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Manzanillo

SUN

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

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on our featured articles are always
welcome.*

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Submissions for possible inclusion
in the magazine, please send to the
editor by 20th of each month.
We are always looking for writers
or ideas on what you would like us
to write about in the magazine.
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Tommy Clarkson



King Alexander Palm, *Archontophoenix alexandre*

Family: Arecaceae

(Also known as Alexandra Palm, Alexandra King Palm, Alexander Palm, King Palm, Northern Bangalow Palm and the Alex Palm.)

As perhaps the foremost Guru of palm trees, Robert Lee Raffle, has stated, these “are some of the world’s most beautiful trees, palm or otherwise.”

Yet, that having been said, there are similar looking palms as they’re sometimes confused with the Solitaire Palm (*Ptychosperma elegans*) or the Hurricane Palm (*Dictyosperma album*). In fact, there are actually six species in this genus with all sharing the common name of King Palm.

The name for this species was derived from an honor bestowed upon Princess Alexandra of Denmark (1844-1925). It and its five relatives are tall and slender with unarmed feather leaf fronds which look quite similar to the fronds of a coconut palm frond while its trunk of the palm looks similar to the Manila (or Christmas) Palm.

Native to the coastal rainforest of northern Queensland to southeastern New South Wales in Australia, it is a single-trunked, self-cleaning and virtually maintenance free palm. In the wild it grows up to 18-25 meters (60-80’) but it is more usually seen at a domesticated height of between six to nine meters (20-30’). In its native environs it often grows in lowland swamp forests but just to show that it’s not stuck in just one neighborhood, it can also be found happily living at altitudes up to 600 meters.



The numerous stages in the inflorescence of the King Alexander is intriguing and a singular delight to watch unfold

I've read that it is purported to be the fastest growing of all cultivated palms but in *Ola Brisa Gardens* I have several others that will certainly give it a run for its money in this category! It has a medium sized, ringed, light gray to olive-green straight trunk 30.5 to 46 cm (1-1.5') in diameter with a slightly enlarged base topped with a bright green crownshaft composed of tightly wrapped pinnate leaf-bases. This, up to 90 cm (three feet) crownshaft is smooth and ranges in color form light green to purplish or a brownish red.

Though occasionally sold as an indoor palm, they should not be as they have a need for much sun and, simply, don't care for the, generally, dry atmosphere of indoors.

The Mount Lewis Palm (*Archontophoenix purpurea*) is slightly different than its five siblings in that it has a crownshaft that is more bulbous at its base and is a reddish purple in color. Another of this genre, the Bangalow or Piccabeen Palm - and by some also called the King Palm - (*archontophoenix cunninghamiana*) displays lilac-purple flowers.

Its crown of eight to twelve large, graceful leaves, each 1.8 - 3 meters (six to ten feet) long and comprised of 100 or more closely spaced, narrow, drooping and

strongly ribbed leaflets, is light green above and have a deep-green, grayish green, blue-green color or silver color on the underside. and, when mature can be six meters (20') across. They grow from the rachis in a single plane with it twisting near its middle providing an absolutely wonderful angle for the leaf giving it - again in the words of Riffle - "a sense of movement even in still air."

Its numerous white clusters on pendent spikes encircle the trunk directly below the crownshaft sporting small white or nearly white unisexual (of both sexes) creamy-white flowers. These are followed by small, bright red fruits.

It works well as a single specimen landscape palm, nice when planted along streets or is quite pleasing in appearance when grouped with others. Sometimes planted in a tub they are effectively employed on verandas or patios. And, as a rainforest palm, it likes regular moisture and prefers a rich, deep, humusy, organic yet fast draining soil. It thrives in partial sun when young and but can handle full sun as a mature specimen.

As was my condition when but a tender, impressionable youth, its heart is vulnerable to fatal shattering. In the King Alexander Palm's case, it may be when the crown is subjected to undue stress while being moved or transplanted. It is also susceptible to leaf-tip burn from drying winds.

One must not forget that it likes to be watered during the dry season and responds well to fertilization at least twice a year. So beyond drought, cold and drying winds are its enemies. The three things it likes: good air circulation, high relative humidity, and bright sunshine when no longer young. With such it will grow at least a vertical foot a year.

Long live the King!

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Tommy Clarkson

Madagascar Palm, *Pachypodium lamerei*

Family: Apocynaceae

Also known as: Devil's Backscratcher

The genus of *Pachypodium* are shrubby succulents, most of which have thick, prickly stems, strap-like leaves and five-petaled, funnel-shaped flowers terminal clusters.

The unique Madagascar Palm combines features of both palms and cactus and your guess as to its origin is correct – in the southern part of that unique island. It is the biggest species in the family and, interestingly, attractive kin of Plumerias.

It is a long liver (as opposed, I suppose, to a short spleen) and to say that it likes warm environs and sun is to state the obvious. It sports thick, thorny stems with a cluster tuft of narrow leaves near its top. The flowers are fragrant, white with yellow-throats and are about four inches (10 cm) across.

Drought-tolerant, it is a good choice for xeriscaping – but, of course, plant in well-draining soil. However, I have heard of one gardener in South Texas, who heavily watered his Madagascar Palms every other day and gave them fertilizer (probably something like a 10-60-10) weekly, resulting in plants that were so fast growing that he had to regularly take top cutting to keep them from growing too large! That having been said, I have read of other gardeners who have very healthy specimens of 16-17 feet (4.9 to 5.2 meters) tall. The norm for a mature specimen, however, would be one of, perhaps, ten to twelve feet (3 to 3.3 meters).



With wider, more rounded tip leaves, this is another species of *Pachypodium* but I've yet to identify it!

The silvery gray to tan trunk is generally swollen at the base and – looking like in inverted carrot – tapers with height. Very sharp, one inch (2 ½ cm) long gray to black spines are grouped in threes. As earlier mentioned, atop the plant are – generally no more than – two to three dozen, linear-elliptic, slightly arching leaves. These are from ten to eighteen inches (25 ½ to 46 cm) long and are a deep green color with a slightly lighter colored, prominent, mid ridge. The flowers grow from the middle of this leaf crown.

The easiest way to propagate these is from stem cuttings. However, make sure that the cut surface is calloused over before planting. Starting from seeds is a wholly different proposition. To most effectively do so, bag the plant's seed heads to capture the ripening seeds. Allow these twin horned pods to dry on the plant after which you may break them open to collect the seeds.

You might consider soaking these seeds in warm water for 24 hours prior to planting. *Pachypodium lamerei* seeds do not store well, so I encourage you to sow them as soon as you are able. One last propagation option is in the small branch-like offshoots that sometimes appear at the base of the plant. These can be removed to produce new plants.

Branching occurs naturally in Madagascar palms that have suffered an injury, though mature plants occasionally branch without being damaged. Such happens primarily in older specimens and will come about after blooming. Ones planted outdoors are more likely to flower and branch than those grown indoors.

You may be able to induce branching by cutting the top of the plant. However, this process requires injuring the center of the spiral from which the leaves normally grow. So, if you choose this method, use a sterile knife to reduce the risk of infection. Most Madagascar palms recover from this operation but there's always a possibility the "patient" won't survive the ordeal.

(Caution: In that its spines are extremely sharp and in ample abundance on its trunk, these plants should be planted away from foot traffic.)

Though not common, if your Madagascar Palm shows signs of disease or pest infestation, remove the damaged parts.

These are moderate growers, though they often take off quickly once ensconced in your garden. In a container the growth rate will be slower. If your Madagascar Palm's home is a pot you will need to move up in size every three years or so. This is bit of a challenge as a result of those needle-like spines. Perhaps the best procedure is to wrap several layers of newspaper around the trunk where it is to be handled.

A few confuse the Madagascar Palm with the Half-Man or Ghost Palm, (*P. namaquanum*) or the Elephant's Foot Plant, (*P. rosulatum*). But this latter one should not be further confused with the Elephant's Foot or Ponytail Palm, *Beaucarnea recurvata* – which is not a palm but a succulent.

(Yes, it all sometimes becomes most befuddling!)



For a headdress the Madagascar Palm sports a cluster tuft of narrow leaves near its top.



Thick, prickly stems indeed!

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AT THE MOVIES

Suzanne A. Marshall

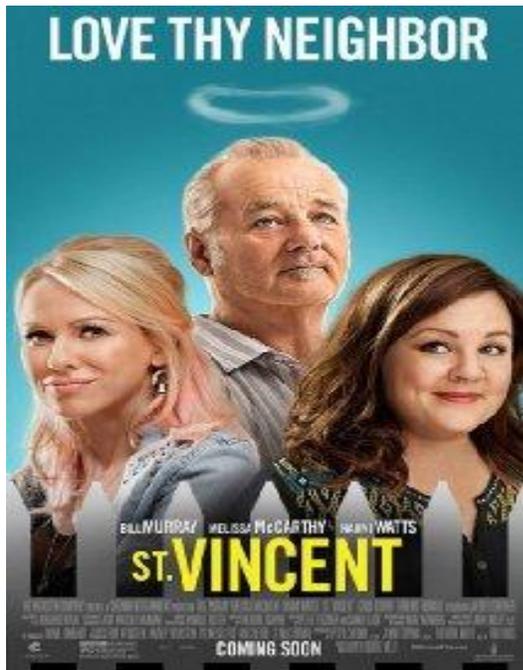
St. Vincent

Starring: Bill Murray, Melissa McCarthy, Naomi Watts
Directed by: Theodore Melfi (and screenplay)

“A young boy whose parents have just divorced finds an unlikely friend and mentor in the misanthropic, bawdy, hedonistic war veteran who lives next door.”

This is a ‘feel good’ movie and who doesn’t want to feel good? Bill Murray and the cast play wonderful roles and I give particular mention to Naomi Watts who is so tarty and funny, as well as the young boy played by Jaeden Lieberher in his role as Oliver; delivered with such innocent seriousness. It’s a cute story with a message and one that all audiences will relate to. You’ll feel good when the movie ends.

Bill Murray has been nominated for both a Golden Globe and Oscar award in this role.



The IMDB ratings have given this film a 7.3/10 rating based on 20,000+ viewer votes

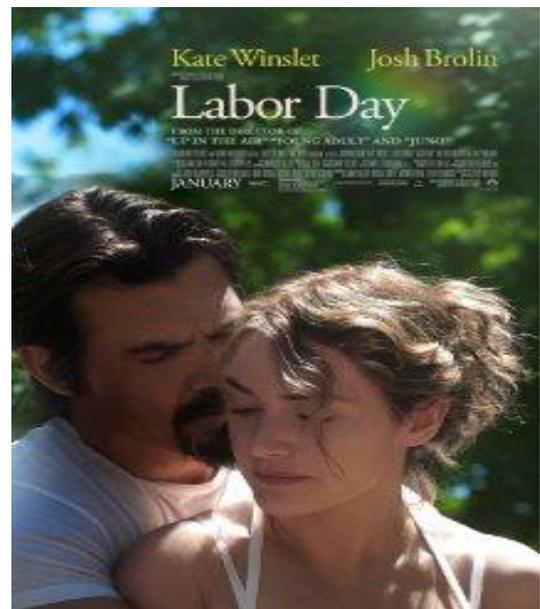
Labor Day (2013)

Starring: Kate Winslet, Josh Brolin, Gattlin Griffith, Tobey Maguire
Directed by: Jason Reitman

“Depressed single mom Adele and her son Henry offer a wounded, fearsome man a ride. As police search town for the wounded convict, the mother and son gradually learn his true story as their options become increasingly limited.”

The story is based on a novel by Joyce Maynard. It turned out to be quite engaging thanks to its really solid performances. Though a little far-fetched, it managed to subtly interweave the lives of the characters and the many circumstances leading up to their encounter. The characters themselves became quite engaging as the movie progressed.

I really loved the way the movie was shot and edited so that it was natural looking, a little romantic and empathetic to its characters. I would recommend this movie as worthy of a nice evening watch. Enjoy.



IMDB rate this movie as 6.9/10 based on the votes of 22,190 users.

From Time to Time (2009)

Starring: Maggie Smith, Alex Etel, Timothy Spall, Pauline Collins

Directed by: Julian Fellowes

“A haunting ghost story spanning two worlds, two centuries apart. When 13 year old Tolly finds he can mysteriously travel between the two, he begins an adventure that unlocks family secrets laid buried for generations”.

When I saw Maggie Smiths name on the cast roster I didn't even look at the storyline. I just love her as an actress. So to my surprise it turns into an other-worldly flick which I would not have chosen. However, that being said it isn't goolish and indeed is a rather charming film, lovely to look at and I truly enjoyed it. Now and then it's good to escape reality. The film is a good 'yarn'. The movie can be found on netflix.

IMDB rates this film at 6.9/10 and I do agree.



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AT THE MOVIES

Amistad

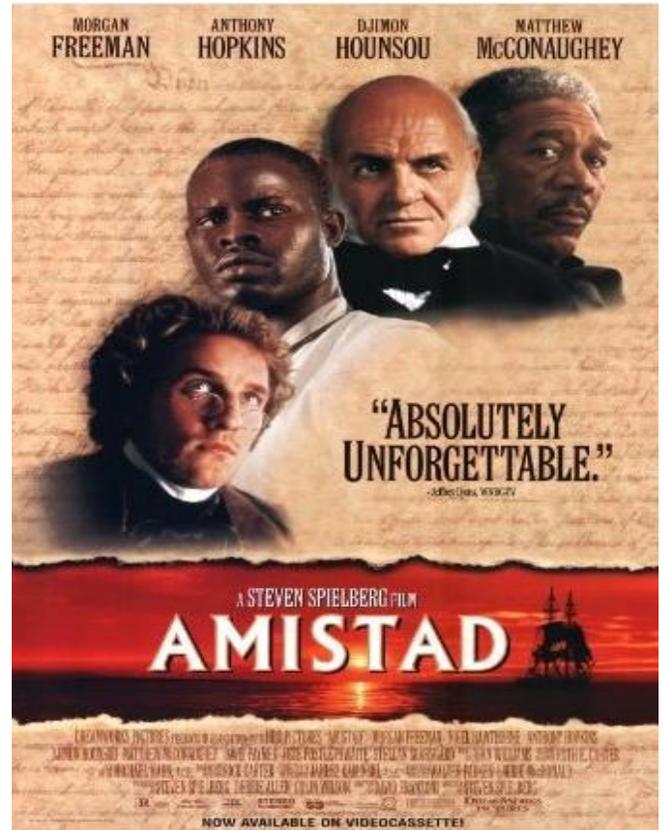
By Kirby Vickery

Mystique builds as a contralto hums a haunting Negro spiritual during the opening credits of this 1997 Steven Spielberg film. Then, with the background sounds of creaking sailing ship rigging, Mr. Spielberg builds a compelling suspense. His camera focuses across the eyes of a black man. One can feel the intensity in those eyes as the sweat builds and starts to run into them. The camera almost immediately answers the viewer's question of "what" by flicking to a close-up of the man's fingers as they feverishly work to free a heavy metal spike imbedded in the ship's structure. The camera flashes from his face to his fingers and back again as the fingernails split under the pressure and become bloody with the effort of freeing the spike.

Still in vivid close ups, the fingers use the freed spike to open the locks of feet and hand shackles as slaves start to move quickly and silently to take control of their sailing vessel which launches the movie "Amistad." Set in 1838, Spielberg based this movie on a true incident in American history about a group of African people who were abducted and sold into slavery. Spanish slave traders then illegally resold them in Cuba and were shipping them for the North American slave markets as plantation-born slaves.

That first step in their quest for freedom brought them under the brief control of the American Navy and then to a prison in Connecticut. They existed there while the trial for their freedom was prepared and scheduled. This strange incident forced several rulings by the Supreme Court of a young country which not only aided these African people but helped the United States gain strength and position in international politics.

Morgan Freeman, Anthony Hopkins, Djimon Hounsou and Matthew McConaughey combined their acting talent and effort to give the viewer a story which went deeper than just a group of African people gaining their freedom in a new country with new laws and unheard-of political intrigue. Spielberg's presentation goes deeper than most movies to portray an evolution of the feelings, thoughts, and emotions of the characters on both sides of the color line as they overcome obstacles, through growing knowledge, faith, and trust in each other to form a true friendship or *amistad* in their quest for freedom and mutual justice.



The film's treatment of the significant events, actions, and settings of the Amistad incident are accurate and historically valid. The average movie attendee should absorb a great deal of period history and incident knowledge by viewing this film. A student of history would be able to gain a lot more knowledge and appreciation of the event through individual comparisons with true documented history because Spielberg weaves his narrative by changing some depictions of a few individuals from their historical accuracy and a subduing of the actual time line.

The Amistad incident itself was fortuitous in its time. The entire series of events involving this incident and this group of African people is very well documented. "Amistad America" is one result. It is a historically-based society that operates a newly built replica of the Amistad Schooner which is used for historical education purposes. There have been several books written about this incident. Tulane University has an Amistad Research Center and sponsors one of over a million Web sites which concern themselves with the Amistad incident.



Spielberg's treatment of historical accuracy in some of the characterizations was loose. Mr. Baldwin, the African's lawyer, was not a starving, fresh from school, lawyer looking for work as portrayed in the movie. In reality he was a highly experienced trial lawyer who was involved because of his strong abolitionist views. The language professor was not a bumbling fool also as portrayed. He was a valuable member of the defense team whose efforts certainly aided in gaining communication and problem resolution for the group. The American President portrayal was also slighted, and the time line was blurred to give the viewer the feeling that all this happened in a period of a weeks or months not the two years it actually took to get through the trials.

There is one major omission in stated historical data which would have made the beginning of the movie more understandable. The viewer is never aware that the Amistad was captured off of New Jersey and towed to Connecticut before landing, because New Jersey was a free state at the time, and Connecticut was a slave state. The Navy's ship captain could have never attempted to claim salvage rights over the "slave cargo" had he landed them in New Jersey. However, in the hands or the master story teller, Steven Spielberg, these difficulties are re-woven into his version for portrayal and for the average movie enthusiast, completely unnoticeable.

Movies for the general public are by and large made to be entertaining and as such should be used or viewed in that context. It is difficult to make a film about a historical event especially when the producer demonstrates care about accuracy and wants it to sell, too. How deep does he go into reason? What gets left on the cutting room floor which could be termed "historically pertinent" in the interests of time, story line, or even story interest?

What gets changed to build a story which would carry the historical value in a movie? Take Mr. Spielberg's rendition of Mr. Baldwin. The real, Baldwin, experienced trial lawyer, and future governor of the state of Connecticut, was not a flamboyant, life of the party, type. Would the story sell if Baldwin was portrayed in the movie as the he truly was? There is an obligation for historical accuracy when a film is termed "A Documentary." Although this film wasn't a documentary, it held close to that line. Amistad is a truly enjoyable film.

"Amistad" the movie is the result of a master story teller's tail of the play and interplay of several groups of people who achieve much more than legal battles over freedom. It seems the Amistad incident happened just so Mr. Spielberg could explore and portray the richness of human emotion and feeling as the characters grew and learned about each other 157 years later.

It was the first of two historically based movies he produced. The other one was Schindler's list. Both movies are rich in historical accuracy and drama. Amistad is broader based in that Mr. Spielberg focused more on the different groups evolving toward something rather than a single individual's saga running from a bad situation. It also left the ending slightly open ended and (because it followed the real Amistad story) it showed the historical impact the incident had on the citizens of the town of Hartford, the state of Connecticut, the United States of America, and the continents of Europe and Africa.

The African who worked the spike out of the ship asked his American lawyer after he figured out that these white people were not going to eat him, "What kind of a land is this were you almost mean what you say? Where laws almost work?" Ever wonder what the answer was? Ever wonder what the answer would be today?



Good Intentions.

L. C. Allard

Most of us relate to silly moments in life that we'd like to take back. This is largely because in retrospect you can see it all so clearly and wonder 'what was I thinking'.

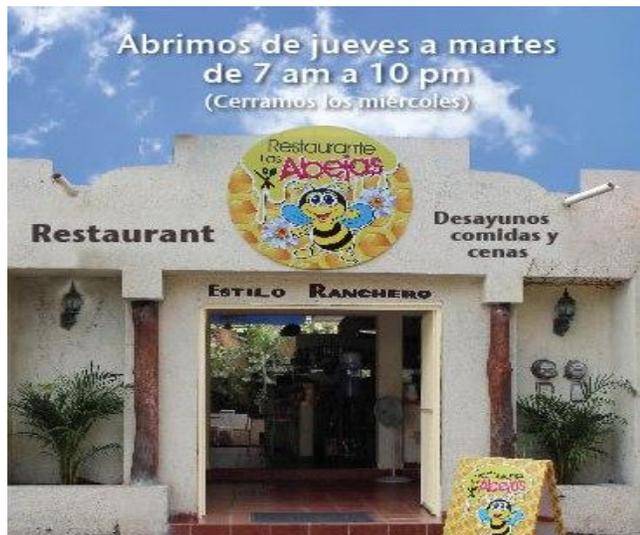
It's Christmas time (Navidad) on the beaches of Manzanillo. New Year's Eve is approaching and throngs of vacationers are walking, swimming and picnicking from baskets and coolers under flapping umbrellas stuck deeply in the sand. This stretch of beach is not usually busy except for a few local fishermen casting with their rods into the surf, or others having a mid-afternoon siesta. Today however, the children are busy screaming and laughing in the surf or playing in the sand with pails and shovels. It's festive! I love this time of year for its ability to exude such a wonderful sense of community.

As I walk the beach near the retreating surf with friends from Guadalajara I note the return of the brown pelicans and their entourage of white seabirds who scavenge leftovers from the birds. Obviously, the schools of migrating fish have returned as well. The pelicans waste no time diving for their dinner and there are hundreds of small minnows skidding back to

the water's edge or being scooped up by the next wave hitting the shore. The sounds of the surf, the crying gulls, the children and their families playing and laughing, wrap us all up in a blanket of contentment and good fortune. We are so lucky to be here escaping the harsh northern winter.

Suddenly we come upon a beached school of fish still gleaming and flapping their tails and twisting their bodies to find water. My friends and I scan the shoreline to see if any of the locals are here fishing along this stretch. We see no one. No lines in the water or buckets on the beach or the nets they use by throwing them like big carpets over the retreating surf.

Two of us wrongly decide that given the strong surf, the deep undertow and the pelican activity, that these poor creatures had been thrown up onto the beach and needed to be rescued. "Nah, just leave them there" say the others. But from some silly sense of 'nature-hood' (I'm inventing a new word) two of us each pick up a fish by its tail and throw them both back into the surf! It was a bit tricky because these fish were as big as 3-4 lbs., slippery and squirming.



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On our way back for another rescue we hear a lot of hollering in Spanish and a man appears out of the crowds running up the beach toward us waving his hands and telling us to stop! I don't know where he came from but of course with immediate embarrassment and guilt I dropped the second fish back on the sand and readied myself for an apology with my very limited Spanish. Now I can't say that I wouldn't react the same way again under the same circumstances. Who wants to see so many animals gasping for life on a beach and do nothing I ask you?

Of course in retrospect I have to ask myself, what were the chances that a school of fish would beach themselves up onto dry sand? But our hearts were in the right place. Everyone on the beach who had turned to see the commotion had a really good laugh including ourselves and the fisherman, who was mostly relieved when we managed to explain we had only thrown two back in!

Solo dos señor. Lo siento, solo dos! I'm still feeling pretty naïve but our intentions were good.



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Hotel Zar | MARINA | (Wing's Army) | by La Catrina

Double Trouble

Suzanne A. Marshall

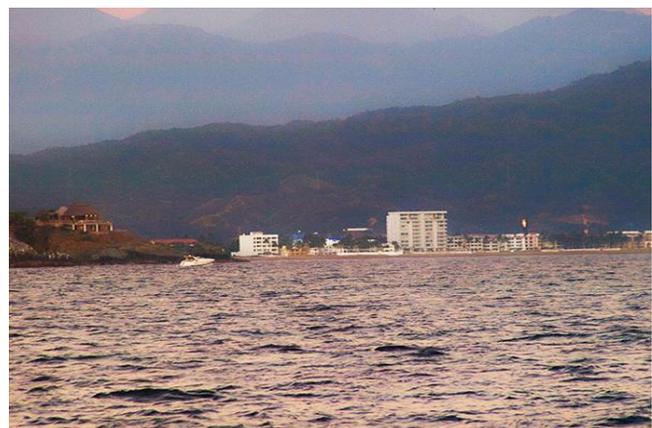
No, I'm not referring to a local problem or an incident of any sort. In fact I'm writing about one of the most delightful evenings I have ever enjoyed in Manzanillo.

Thanks to the kindness of friends, my husband and I were invited to enjoy a birthday celebration with their family and friends aboard a beautiful 32 ft. deep sea fishing cruiser for a two hour sunset cruise. Her name turned out to be 'Double Trouble.' But she was hardly 'trouble' as we slowly moved from the marina at Las Hadas into the bay and began a spectacular tour along the several bays of Manzanillo. The weather was hot, clear and perfect for the ideal sunset we anticipated. We were gently lulled by the buoyant cradle of this pristine white sparkling vessel and comfortably seated in the roomy main deck with open walls of windows or atop the cruiser on benches under an awning.

With a few coolers filled with ice-chilled champagne and the ocean breezes blowing through our hair, I could not have been prepared to see Manzanillo so incredibly stunning from this seaside perspective and nestled in the lush green hills of the mountains. It literally sparkled in the late afternoon sun as shafts of sunlight touched the waves and the cliff-dwelling homes, hotels, and towers, surrounded by bougainvillea and towering cactus.

For the past eight years having enjoyed this marvelous winter location on the west coast of Colima Mexico, our exposure has included walking the local beaches, site-seeing day trips, vista viewing from our sea-side terrace, night-life and in-land tours or trips to Guadalajara for shopping and gallivanting with expat friends and our terrific Mexican neighbors. We were now enjoying a completely new experience. One we will never forget.

Leaving from Manzanillo Bay we skirted the hills of La Punta (the point of the peninsula) letting our eyes explore the horizon and beautiful cliff structures along the way. The pelicans nest in great numbers in the cliffs and are always such marvelous creatures to watch. They are so ungainly looking on land or in the cliffs with their awkward beaks and webbed feet, but in the air they soar like guided missiles and dive for their prey like cunning torpedoes. They almost always hit their mark.



We rounded La Punta and entered Santiago Bay for more beautiful views of the hills and beaches. We passed a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe atop the rocks, somehow lovingly built here by the locals and on past Elephant rock which, as we passed by, looked surprising like its' namesake, trunk down.

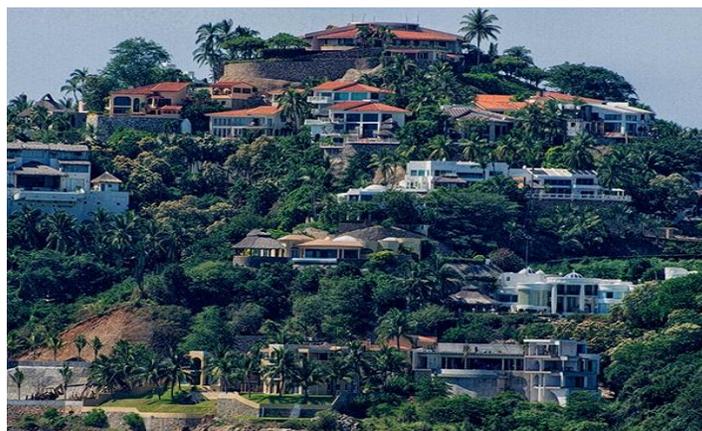
In the northern portion of Santiago Bay where the Mexican locals enjoy a beach area called La Boquita (mouth of a river) we came upon a number of pelicans who appeared to be casually standing on the water. At second glance I realized that this was the place where the remains of the frame of a shipwreck rested on the bottom of the bay and created a great spot for pelicans to watch for schools of fish just below the surface of the water or just have a snooze. This location is also where many residents of the bay love to snorkel and explore fish life and corrals sheltered by the sunken ship.

As we left the bay we entered more open sea and to my great joy finally got up quite 'close and personal' to the gigantic freighters and tankers. They are parked at intervals skirting both bays and awaiting their turns to slowly make their way into port. They will unload/reload their containers filled with cargos of food, fuel, autos and commodities from all over the world. The port of Manzanillo moves over 2 million TEU's (twenty foot equivalent units) per year as Mexico's' busiest port. We've spent many an afternoon on our terrace playing scrabble and watching the ships coming and going. At night many are lit up like Christmas trees especially during that season. Still it's difficult to fathom just how big these babies are until you're up close to them. They are gigantic with lengths longer than 1,200 feet with containers stacked up to 4 levels. When you are finally close enough to see people walking on deck you realize that the bridge portion of the vessel is like a five to seven story apartment building. It's a big business in more ways than one.

And now as we head back to Manzanillo Bay, the sky is a lusty rustic orange to fuchsia colored backdrop as we all watch the final moments when the sun sinks into the horizon and the skies continue to reflect the most delicate of rose colors long after the glowing ball has disappeared.

Sigh.....

Dinner at the marina awaits and these memories are etched forever.



An Aztec Dwarf Story

By Kirby Vickery

A dwarf's life in the courts of Europe during the Dark Ages and on into the Renaissance was probably one of misery. Within the courts they were cast as jesters and fools. They were little people although cute but also to be persecuted because of their size. Outside the court they were associated with wood lore and forest activities. We have the Brother Grimm to thank for Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Even today Tolkien gives us his rendition with-in his Middle Earth epic fables.

The Aztecs also had some Little People and their place in the Aztec Mythology is much different than what you get from Europe.

One particular story starts out with a very old woman who was quite lonely and she very rarely left her little shack. One day out of grief and loneliness she took an egg and carefully wrapped it in a cotton cloth and sat it near her fireplace in a corner of her hovel. She would check it every morning and occasionally change the cotton cloth to keep everything clean. She would always remember to use only the softest cloth and was very careful with her egg. One morning when she opened the cloth to change it and check the egg, she found nothing but a few broken bits of egg shell. In the middle of the broken egg shell was a tiny little creature standing there with its arms held out to her. She just couldn't believe her fortune in having the little being. She picked it up and gave it a great hug and a nurse. Every day for a year she loved and cared for the little being and was very careful to teach it all she could.

During that year it grew into a little man and could walk and talk and do anything any other man could do. The only problem with him was that he had stopped growing and remained very small. A mother's love has no bounds and she wanted greatness for her son. Toward that end she called him over one day and told him to go out and find the local king and challenge him to a dual of strength so that he might prove his worth.

Now the kid had more upstairs than his mother and begged not to go but his mother was steadfast. It is known in Mexico that you don't argue with the lady of the house and in Aztec times that went double. So off he



(Photo courtesy of Wikipedia)

went to whatever fate had in store for him. When he was placed in front of the local king he laid out his challenge of strength to the monarch. His Majesty just smiled and told the little man that he needed to be able to lift a rock weighing at least three arobes (that's 75 lbs for you uninitiated types).

At this the boy ran back to his mother crying about what the king wanted him to do. She sent him back saying that if the king can lift it so can you. Back at the palace the king was a little miffed but holding true to his kingdom he lifted the rock as did the dwarf - er, little man. So the king devised another test of strength to which the little guy did just as well as he king. Then another test was run and yet still another and another.

It seemed that whatever the king could do the little guy could do too. Finally, so as not to be out done and lose face to his public the king told the little guy that he had to build the finest castle in the land or forfeit his life. At this the youngster fled back to his mother the old lady and told her his tale.

As the story goes the old lady didn't even bat an eye but suggested that they sleep on it which they did. When they woke up in the morning they found themselves in the very castle the kid was supposed to build. As it turned out they weren't the only two people who were impressed.

When the king saw it he was amazed at what he saw and a little angered him. So he sent the little guy out to gather two bundles of cogoiol (a jungle grown very hardwood). He then explained to the little guy that he was to allow the sovereign to beat him over the head with one stick after the other and the king would allow the little person to do the same to him.

At this news the little man quickly ran back to his mother, the old lady and told her of the king's proposal. He also added that the king was no slouch and would probably beat his brains out. Well mom just laughed it off and sat a freshly made tortilla on his head telling that it would protect him. She then sent him back with the tortilla and the two bangles of clubs to see the king.

The king being the king got first crack at the little person and proceeded to break each and every branch over his adversary's head. The tortilla held firm and the dwarf

wasn't hurt in the least. The monarch didn't want to let his opponent hit him but word had gotten out around the court and he just couldn't allow himself to lose face so he allowed this skinny, little, puny, shrunken, tiny man have his turn. The second blow with the first stick did the trick. The monarch's head was split into tiny little pieces. All the king's men and all the king's other animals (they didn't have horses in those days) couldn't put him back together again and they elected the dwarf as their new king and leader. Right after that the old woman disappeared.

She was found later sitting near a small river under a beautiful tree next to the sun light petting a large snake. She sold small amounts of water although not for money. She did it for the children to keep the snake fed. Apparently the snake had a thing for innocent babies. To bring this story into a proper Mythological meaning one can liken it to Shakespeare's second or deeper meaning to his sonnets. The old lady is the Rain-Goddess and the dwarf is the man of the Sun who comes out of the cosmic egg.

In the Yucatan dwarfs were considered special and sacred to the sun-god but were occasionally sacrificed although one knows exactly why.



Health and nutrition center

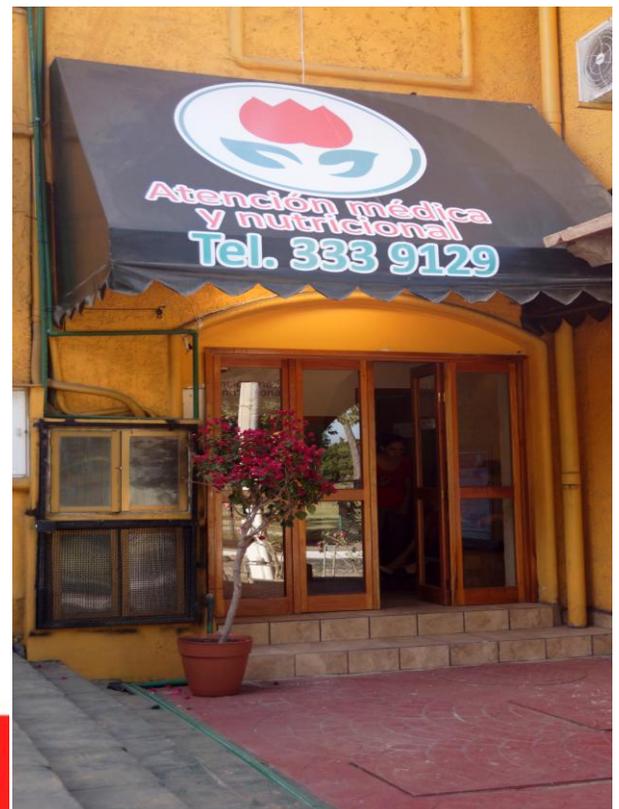
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If only there was a way to find “Our Song”

Señior Tech



Before starting this month’s article, I wanted to update my review of the Sonos speakers I wrote about last month. I was concerned that I may have been a bit hasty giving such a glowing review of the Sonos speakers. The controller app kept losing the connection to the speakers. After re-installing and reconfiguring the app, I still was unable to get a connection to the speakers every time. After a frustrating 2 weeks, I broke down and called Sonos tech support (I dread calling tech support; they generally make you wait for 30-40 minutes and then treat you like you are a idiot).

Not so with Sonos, I was connected with a support representative within a few minutes. The representative asked to connect to my system, and within five minutes isolated the issue. It turned out to be a conflict with a Wi-Fi range extender. I told him I would let him go and reconfigure my network (I discovered why the speakers kept losing the connection; I had added new range extenders last year but did not disconnect an old extender. The controller app had a 50/50 chance of connecting to the correct extender and therefore access the speakers).

This, however, is not why I am impressed with their service. One week after my call, I received an email from Sonos asking about the problem, I assumed this was just to get a rating of the representatives. Since I did not respond, I received another email a week later. This time I responded to say that the problem was fixed. The representative emailed back to say that he was happy that all was well. I now picture the Sonos technical representatives as the replacement for the Maytag Man (some of you may remember the 1980’s commercials); their systems are so easy to set-up and reliable that they have to look for problems to solve.

Since I wrote about network-connected speakers, I thought some of you might be interested in what

content is available on the Internet (network). If music is your desire than you will be happy to learn that you can now access millions of songs and musical artists. There are numerous music services such as:

- Paid Services (**free access with some limitations and ads)
 1. Deezer.com (over 34.5 million searchable songs **)
 2. Spotify.com (over 30.0 million Searchable songs **)
 3. RUSC.com (35,000 old time radio shows. Paid service only)
 4. Concertvault.com (Music, Comedy, & Interviews 1965 – 1999. Paid only)
 5. Dar.fm (Listen to radio shows **, Record shows to listen later. Paid only)
 6. Calmradio.com (# of music channels for relaxation, nature sounds. Paid subscriptions only)
 7. Beatsmusic.com (Over 20 million searchable songs. 2 week free trial)
- Free Services (Ad supported)
 1. TuneIn Radio (Over 100,000 Radio stations worldwide)
 2. Soundcloud.com (music, usually playlists, some search capability.)
 3. Songza.com (music in playlists, user can select the type of music.)

All services offer Smartphone and tablet apps. Some apps provide additional features than those available on the computer.

As you can see there are numerous entertainment options available. Almost all offer a free trial period.

Are you feeling nostalgic? Try RUSC.com and listen to old mystery programs or maybe some laughs with Abbott and Costello. Concertvault.com has concerts recorded from 1965 to 1999 by your favorite artists; the archives also include numerous interviews.

Is Talk Radio your niche? Dar.fm serves up daily programs to suit any political bent or topic. Listening is free. Paid service allows recording shows to listen at your convenience.



[TuneIn Radio](#) lets you listen live to over 100,000 radio stations worldwide. So if you get homesick while travelling, you can listen to your home stations for the weather forecast and be thankful you are here.

The other services deal mostly with music. For the cost of 5 - 6 CDs yearly, you can make and listen to your own playlists, choosing from over 30 million songs. The premium services offer near CD quality music tracks and allow you to download unlimited songs to your mobile device (as long as your subscription is valid). When I think of the thousands of dollars I have spent buying Albums and CDs over the years, I think this is a

bargain. It is not necessary to even spend a dime, if you only listen to a specific genre of music

A service I enjoy is [Audible.com](#). Audible offers audiobooks, and since 2001 I have collected over 500 titles. They have over 200,000 books in their library. The books are unabridged and read by professional actors. They are stored on their servers and I can download and listen to them anytime. Since they are owned by Amazon.com, I am not worried about them folding. The millions of subscribers also review the books, so when I use my 2 credits every month, I read reviews to make sure I am not disappointed in my selections.

This brings me back to my Sonos speakers; I can listen to any of the above content in Hi-fidelity.

I wish to clarify; I am not affiliated or paid by any of the above services or vendors. For that matter I am not even paid by this publication; this is a labor of love, I am a masochist!!!

"Vintage Gramophone" by Stoonn, "Portrait Of Beautiful Woman Listening Music" by imagerymajestic. [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)



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Mariscos Carlos

(You may need a treasure map to find this restaurant, but the trip is well worth the trouble).

By Allan Yanitski



I would like to tell you about all the great seafood at this restaurant but I can never get past the appetizers; in particular, the shrimp tacos, and the shrimp tostadas.

The shrimp tacos are sinfully delicious and are not for one with a weak heart. They are made of shrimp and cheese that fill a taco, then deep-fried. They look like cigars but the taste is outstanding. Be careful with your first bite, the cheese can be hot.

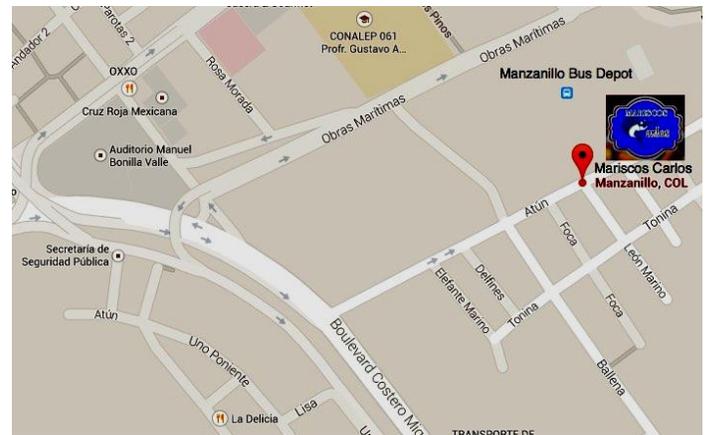
The Shrimp tostadas on the other hand are more of a healthy choice. A tostada is covered with mounds of fresh shrimp mixed with fresh tomatoes, onion, avocado, and small pieces of jalapeño pepper (you can order without).



When you are seated they bring plates with different nibbles such as jicama or coconut meat and fresh cucumber slices.

Three shrimp tacos and two shrimp tostadas cost \$118 pesos and are a flavour burst for your taste buds as well as filling.

The bad news is the location. The restaurant is located behind the Manzanillo bus station and is a bit of a challenge to get to from the main boulevard. If you happen to be coming from Centro Manzanillo there is only one right turn, otherwise turn right after the Auditorio. When you pass the senior's home turn left and turn at the sign for Mariscos Carlos (before the Bus Depot). The road in front of the restaurant is dirt and could use a grader to level the roadway.



Parking is available in a lot on the side and in front of the restaurant.

The restaurant itself has been renovated last year and is very nice inside. The restrooms are extremely clean and sanitary. In the older section, the floors are well worn but clean. The new section has new tiles and wooden roof. They are now adding a second floor which will provide additional seating. It is sometimes hard to get a table on weekends; people wait patiently to get in to enjoy the bounty.

The serving staff was friendly and even though our Spanish is basic, they were patient and helpful. We had a nice conversation with our waitress and as we were leaving she hugged my wife and me goodbye.

I really have to get past the appetizers and try some of the seafood dishes. The ones I have seen look like they would be excellent. But those shrimp appetizers are so good!! Maybe the next time we go.

Mariscos Carlos is closed Tuesdays but is open for lunch all other days until 7:00 PM. The restaurant is very busy Friday through Sunday.

Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner

Specialties

Chilaquiles, Machaca, BBQ Ribs and Chicken,
Burgers, Mexican Dishes, Espresso,
Capuccinos, Milk Shakes, Cold Beer

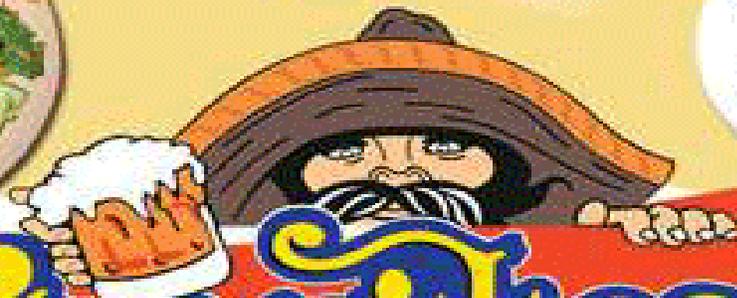
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