



coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine

Shaving Brush Tree Flower
Las Brisas, Manzanillo
photo by Allan Yanitski

Around Manzanillo
History and Mythology
Good Deeds
RV Travel
Nature's Wonders
So Much to See
Food and Drink
Learn Spanish
Path to Citizenship



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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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Flores en las Calles de Manzanillo

story and photos by Allan Yanitski

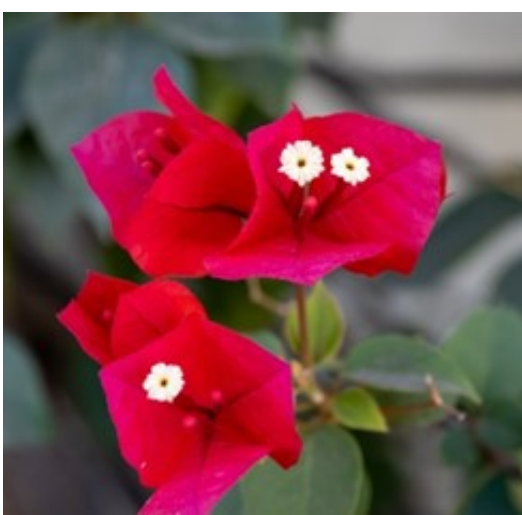
Life in the times of COVID has been a challenge for everyone. Those of us that have chosen to live in Manzanillo are able to get our exercise walking the boulevards relatively safely in a near perfect climate during the winter months. Over the past two months, while walking with my wife, I have started to collect photos of the flora on the streets.

We live in Manzanillo full time so it will be interesting to see how the foliage changes over the different seasons. When we were snowbirds, we never thought about seasonal changes. As an example, the Primavera (*Tabebuia donnel-smithii*) only flowers between January and March. We have seen lines of these on the highway and the visual effect is spectacular.



Primavera (*Tabebuia donnel-smithii*)

Each time we walk along the boulevard, we continually find new surprises. Bougainvillea Bushes (*Bougainvillea glabra*) do very well in Manzanillo, and they are plentiful. The flowers are resplendent in deep reds, coral, purple, orange, ivory, yellow, and blue.



Of course, there are numerous other species on display for us to enjoy on our walks. Between the municipality, homeowners, restaurants and condominium complexes, these trees, shrubs and flowers adorn the walls, sidewalks and the boulevard.

I have been a photography enthusiast for over 50 years, to the extent that I had planned to build a darkroom in my home and develop and enlarge my negatives when I retired. Fortunately, the digital revolution took photography to a new level. The positive aspect of digital photography is that there are more photos than this article will allow.

A link at the end of this article takes you to the numerous other street photos of Manzanillo.

Our initial walks in Las Brisas were solely on the main Boulevard (Avenida General Lázaro Cárdenas). This is where the majority of the plants, shrubs and trees are located. As we strayed off the main street, we saw two distinct community layouts. The northern area, a block from the Kiosko and Monster Burger, is the town square.

The square has a pavilion in the centre and the streets support vehicular traffic with thin sidewalks for pedestrians. Numerous shops and businesses are located here. At the southern end of Las Brisas (close to the naval base), we found a network of non-vehicle alleyways with parks interspersed between the homes. We did not see many people during our walks, but the few we did see were friendly.

...Flores en las Calles de Manzanillo

The majority of the businesses in this part of Las Brisas are either located on the main avenue or at the northern perimeter of the naval base and at the back entrance to the soccer stands.

Over the past few years, there has been an explosion of new restaurants. Serving everything from breakfast, tacos to gourmet service, you can satisfy your hunger pangs after your walk.

The following photos were taken on the main avenue. I wish to credit Google Lens and Wikipedia for the identification and descriptions of the plants.



Catharanthus is a genus of flowering plant in the Apocynaceae family.

Like the genus Vinca, they are known commonly as periwinkles.

These are perennial herbs with oppositely, or almost oppositely, arranged leaves. Flowers are usually solitary in the leaf axils. Each has a calyx with five long, narrow lobes and a corolla with a tubular throat and five lobes.

Catharanthus roseus, is a main source of vinca alkaloids. The plant produces about 130 of these compounds, including vinblastine and vincristine, two drugs used to treat cancer.



Hibiscus is a genus of flowering plants in the mallow family, Malvaceae. The genus is quite large, comprising several hundred species.

These are native to warm temperate, subtropical and tropical regions throughout the world. Member species are renowned for their large, showy flowers and those species are commonly known simply as "hibiscus".

A tea made from hibiscus flowers is known by many names around the world and is served both hot and cold. The beverage is known for its red colour, tart flavour, and vitamin C content. Locally, it is known as Jamaica (pronounced hamike a).



Bauhinia monandra is a species of leguminous trees, of the family Fabaceae. Common names include pink bauhinia, orchid tree, and Napoleon's plume.

Naturally they grow in Madagascar, but have naturalised in Burma, Australia, Christmas Island, the Caribbean, southern USA and the Pacific Islands. The species is invasive in New Caledonia.



Bougainvillea is an evergreen, climbing shrub with thick, thorny stems and drooping branches that are glabrous or sparsely hairy. It needs full sunlight, warm weather and well-drained soil to flower well.

The species is often used in culture, in areas with frost in glass houses, otherwise outdoors. The similar *Bougainvillea spectabilis*, which differs from *Bougainvillea glabra* by the velvety-felty underside of the leaves, is also cultivated, but less frequently. It usually grows 10-12 ft (3.0-3.7 m) tall, occasionally up to 30 ft (9 m). Tiny white flowers usually appear in clusters surrounded by colorful papery bracts, hence the name paperflower.

Being of medical importance, the infusion of the plant's tender leaves and bracts is used orally to treat gastrointestinal problems (diarrhoea, stomach pain), and respiratory conditions (asthma, bronchitis, catarrh, chest pain, fever, pneumonia, whooping cough).

...Flores en las Calles de Manzanillo



Pseudobombax ellipticum, with common names including shaving brush tree, Dr. Seuss tree, and amapolla tree, is a species of plant, subfamily Bombacoideae of the family Malvaceae.

The beautiful tree is native to southern Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Hispaniola, Honduras and Cuba.

Pseudobombax ellipticum is a tree that can reach 18 m (60 ft) in height and 1.3 m (4 ft) in width. Its branches are close to the base of the stem. It is a deciduous tree with succulent stems. Each of the flowers can produce hundreds of tiny black seeds (.1mm) that germinate within approximately 30 days.

The flowers are fragrant and if peeled back are quite sticky. Uses include firewood and wood for carving handicrafts. The attractive flowers are used to decorate homes and churches in Central America.



Codiaeum variegatum (fire croton, garden croton, or variegated croton; syn. *Croton variegatum* L.) is a species of plant in the genus *Codiaeum*, and is a member of the family Euphorbiaceae. In tropical climates, crotons make attractive hedges and potted patio specimens, valued for their striking foliage.

The colour patterns may follow the veins or the margins, or be in blotches on the leaf.

When cut, stems bleed a milky sap like many of the Euphorbiaceae. The sap can cause eczema in some people. The bark, roots, latex and leaves are poisonous. The toxin is the chemical compound 5-deoxyingenol. The plant contains an oil which is violently purgative and is suspected of being a carcinogen. Consumption of the seeds can be fatal to children.



Petrea volubilis, commonly known as purple wreath, queen's wreath, sandpaper vine, and nilmani, is an evergreen flowering vine in the family Verbenaceae, native to Tropical America, that is valued especially for its display of violet flowers.

As a climbing plant, it grows to a height of 12 metres, but as a shrub it grows to 4 metres tall. In temperate climates, *Petrea volubilis* prefers full sun and it can tolerate shade, although it will not flower profusely. It handles a very light and fleeting frost at temperatures down to -2 ° C, but beyond this threshold the plant would die. It thrives in well drained, fertile soils and can tolerate drought.

The Wayapi ethnic group traditionally uses a preparation with sap to treat burns, wounds, inflammation and abscesses, and in the Caribbean, it is used to treat diarrhea.



Thunbergia grandiflora is an evergreen vine in the family Acanthaceae.

Common names include Bengal clockvine, Bengal trumpet, blue skyflower, blue thunbergia, blue trumpetvine, clockvine, skyflower and skyvine.

Plants may grow to about 20 metres in height and have a long root system with a deep taproot. The stalked, opposite leaves, which have a rough surface, are quite variable in shape. They may be triangular or ovate and the margins may be toothed, lobed or entire. Length is up to 20 cm and width is up to 6 cm.

The species has become a serious environmental weed in Australia, on disturbed land along watercourses, and in the wet tropics where it smothers other vegetation. It is commonly seen north of Sydney where it has been cultivated for many years.

...Flores en las Calles de Manzanillo



Allamanda cathartica, commonly called golden trumpet, common trumpetvine, and yellow allamanda, is a species of flowering plant of the genus *Allamanda* in the family Apocynaceae.

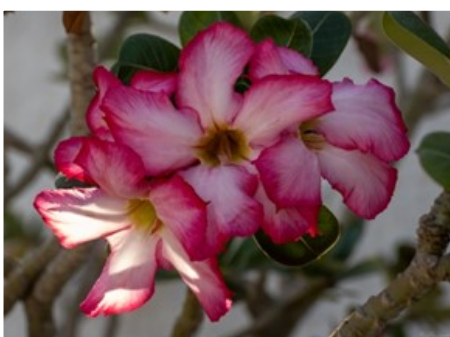
It does not twine, nor does it have tendrils or aerial roots. It can be pruned into a shrub form. If not pruned, it can sprawl to a height of 20 feet.

The city of Canóvanas, Puerto Rico has adopted this species, known locally as canario amarillo, as its official flower.



Delonix regia is a species of flowering plant in the bean family Fabaceae, subfamily Caesalpinioideae native to Madagascar.

It is noted for its fern-like leaves and flamboyant display of orange-red flowers over summer. In many tropical parts of the world, it is grown as an ornamental tree and, in English, it is given the name royal poinciana, flamboyant, flame of the forest, or flame tree (one of several species given this name). In addition to its ornamental value, it is also a useful shade tree in tropical conditions, because it usually grows to a modest height (mostly 5 m or 15 ft, but it can reach a maximum height of 12 m or 40 ft).



Adenium obesum is a poisonous species of flowering plant belonging to tribe Nerieae of subfamily Apocynoideae of the dogbane family, Apocynaceae,

that is native to the Sahel regions, south of the Sahara (from Mauritania and Senegal to Sudan), and tropical and subtropical eastern and southern Africa and Arabia.

Common names include Sabi star, kudu, mock azalea, impala lily and desert rose.



Ixora coccinea (also known as jungle geranium, flame of the woods or jungle flame or pendkuli) is a species of flowering plant in the family Rubiaceae.

Although there are around 500 species in the genus *Ixora*, only a handful are commonly cultivated, and the common name, *Ixora*, is usually used for *I. coccinea*. *I. coccinea* is used in warm climates for hedges and screens, foundation plantings, massed in flowering beds, or grown as a specimen shrub or small tree.



Leucophyllum frutescens is an evergreen shrub in the figwort family, Scrophulariaceae, native to the state of Texas in the southwestern United States and the states of Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas in northern Mexico.

Although commonly known as Texas sage, it is not a true sage and is distinct from the genus *Salvia*. The species is also called Texas Ranger, Texas rain sage, cenizo, Texas silverleaf, Texas barometerbush, ash-bush, wild lilac, purple sage, senisa, cenicilla, palo cenizo, or hierba del cenizo.

Texas sage is a popular ornamental plant, commonly used for edge and area plantings in warmer and drier areas; it requires minimal water, is easily shaped into hedges, and blooms over the entire surface.

It is available in a variety of cultivars, including 'Green Cloud', 'White Cloud', 'Compacta', 'Convent', and 'Bert-Star'. *L. frutescens* is a host plant for the caterpillars of the theona checkerspot and calleta silkmoth.

...Flores en las Calles de Manzanillo



Kerria japonica, also known as the Japanese marigold bush or miracle marigold bush in the northern New England area and as yamabuki in Japan, is a deciduous shrub in the rose family Rosaceae, Kerria is valued in gardens for its golden yellow flowers, which appear in the spring.

It is best grown with some shade from full sunlight to avoid blanching the flowers and needs to be pruned after flowering to maintain health and vigour.

The flowers are golden yellow, with five petals, and evenly-spaced along branches of new green growth. The fruit is a dry single-seeded achene 4 - 4.5 mm long.



Plumbago auriculata, the cape leadwort, blue plumbago or Cape plumbago, is a species of flowering plant in the family Plumbaginaceae, native to South Africa.

Plumbago auriculata is an evergreen shrub, often grown as a climber, ascending rapidly to 6 m (20 ft) tall by 3 m (10 ft) wide in nature, though much smaller when cultivated as a houseplant.

The leaves are a glossy green and grow to 5 cm (2 in) long. The stems are long, thin and climbing. The leaves alternate and are 2 - 5 cm while the five petals are about 2 cm wide and can be pale blue, blue or violet in color.

Disclaimer: I am not a botanist; I just play one on the internet. If you find any discrepancies with the information above, please write an email and I will update the information in future articles.

There are far more species and varieties on the street. Earlier in the article, I wrote that a link to additional photos is available for viewing.

[Click on this link and enjoy!](#)



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A Mayan Rabbit Story

story by Kirby Vickery

I have found that when I dig into the internet, which is my main source of information and stories these days, you can find just about any kind of a story to fit just about any situation. You can also find those that don't seem to relate to anything and are just fun to read.

Sometimes, you run across some really short stories that profess to be part of the Mesoamerica's Mr. Rabbit litany but are not, or shouldn't be, more for their corniness or veracity. Sometimes, I doubt the originality of some of these stories.

Although the fact remains that if they are real, then you have to give some Mayan or Toltec priest a lot of credit for their imagination. Take the following story I found the other day, along with four others on a web site that professes this story as being one of the authentic Mesoamerican children's stories:

The Rabbit and the Crab

Once upon a time, the rabbit joined with the crab to grow some carrots. They worked for several days together. First, they chose the seeds and then they prepared a field to plant them. After that was accomplished, they carefully planted the carrot seeds. Then, they took care of the young plants. It should be noted that the two of them were always in agreement. Finally, they harvested the crop and separated the tops from the carrots.

Then the arguments began when the time came to divide the crop. The rabbit decided that he wanted most of the crop and initiated a plan to deceive the crab with sweet talk:

"You see, friend Crab, that we have two piles consisting of different sizes. The larger one is for you and I'll take the small one."



A Mayan Codex

Now the Crab wasn't a dummy and could see that the big pile was all tops and the small one had all the carrots.

The crab raised his claws as he was apt to do and said. "Thank you very much, my dear rabbit friend, but as I am a fair being, I think we should divide the two piles in half. Either let me divide and you choose, or you divide and I'll choose, either way. What do you say?"

"Oh no! I cannot agree to that" said the rabbit. "Let us walk some ninety maitl (a 'maitl' is the distance from one fingertip to the other with your arms held out straight to your sides) from here and we'll come back running. The first one to get back here gets the carrots and the other one gets the tops. What do you say?"

"Yes, I will agree to that. It seems fair to me." Answered the crab.

...A Mayan Rabbit Story



A Mayan rabbit

"Finally we're in agreement!" said the rabbit. He was very happy, because he was sure he was going to win. "I'm so pleased about this that, if you win, I'm prepared to give you all the carrots and all the tops. Do you agree?"

"I agree!" Repeated the crab.

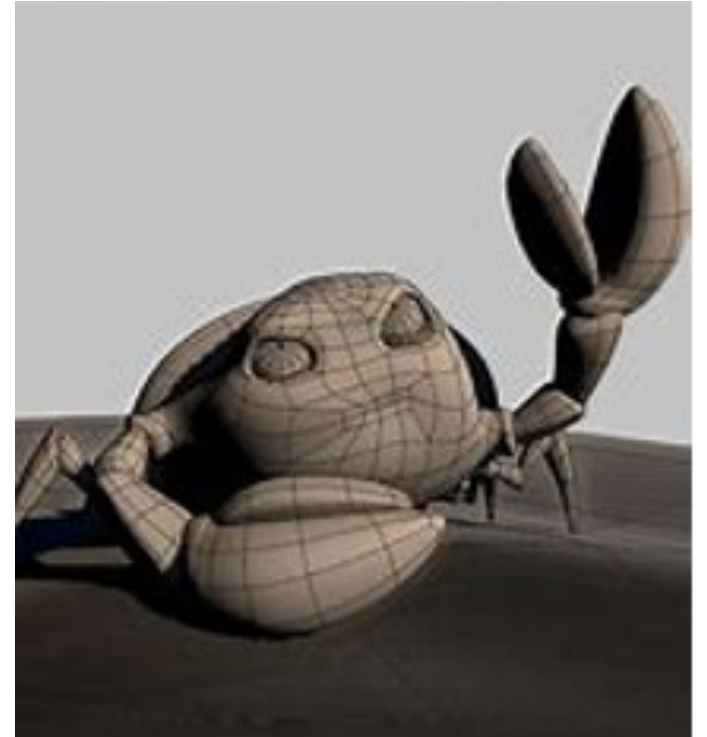
"There's one other thing," said the rabbit. "Since I know you're slower than me, I'm going to give you a ten-pace head start."

"Mr. Rabbit, my friend, thank you very much but, that's too much! I can't accept that" said the crab, while pretending that he didn't want to take advantage of him. "You're the one that ought to have a ten-pace handicap and I won't take no for an answer."

The rabbit hastened to agree, not wanting to cause any alienation between the two of them. That way the other fellow wouldn't get angry.

Off they went together in a friendly fashion with this agreement to the place where the race was going to start. Then the rabbit went ahead to take the ten-pace handicap.

However, as soon as he turned his back, the crab, who was neither slow nor lazy, grabbed the rabbit's tail with his claws, without the rabbit realizing it.



A Mayan crab?

When they arrived at the carrots, the rabbit quickly turned around thinking that he had left the crab far behind in the dust like he did when he raced the turtle in another story. But, as he turned, the crab opened his claws and fell quietly on top of the carrot mound.

"Where are you, Mr. Crab, my friend?" The rabbit asked happily when he didn't see him anywhere.

"Here I am!" answered the crab while behind him sitting on the pile of carrots.

The rabbit jumped up with great surprise and then stood there frozen in his tracks. He couldn't believe what he saw. There was the crab, sitting on the pile of carrots.

"Here I am! And I got here before you did!" the crab taunted.

...A Mayan Rabbit Story

That day was the second time ever that the rabbit had lost a race. He was very sad because he could not understand how the crab got ahead of him. That's how the crab got to keep the carrots.

That is almost the story of the rabbit and the crab. What we know of the Mayan, Toltec, and Aztec comes to us through various 'Codices' that Cortés and his army didn't get to destroy. These were written records and stories written on Mesoamerican bark paper. These leftover manuscripts are still being found, mostly in Europe. Some have little stories in them and some of these little fables are "sold" to the public as being genuine tales coming from the books.

The language used will vary depending on the archaeologist's ability to translate (and my reconstruction for the Manzanillo Sun.) Some are fake as is this one. How do I know?

Although there was an indigenous carrot plant in the "New World", it wasn't anything that anyone would want to plant. Real carrots, and there are several with different shapes and colors, were introduced by the Spanish on the island of Margarita which is located off the coast of Venezuela, in 1565, and later into the Thirteen Colonies during the 1600s. However.

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Story & Photos
by
John Chalmers

Among the many operations in the Manzanillo area that have suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are community-related and charitable organizations. One such example is the Santiago Foundation, which operates two Learning Centers to give children and adults alike a leg up with the many opportunities offered.

In both the Francisco Villa district of Santiago in the urban area of Manzanillo and in the small town of El Naranjo near the city, facilities of the Santiago Foundation are used to provide educational and skill-building courses in after-school programs. Training is offered in both general interest and job-related subjects. These include instruction in tap dancing, cooking, sewing, quilting and making jewelry and piñatas. Courses in cosmetology and carpentry can lead to jobs and English taught at the centers helps to open opportunities in many areas.

In addition to providing instruction, the Santiago Foundation provides scholarships for secondary school and university and for skills to support job training and to foster Mexican culture. Funds raised are used to pay staff and provide maintenance for the two centers operated by the Foundation.

This year, due to the pandemic, the annual "Festiago" gala dinner event which is normally attended by some 200 guests who have the opportunity to bid on items in silent and live auctions, regrettably has been cancelled.

As well, an annual rummage sale has been cancelled due to lack of donations, and other fundraising events have been put on hold. In previous years, an open house event at El Naranjo has provided a showcase for the work done by students.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an annual fund raising "Festiago" gala dinner and auction event held was cancelled, resulting in a loss of income normally generated by that special occasion.



A silent auction before the annual dinner provided opportunity to purchase a wide variety of donated items, and following the dinner the live auction added color to the festive event.

...Combatting COVID with Crowdfunding

Despite the loss of revenue in 2021, the cost of maintaining the Learning Centers still continues. To cope with loss of funding from the annual dinner and rummage sale, a crowdfunding campaign has been started. Donations can be made online and the campaign can be reached when you [click here](#). Your contribution will enable the Santiago Foundation to continue the work it began when it was formed 38 years ago, in 1983, to serve the Manzanillo community.

There are several ways to provide financial support for the Santiago Foundation. One way is to contribute to the crowdfunding campaign by clicking on the link above. If you shop online at Amazon, a portion of the purchase price is donated to the Foundation when you shop through [smile.amazon.com](#). Just designate Santiago Foundation as the beneficiary to add your support.

In 2013, the Benefactor Circle was introduced. It made possible the construction of a new roof at the El Naranjo facility and purchase of tools and supplies for the carpentry program. "The Benefactor Circle allowed us to accumulate a small cushion which we have used for extraordinary needs and events due to weather and aging facilities," says board treasurer, Joyce Murphy.

"With the loss of revenue from our annual dinner and auction, as well as the strict COVID restrictions on public gatherings, we are left with few options for fundraising this year." For information on the Benefactor Circle, contact Joyce at joycemurph@hotmail.com.

The Santiago Foundation is a registered non-profit organization (USA and Mexico). In a normal year, as many as 600 students benefit from attending classes at the Foundation's two Learning Centers. Financial support for the Santiago Foundation, when donated through its web site at www.santiagofoundation.net is eligible for tax-deductible donations.

Even though fundraising events in 2021 have been cancelled, and activity has been very substantially reduced at the Learning Centers, teachers have still been paid, as income they earn is crucial to the well-being of their families. The board wanted to continue acknowledging the teachers' loyalty to Santiago Foundation, which is entirely funded by private donations, with no funding available from government. Thus, your contribution is an investment in education, skill development and job opportunity for the Manzanillo community.

you can reach John at john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com

... more pics follow



Staff of the Vida del Mar condominium development load their truck to transport donated clothing and household items for the rummage sale at El Naranjo to support the Santiago Foundation.



Workers from Vida del Mar are ready to deliver the first truckload of items to the rummage sale in 2020. Sadly, like the annual gala dinner, the sale was cancelled in 2021.

...Combatting COVID with Crowdfunding



Clothing and household items donated for the rummage sale, and displayed both on tables and the plaza at the Santiago Foundation facility in El Naranjo were popular with customers.



In 2020, a special fundraising drive made possible a complete renovation of the kitchen at the El Naranjo facility, from the floor to the walls and windows, equipping it with all new commercial-grade food preparation areas and appliances. Additional funds to be raised will enable renovation of the kitchen at the Francisco Villa facility.



Guitar music and song from young musicians at El Naranjo entertained everyone who attended the 2020 open house showcase displaying results of the many courses offered by the Santiago Foundation. Olga, the guitar teacher for many years, has brought her students to Vida del Mar many times to play for the Christmas caroling celebration.

...Combatting COVID with Crowdfunding



The results of cooking classes are clearly evident in the tasty-looking products made by the students, and displayed at the open house.



Items made from students attending the knitting classes include functional goods such as sweaters, tops, shawls and blankets.



Bracelets, earrings and necklaces are among the items produced in the jewelry classes, offered among the many subjects of personal interest.



Carpentry classes teach construction in woodworking to produce items ranging from toys to functional and decorative items.



The popularity of quilting classes with volunteer instructor Chris Newbold, at left, is seen in both quilts and padded tote bags made by students.



Many types of items are decorated with colorful embroidery designs. Hanging in the background are piñatas made for special occasions.

...Combatting COVID with Crowdfunding



With hair and makeup done by cosmetology students, girls in swirling skirts of traditional design were part of the open house entertainment that reflected Mexican culture and heritage.



The instructor leads cosmetology students to show the results of their work in hair and makeup, as well as in dress design and construction.



The open house event highlights recognition of success in courses for both youngsters and adults who receive graduation certificates for completing a program, as have these students, shown with their teacher.



The open house event at the El Naranjo facility of Santiago Foundation provides opportunity for young people to present skits in English that they wrote for the occasion to demonstrate their proficiency in learning English.



At the open house event, instructional staff and volunteer members of the board of directors are thanked publicly for their contributions to the success of the diverse courses offered by the Santiago Foundation. At center, wearing sunglasses, is board chair Jeanne Bradner. To her left is treasurer Joyce Murphy.

LAND FOR SALE

Manzanillo, Colima

Currently part of the orchid nursery Viveplants.com

LOCATION:

Located in Ejido La Central, municipality of Manzanillo. Only at 950 meters distance from Federal Highway No. 200, Manzanillo-Cihuatlán.

Only 8 km away from Santiago Bay.
Coordinates: 5H28 + 3W

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Total area of 7,084 hectares.
- It has an office and packing shed of approximately 1,794 m².
- 5 hectares of Ataulfo mango orchard in productive age. (Currently being exported to Canada)
- The property has water rights of 186,000 m³ per year, from a deep well located on adjacent land.
- It has a non-ejidal property title (deed).
- It has good access to internet, electricity and septic tank.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

In the last decade the municipality of Manzanillo has experienced an accelerated urban growth driven mainly by the port activity. The Ejido La Central valley, where this property is located, represents the main future option to continue this urban growth. This guarantees a good capital gain in the value of this property in the medium term, which could also be used to build a countryside development, since it is located next to the orchid nursery and has a beautiful view of the hills "El toro" y "La vaca".

Contact us:
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WhatsApp or phone calls:
(+52) 314-1030-138

Value: \$20,000,000 (Pesos MXN)



La Peñita RV Resort

by Dan and Lisa Goy

La Peñita de Jaltemba, Nayarit

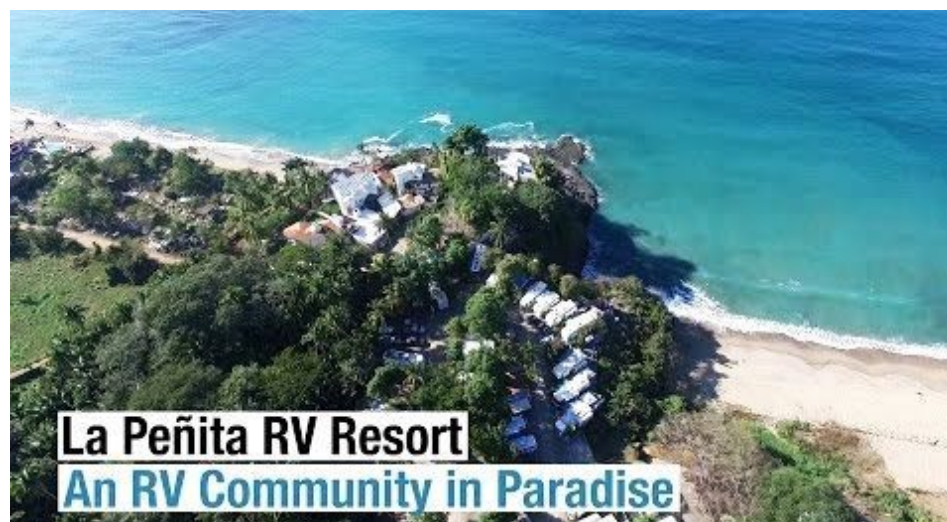
In the fall of 2018, we included the La Peñita RV Park as one of our many stops on our first 45-day mainland Mexico tour. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay and were so impressed that, following the tour, we returned for the remainder of the winter and booked in again for January, February and March 2020. Our scheduled return in November of 2020 was canceled, of course, because of COVID-19 and the international border closures, something we hope never to repeat after spending 15 consecutive winters in Mexico. To date, we have shoveled snow 15 times since our first snowfall October 28.

The La Peñita RV Park is located within what is referred to as Riviera Nayarit. Stretching north from Puerto Vallarta's International Airport, Riviera Nayarit is a beach destination of 200 miles of pristine Pacific coastline, dotted with dozens of seaside coastal towns and pueblos boasting lush, rugged mountain peaks, nature sanctuaries, golden sand, palm-fringed beaches, RV parks and luxurious resort hotels. What snowbirds and vacationers alike love about Riviera Nayarit is this region of Mexico is marked by a predominately sub-humid climate and an annual average temperature of 25°C (77°F) throughout the winter.

Sunshine and clear blue skies predominate ninety-five percent of this season and this creates the ideal environment for the growth of exuberant flora that take on intense colorful hues and beautifully paint the land. On every Nayarit beach, in every little Pacific Coast town, you'll find Mexico's lush vegetation, the extraordinary animal species and friendly people.

Campgrounds and RV parks can be found as far north as the community of San Blas to the outskirts of Puerto Vallarta, winding along the Pacific coastline through the municipalities of Banderas Bay, Compostela, San Blas, Santiago and Tecuala. Depending on the RV snowbird destination, there are many different options to drop down from Hwy 15D to the coast, including a new toll bypass under construction as we write this article.

The La Peñita RV Park is in the town of La Peñita de Jaltemba, on Jaltemba Bay, about 60 km (40 miles) north of Puerto Vallarta and has a private gate that provides direct access to the village. Canadians Carole and Grant took over the management of the campground after first visiting with their parents, decades ago.



With 120 spaces, there is plenty of room although a space was hard to find in January of the 2019/2020 season. The village of La Peñita de Jaltemba provides shopping, restaurants, a weekly market and many other services. The entrance is well signed on Mex 200 between KM 91 and KM 92. The Church's describe La Peñita like this:

Mike & Terri Church (Page 64 – Traveler's Guide to Mexican Camping)

"This campground is a little different than the others in the area. It is located on a small hill above, but close to, a nice beach. The facilities are good and this is a very friendly and popular park. It's also one of the best-managed parks in the country. Reservations are important for long stays but it's possible to stop in here for a few days without them, particularly early or late in the season.

Campsites are spread all along the hillside on terraces. There are about 120 spaces. Most have full utilities (15 amp outlets) and some have patios. There is plenty of room for big rigs. There is lots of shade and some sites have great views of the coast and the beach below. Restrooms have hot showers and there is even a swimming pool.

There's very inexpensive phone service to the US and Canada, and also DSL Wi-Fi which reaches throughout the park. Activities include frequent water volleyball games, tours and special nights for hamburgers and pizza. There's almost always something going on in this park. Monthly rates here are lower for multiple-month stays." **4th Edition** (Copyright 2009)

...La Peñita RV Park



La Peñita RV Park

For us, we particularly enjoy the pool and started the "La Peñita Floating Club" which consists of a daily migration to the pool after lunch and sitting in our floating chairs for an hour or so. We are joined by others and sometimes the event includes some swimming. Other features very important to us are the daily laundry service with same-day delivery, Taco Tuesdays, Tuesday propane pickup, twice-weekly green grocer delivery, twice-weekly bakery truck, daily water delivery, Friday beer can races, washer toss on Sundays Sunday hamburger/hot dog night, and so much more. Special events include the Valentine's Day Costume Dinner and the Super Bowl Sunday Pot Luck. Some of these are features of the park, most are organized by volunteers within La Peñita.

The park population supports many good causes in the community such as a breast cancer clinic held yearly on the first weekend in February in La Peñita de Jaltemba. These efforts are designed to help women survive breast cancer with comfort and dignity. Volunteers from the park supply women with a breast prosthesis, mastectomy bras, lymphedema sleeves, wigs, hats, scarves and love. There is also a survivor program for local women while they are undergoing treatment. This is just one of many good causes the La Peñita RV Park community supports. Last season, the park was treated by a drive-by of the Guadalajara Auto Club of unique and collectable cars, the 20th Rally Costa Del Sol which was much appreciated by everyone.

The town of La Peñita de Jaltemba is a real treasure and the commercial center of the tiny bay area. It has a bank and an ATM outlet. There are a few general grocery stores, butcher shops and other food and tourist-trinket stores along the main street, the Avenida - the Avenue - as the locals call it. The formal name is Avenida Emiliano Zapata, named after the Mexican Revolutionary hero who fought for land reform.

La Peñita is arguably larger than the other communities and therefore has more shops and stores than the communities to the south.

It has a population of approximately 7,000 people and, during the November to April tourist season, swells by another 2,000 to 3,000 people. What we like the best is that the town is decidedly Mexican. Often there will be parades with colorful costumes, kids in marching bands, banners and flags. Celebrations can close down a street, occupy the town square or blast into the night. Fireworks going off intermittently during some festivals often keep folks on their toes at night.



La Peñita RV Park upper patio

One of the main ways merchants advertise is with a vehicle, usually a dilapidated car, with a blaring speaker system. They drive up and down the street announcing this bargain or that, from shrimp, tamales and elotes, to events and community warnings. Of course, there are the gas trucks that frequent the streets with similar speaker systems belting out the familiar jingle or simply the word "GAS!" When the circus comes to town, promoters drive animal trailer cages through the street. It is very strange to see a couple of Bengal tigers drive by as you eat lunch at one of the many eateries.

One of La Peñita's major attractions is the "Tianguis" or open-air market. Every Thursday, rain or shine, the market attracts locals and visitors to the town. Artisans sell their crafts: pottery, jewelry, fabrics, baskets, purses. Food vendors sell fish and shrimp, veggies and fruit, breads and herbs as well as prepared market food such as large plastic cups filled to the brim with a fruit salad. The market also specializes in clothes, used clothes, \$10 peso stores (similar to a dollar store), household tools and small equipment.

...La Peñita RV Park

You can purchase everything from flower pots to gas stove parts, blender pieces to baseball caps or purchase real estate. This is a diverse market with a wide range of customers.



Park office

Separated by a river to the south, Estero Zarco, Rincón de Guayabitos lies in the centre of the three towns. Rincón de Guayabitos name is derived from the Spanish meaning Inside Corner of the Guavas. This is in reference to the guavas orchards of the past that inhabited the corner of Jaltemba Bay. The town was developed for Mexican middle class tourists and later for foreign residents.

The Avenida del Sol connects the two as it twists and turns through the town's residential area and then past the police, square and church, through the commercial area. The town is a hub for small hotels and bungalows, usually a one- or two-bedroom apartment with a small kitchen. These are perfect for the Mexican family vacationers that travel from the interior. This community also has RV parks full of snowbirds. We have many friends staying somewhere in this community.



The beach at La Peñita



Parked at La Peñita

The residential area of Rincón de Guayabitos is where the majority of Americans and Canadians have built their houses. There are small, modest casitas to million-dollar oceanfront homes. While the intention was never to be commercial, bed and breakfasts, small bungalows and hotels have invaded the quiet neighborhood. There is an ecological park, beach access, tennis and pickleball courts.

The Guayabitos beach is a circular half-moon of sand that stretches from Estero Zarco past the residential area down and around the commercial sector. It is an entertaining beach with a number of vendors that keep things lively. Of course, there are a number of small entrepreneurs that sell, like everywhere in Mexico, jewelry from briefcases, tablecloths and T-shirts. They also sell beach toys, umbrellas, fish on a stick, nuts, oysters and tattoos. A favorite are the huge blown-up beach toys in the shape of sharks, lobsters, airplanes and the traditional round lifesaver, all in florescent blue, pinks and greens.

We have a couple of favorite day-trip spots we visit during our stay at La Peñita. One is a village a little farther south, full of snowbird RVers with a great beach, Lo de Marcos. This is another small authentic Mexican town with wide, calm streets, colorful flowering trees, brilliantly painted façades and friendly people. The other is Chacala, 30 minutes north of the park. This beach town is set in a small cove on the Pacific coast near the pueblo Las Varas with a population of approximately 300 full-time residents. Chacala is known for its physical beauty and unhurried lifestyle. This place is all about the beach and seaside restaurants. They also have a large parking and dry camping area. We always stay a couple of days southbound and northbound at Chacala on our travels to La Peñita.

Submitted by
 Dan and Lisa Goy
 Baja Amigos RV
 Caravan Tours
www.BajaAmigos.net

... more pics follow

...La Peñita RV Park



Dan kayaking



Dry camping Chacala



Lisa, Kelly and Lulu at Chacala

...La Peñita RV Park



Bill and Brooke at Chacala



Chacala dry camping beach area



Dry camping area at Chacala beach



Our dry camping spot - Chacala



A walk from the park into town

...La Peñita RV Park



La Peñita bread truck



La Peñita guests galore



Joel, Louise and Lisa



Iguana in the tree above La Peñita RV park camp site



Volleyball in the pool at La Peñita



Valentine's Day dinner at La Peñita

...La Peñita RV Park



Lisa getting her face painted for the event



Lisa with the face painting artist



Left: Roland and Janice



Above: Group happy hour at La Peñita



Lo de Marcos beach



RV park in Lo de Marcos

...La Peñita RV Park



Roland tending bar on Dan's 65th birthday in La Peñita



You've got to love the propeller!



Auto rally in the park

Nice old Ford





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by Tommy Clarkson

Mexican Sunflower *Tithonia rotundifolia*

Family *Asteraceae*

Also known as Goldflower of the Incas, Red Sunflower or Mexican Marigold

(Inasmuch as most of my regular readers and garden visitors know that, in fact, I was just an old Midwest US kid who enjoys rootin' in the dirt, I'm going to name drop now! This morning, while returning from a leisurely, morning walk with my visiting buddy from Hawaii, Dr. Arthur Whistler - the renowned botanical author who is, in the guest bedroom below me, at this very moment, working on his seventeenth book on tropical plants and after whom no fewer than nine plants that he's discovered have been named -glanced upon and commented on a Mexican Sunflower. Now these are not yet, technically, growing right here in Ola Brisa Gardens. But, they were seen close by and (though they are annuals) I may endeavor to start some specimens from seed for planting across the street. Besides that, I realized I'd not, heretofore, written about this attractive, ornamental wildflower. So, I decided to do so!)

Firstly, as Art has properly described them in his book *Tropical Ornaments*, with their year-round blooming flowers are comprised of "large, terminal heads borne on thickened stalks, (with) each head surrounded by two series of ovate bracts with ray florets mostly (comprised of) ten to fourteen, obovate to elliptic, 1.5-3.3 cm (5/8-1 ¼ inches) long (and being) reddish-orange to yellow-orange" in color, the *Tithonia rotundifolia* does, indeed, look "sunflowery"!



Like the Kansas Sunflowers of my youth, their floral heads are heliotropes in that they face the sun throughout the day.

In an article in [Southern Living](#), I read of the Mexican Sunflower described as a "rather coarse plant with velvety green leaves (and) spectacular, gaudy flowers, (growing) rapidly to six feet (1.83 meters) tall, four feet (1.22 meters) wide."

Kirsten Albrecht Llamas cites, in her excellent, large publication [Tropical Flowering Plants](#), that there are ten to eleven species in the *Tithonia* genus, all being "annual and perennial herbs and shrubs from Mexico and Central America (with) floral heads (that) are rotate, solitary or in small clusters on long stalks."

She continues that they are "called *mirsal* (looks-at-the-sun) in Spanish, referring to the rotation of the floral head toward the sun (heliotropism) throughout the day." (*That sure sounds like the State flower of Kansas - where I spent my youth - to me!*)

In a more functional description of it and its gardening uses, Neil Sperry says, in the second edition of [Texas Gardening](#), "(it is an) "outstanding background plant but (is) quite coarse-textured for prime real estate spaces." He adds that it (is) a delightful plant when used in moderation."

Susan Mahr, of the University of Wisconsin-Extension Service, did a masterful job of further plant-specific description saying

...Mexican Sunflower



One writer described The Mexican Sunflower is a "rather coarse plant with velvety green leaves (and) spectacular, gaudy flowers, (growing) rapidly to six feet tall, four feet wide." (I think that somewhat insulting "coarse" part is not necessary!)

that it has "a large central stalk and a somewhat gangly branching habit. The stems can be brittle.

The dark green leaves are ovate to deltoid (triangular) in shape, with serrate to crenate margins. The coarse leaves are usually entire, but occasionally will be three lobed. The foliage and stems are covered with a soft, downy fuzz, and the underside of the leaves are hairy."

She continues with "The solitary flowers are borne on fragile hollow peduncles (flower stems) that are susceptible to being bent and are often broken by birds. Each 3-inch blossom has a number of bright red-to-orange ray flowers surrounding the central yellow disk flowers.

The flowers are attractive to a wide variety of bees, butterflies (a particular favorite of Monarchs) and hummingbirds, and can be used as cut flowers. Deadheading spent flowers will prolong blooming.

The flowers are followed by grey-to-black flattened triangular seeds that are easy to collect, to save and to grow in subsequent years."

This low-maintenance, heat-tolerant character grows best in full sun, with a medium amount of moisture. Interestingly, it prefers poor-to-average, well-draining soil in which to make its home. Relative to this, I'd suggest that one avoid planting them in rich soil or doing all that much fertilizing of them.



The dusty appearance of the leaves is just that! This wild growth is next to a nearby, much used, dusty road!

Pinch back plants to encourage bushier growth and sturdier plants, otherwise they might fall over from being too top heavy and/or lacking sturdy-enough stalks. Even so, they often need to be staked to remain healthy looking and correctly upright. You also may want to shelter your Mexican Sunflowers from strong winds. But, you'll be pleased to know they have few pest problems and that they reseed themselves generously!

In the "oh, by the way" category of facts, the genus is named for Tithonus, a young man much loved by Aurora, the dawn goddess!

Get your copy of The Civilized Jungle: Tropical Plants Facts and Fun From Ola Brisa Gardens [Volume I](#), and now [Volume II](#) is here!!

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you can reach Tommy Clarkson at tommy@manzanillosun.com



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Photos from vaccination campaigns in El Naranjo and Miramar



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Yelapa

places the editors have been and recommend you visit

Nestled in the southernmost cove of the world's 7th largest bay, lies the peaceful village of Yelapa, Jalisco, Mexico. Although there is a road which leads to the pueblo, it is most easily accessible by boat. Transportation to the village departs daily from various locations in the Puerto Vallarta area.

Yelapa's tranquillity is ideal for those looking to stay, for that entirely laid-back vacation. The beach is covered in a blanket of golden sand, and is a superb place to swim, snorkel, or parasail. If you are not that energetic you can just relax in one of the numerous beach chairs, soak up the sun, and enjoy a cold drink.



Yelapa - the definition of paradise
Photo by tceagle, Panoramio

The road is used mostly for the delivery of building materials used by the community. The most widely used method of travel to and from the pueblo is by boat.



Yelapa Beach
photo by E B Fladung III, Flickr



Map of Yelapa and area, courtesy of Yelapa.info

To travel to Yelapa, you must first go to Puerto Vallarta, which is located on the west coast of Mexico (see map below). Once you are in Vallarta, you can take different types of boat travel to Yelapa. There are no cars in Yelapa, although there is a road which leads to the outskirts of the village.

Instructions on how to get to Yelapa and much more can be found at Yelapa.info

Find the original article and many more about Yelapa [at this link](#)



by Tommy Clarkson

Physic Nut *Jatropha integerrima* – or, possibly, *J. pastada* or *J. coccinea*

Family *Euphorbiaceae*

Also known as Nettlespurge or Rose-flowered Jatropha

Ever in search of new species of tropical or semi-tropical plants that will complement the others in our gardens, I was recently delighted to come upon this perennial - but was rather puzzled regarding its botanical specifics. (*Actually, this is a writer's classic way of saying that, in point of actuality, I had no idea whatsoever what it was!*)

Thus, I was delighted when I narrowed its identification to the family of *Jatropha* - with help from Dr. Mark Olson and Dr. Arthur Whistler.

(Now, to a degree, that begs an interesting question. Technically speaking, can someone rather significantly junior in age - but vastly more educated, experienced and knowledgeable in this field than me - still be called such? Well, given the breadth and depth of his plant awareness - to say nothing of his generosity and willingness to share all manner of tropical botanical plant information with me, I must most absolutely say, a definite, yes!)

Along with the name, he kindly informed me that, "You are in a *Jatropha* hotspot, with at least six wild species in the area, including the super charismatic *Jatropha chamelensis*, which has a big trunk with golden papery bark and leaves like huge, green, dinner plates."



They can develop interesting leaves that look like horns!

Beyond that, those who have copies of Volume I and II of our book series - based on plants in our Ola Brisa Gardens - "The Civilized Jungle," will recall that the Gout Plant (*Jatropha podagrica*) was discussed in the former and the Coral Plant (*Jatropha multifida*) in the latter.

Hence, it should logically follow that *Jatropha coccinea* should be in Volume III. (*Now to decide when to write about *Jatropha curcas*, *J. gossypifolia*, *J. integerrima*, *J. ortegae* and some of the others with which I am more personally familiar!*)

The some 150 species in this genus range from smallish herbs, through medium-sized shrubs to smaller, tree-sized plants. Some are perennials while yet others are annuals. Tropical and semi-tropical in nature, they range all around the world. Perhaps their greatest diversity may be found in Africa and the Americas. They prefer sandy, non-water retaining soil and can be propagated by either cuttings or seed.

Their primary commonality is the similarity of their flower structures. They like sun to partial shade and regular watering. They can be all monoecious (meaning that they have both male and female flowers on the same plant or dioecious (on different plants). These blooms are found most attractive by butterflies. Moreover, while all parts of the plant are poisonous, the seeds from them is being studied as a potential fuel alternative! I kid you not!

...Physic Nut



In maturity, they can grow into a small sized tree.

Prone to more sun than shade, our new specimen is the subject of an experiment. It is presently nestled in a hanging basket on the southeastern side of our dining palapa. Its neighbors - on that side - include a lush fern, an intriguing vine that I have yet to identify, a Christmas Cactus, a carnivorous Pitcher Plant and a white Geranium. (*Yes, I readily admit the latter to not being "tropical per se" but my Grandmother (Rose Unruh) loved them, so it is there in her honor!*)

So far, it has done rather well but we will have to study the effects of a full year of seasonal sun direction change.

The medium-sized leaves of this species - and for what reason I have no idea - cause the word "elfin" to come to mind! They are a bit unique . . . and rather attractive, with their two "pointy-outy" (*Don't you love it when I use these highly technical botanical terms?*) spiked sides on the upper part of the lamina (blade, or the principle part which most of us folks think of as the leaf proper) not far down from the stem!

These - all by themselves - keep the leaf from having the more classical, oval shape. They are pretty, in a leaf sort of way, pure, simple and basic green in colorization. The smallish flowers are five-leaved, full and pinkish.



Its smallish flowers are five-leaved, full and pinkish.

Now, though we've had our specimen not all that long, my suggestions as to properly growing and maintaining a *Jatropha coccinea* would be in moderate to slightly filtered sunlight - not protracted hours of hot sun - definitely planted in well-draining soil, and watering once it begins to dry out (via proper usage of a hydrometer) about three to four inches down into the roots and applying a general floral fertilizer monthly.

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Tuba - A Manzanillo Favourite

The hot and humid climate of the Pacific is not like anything else. You can walk through the streets with light clothing, and you will still have to hydrate to enjoy the trip. Fortunately, there is a Colima gastronomic drink that refreshes any overheated person: the *tuba*. It is the honey or sap extracted from the heart of palm trees. As a product of a cultural mixing, and with a lot of history, *tuba* conquers any overheated soul and then some when it is mixed with peanuts.

Like the entire Pacific coast, the Filipino influence on cuisine is very evident thanks to the *Nao de China*. With it came, among other things, the palms that give rise to this delight.

La Nao de China (the alternative name for the ship, *Galeón de Manila*) greatly influenced Colima's gastronomic culture. At the time of the viceroyalty, this ship sailed from the Philippines and towards Acapulco stopping at Manzanillo, where the first products and people disembarked. This is how the palm or coconut tree began to be cultivated, from which the migrants produced a drink called coconut wine or *lambalong*.



Tuba

This fermented wine was related to the *pulquero* mead already known to the natives: the heart had to be scraped to extract a sweet and nutritious liquid. The coconut wine had such a high alcohol content that it was banned and the tradition of producing it was forgotten.

But part of the history survives as a sweet drink in the mornings and a little more acidic if it is extracted in the afternoons: what today we know as *tuba*.



Don Leo

Today it is a symbol of *Colimota* identity. Even in the main garden of the city of Colima there is a monument dedicated to the tuberos that shows them with their traditional clothing and their vessel, a kind of giant gourd where the *tuba* is stored to keep fresh.

Leonardo Morán Moreno, alias "Don Leo", has spent 77 years of his life producing *tuba*. He has been a boxer, cook and bartender, but climbing palm trees has always been a constant. While singing and reciting verses, he climbs some steps that he himself carved into the trunk of the palms; all this happens in the middle of the city, specifically in one of the main avenues of the city of Colima, the roundabout of *El Charro*.

Once in the palm vessel, he begins to scrape the stem and extracts the liquid with a hose that leads to a small jug. Somehow juggling all, with great skill, he comes down from the palm with the yet unprepared *tuba*. DonLeo extracts *tuba* twice a day; the first is a little sweeter and is served for breakfast with a special bread called *birote*. The second already has more acid notes, but is still just as good.

To be sold, it is tinted with beets and pieces of fresh fruit are added to balance the sweetness of the mead. To complete the equation, you need an element that adds a bit of salt and consistency to the *tuba*; that's where peanuts are added.

Something happens the moment you take a sip; the world truly becomes a cooler place.

See more about tuba [in this video](#).

Source [AnimalGourmet](#)

Photos and article by Paloma García Castillejos

Crossword

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

Across

- 1 train
- 3 (I) do
- 7 autumn
- 8 to give
- 9 banana
- 13 to be
- 14 (I) add
- 16 love
- 17 (I) wash

Down

- 1 uncles
- 2 echo
- 4 (they) burn
- 5 other; another
- 6 to show
- 10 long; length
- 11 island
- 12 monkey
- 15 handle

Last month's crossword solution:

1	t	o	2	c	a		3	p	4	a	s	5	o
	o		e			6	b		s				l
7	d	a	s				8	a	ñ	a	d	e	
	o		t		l								r
		9	h	a	b	l	á	10	i	s			
11	o						e		n			12	a
13	c	a	14	s	a	n			15	d	a	r	
	h		o		a			i					d
16	o	l	l	a			17	t	o	s	o		

lexisrex.com

Las Adelitas

Female Soldiers in the Mexicanion

from the Path to Citizenship series
article and images from Wikimedia

Soldaderas, often called Adelitas, were women in the military who participated in the conflict of the Mexican Revolution, ranging from commanding officers to combatants to camp followers. "In many respects, the Mexican revolution was not only a men's but a women's revolution." Although some revolutionary women achieved officer status, *coronelas*, "there are no reports of a woman achieving the rank of general."

Since revolutionary armies did not have formal ranks, some women officers were called *generala* or *coronela*, even though they commanded relatively few men. A number of women took male identities, dressing as men, and being called by the male version of their given name, among them Ángel Jiménez and Amelio Robles Ávila.



Representación de una Adelita
Author ProtoplasmaKid, Wikimedia

The largest numbers of soldaderas were in Northern Mexico, where both the Federal Army (until its demise in 1914) and the revolutionary armies needed them to provision soldiers by obtaining and cooking food, nursing the wounded, and promoting social cohesion.

In area of Morelos where Emiliano Zapata led revolutionary campesinos, the forces were primarily defensive and based in peasant villages, less like the organized armies of movement of Northern Mexico than seasonal guerrilla warfare. "Contingents of soldaderas were not necessary because at any moment Zapatista soldiers could take refuge in a nearby village."

The term soldadera is derived from the Spanish word *soldada*, which denotes a payment made to the person who provided for a soldier's well-being. In fact, most soldaderas "who were either blood relations or companions of a soldier usually earned no economic recompense for their work, just like those women who did domestic work in their own home."

Soldaderas had been a part of Mexican military long before the Mexican Revolution; however, numbers increased dramatically with the outbreak of the revolution. The revolution saw the emergence of a few female combatants and fewer commanding officers (*coronelas*). *Soldaderas* and *coronelas* are now often lumped together.

Soldaderas as camp followers performed vital tasks such as taking care of the male soldiers: cooking, cleaning, setting up camp, cleaning their weapons, and so forth.

For *soldaderas*, the Mexican Revolution was their greatest time in history. *Soldaderas* came from various social backgrounds, with those "to emerge from obscurity belonged to the middle class and played a prominent role in the political movement that led to the revolution." Most were likely lower class, rural, mestizo and Native women about whom little is known.

Despite the emphasis on female combatants, without the female camp followers, the armies fighting in the Revolution would have been much worse off. When Pancho Villa banned soldaderas from his elite corps of Dorados within his División del Norte, the incidence of rape increased.

They joined the revolution for many different reasons; however, joining was not always voluntary.