERTURE OF F/2.8 OR LOWER.**

If you choose to buy a new camera, it should come with a basic lens. Although this lens has limitations, it's good enough to learn with. You can later upgrade to a lens that is more light-sensitive. If you opted for a second-hand camera, you can use the money you saved to invest in a better lens. Although a bit expensive, lenses with an aperture of f/2.8 or lower are more sensitive to light and will give you better results in astrophotography.

**IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO HAVE A STURDY TRIPOD, PREFERABLY A HEAVY ONE**, to keep your camera steady during long exposures and prevent wind from ruining your shots.

Once you have your gear, you might not know how to use it right away. You have two options: you can experiment through trial and error, playing with the settings

during the night; or you can **TAKE A BASIC PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE**, which may not teach night photography but will help you get to know your camera.

There is no perfect recipe for capturing stars on your first try – it all depends on light conditions. **A GOOD STARTING POINT IS TO SET YOUR APERTURE TO F/2.8, ISO TO 800, WITH A 30-SECOND EXPOSURE.** Find a location far from city lights, focus toward the southeast, and ensure the stars look sharp. If your first photo isn't perfect, tweak the ISO and exposure time until you get the image you like.

Practice is the key to mastering any discipline, and photography is no different. Don't be afraid to experiment, and practice as much as you can. I hope my advice helps you feel more confident about starting your journey in astrophotography.

**If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at [marcelradamex@gmail.com](mailto:marcelradamex@gmail.com) or on Instagram at [@crosswinds\\_](https://www.instagram.com/crosswinds_).**

*Wishing you clear, star-filled skies!*

# EL ARTE DE CAPTURAR ESTRELLAS: Introducción a la Astrofotografía

Por Marcel Barajas

Hola, mi nombre es Marcel Barajas y soy un apasionado astrofotógrafo amateur. A lo largo de los últimos 12 años, he aprendido a capturar la belleza del cielo nocturno, sin haber comenzado con conocimientos previos sobre el manejo de cámaras profesionales. Si estás interesado en fotografiar estrellas y explorar este fascinante hobby, quiero compartir algunos consejos que te serán de gran ayuda.

Al tener una fuerte inclinación hacia la astronomía, uno de los primeros pasos que tomé después de adquirir mi primera cámara fue aprender a orientarme bajo las estrellas. Conocer el cielo nocturno es fundamental antes de aventurarse a capturarlo con una cámara. Así que, mi primer consejo es: **NO TE APRESURES A COMPRAR UNA CÁMARA PROFESIONAL ANTES DE APRENDER A UBICAR LAS CONSTELACIONES Y PLANETAS.** Familiarizarte con el cielo a simple vista es esencial para hacer mejores fotos más adelante.

Una vez que logres identificar las estrellas y planetas, puedes comenzar a pensar en adquirir una cámara. **NO ES NECESARIO COMPRAR UNA NUEVA,** especialmente si estás comenzando. Lo ideal es buscar una usada, lo que te permitirá familiarizarte con el equipo sin hacer una inversión significativa. Además, te sugiero que, si tienes amigos fotógrafos, consideres adquirir una cámara de la misma marca que ellos, para que puedas compartir y probar distintos objetivos.

Si decides comprar una cámara nueva, normalmente vendrá con un objetivo básico. Aunque este tipo de lente tiene limitaciones, es más que suficiente para comenzar a experimentar. Con el tiempo, podrías venderlo y adquirir uno más especializado y sensible a la luz. Si optaste por una cámara usada, aprovecha el dinero que ahorraste para invertir en un mejor objetivo. **RECOMIENDO SIEMPRE UN LENTE CON APERTURA DE F/2.8 O MENOR,** ya que estos son más sensibles a la luz y ofrecen mejores resultados en astrofotografía, aunque sean más costosos.

Otro aspecto clave es invertir en un buen trípode. Busca uno pesado y robusto, ya que esto evitará que el viento mueva tu cámara y arruine las tomas largas que necesitas para capturar las estrellas. Una vez que tengas todo tu equipo, probablemente te sentirás perdido sobre cómo utilizarlo. Aquí tienes dos opciones: **PUEDES APRENDER MEDIANTE ENSAYO Y ERROR, AJUSTANDO PARÁMETROS DURANTE LA NOCHE,**



Cuatro cienegas 2018; Photo by Crosswinds

**O BIEN, TOMAR UN CURSO DE FOTOGRAFÍA BÁSICA,** que aunque no necesariamente te enseñará astrofotografía, te ayudará a familiarizarte con los controles de tu cámara.

No hay una fórmula mágica para obtener la foto perfecta de estrellas en el primer intento, ya que siempre dependemos de las condiciones de luz. Sin embargo, te sugiero estos parámetros básicos para comenzar: **AJUSTA LA APERTURA A F/2.8, ISO A 800, Y UN TIEMPO DE EXPOSICIÓN DE 30 SEGUNDOS.** Ubica tu cámara lejos de las luces de la ciudad, enfoca hacia el sureste, y asegura que las estrellas se vean nítidas en el visor. Si no logras una buena foto al primer intento, ajusta el ISO y el tiempo de exposición hasta obtener el resultado deseado.

Recuerda que la clave de cualquier disciplina, incluyendo la fotografía, es la práctica. No temas cometer errores, ya que cada intento te llevará a mejorar. Espero que estos consejos te sean útiles y te ayuden a sentirte más seguro al entrar en el maravilloso mundo de la astrofotografía.

**Si tienes alguna duda, no dudes en contactarme en marcelradamex@gmail.com o a través de Instagram en @crosswinds\_.**

*¡Te deseo cielos despejados y llenos de estrellas!*

## BOOK REVIEW

# Hungry Crow Babies

by Daria Hilton

By Susa Silvermarie

In Irish mythology, the Morrigan is a Triple Goddess who has the power of prophecy and divination and the ability to shapeshift, preferring into the form of the crow. Since crows figure largely in *Hungry Crow Babies* by lakeside writer Daria Hilton, it's fitting that the main character in Hilton's novel is named Morrigan.

At the start Morrigan sees life as flat, something to get through, albeit as pleasantly as possible with as many libations and plant helpers as are available. By the end, the protagonist surprises even herself by arriving at the experience of life as a connection. In the concluding scene we see her lifting a glass, not only to a new bench in a SF park and its view, but to a new perspective on life.

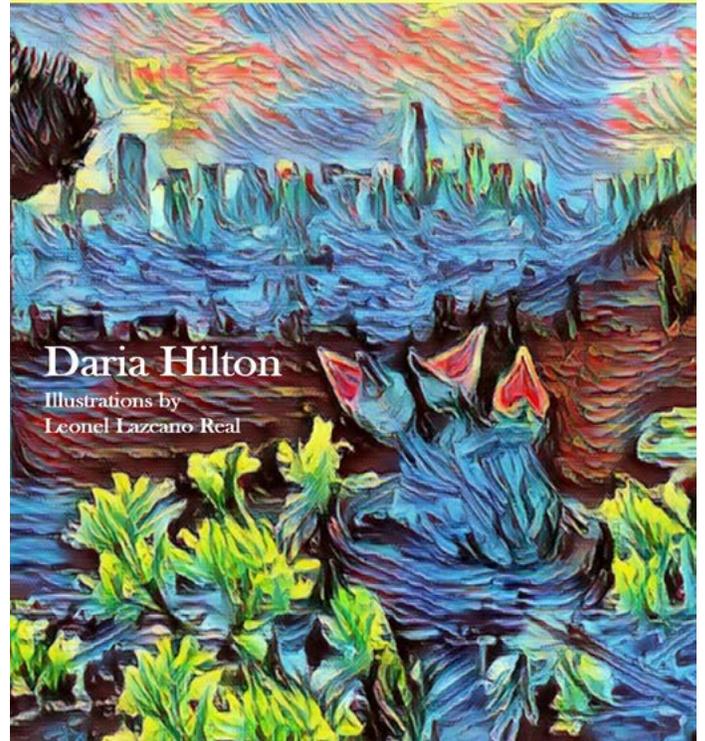
In between is a rollicking ride. Morrigan's path of spiritual awakening is a delightfully crooked trail, full of adventures and confusions and heartbreaks. And humor! The author can make you laugh at the antics of all the beings Morrigan encounters, including herself. The balance of levity works well as the story unfolds and Morrigan must deal with serious issues like her mother's hidden and tragic past, and the shocking twist when Mom—well, you'll see.

The strength of Hilton's writing lies in such surprises, as well as in her nature imagery. Here is an author who can paint an image of a dragonfly on her character's knee such that the reader feels it on her own knee. Her descriptions of nature settings in California are strong and lyrical, with images like the bobcat darting across the trail on one of Morrigan's many hikes, like the arms of an oak tree helping Morrigan embrace her grief, or like the cloud bank that reached for Morrigan in feathery tendrils.

At one point, the crow helpers show her a new view, stating: "I am you. You are me." You are me, which

## Hungry Crow Babies

*A Raucous Tale of Spiritual Awakening*



Cover *Hungry Crow Babies*

is the translation of a Maya expression used for a daily call and response greeting. Yet Morrigan never simply accepts second-hand wisdom. Here is a fictional voice that insists the highest authority is her own experience. By the time Morrigan's daily life morphs into something even more satisfying than the sex and plant medicines she so enjoys, the reader can't help but cheer this wild protagonist on her way.

**Here is a midlife coming-of-age novel by one of our own that will make you laugh and cry.**

**\*Available on Amazon in e-book and paperback and in our own Lake Chapala Society Library.**



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www.lakechapasociety.com

# It's Never Too Late

By Diana Hunt

Dra. Beatriz Gonzalez Gallagher is a diminutive powerhouse who has had a lively practice for over 30 years, utilizing her knowledge in nutrition, nutrigenomics, metabolic testing, genetics, Chinese and herbal medicine. She got a late start on her career path, but her persistence and curiosity paid off.



*Dr Bea using super-microscope*

The future Doctor (PhD, CNS) of Integrative Medicine and Clinical Nutrition is one of 10 children born in Toluca, Mexico. Her family moved to Mexico City and, at 18, she got a job as a bilingual secretary with a U.S. company.

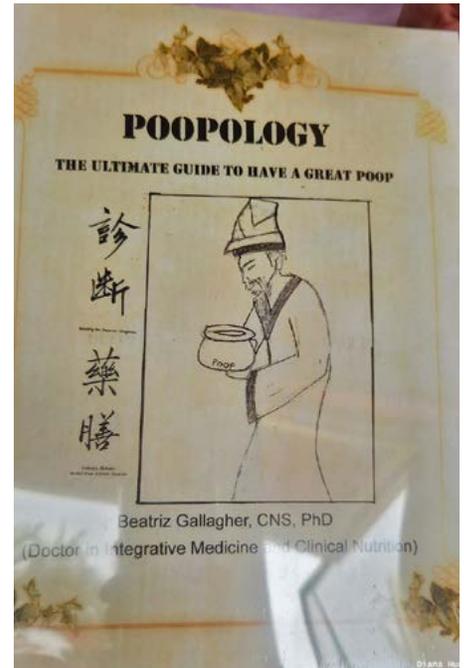
A young American auditor caught young Bea's eye and they married within a year. They moved to Connecticut and her "housewife" phase began. Bea always wanted to continue her education, but the responsibilities of having two children put those plans on the back burner. She did manage to stay involved in business for a while, selling vitamins as a side job.

"When my daughter was in high school and got her driver's license, I delegated a bunch of projects and tasks so I could go back to school," says Dra. Bea. "First, I had to get my GED (high school equivalency certification), because in Mexico many girls went from secondary school (grades 7-9) to directly to commercial school."

She had to take a knowledge test, English and math. She easily passed these tests, received her diploma and looked for college courses to enroll in.

"There was a community college that offered nutrition classes," she recalls. "I was curious to understand why vitamins worked for some people and not for others."

But, Bea encountered more barriers. She took and passed another required competency test, then began formally studying nutrition at age 43.



*Dr Bea book*

"The courses were basic and boring, and I wanted to learn so much more," she fondly recalls. "A friend told me to 'shoot for the stars: if you miss, you will still be in the same galaxy'."

After community college, Bea enrolled at the University of Connecticut. "They had a program for adult students who had all of the core credits. You could create your own learning path. My goal was to earn a Master's Degree, but I first had to get a Bachelor of Arts in Biochemistry," explains Bea.

With a BA degree in hand, she embarked on a Masters in Human Nutrition. Bea had finally found the "really interesting stuff" that she always wanted to learn about. Funding her ongoing education, however, proved to be a challenge.

## Unexpected Circumstances

When the office from which she had been selling vi-

tamins burned down, Bea was able to use the insurance money to continue her studies. She went on to earn a PhD in Integrative Medicine and Clinical Nutrition through a special program from Capital University in Washington DC.

She finished her PhD and earned a Diplomate in Chinese Medicine by 2005, when she was 55 years old. With her voracious appetite for learning, Dra. Bea enrolled in an 18-month online program on Functional Medicine.

Frustrated with the job market in the U.S in the 2000's, Dr. Bea returned to Mexico to visit family and friends. She decided to move back to her birth country. But where?

"There are always people in your life who guide you," she reflects. She met a doctor from Guadalajara while attending a conference in Las Vegas. He asked if she had heard of Ajijic, explaining that the village was by a lake, was home to a lot of expats, and that nobody there was practicing the alternative therapies that she provided.

After one visit to Ajijic, she informed her husband they were moving to Mexico. "My husband was not going to relocate," says Dra. Bea. "I ended up traveling between Ajijic and the U.S. for several years before he finally joined me and thought maybe he could live here."

It did not take long for Dra. Bea to realize that the older population in Ajijic had different types of health issues than she was used to working with. "I needed to take more classes, to learn more about health and aging. Science is always changing, and you must stay current with new discoveries."

Dra. Bea recently wrote a book on a topic most people don't want to discuss: Poopology. She presented a paper on the subject last year in the States, then was invited to Granada, Spain, to present her work at a Detoxification Conference this last month. She finished translating her paper into Spanish just before leaving.

Dra. Bea has been busy with her practice, ongoing education, and consulting. At 74, she prefers to work less and have more time for research and travel.

This doctor is not slowing down any time soon!

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# Bowen Therapy: Your Muscles Secret Getaway

By Sharon Brooks



The Alternative Natural Healing series introduces you to **Bowen Therapy**. Imagine a Bowen Therapist as a ninja masseuse. They sneak up on your muscles like a stealth cat and the precision of a Swiss watch. And to your surprise, you receive the gentle rolling of various hand movements. You may wonder if you are even being worked on. **Then suddenly you feel like your muscles are on a mini vacation.**

Bowen Therapy, also called Bowenwork or Bowtech is like a spa day without going to the spa. This is how the day goes: Your muscles, tendons, and ligaments are lounging around, sipping on tiny coconut drinks with little umbrellas, while the fascia (the soft tissue that covers all your muscles and organs) and skin are getting a gentle, rhythmic massage. **It's like a spa day for your nervous system**, which gets so relaxed it might send a thank-you note.

According to Bowenwork therapists, this type of therapy acts on the autonomic nervous system, inhibiting the sympathetic nervous system and activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

The gentle movement helps to alleviate symptoms such as a frozen shoulder, migraine, back, and neck pain. The gentle movement eases respiratory conditions, gastrointestinal disorders, IBS, and side effects from cancer treatments.

Many seek Bowen therapy **for managing stress, fatigue, depression, anxiety, and high blood pressure.**

Changes in symptoms can occur at any point during a Bowen session, immediately afterward, or even days later.

Thomas Ambrose Bowen created Bowen therapy (1916–1982) in Australia. Though Bowen wasn't a medical practitioner, he claimed that the therapy could reset the body's pain response.

A 2024 controlled trial with 132 participants with fibromyalgia syndrome for example, compared the effects of Bowen therapy, standard exercise programs, craniosacral therapy, and static touch therapy over 12 weeks of treatment. The researchers found that Bowen therapy was effective at improving the quality of sleep and pressure pain threshold. Participants still reported these improvements 24 weeks post-treatment.

Other study groups show long lasting effects depending on the severity of the problem and the number of sessions each participant completed. There are several people here in The Lake Chapala area who have used Bowen therapy. There are many excellent Bowen practitioners to choose from here at LakeSide. We suggest you reach out to friends, family, or social media to inquire about others' experiences with Bowen Therapy.

A Bowen Therapist in Mexico does not need a license to practice this type of manual manipulation of tissues.

Experts state that the therapy is safe. Some therapists advise their clients to avoid other muscle-manipulation therapies for at least 1 week after the session to allow the body to adjust.

**Think of Bowen therapy as your muscles' secret getaway, where the only thing getting rolled out is the red carpet for relaxation!**



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