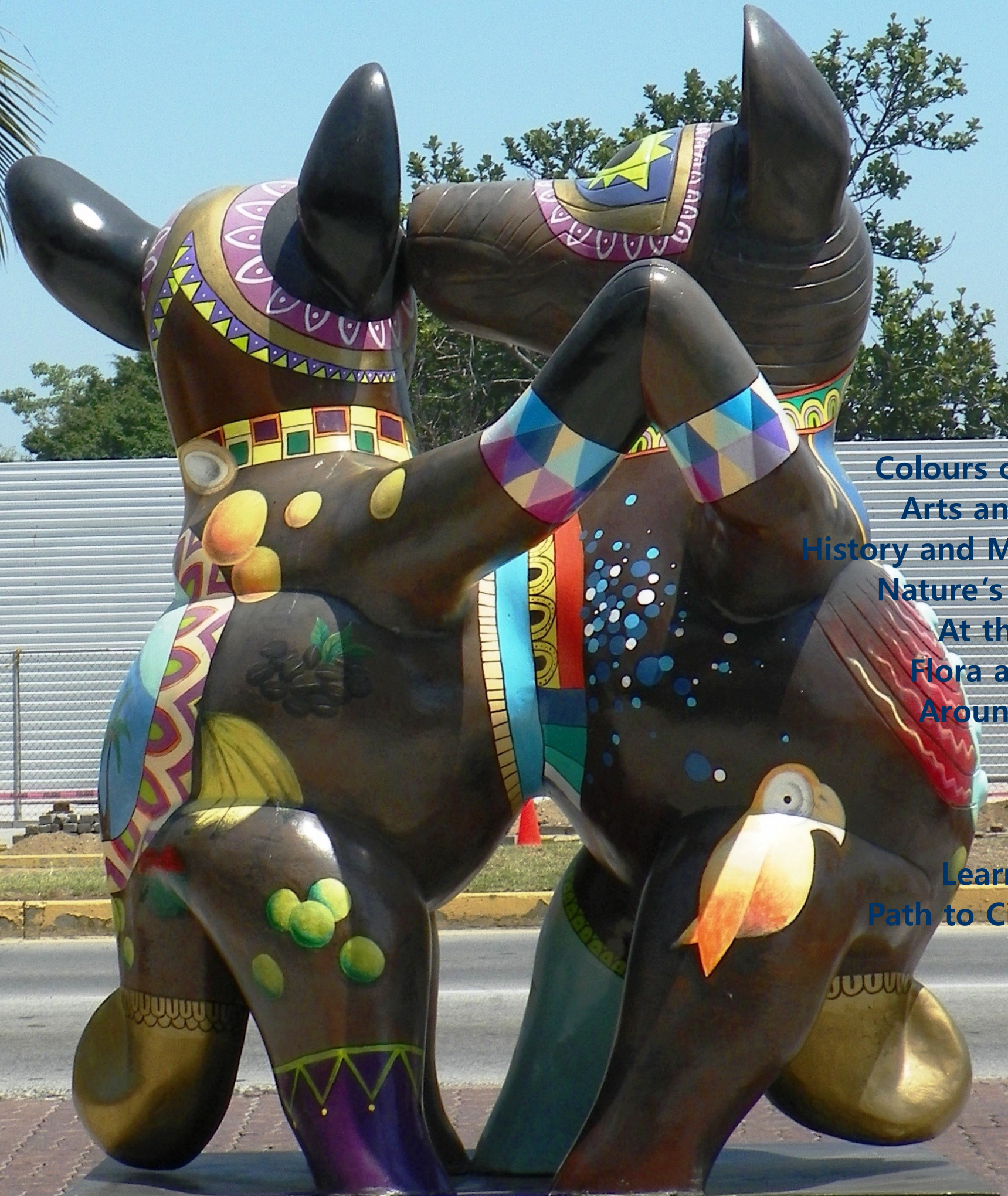




**Dancing Dogs**  
photo by John Chalmers  
at Punto Bahía mall



- Colours of Mexico
- Arts and Culture
- History and Mythology
- Nature's Wonders
- At the Movies
- Flora and Fauna
- Around Mexico
- Finance
- RV Travel
- Recipe
- Learn Spanish
- Path to Citizenship

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To send submissions for possible inclusion in the magazine, please send to the editor by 15th of each month. We are always looking for writers or ideas on what you would like us to see as topics for the magazine.

Article submissions:

- Preferred subjects are Manzanillo and Mexico
- All articles should be 1000 words or less or may be serialized or 500-750 words if accompanied by photos
- Pictures are welcome
- Comments, letters to the editor, articles, photos and advertisements are always welcome

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## A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo

by Suzanne A. Marshall

Given the fact that 'high season' living in Manzanillo is incredibly busy; I use the term 'quieter' living a bit lightly. The winter months can be socially hectic and a hell of a lot of fun! When the snowbirds have arrived you don't have to work too hard at finding activities to stay occupied with. The restaurants and clubs offer venues for entertainment and dancing and there are numerous organized events such as weekly beach bocce games, card games, yoga classes, painting classes and always the cinemas to watch for. There are also organized poker nights and ladies' night gatherings. Many of us are taking language classes in Español and doing our best to get better at communicating with our fabulous Mexican neighbours.

I think this is a good time to share my most recent realization. I finally understand what 'cultural silos' are about. In Canada and the USA it is not unusual to find many cultural 'barrios' or neighborhoods; from 'China Town' to 'little Italy' to areas of East Indian decent or Pakistanis or French, or Vietnamese or African and so forth. The simple fact is that there is an instinct to find comfort and familiarity with people who share your life-long influences of language and customs. It seems to be the first thing that happens when you arrive in a new place. There is usually a social network that forms (or exists) and invites you to join in. It's irresistible really, since at first you are truly feeling like a fish out of water.



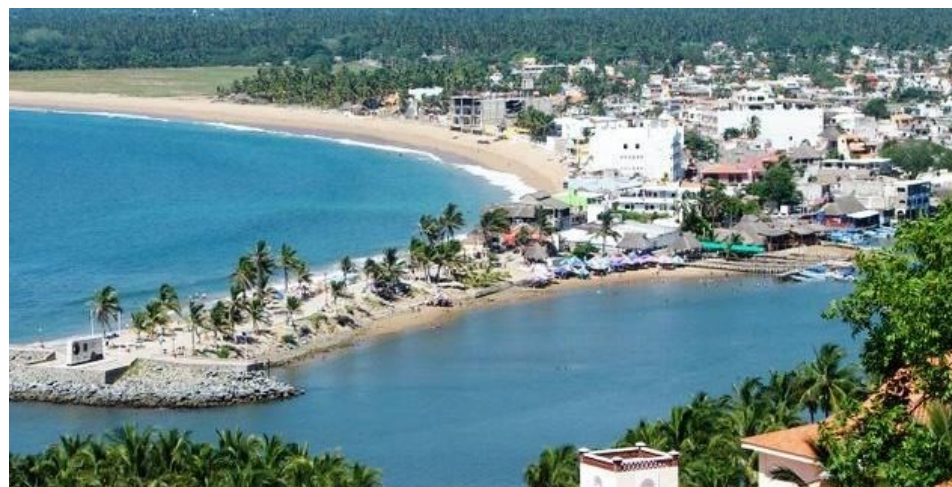
Try a little yoga at the beach

This social support is invaluable during the period of adjustment when you begin to navigate a new culture, it's customs, language and everything from shopping for food to just driving a car. You also need to stabilize the usual need for finding a doctor, a dentist, a good hair dresser and so on. That being said of course, there comes a time when we need to branch out from that cultural comfort zone and learn about our new environment; tackle the language and get to enjoy so many fabulous Mexicanos. Then we can also begin to explore the vast

history and amazing areas of this country and it's ancient civilizations.

So when the 'snowbirds' begin the mass migration north for the summer months; the farewell parties have taken place and most of the 'winter' family and visitors have come and gone; the pace for those of us staying behind ambles down to a pleasant scattering of dates and we begin to expand our horizons. At least that's what we do.

There are numerous short destinations one can enjoy from Manzanillo that can have you trekking farther afield and exploring even more of this fascinating country. Day trips to Colima city, Barra De Navidad, Melaque, Cuyutlán (turtle sanctuary and Mangrove tours), el Salto falls are just a few of the places one can take off to or even spend a weekend or a few days exploring. Of course these locations offer interesting architecture, sites and museums.



Less than an hour from Manzanillo, the towns of Barra De Navidad and Melaque offer beaches, restaurants, shopping, boating and an array of various sites

Once you begin to explore these areas, you become smitten by the travel bug. You just want to see more. Since our annual condo meetings are held in Guadalajara, we've begun to find wonderful spots along the way. Outside the city of Guadalajara there is a very large expat community called Lake Chapala and Ajijic which make short trips a true pleasure. They are a nice getaway for a few days and something new to see and enjoy. Also, during the hot season, these are ideal places to take a break from routine since the elevations of the Sierra Madre Mountains at these locations are cooler and less humid.

We have stayed a few days in the small city of Sayula where we enjoyed a lovely town square, toured a tequila factory, a candy factory and the famous Ojeda knife makers, where we couldn't

...A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo



The volcanic black sand at the beaches of Cuyutlán attract beachgoers and surfers from afar

resist some of their fine wares, returning with amazing stainless-steel chefs' knives that we are really enjoying in our kitchen. We still have plans to take a jaunt not far from there to a mountain village called Tapalpa, which has been described to us as similar to a Swiss village. That description certainly piqued our interest. That should make a nice cool destination during our hot season.

A crocodile blends with the water and the lilies as our small tour boat motors by



... more pics follow

...A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo



Down the beach road from Cuyutlán, a mysterious mangrove tour is very popular where numerous creatures can be spotted such as crocodiles, water fowl and humungous termite nests

On some days one can enjoy the supervised release of recently hatched turtles. It's a real thrill!



El Salto Waterfalls are just a short daytrip from Manzanillo

Lake Chapala is a beautiful, large expat community just outside Guadalajara city. There is much to see and do .



...A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo

A boulevard in Lake Chapala complements a nearby lakeside malecón.



The town of Ajijic lies beside Lake Chapala, a short distance from Guadalajara, and is approximately 3 ½ hours from Manzanillo. The Central square is often filled with vendors and boasts delicious local cuisine.

Ajijic has quaint cobblestone streets and shops that are painted with wonderful scenes and colors.





...A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo



Mexico is filled with luscious interior spaces like this one in the town of Sayula, located 100 km south of Guadalajara. A delightful small city to visit.

There are rustic lodgings to be enjoyed in the mountainous city of Tapalpa.



Chapultepec Park in Mexico City is larger than Central Park in New York. It offers days of exhibits and museums with beautiful walking paths and picnic areas.

...A Quieter Side of Living in Manzanillo



Expect to spend a lot of time in Chapultepec Park, Mexico City.

Located about an hour north of Mexico City, the Pyramid of the Sun is an awesome ancient structure



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### A Complete Mexican Experience

story and photos by John Chalmers

What could be a more complete Mexican experience than a home-cooked dinner enjoyed with live mariachi music and a spectacular performance of traditional Mexican dances!

That was what a capacity and appreciative crowd enjoyed on February 23 at an open-air pavilion, the *Casino de el Naranjo*, a short drive from the greater Manzanillo area. The facility is located beside the rodeo ring adjacent to the junction of Highway 200 west of Manzanillo and the road to Vida Del Mar, by the small town of El Naranjo. The casino came alive in the evening performance with a truly Mexican flair in the second annual event of music, dinner and dance by the local *ballet folklórico* dance group called Tynebeka Ti Kilen.

Led by instructor Angel Caro, the group’s name comes from an indigenous dialect in the state of Nayarit, where Angel studied dance. Tynebeka Ti Kilen is a phrase that means “little dancer.” In regular practices at the Vicente B. Ibarra School in El Naranjo, some two dozen young people from 6 to 18 years of age learn traditional dances from various Mexican states. The group’s public performance is a fund-raising event for Tynebeka Ti Kilen with pesos needed for costumes, dance shoes and other expenses.

The gala evening began with a home-cooked Mexican buffet prepared by the mothers of the dancers. Diners were treated to traditional dishes including *guacamole*, *pozole*, *flautas*, *chiles rellenos*, *tamales* and more. Of course, no Mexican fiesta would be complete without its national drinks – *cerveza fría* and *margaritas con hielo*!

Live music and song from a four-piece mariachi band started the evening as folks gathered to take their seats and line up for



Three dancers on horseback wait to be led into the *Casino* before the performance starts.

dinner. The show began when three of the girls in the troupe were paraded in on horseback to a welcoming crowd of 300 folks. From then on, it was non-stop dancing, expertly performed by the dedicated and enthusiastic youngsters. Beautiful dresses, swirling skirts, stamping feet, clashing *machetes* and lively music were all part of the performance.

One can’t help but admire the quality of instruction and skill seen in the dances, which are far more than good exercise for the kids! The teamwork, discipline, personal satisfaction, confidence and self-esteem are among the benefits of the program for the young participants. Perhaps the ultimate reward for both the dancers and the audience is enjoying the rich heritage that is presented in preserving cultural and historic traditions of this beautiful country. Olé! and Viva México!

The *Casino de El Naranjo* pavilion provided a fine venue for the buffet dinner and dance performance by the Tynebeka Ti Kilen troupe.



... more pics follow

...A Complete Mexican Experience



Hairdos, hoop earrings, makeup and costumes add glamour to the young dancers.



A full crowd was in attendance for a fine dinner and a great performance.

With mariachi music, the girls on horseback were led in to start the entertainment.



Live and lively music and singing from the mariachi musicians added to the festivity.

...A Complete Mexican Experience



The fancy dresses with huge skirts and beautiful stitching are works of art.



Instructor Angel Caro, at right, danced with his young protégées, in this number.



Swirling skirts and fancy footwork are involved in many of the dances.

...A Complete Mexican Experience

Fast action as girls whirl their skirts is sometimes just a blur for the camera.



The costumes are as much a part of each dance as are the music and the footwork.

Amazing shows of colour and creativity show in all the costumes and dances.



...A Complete Mexican Experience



The dinner and the dance performance raise funds for the cost of costumes and other expenses.



Precision of performance is to be admired of every dancer in the program.

...A Complete Mexican Experience



Precision, poise, personality and performance are elements in every dance.



Ribbons in the hair match these spectacular, complex and beautiful dresses.



...A Complete Mexican Experience



Practice and rehearsal lead to a fine performance for an appreciative audience.



Although boys are outnumbered by girls in the group, they are just as welcome to participate and are just as keen.

...A Complete Mexican Experience



Even when waiting their turn to dance, these girls show poise in their posture.



Enthusiasm and energy are evident with each move the dancers make.



In practice at the school, instructor Angel Caro leads the troupe in their steps.



Even in practice, the girls wear big skirts to rehearse the traditional dances.



Instructor Angel Caro meets with the dancers at a break in a practice session.

...A Complete Mexican Experience



In practice or public performance, all the dancers take their work seriously.



Boys don't need simple costumes like the girls in practice, but the dance shoes are must!



Joy is seen in this girl's expression while receiving instruction from Angel.



Instructor Angel Caro is well qualified and trained in traditional Mexican dances.



Smiling faces reflect the love of dance shared by the members of the group.

Grace and beauty typify each number learned by the dancers.



...A Complete Mexican Experience



Swirling skirts in the sun add to the color and movement in practice.



Dedication and discipline are reflected in dance as girls learn their steps.



Each practice session of the Tyenebeka Ti Kilen dancers shows evidence of skill.

Each member of the group contributes to its overall fine reputation in the town.



...A Complete Mexican Experience



Late afternoon practice sessions are held at the school in El Naranjo.



Posing for a group photo after their annual performance provided a photo opportunity for anyone with a camera! Seen standing at the back is Rich Taylor, who was recognized during the evening for his support of the Tynebeka Ti Kilen dancers in staging their fund-raising event. Tynebeka Ti Kilen instructor, Angel Caro, is shown at right in the front row.

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by Tommy Clarkson

**Mondo Grass** *Ophiopogon japonicas*

Family: *Liliaceae*

Also known as: *Dwarf Lily Turf, Monkey Grass or Snakebeard*

Like a somewhat nondescript person that we busily pass, unnoticed, on a bustling, crowded street, we've all seen this plant in a variety of locales and applications. Yet, most likely we looked right past it and never gave it a second thought.

This dense, slow-growing perennial plant grows in thick clumps. It is often used in shopping malls, beneath signage in apartment or condo entrances, in garden borders or even, effectively employed in erosion control. Yet other applications are for its incorporation in the moist soil of bog gardens, near water features or alongside streams and dams.

Though the name indicates otherwise, it is actually not a member of the grass family (*Poaceae*). Accordingly, unlike most grasses, it will not tolerate being trod upon. But - as Neil Sperry observed in his book *Texas Gardening* - It's "a good choice in narrow spots where you need something that doesn't sprawl." He further notes, "It's especially good under trees, since it has no runners to snag fallen leaves."

The word *Ophiopogon* describes its bloom. Translated from Greek, that means "snake with a beard." Since most of our local serpents are clean shaven and Quetzalcoatl, the Teotihuacan feathered serpent god has not been observed of late, might I suggest that its flora remind me of grape hyacinth flowers?



Its white-to-pale blue flowers are seldom seen in the hotter tropical realms.

Originally, from the forests and woodlands of Japan and Korea, it's a shade lover. Moderately drought and salt tolerant, it is linear-leaved and it is not uncommon for the tips to brown. These long, slender leaves are sessile (*your word for the day*) in nature. (This means that they are "stalkless and attached directly at the base". These are six to fourteen inches (15.24 - 35.60 cm) long and one-sixteenth to one-quarter inch (.16 - .64 cm) wide.

Its white to pale-blue flowers are seldom seen in the hotter tropical realms. As is generally their nature, ours - here in the sub-tropics - are small and (as may be seen in the accompanying picture) appear deeply nestled amid the leaves. Mondo Grass enjoys fertile, moist and well-draining soil. Outside of regular watering, *Ophiopogon japonicus* requires little more attention.

If you've read very much of my botanical work, the following *news nugget* comes as no surprise. There is a bit of confusion

...Mondo Grass



The Mondo Grass variants 'Aureovariegatus', 'Variegatus' and 'Vittatus' have longitudinally striped leaves with white or yellow and green.

regarding these and several related varieties of *Liriope*! For example, the similarly named Lily-Turf (*Liriope muscari*) is a relative. (But it's entitled to writings wholly of its own!)

Dwarf Mondo Grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus* 'Nanus') is one-third - or less - the size of the typical Mondo Grass, often reaching but only two inches (5.08 cm) tall. Interested in its kin? As per the *Clemson University Extension Service*, the following are various cultivars you might wish to consider as well: 'Aureovariegatus', 'Variegatus' and 'Vittatus' which have longitudinally striped leaves with white or yellow and green stripes; 'Caeruleus' has dark green leaves and violet-blue flowers; 'Kioto' or Dwarf Mondo Grass grows only to about four inches (10.16 cm) high with small flowers of light lilac to white; 'Nippon' is very small with whitish flowers; and, 'Gyoko Ryu' is even shorter and more compact than 'Nippon'. Beyond these, Black Mondo Grass (*Ophiopogon planiscapus*), which grows to around six inches (15.24 cm) tall, has dark purple leaves that appear almost black.

As we know, there are all manner of rather obscure, yet positive and effective uses of many of Nature's plants. Now, though this is stated in none of my botanical books, I recount that this may be one of them. The site, *Plants for a Future*, asserts that "The root [of the Mondo Grass] is antitussive, aphrodisiac, ex-

pectorant, pectoral, sedative, sialagogue, stomachic and tonic. It is said to have anticancer potential. It is used internally in helping with dry coughs, fevers, thirst, dry constipation, insomnia, anxiety and palpitations. It is also frequently used in poly-herbal treatments of diabetes mellitus. The roots have an antibacterial action, inhibiting the growth of *Staphylococcus*, *E. coli*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *B. typhi*. For these, the roots are harvested in the spring and dried for later use. The plant is antipyretic, antiscrofulatic, antitussive, emollient, expectorant and lowers blood pressure. Nodules on the fibrous roots are used as a nutritive tonic in the treatment of TB."



It is normal for the thin, leaf blade tips to brown.

Knowing all of this - besides the fact that these are wonderful groundcover plants - might you want more? Simply carefully dig some up, divide and replant in somewhat sandy, compost soil.

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## How Music Came to the World

by Kirby Vickery

*There are many variations to this particular story as you can imagine. I mixed three of them for you.*

One fine and very windy day, the sky god, Tezcatlipoca called out to his sometimes friend and sometimes not a friend Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl, the god of the wind, to meet with him to discuss a problem facing both of them although Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl hadn't noticed. Those were difficult days between the two as they liked to fight each other now and then.

Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl was just a little put out because he was really busy coordinating and running the hurricane season and was really into it causing all the effects you would expect in a major Hollywood disaster film. You can imagine his attitude being called from his work of love. "What is it you want, oh god of the sky? Can't you see that I am very busy and not in the mood to fight with you today? By the way, how do you like my sixty mile per hour breezes? Really nice and steady aren't they?" Asked the ego laden Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl.

"Your breezes are fine," replied Tezcatlipoca. "But, even when your winds turn into light gusts for the people of the world to enjoy, haven't you noticed that there is something missing from this world where we have all these people living and having life?"

"Well let's see. They have the night and day from the sun god. The moon circles every 28 days thanks to Coyolxauhqui. They have water when I bring the rain. They have their crops of maize thanks to my wife, 'the hairy one,' who causes them to grow. You remember Cinteteo, don't you? The one you keep making passes at during the Centzon Totochtin [also Centzontotochtin] party," replied Tezcatlipoca, while ticking items off his fingers. "What else would you think they need?"

"They need music, you clod. Haven't you ever noticed that there isn't any music on the world. Not even the birds sing," Tezcatlipoca went on. "There is no singing, playing or feeling that beat. There can't be any real celebration anywhere without music. Can't you see that, Wind?"



The Florentine Codex lists two Aztec drums of divine origin, the huehuetl and the teponaztli. The Huehuetl was a tube drum which sat on three legs and used a tightened skin as a sound board. The Teponaztli is a hollowed-out log drum with two slits producing to distinct pitches when played. They both were fire hardened. These drums are said to be enchanted.

"Yeah, I see it," replied Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl. "But, what does that have to do with me. Not my job, is it? Although, it would be nice if we had music here, just where is it?"

"Huitzilopochtli, the sun god, has it all. They sing, dance and play for him all day long in his palace up there and he isn't sharing." Tezcatlipoca pointed. "We need you to go get those musicians and bring them to this world. I'd do it but you're the only one with wings that can get there."

Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl didn't think that was right either so he unfolded his giant wings and flew off searching for the one place where he knew he would be able to get to the palace of the sun god.

He landed on a special beach and called out to the sun god's three servants: Water Woman, Water Monster and Conch and he told them to form a bridge.



...How Music Came to the World

They each grabbed one another and began to grow very tall and very thin. Then they started to twirl together to make a strong corded bridge that went all the way up into the sky.

He climbed that bridge and watched the world get smaller and smaller the higher we went.

Finally, he was able to see the sun god's palace off in the distance on the other side of a large village with high walls and winding roads. He became very tired and wanted to turn around and go home. But, off in the distance, he heard the most wonderful sound he had never heard before. It was music from the palace and Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl let it lead him out of the village into the palace itself and he was able to see the musicians in the courtyard playing for the sun god.



Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl

When Huitzilopochtli saw him, he ordered the musicians to stop singing and playing. "It's that infernal Wind god, Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl!" he told them. "Don't look at him or speak to him. As a matter of fact, ignore him or he will take you back to his music-less world."

Not to be outdone, Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl went into his wind and storm thing. As he flapped his wings, creating a great wind, he called out, "Musicians! Come to me!" But none of them moved. "I am the Lord of the Sky, and I command you to come to me." And, again none of them moved other than to cower behind one another.

This angered Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and he stood full up and flapped his wings creating a tornado like wind with lightning,



Tezcatlipoca

hail, snow and thunder, all blowing and booming from one end of the square to the other. His might was so great that the clouds he produced blotted out the sun. As the sun shrank to something the size of a candle, all the musicians ran to Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and huddled for protection against the wrath of his creation as the sound he made leveled everything around the square.

They all forced themselves onto his lap for protection and he wrapped them up and carried them from the palace of the sun god. Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl grew happier and happier as he negotiated the streets of the town and descended the bridge of three servants, back toward the beach, with his heart singing in joy.

Apparently, the world could feel the coming of something good and wonderful because, the closer they got to that shore, all sorts of good things started to happen. The fruit got riper, the grain longer and larger, all the flowers started to bloom in buds of more color and larger in shape.

When Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl finally set them down, they looked about and immediately saw what the problem was and they started to play and sing and dance, filling the air with music which spread to the animals and the birds. The wind god was pleased, and the musicians have continued to fill the world with their song and dance ever since as they, too, had found a home.

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



by Tommy Clarkson

**Jade Vine, *Strongylodon macrobotrys***

Family: *Leguminosae*

Also known as: *Emerald Creeper, Emerald Vine, Turquoise Jade Vine or Cascada de Jade*

There is only one plant my Patty has ever asked that we include in our gardens. This is it, the Jade Vine, endangered in the wild and somewhat scarce in cultivation. After an extensive time of searching, several years ago, I finally found a source, south of Puerto Vallarta and acquired a couple... only to have the blasted iguanas promptly eat them down to scant stem stubs! *The scaly, reptilian swine!* When I returned to my source, none were any longer available. It took me another six years before I finally found three more specimens - larger this time - in Mexico City. *(At this point, I put our lizard interlopers on the direst of consequences notice!)*

The *Strongylodon* genus consists of perhaps some twenty species of woody shrubs and vines (mostly the latter). Their home habitat ranges from Madagascar through the Philippines into Polynesia. The rather rare Jade Vine comes from the damp riverine rainforests of the Philippines. In these natural environs, its aggressive growth allows it to virtually swallow trees and supporting structures! But wherever located, this to our way of thinking, is perhaps the most beautiful of flora, what with its stunning jade-green to almost turquoise (like the color of oxidized copper) pendant flower clusters.

Now, one knows how botanical writers sometimes quibble a bit on details. William Warren, in *Tropical Plants*, says these flowers "are purplish or pale green when they first appear and later harden into [a] darker green." Whereas, Robert Lee Raffle in *The Tropical Look* - says they commence their lives a "bronzy rose." I've read elsewhere, "waxy, brilliant aquamarine." *(How about if I just say a politically compromising "yes"?)*



Its most strikingly original flowers appear as some sort of upward-pointed, slender, jade-colored bananas!

Regardless of their subtle initial color, they are attractive! These are one to five feet (.30 - 1.52 meters) long, pendant racemes with claw-shaped flowers of four to five inches long. In Hawaii, the individual flowers are incorporated into leis.

According to Kirsten Albrecht Llamas in her great book *Tropical Flowering Plants*, "The flowers have a hood-like standard [an enlarged or distinct erect petal] and a falcate [curved like a falcon's beak] keel clasped between two wings.... The species name means "grapelike," alluding to the way the blue-green flower clusters dangle under an arbor like under-ripe green grapes with a frosty bloom."

To my eye, gray-green when young, its trifoliolate leaves (compound with three leaflets) - elliptical to ovate in form - grow to five to six inches (12.70 - 15.24 cm) long.

A woody evergreen with serpentine stems, it is an aggressive grower and rampant climber to over fifty feet (15.24 meters) in length. It, definitely, requires support (such as a pergola) so that those magnificent flowers can be appreciated from below. If controlling their size is an issue, cut them back after they've bloomed - dramatically so, if necessary.

...Jade Vine

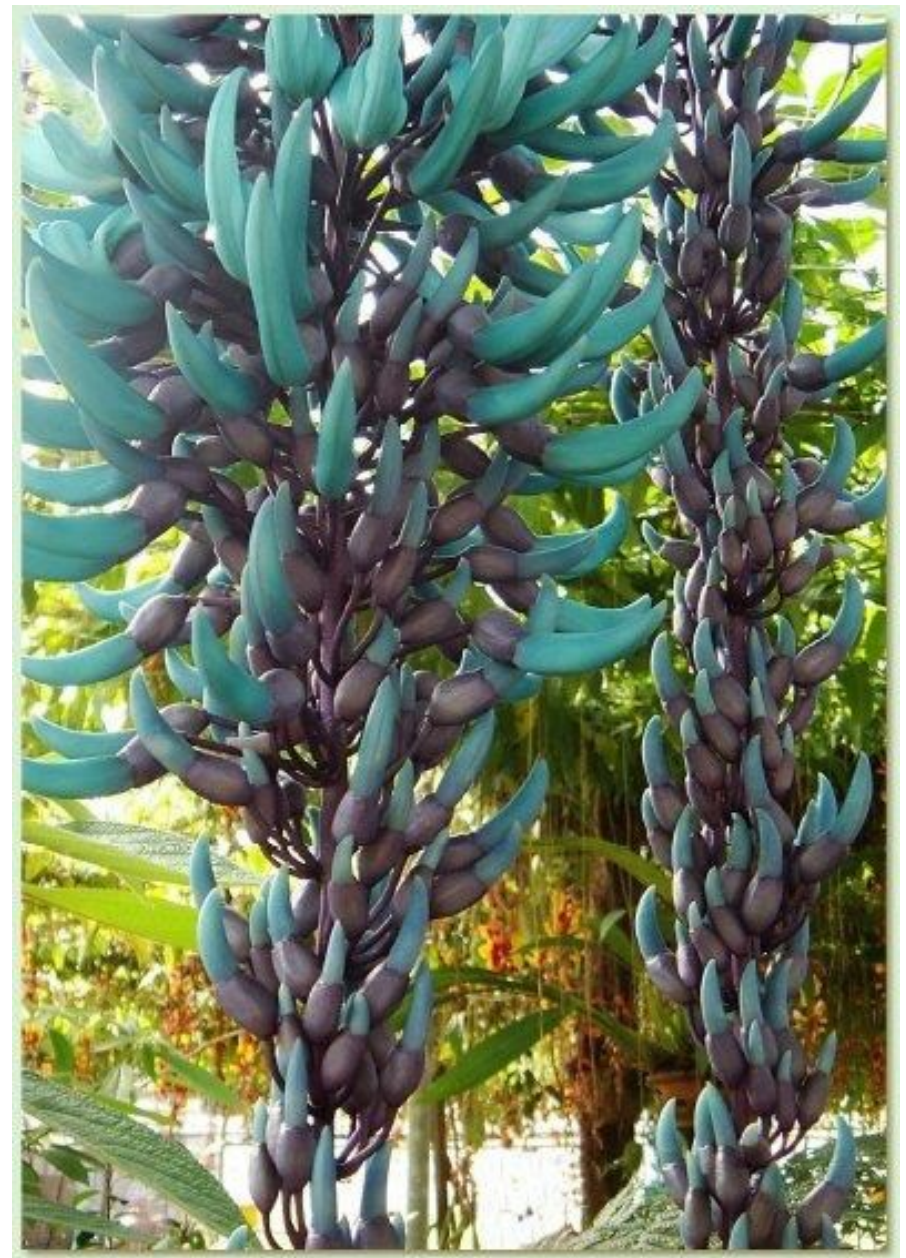


Its trifoliate leaves are elliptical to ovate in form and grow from five to six inches long.

As to a home, the Jade Vine likes full sun, with rich, moist soil and its roots should be shaded. It's a bit of a hog when it comes to moisture, growing best with ample and copious water. When the top of the soil at its base is dry, give it more. Lack of water results in browning of its leaves, and causes slow and stunted growth. So, water all year around. They are, however, not heavy feeders. I'd suggest a mixture of half a teaspoon of water-soluble, balanced fertilizer - or one specifically for blooming plants - per gallon of water, twice a month during its primary growing season - down here that's nearly all four "seasons".

How about propagation? This can be accomplished through either seed plantings or vine/stem tip cuttings - best taken early in the season. To "add an edge", use a rooting hormone, then place the cutting in starting soil and put it in a warm location with ample humidity and moisture. Within a few weeks, new growth should commence. The Jade Vine can also readily be sprouted from seeds harvested from seedpods. Try to avoid transplanting. Once established, replace the top few inches of surface soil annually.

In its native environs, the Jade Vine has a most unusual way of spreading its pollen. When a bat alights on the flower to stick its tongue into the flower to extract nectar, a protruding "wing-tip" above it exudes the pollen on the bat's head which then is passed on as it visits other Jade Vine flora. *Interesting, huh?*



Kirsten Albrecht Llamas describes the Jade Vine flora this way, "The flowers have a hood-like standard and a falcate keel clasped between two wings."

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But of the former two, if unable to be here in person, what better way to vicariously bask in our balmy environs - no matter where one might be this winter - than through graphic word pictures and great photography?

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Enjoy. (And we look forward to your physical visit here at Ola Brisa Gardens!)

Tommy and Patty Clarkson



**At the Movies**

by Suzanne A. Marshall

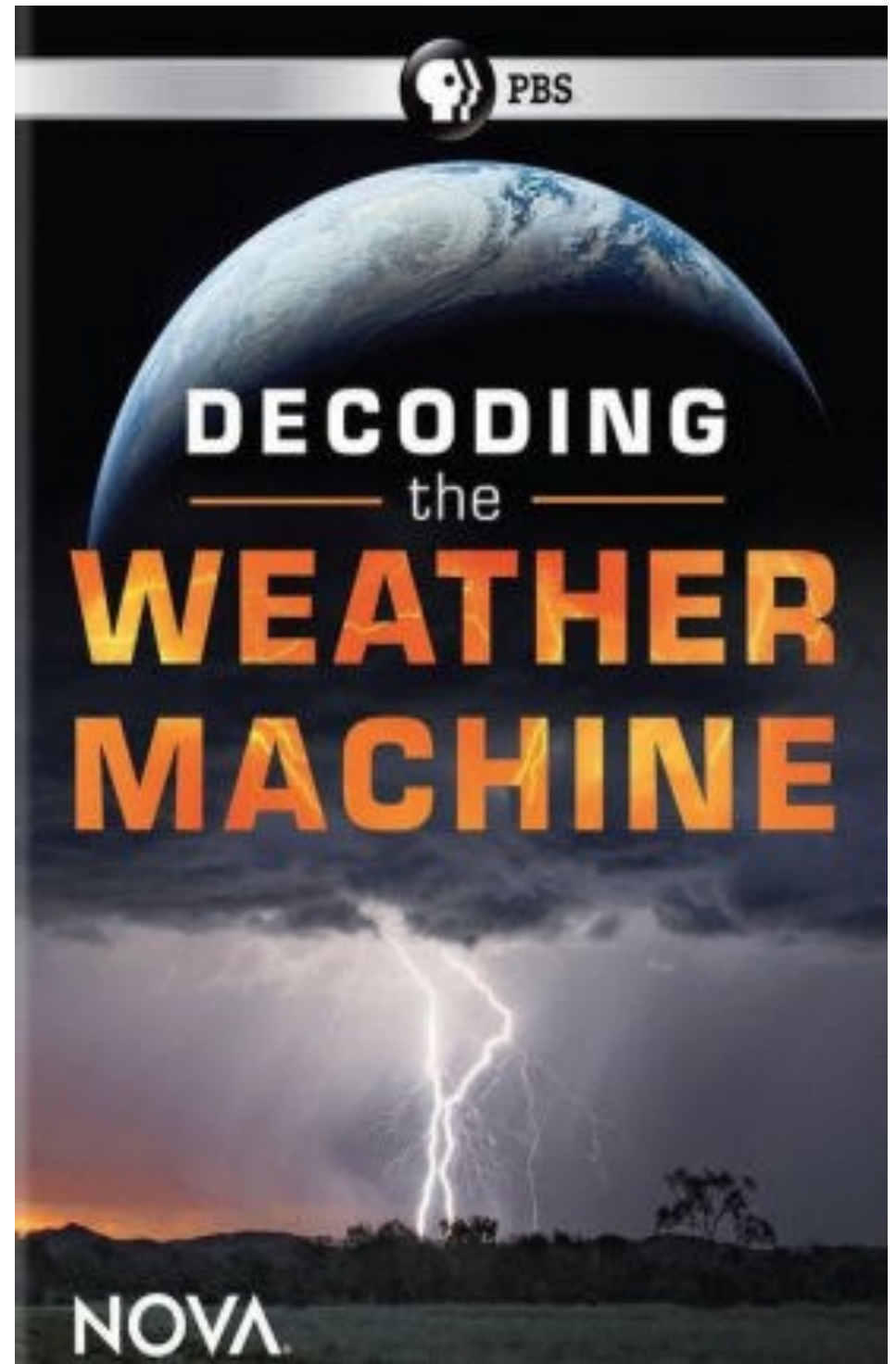
**Decoding the Weather Machine**

Documentary, Nova, PBS

*“Disastrous hurricanes. Widespread droughts and wildfires. Withering heat. Extreme rainfall. It is hard not to conclude that something’s up with the weather, and many scientists agree. It’s the result of the weather machine itself—our climate—changing, becoming hotter and more erratic. In this two-hour documentary, NOVA will cut through the confusion around climate change. Why do scientists overwhelmingly agree that our climate is changing, and that human activity is causing it? How and when will it affect us through the weather we experience? And what will it take to bend the trajectory of planetary warming toward more benign outcomes? Join scientists around the world on a quest to better understand the workings of the weather and climate machine we call Earth, and discover how we can be resilient – even thrive – in the face of enormous change.”*

I hardly know where to begin with the accolades that this documentary production deserves. Who can ignore the weather events of the past few years around the world and the ridiculous recent winter that North Americans faced on so many levels. Between raging fires, all-consuming flooding and record snowfall; no one should be turning a blind eye to the future of this planet.

This production enlightens us to the causes and ‘mitigations’ that might just save us if we start to pay attention now, and get behind the ways and means to cope with this exceptionally fearsome situation. There seems to be no denying the facts and the specifics of the information and research that is laid out for all of us to conclude. It’s time for action all around the world.



I highly recommend this amazing and educational production. It is enlightening on so many levels and if the ‘lights’ weren’t on already, they’ll be blazing away by the end of those two hours. Take the time to view and share with as many people as you can. Apologies for preaching. I just feel that I’ve learned and confirmed so much. It will be well worth it.

I give this documentary a 10/10 for content, clarity and rationale. The production itself is superior.

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

## Chachalacas

by Terry Sovil



Cha Cha what? The first thing you will need to know is how to pronounce Chachalaca. It is "cha cha lock ah". When you listen to their song, many think that is what the bird is saying. These birds are really fascinating to watch, and hear! I've been fortunate the last few years to have some in our completely over-run jungle beyond our back yard. About two years ago, they had babies and I got to see Mom, Dad and 3 babies walk down our wall. This year they have been active again and I saw a display I'll probably never see again. While noisy, they are very private and shy. They can be hard to spot. Getting a good photo is very difficult.

There are several different species of this bird and some overlap areas. All are part of the West Mexican Chachalaca group. Texas has some, at the very bottom of their state. It is the "Plain Chachalaca".

Here is a recap:

- West Mexican Chachalaca (*Ortalis poliocephala*)
- Rufous-bellied Chachalaca (*Ortalis wagleri*)
- White-bellied Chachalaca (*Ortalis leucogastra*)
- Plain Chachalacas (*Ortalis vetula*)

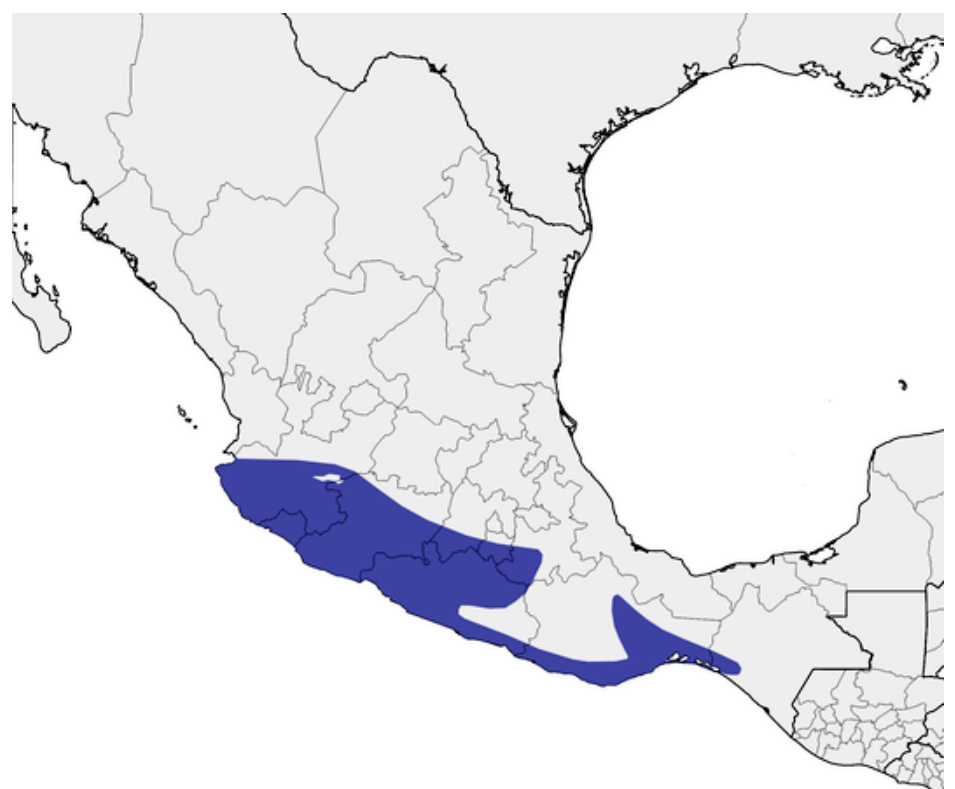
**White-bellied Chachalaca is what we have here in Manzanillo.**

The Chachalaca is a very loud and vocal member of the Cracid family. They are found on the Pacific Slope of Western Mexico from southern Mexico south to western Nicaragua. Various studies have listed them in two groups, but they are all part of

the Chachalaca family. They are not turkeys, although they may remind you of one! It is a relative of guans and curassows.

The white-bellied Chachalaca is not really very colorful but they sure can "speak" with authority. It has a gruff, throaty, rhythmic chattering, usually performed by several animals at the same time. They can be heard a long way off which helps reveal their location. They do spend time in the tropical forests but, with development, you can find them living within green cities and developed areas. They will often travel in groups of 6 or more birds.

The White-bellied Chachalaca has a dull white belly that contrasts with its brown breast. They are found in swamp forest, second-growth scrub (our back-yard area) and mangroves, but also drier habitats such as dry forest, pastures and plantation



...Chachalacas



edges. Vegetarians, mostly, they will eat leaves, fruits, seeds and flowers in the tree canopy. If in the mood, they will eat insects and maybe even a small reptile. They are rarely seen on the ground. They stick to the higher forest canopy areas and like dense growth where they can blend in.

When they are ready to raise a family, the nest isn't a big project. They build a platform with flattened leaves pretty low to the ground. They are tolerant of humans. They typically lay 2-3, sometimes 4, eggs. The female lays the eggs and incubates them for 24 days. The new born are "precocial", meaning relatively mature and mobile as soon as they hatch. This allows them to avoid predators (falcons, hawks). The young are usually only on the nest for a few days and then they move to the ground. The parents track where they are and bring food. The young have baby feathers in a few days and full adult feathers in 3-4 weeks.

All species have long tails, fairly long and stout knees, long necks and loud calls. West Mexican Chachalaca is a relatively large Chachalaca. The upperparts and upper breast generally are grayish brown, but the head and upper neck are grayer. The lower breast and belly are white, with cinnamon under tail coverts. The tips of the tail feathers are broadly tipped with creamy buff. The sexes are similar.



Rufous-bellied Chachalaca (*Ortalis wagleri*) is a similar species that occurs in western Mexico from southern Sonora to extreme northern Jalisco, and so apparently replaces West Mexican Chachalaca very abruptly. The most distinctive feature is a rust colored-belly. The status of these two species is unclear, as some hybrids or intergrades have been reported. In areas where the two species approach one another, West Mexican Chachalaca occurs at higher elevations in more humid forests.



The White-bellied Chachalaca (*Ortalis leucogastra*) overlaps narrowly with West Mexican Chachalaca in Chiapas. White-bellied Chachalaca is smaller than West Mexican Chachalaca, with broader and whiter tip, whitish (not cinnamon) under tail, and usually is found at lower elevations.

Plain Chachalacas (*Ortalis vetula*) replace West Mexican Chachalacas on the Atlantic Slope of eastern Mexico, but both species overlap in a small area in Chiapas. Plain Chachalacas are slightly smaller, with a buffy brown belly.

All of them are social birds, living in groups (parents, former offspring or "friends"). They do form breeding pairs and have a short courtship which includes calls back and forth, mutual preening and feeding, and a bit of dancing/chasing. The courtship is normally on the ground and then they proceed to build the nest.

Well, you've heard a lot about the sound. Here is a link to take you to [a good recording](#) so you can hear it for yourself. Please TURN YOUR VOLUME all the way UP.

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

## Los Toriles, The Ruins of Ixtlan del Rio

by Kirby Vickery

The histories of the Aztecs tell of them coming from far away in the north to settle on an island in the middle of a lake in what is now Mexico City. That is where they grew their empire and that is mostly mythology. Initially, they were the underdogs of Mesoamerican society as it was already occupied by Nahuatl speaking tribes unified into the nation of the Toltecs. It was later in the Aztec history that they combined their forces with two other tribes and overthrew their predecessors. They expanded, and continued to expand, probably to keep a constant supply of slaves and altar sacrifices more than anything else. Mostly their conquests were to the east and south of their wonderful city.

They were unable to expand into the southwest as easily because the local tribes all banded together to resist them. This was mainly the populations both near and along the Pacific coast, Colima being one of them. They were able to capture some earlier cultures' cities in the northwest in the middle of agave country (home of the little blue frog story). One source tells us that Ixtlan Del Rio was founded by the Aztecs on an older site while another tells of a distant history with the original peoples coming down through the Bering Strait (Aztecs?). We stopped by on our way back north this year to break up the 4,000-mile trip a little. Ewa had been there about 12 years



This has been replaced by an electrical grinder

One source tells us that Ixtlan means "a place dedicated to Ehecatl." He was the god of wind. Another tells us that Ixtlan means "a place of obsidian." There is a lot of that scattered about and included into the ruins. Obsidian is volcanic glass and was used for weapons making as well as for jewelry. Los Toriles translates as 'The Bullpen' and probably alludes to the shape of the altar which is round, which is rare among Aztec architecture.



Living and storage facilities

ago and found that a lot had been done to expand the area dug out and restored. I, of course, fell in love with the little city of Ixtlan where we stayed the night before. The site itself is just outside the town within a short drive and will cost a nominal fee to get in past the entrance exhibits unless you have a Mexican 'Senior's Card.' We were allowed to bring Daisy in with us but the caretaker's dogs, one of which backed into a cactus, made me wish that I hadn't.

Originally inhabited by coastal people between 2000 BCE and 1500 BCE, they built using sea shells and became very artistic in creating artistic ceramic cookware. They later developed the 'Shaft Tomb Tradition' (500BCE to 500CE) where their graves were dug out of the sides of tunnels. This tradition runs all the way down into the state of Colima. Today the site has two graves viewable along with all the ceramic finery and bones in them. Archeologists have named this era: Los Concheros or 'The Shell Crafters.'

The site and the former city are rich in history and the prime point of archeology in the state of Nayarit. Should you visit, I recommend a little background reading about the site and gain some knowledge of the history of the western Mexico Mesoamerica before you arrive as I haven't even touched on it in this article. We didn't, and I had to go back to some of my source material to understand the significance of this site. Although one of my source web sites states that this site isn't that touristic, I found it a worthwhile weekend experience from Manzanillo.

By the way, the town of Tequila is just down the road and they have a history and an ambiance all their own. Well worth the trip.

... more pics follow



...Los Toriles

Living and storage facilities



One of two tombs in the tunnel at Los Toriles. Note the pottery.



Ewa on small altar for size reference only.



...Los Toriles



Significant and very rare round altar.

Daisy in front of the ruins of the public performance building.



A look to the inside of the public performance building.

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

## Helpful Hacks to Make Decision Making a Breeze

by Yann Kostic and Tom Zachystal

Should you buy or rent property in Mexico? Should you choose a house Lakeside in Ajijic or an ocean-view condo in Manzanillo? Should you take that job offer or stay retired?

Making sound decisions is one of life's biggest challenges. If you're not careful, you can make a poor choice, or even find yourself frozen in indecision.

The next time you are faced with a big decision, try these tips to help you weigh your options. Whether it's a major life decision or which swimsuit to buy, these hacks can help you work through the decision-making process.

**Reverse your role.** Have you ever found it easier to advise a friend than to figure out your own life?

If a particular decision is difficult to make, try pretending you're the friend. Consider what you would tell someone to do in your situation if he or she asked for your advice. This fresh perspective can be quite enlightening.

**Avoid overload.** Often, we find it hard to make decisions because there are too many options. We feel overwhelmed with information. Try limiting your research so that you are informed but not overloaded.

Talk to two trusted friends rather than asking everyone on social media for advice. Read one good book on the subject rather than fifty online articles.

**Make a list.** This tried and true method still works. If you want to go high-tech, you can create your list as a spreadsheet.

Either way, list the pros and cons of each option, and then examine your list to decide which option is best. Take your time: a good decision is based on gathering the right information, solid analysis and logical deductions.

Note: This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide financial advice for your particular situation.

Yann Kostic, MBA and Tom Zachystal, CFP, are Presidents of their respective Assets Management firms, both US-Registered Investment Advisors (RIA). Tom is the San Francisco Financial Planners' Association President. Tom and Yann cater to US expats in Mexico and worldwide. Comments, questions or to request his newsletter, "News you can use" contact him at [yannk@atlantisgrp.com](mailto:yannk@atlantisgrp.com), in the US at (321) 574-1 529 or in Mexico, (376) 106-1613.



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## Paa Mul

by Dan and Lisa Goy, exclusive to Manzanillo Sun

### February 7 - 10, 2016 (Day 32-35)

Sunday morning, we were southbound on Hwy 307 to the Mayan Riviera to take a look at 3 potential camping spots for 3 or 4 days. This was a short drive of less than 100 km or 60 miles. It was a great road and easy drive. Rafael had phoned ahead with 2 possible locations that both confirmed they had room for all 6 RVs. One location was \$300 pesos per day (Xpu-Ha Campground), the other \$47.25 USD or \$850 per day (Paa Mul RV and Cabañas).

When we arrived at Acamaya Reef, we parked at the PEMEX across the street which was very handy. Then Rafael, Eileen and Dan went to see what was what. We had been unable to contact campground #1. Acamaya Reef Motel, Cabañas and RV Park was a no go, just no room. Campground #2, (Xpu-Ha) at \$300 pesos per night, already had 8 RVs and the layout was problematic, to say the least, so we decided on the expensive option, Paa Mal RV Park. In many ways, this park reminds me of Loreto Shores in Loreto on Baja, expensive with the real focus on permanentes.

With 200 sites, only about 20 or so remain for travelling RVs. The rest were occupied by full time residents who had built palapas around their motorhomes, travel trailers and 5th wheels. Apparently to maintain their status as a campground (including tax breaks), they need to have actual RV spaces that are available for daily use. So far on this tour we have found the camping fees to be less than on Baja. Isla Aguada and Paa Mal are the exception. It is not surprising that the waterfront was occupied by permanent structures years ago, and also appears a low rise hotel was added more recently.

Paa Mul reefs



Hwy 307 - Paa Mul bound

The actual RV sites that were available were OK, 30 amps, fairly level, in a rack and pack fashion. However, the washrooms available were brutal. The women's was closed, the men's should have been closed. Sad, considering they charge almost \$50 USD per day. The good news was the folks we met were friendly, the beach very attractive and swimmable. There was a nice pool and restaurant that had much cleaner washrooms.

I used the outside pool shower to wash my hair and soap down. I left my bathing suit on given the onlookers poolside and in the restaurant. Just one more negative to mention. Wifi was available, but only to those staying in the hotel or cabañas.

No access to the internet was available, even for an extra fee. We checked out the restaurant for dinner; the food was good, beer cold and reasonably priced.

**Day 2** at Paa Mal saw many in the group take a colectivo to a beach further south where they could swim with turtles and rays in the sea grass. We headed to the beach at the park with Mike and Kelly, did some swimming and paddle boarding. The sun was out most of the time with some breeze. It was very pleasant.

...Paa Mul

**Day 3** we started with breakfast at the restaurant then the gang drove into Playa del Carmen. Eileen and Rafael met her sister and husband, following for a vacation. The rest of the gang just walked about and took in the sights.

We had had never been anywhere on the Caribbean coast, so all was new. We found a small local eatery a few blocks from the tourist zone, lots of Mexicans, not many foreigners. It was very reasonably priced, well under 200 pesos for the two of us.



Beachfront restaurant in Paa Mul

**Day 4** in Paa Mul many of us headed to Tulum, the Mayan Archeological site on the Caribbean, one of what is referred to as the "Big 4" (Uxmal, Chichen Itza, Tulum and Palenque). Although the site was very scenic and manicured (it seemed like a golf course) I was underwhelmed in general. Good news was no merchants on the site itself and did find a bumper sticker thanks to Mike. Back to the RV Park for some sun, swimming, fun and, of course, a happy hour.

**Playa del Carmen**

Playa del Carmen is located along the Caribbean Sea in the municipality of Solidaridad, in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexi-



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On the road in the Mayan Riviera

co. It is a very popular tourist area in eastern Mexico. Playa del Carmen features a wide array of tourist activities due to its geographical location in the Riviera Maya. It has also been the destination of PGA Tour golf tournaments and the set location for various television shows. The town has become one of the fastest to grow in population size in Mexico.

Playa del Carmen is located within the Riviera Maya, which runs from south of Cancún to Tulum and the Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve. Playa is a stop for several cruise ships which dock at the nearby Calica quarry docks, about six miles (10 km) south of the city. The Xcaret Eco Park, a Mexican-themed "eco-archaeological park", is a popular tourist destination located just south of the town in Xcaret.

In October 2005, Hurricane Wilma passed directly over Playa del Carmen, remaining in the vicinity for two days and causing significant damage and a temporary drop in tourist arrivals.



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...Paa Mul



Paa Mul Trailer Park

Most of the damage was relatively superficial and repaired within a few weeks of the storm. Hurricane Wilma arrived from the Caribbean Sea, passing over Cozumel before making land-fall in Playa del Carmen. It then moved north along the Mexican coast, hitting Cancún especially hard.

Originally a small fishing town (like Cabo San Lucas), tourism to Playa del Carmen began with the passenger ferry service to Cozumel, an island across the Cozumel Channel and a world-famous scuba diving destination. Playa del Carmen has recently undergone extreme rapid development with new luxury residential condominium buildings, restaurants, boutiques and entertainment venues. Tourist activity in Playa del Carmen centers on Quinta Avenida, or Fifth Avenue, which stretches from Calle 1 norte to Calle 40. A pedestrian walkway located just one or two blocks inland from the beach, Fifth Avenue is lined with hundreds of shops, bars and restaurants. There are many small boutique hotels on and just off Fifth Avenue and on the beach. Playacar is a residential and tourist development in Playa del Carmen just south of the main urban area. Most of the all-inclusive hotels, the aviary and the golf course are located in this development. There are two phases—phase 1 is mostly residential with a few hotels and some stores, while phase 2 contains the largest all-inclusive resorts as well as the golf course and a significant number of residential properties.

The city is home to Inter Playa del Carmen, an association football club founded in 1999, which competes in the south group of the Segunda División Profesional, the third tier of Mexican

football league system. The OHL Classic at Mayakoba is a PGA Tour golf tournament held at El Camaleón Golf Club since 2007. The telenovela Peregrina takes place in Playa del Carmen and the “The Real Housewives of Vancouver” featured Playa del Carmen in two episodes. “The Amazing Race has shot on location in Playa del Carmen” and the Celebrity Mole was set in the Playa del Carmen area. In addition, the UK Reality Series “Geordie Shore” featured Playa del Carmen. Playa del Carmen is host to several major annual events, the largest of these was The BPM Festival, a world-famous electronic dance music festival which, up until recently, took place in January each year.



Paa Mul Hotel and Trailer Park beach (East)

### Tulum

Tulum is the site of a pre-Columbian Mayan walled city serving as a major port for Cobá, in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo. The ruins are situated on 12-meter (39 ft) tall cliffs along the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula on the Caribbean Sea in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexico. Tulum was one of the last cities built and inhabited by the Maya; it was at its height between the 13th and 15th centuries and managed to survive about 70 years after the Spanish began occupying Mexico. Old World diseases brought by the Spanish settlers appear to have resulted in very high fatalities, disrupting the society and eventually causing the city to be abandoned. One of the best-preserved coastal Maya sites, Tulum is today a popular site for tourists.

This Maya site may formerly have been known by the name Zama, meaning City of Dawn, because it faces the sunrise. Tulum stands on a bluff facing east toward the Caribbean Sea. Tulum

...Paa Mul



Paa Mul Hotel and Trailer Park beach (West)

is also the Yucatan Mayan word for fence, wall or trench. The walls surrounding the site allowed the Tulum fort to be defended against invasions. Tulum had access to both land and sea trade routes, making it an important trade hub, especially for obsidian.

From numerous depictions in murals and other works around the site, Tulum appears to have been an important site for the worship of the Diving or Descending god. Tulum was first mentioned by Juan Díaz, a member of Juan de Grijalva's Spanish expedition of 1518, the first Europeans to spot Tulum. The first detailed description of the ruins was published by John Lloyd

Stephens and Frederick Catherwood in 1843 in the book Incidents of Travel in Yucatan. As they arrived from the sea, Stephens and Catherwood first saw a tall building that impressed them greatly, most likely the great Castillo of the site. They made accurate maps of the site's walls, and Catherwood made sketches of the Castillo and several other buildings. Stephens and Catherwood also reported an early classic stele at the site, with an inscribed date of AD 564 (now in the British Museum's collection). This has been interpreted as meaning that the stele was likely built elsewhere and brought to Tulum to be reused. Work conducted at Tulum continued with that of Sylvanus Morley and George P. Howe, beginning in 1913. They worked to restore and open the public beaches. The work was continued by the Carnegie Institution from 1916 to 1922, Samuel Lothrop in 1924 who also mapped the site, Miguel Ángel Fernández in the late 1930s and early 1940s, William Sanders in 1956, and then later in the 1970s by Arthur G. Miller.

Both coastal and land routes converged at Tulum and a number of artifacts found in or near the site show contacts with areas all over Central Mexico and Central America. Copper artifacts from the Mexican highlands have been found near the site, as have flint artifacts, ceramics, incense burners, and gold objects from all over the Yucatán. Salt and textiles were among some of the goods brought by traders to Tulum by sea that would be dispersed inland. Typical exported goods included

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...Paa Mul



Happy hour at Paa Mul Trailer Park

feathers and copper objects that came from inland sources. These goods could be transported by sea to rivers such as the Río Motagua and the Río Usumacinta/Pasión system, which could be traveled inland, giving seafaring canoes access to both the highlands and the lowlands.

The Río Motagua starts from the highlands of Guatemala and empties into the Caribbean. The Río Pasión/Ucamacincta river system also originates in the Guatemalan highlands and empties into the Gulf of Mexico. It may have been one of these seafaring canoes that Christopher Columbus first encountered off the shores of the Bay Islands of Honduras. Jade and obsidian appear to be some of the more valuable found here.

The obsidian would have been brought from Ixtepeque in northern Guatemala, which was nearly 700 kilometers (430 mi) away from Tulum. This huge distance, coupled with the density of obsidian found at the site, show that Tulum was a major center for the trading of obsidian.

This beach at Tulum is protected for nesting sea turtles; Quintana Roo, Mexico. Tulum archaeological site is relatively compact compared with many other Maya sites in the vicinity and is one of the best-preserved coastal Maya sites. Its proximity to the modern tourism developments along the Mexican Caribbean coastline and its short distance from Cancún and the surrounding "Riviera Maya" has made it a popular Maya tourist site in the Yucatan. Daily tour buses bring a constant stream of visitors to the site.

The Tulum ruins are the third most-visited archaeological site in Mexico, after Teotihuacan and Chichen Itza, receiving over 2.2 million visitors in 2017. A large number of cenotes are located in the Tulum area such as Maya Blue, Naharon, Temple of Doom, Tortuga, Vacaha, Grand Cenote, Abejas, Nohoch Kiin and Carwash cenotes and cave systems. The tourist destination is now divided into four main areas: the archaeological site, the pueblo (or town), the zona hotelera (or hotel zone) and the biosphere reserve of Sian Ka'an.

In 1995, tourism came to a brief halt as the powerful Hurricane Roxanne pounded into Tulum, packing 115 mph winds. Damage was moderate and the Mexicans soon had things back to normal.



Mike on the SUP, Paa Mul reefs

A word to the wise: **Paa mul Beach**

- This is a sandy beach with some exposed limestone
- Footwear is required in most water entry areas
- There's more sand on the south side of the beach for easier water entry
- Snorkeling and swimming are recommended when the seas are calm

However, it's really the offshore coral reef that remains among the most breathtaking and well-preserved attractions on the Paa mul beach. Zigzagging through the crystalline waters of the Caribbean close to the shore, the reef can easily be explored.

... more pics follow

...Paa Mul



Dan with friends in Playa del Carmen, shopping corridor

Beachfront arch, Playa del Carmen



Lots of traffic on this corridor

...Paa Mul



Janice and Roland visiting Tulum



Graffiti art in Playa del Carmen

Gang at the RV park in Paa Mul



Mural at Playa del Carmen



...Paa Mul



Tulum resident - Coatimundi



Tulum info board



Playa del Carmen tourist corridor



Art at the roundabout in Playa del Carmen



Our gang enjoying the Paa Mul Restaurant

...Paa Mul



Rafael and Eileen met up with Eileen's sister and husband in Playa del Carmen



Only in Mexico police checkpoint



Anita gets her hair braided in Playa del Carmen



Tulum beachfront

...Paa Mul



Great lunch stop



Tulum archeological site



Paa Mul sunrise



Paa Mul pool and restaurant



Walkway art in Playa del Carmen

Submitted by Dan and Lisa Goy  
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Experiences from our 90-day Mexico RV Tour:  
January 7-April 5, 2016  
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## Chicken Salad in Avocado

### Ingredients

- ✓ 2 avocados, pitted
- ✓ 2 c. shredded rotisserie chicken
- ✓ 1/4 c. red onion, minced
- ✓ 1/3 c. mayonnaise
- ✓ 2 tbsp. Greek yogurt
- ✓ Juice of 1 lemon
- ✓ 1 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- ✓ Kosher salt
- ✓ Freshly ground black pepper
- ✓ Chopped parsley, for garnish

### Directions

Scoop out avocados, leaving a small border. Dice avocado and set aside.

Make chicken salad: In a large bowl, mix together chicken, onion, mayo, Greek yogurt, lemon juice, and mustard. Fold in avocado. Season with salt and pepper.

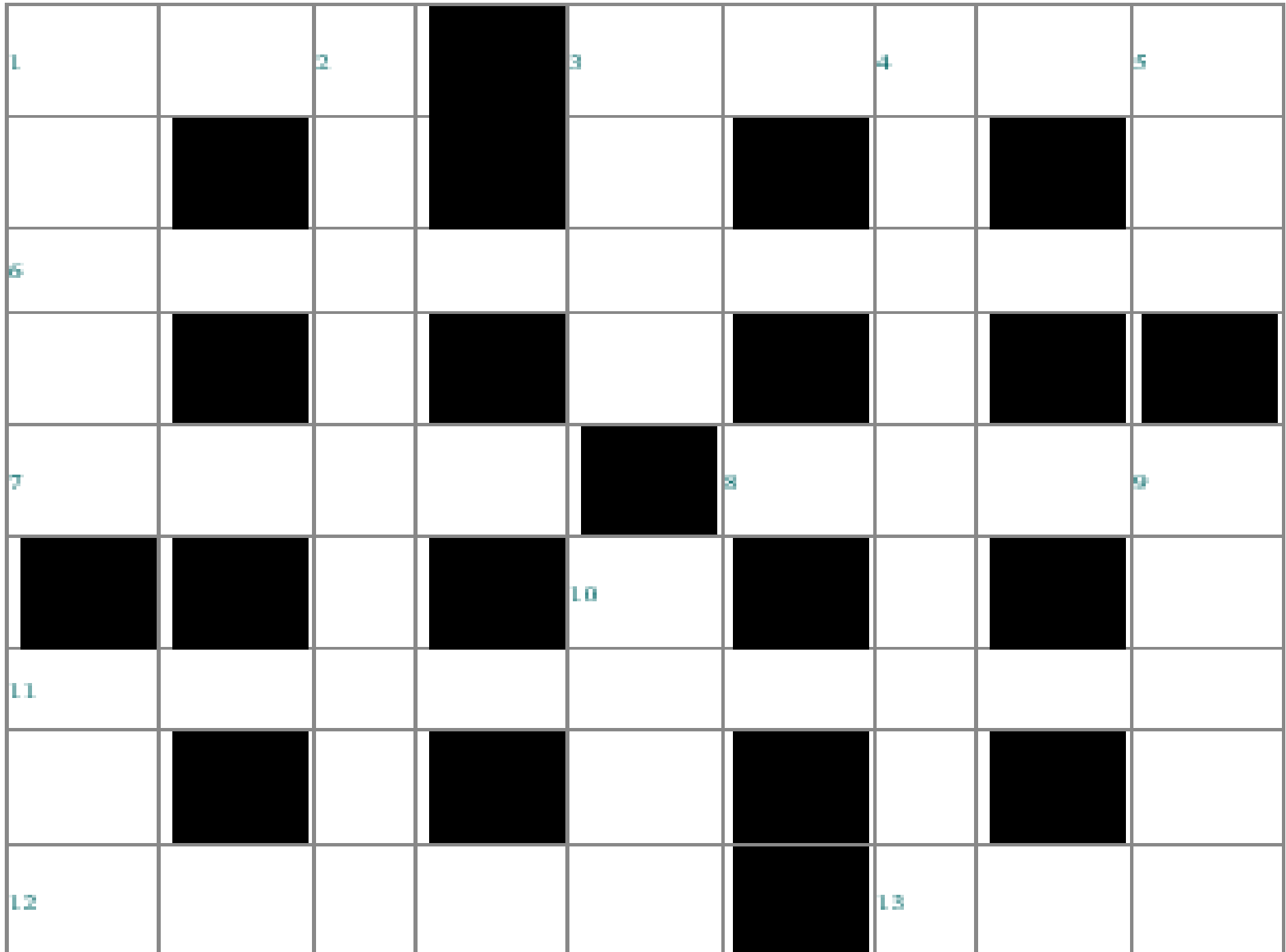
Divide salad among 4 avocado halves. Garnish with parsley.

Recipe and photo credit: Delish.com



Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition



Across

- 1 (you/tú) go
- 3 boat
- 6 patience
- 7 rare, strange
- 8 six
- 11 property
- 12 nine
- 13 to be (in essence, identified as)

Down

- 1 steam
- 2 priest
- 3 well, properly
- 4 memories
- 5 (you/usted) were hearing, (I) was hearing
- 9 sweat
- 10 (I) did, made
- 11 bread

Last month's crossword solution:





## Cinco de Mayo

from the Path to Citizenship series

Cinco de Mayo, Spanish for "Fifth of May", is an annual celebration held on May 5. The date is observed to commemorate the Mexican Army's unlikely victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla, on May 5, 1862, under the leadership of General Ignacio Zaragoza.

In the United States, Cinco de Mayo has taken on a significance beyond that in Mexico. In the US, the date has become associated with the celebration of Mexican-American culture. In Mexico, the commemoration of the battle continues to be mostly ceremonial, such as through military parades.

In the United States, Cinco de Mayo is sometimes mistaken for Mexico's Independence Day - the most important national holiday in Mexico - which is celebrated on September 16, commemorating the Cry of Dolores that initiated the war of Mexican independence from Spain.

Cinco de Mayo has its roots in the French occupation of Mexico, which took place in the aftermath of the Mexican - American War of 1846 - 48 and the 1858 - 61 Reform War.

The Reform War was a civil war which pitted Liberals (who believed in separation of church and state, and freedom of religion) against the Conservatives (who favored a tight bond between the Roman Catholic Church and the Mexican State).

These wars nearly bankrupted the Mexican Treasury. On July 17, 1861, Mexican President Benito Juárez issued a moratorium in which all foreign debt payments would be suspended for two years.



In response, Britain, France, and Spain sent naval forces to Veracruz to demand reimbursement. Britain and Spain negotiated with Mexico and withdrew, but France, at the time ruled by Napoleon III, decided to use the opportunity to establish an empire in Mexico that would favor French interests, the Second Mexican Empire.

The empire was part of an envisioned "Latin America" (term used to imply cultural kinship of the region with France) that would rebuild French influence in the American continent and exclude Anglophone - American territories.

Source: Wikipedia, read the [full story here](#)

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

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