

# REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine  
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August 2008  
Year 17, No. 6

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- ▶ Guatemala's Olympic Athletes
- ▶ The Time Tunnels of Zone One
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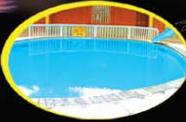
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2008 Olympic Athletes  
design by Rudy A. Girón

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## FROM THE PUBLISHERS

**W**e salute Guatemala's olympic athletes on our cover this month, designed by Rudy Girón. These 12 talented and committed men and women will be competing at the *Beijing 2008 Olympics*; stay tuned to local media for more about their achievements.

August is traditionally dedicated to Guatemala City's downtown Historical Center. Starting with *Sensuous Guatemala*, a feast for the senses in the great square that is flanked by the National Palace and the Metropolitan Cathedral. Next up, *The Time Tunnels of Zone One*, a trip through four fascinating 'pasajes', along with a sentimental journey to those golden bygone days. The final homage to zone 1 is *Portal to the Past*, featuring El Portal, Guatemala City's oldest and continuously-operating restaurant. If those walls could talk.

Within the 'Ruins of La Antigua' series is the not to be missed *Mysterious Monument*, the story of the Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zaragoza de Religiosa Capuchinas. *Flashback: 1937* offers you a chance to guess which town the author is writing about ... "real estate sells from \$2.50 an acre to \$8.50 an acre."

*The Zen of Fin and Fondo* is aptly named for we have come to the end of this popular column—at least for now. Our thanks and appreciation to writer Dwight Wayne Coop who, after some 55 *The Zen of ...* articles, would like to shift gears and introduce a new subject, beginning next month.

The August DateBook is jam-packed with events all month long; in El Salvador the Festival de Maíz (*Celebrating Corn in Suchitoto*) will be held on August 17.

Thank you for reading the Revue; with 20,000 in print monthly, the magazine is also available in Flash Paper or PDF format online at [www.revuemag.com](http://www.revuemag.com) —*JBT*

# REVUE

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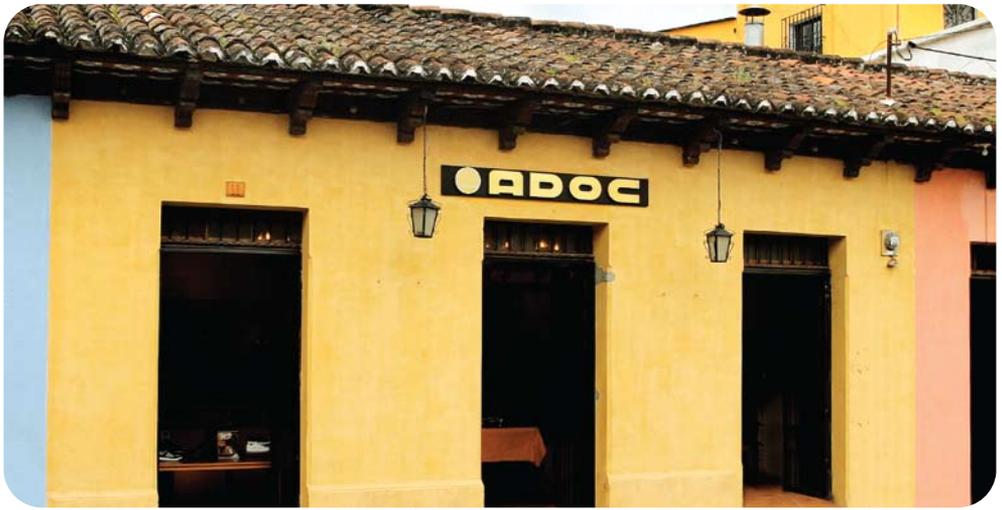
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VALOR POR TU DINERO





# Guatemala's

**12** remarkable athletes will be representing Guatemala at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Our best wishes and hopes for success go out to Evelyn Nuñez in the 20 kilometer race walk, José Amado García and Alfredo Arevalo in the 42 kilometer marathon and veteran Luis Bechinie in the 50 kilometer race walk.

Also deserving of medals are Eddie Valenzuela in boxing; Kevin Cordón in badminton; Juan Andrés Rodríguez in equestrian obstacles; Christian López in weightlifting; Gisela



**Evelin Rosmeri Nuñez Fuentes**  
Sport: Race Walking (20 km)



**Luis Fernando García Bechinie**  
Sport: Race Walking (50 km)



**Juan Ignacio Maegli Agüero**  
Sport: Sailing (Laser class)



**Rita María Sanz-Agero Luna**  
Sport: Modern Pentathlon

# Olympic Athletes

Morales in swimming (100 and 200 meters); Rita Sanz-Agero in modern pentathlon; Juan Carlos Romero in shooting (skeet test); and Juan Ignacio Maegli in sailing (Laser class test).

President of the COG Fernando Beltranena said they will send 45 delegates to China including officials, trainers, doctors and journalists.

The Guatemalan delegation will travel to Beijing on August 5. Good luck to all.

*(Thanks to Claudia González, Alma Diaz Castillo, and People's Daily)*



**Christian Alberto López Bobadilla**  
Sport: Weightlifting (105 kg)



**Juan Andrés Rodríguez Silva**  
Sport: Equestrian obstacles



**Kevin Haroldo Cordón Buezo**  
Sport: Badminton



**Gisela María Morales Valentín**  
Sport: Swimming (100 and 200 meters)



# Guatemala's Olympic Athletes



**José Amado García Gabriel**  
Sport: Marathon (42 km)



**Eddie Valenzuela Barillas**  
Sport: Boxing



**Alfredo Arévalo Reyes**  
Sport: Marathon (42 km)



**Juan Carlos Romero Arribas**  
Sport: Skeet shooting



# SENSUOUS GUATEMALA:

## *Sunday Feast in the Historical Center*

by Ken Veronda

**G**uatemala is always a feast for all the senses, but sensory overload comes each Sunday right in the center of everything as hundreds stroll that great square in downtown Guatemala City. Zone One, the zero milepost, the historic center, is alive with family groups wearing their Sunday best, hearing the happy music groups, eating the colorful fruits, *shucos*, sausages and candies on sale. Flanked by the former National Palace, now a museum, the Metropolitan Cathedral, and office buildings, the square is always lively, but never more than on any given Sunday.

One fresh rose, placed each morning between two stylized hands in the center of the plaza, is an especially symbolic touch of color, commemorating the end of years of civil war. Standing there, you can hear the music in several directions around you, individual performers and groups playing for a few coins and then there are the steaming carts of hot sandwiches for sale with rich colors of cut fruits and jewel-like blended drinks; foods to please eyes and stomachs.

The bright colors of the country's terrain are proudly on display in the *huipiles*, beautiful blouses worn by many of the ladies strolling downtown. The façades of the buildings around the great square are muted tones, the tans of the Metropolitan Cathedral, the grays of the former National

Palace, now a museum with tours of the elegant ceremonial rooms opened by dictator-president Ubico in 1944.

Follow that older man from the Highlands as he climbs slowly into the place where he did his military service back when General Ubico ran Guatemala with a firm hand. The farmer hasn't returned to the Big City since he completed his military duties 60 years ago, but watch where he touches: He remembers exactly where to touch panels to open secret doors, openings for quick escapes should the general need them. Watch the pride in the old fellow's eyes in admiring the gilt and marble and crystal symbols of power he once guarded, now just a museum of memories.

Back outside, the numbers grow as the shadows begin to lengthen, worshippers and shoppers and visitors from the countryside blending together, always strolling on Sunday, never rushing, never hustling. This is not a business day, though the stalls of fabrics and foods in the central market are full of colors and tastes their proprietors hope to exchange for quetzals. It's a day for all senses, every Sunday, for all the Guatemalan shades and smells and sounds and tactile sensations that make a sensuous treat for all to enjoy. Come for a Sunday stroll in the center of it all! **13**



Pasaje Aycinena circa 1924



The newly restored Pasaje Aycinena

# The Time Tunnels of Zone One

*Read—or walk—your way through 22 minutes of time travel in Guatemala's historic center*

by Dwight Wayne Coop photos courtesy: Sergio Cruz Arteaga

The yen to envision a familiar place in an earlier era is universal. In the sixties, it found expression in the campy sci-fi serial *The Time Tunnel*, in which two scientists are sporked through historical crossings in which the supporting roles—from Alexander the Great onward—conveniently speak English.

A more credible time trek can be taken in downtown Guatemala in only 22 minutes. Long before climate-controlled malls in Minneapolis, there were, and still are, Zone One's *pasajes*. Exploring them affords a cobwebby peek at el Centro as it was when the *pasajes* were echo-chambers for dawn reveilles of machine-gun rat-tatting, martial doggerel and coups d'état.

Four fascinating *pasajes* about the Plaza de Armas, that square enclosed by the National Palace, National Library and National Cathedral. The fourth edge is home to banks, a vegetarian diner, camera and shoe shops, an arched colonnade, and two of these time tunnels.

Begin on 7th Avenida, a half block south of the plaza. Facing the entrance to Edificio

del Centro (downtown's tallest building) is the aperture of Tunnel 1, the rust-red Real del Parque. Go in.

This least historical tunnel is included as a foil to the others and as a glimpse, not of what downtown was, but what it aspires to. Elsewhere in the city are new, sprawling counterpoints to this mall, though none has its garish, high-density charm.

Real del Parque dates from the still-cooling surface of the past century. When the 1996 Peace Accords were signed, it was just another drab commercial box. But today you can take in three floors of artsy-tartsy commercialism. Scarf some caramel corn, window shop, buy a knick-knack. Go up to the third floor to look down on the traffic. Time becomes a dimension that will stretch as you tour the other tunnels.

This tunnel leads outside, to bustling 8th Calle. Turn right, go two-and-a-half blocks. When you reach Telas Líder, a cavernous old yardage mart, cross the street.

With all the clutter, you could almost miss Pasaje Savoy—Tunnel 2. But once in, you are standing before a big-screen



Real del Parque newly restored



Real del Parque circa 1928

clunker Motorola broadcasting The Time Tunnel. Its regression of fluorescent lights recalls the shiny ribs of the old TV prop. All that is missing is for the two time travelers to corporealize.

Actually, much more is amiss. This address, once prestigious, has fallen on digital times. The fine wooden wainscots remain, but only as unpolished veneers of the past. On the second floor you find more faded elegance and empty locales (storefronts) and, surprisingly, window seats. These merely overlook the building's cruddy hollow airshafts, but they are *refugios* for lunching clerks and lovestruck *novios*. The third floor is filled by Savoy's current landlord, a clothing manufacturer. Even he may soon jump ship, competition from China is killing him.

Return to the present by exiting Savoy on 7th Calle. Go left for half a block, then right for 10 meters, then left again at the La Tirada building. To your left, as you walk, is the Mercado Central, an underground comb of tunnels on five split levels—all "dug" after the 1976 earthquake. On its above-ground parking lot, there once stood the spectacular neo-classic pre-quake *mercado*.

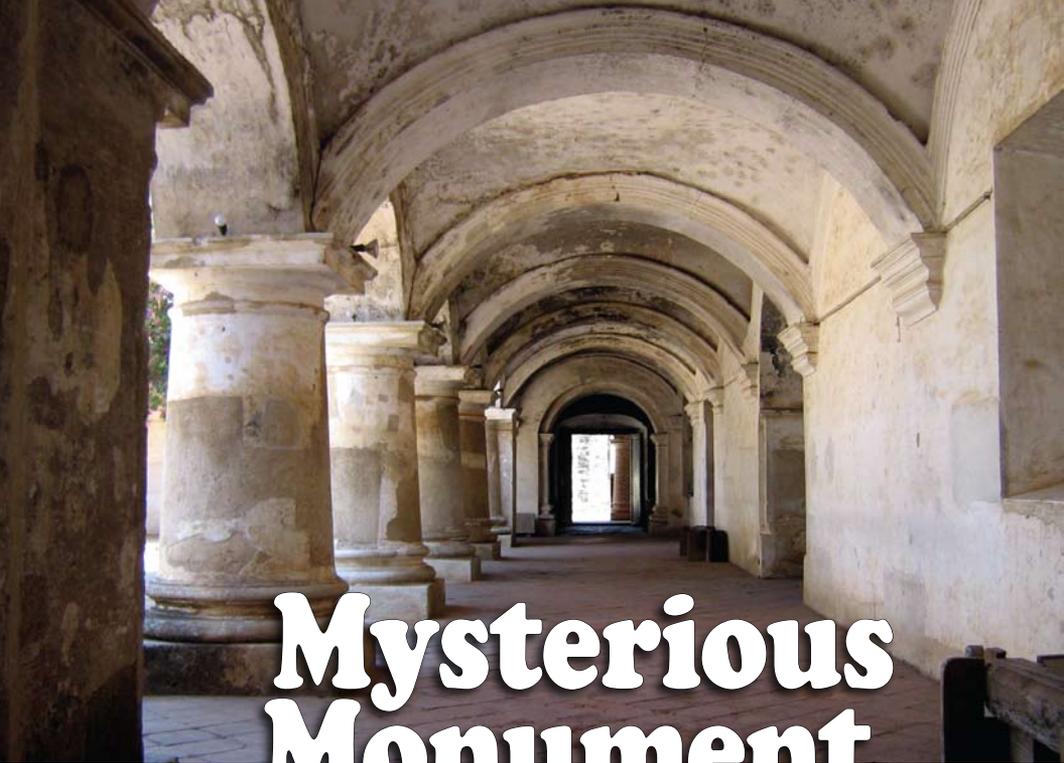
Walk another block toward the looming National Palace. Cut across the Plaza de Armas, just to the left of the huge fountain, toward the colonnade opposite the Palace. Cross the street and seek out the jail-cell door that looks locked. It is not—push through it. You have just sneaked in through the back of Tunnel 3, Pasaje

Aycinena, which was once, incredibly, a mansion belonging to one of the republic's founding families. By the 1930s it was what some historians call Guatemala's first centro commercial—an honor claimed by another Time Tunnel that is a literal stone's throw away.

When you re-emerge into the light—this tunnel has no roof—look back. You see the door you came through and the outline of two others, one arched and wide enough for a carriage. The space between them is now filled by a cubby-hole enterprise.

Before you exit Pasaje Aycinena through the arch on 9th calle, look up and marvel at the contrast of the Pasaje's ornamented vaults with Edificio del Centro's utilitarian angles. Back on the sidewalk outside, you are again in the 21st century. But turn right and walk 25 meters to Tunnel 4, to sample yet another slice of the past.

The aperture to Pasaje Rubio is a wormhole flagged by glass-walled galaxies of jewelry. Now enter what other historians call Guatemala's first centro comercial. Its founder, Señor Rubio—no one recalls his first name—built it as a place for the elite to shop and dine. Until 2008, its liver-spotted complexion and patchy floor made it seem old for its 80 years; today, the well-to-do (excepting coin hounds) rarely shop here. But despite the wrinkles in its original ambience, it remains a time-strolling venue. Except for an appliance dealer, every store retains some of its original character. ...continued on page 76



# Mysterious Monument

*Master architect Diego de Porres builds his finest convent:  
Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zaragoza de Religiosas Capuchinas*

by Joy Houston photos by Jack Houston

Seven monasteries, four convents, sixteen orders and three dozen churches to support. Earthquake destruction of private, public and church buildings in 1717. Cloistered Clarisan and Barefoot Carmelite nuns scared out of their convents. On top of that, worldwide economic troubles. Civil authorities of Santiago de Caballeros, now La Antigua Guatemala, had their hands full and put a freeze on establishment of religious orders.

Still, with faith flourishing in Spain, the Mother Superior in Madrid approached King Philip V to request founding of the Capuchin order in Santiago, and he ordered a feasibility study in November 1720. Upon taking up the matter in August 1721 (no cell phones or e-mail in the 18th century), the town council was dumbfounded. The request read that the people of Guatemala had asked for the Capuchin nuns. The council responded, “No way!” and tabled the matter.

According to J. Joaquín Pardo, Pedro Zamora Castellanos and Luis Luján Muñoz in the *Guía de Antigua Guatemala*, “The truth was that the request for the Capuchin nuns was made by the bishop of Guatemala, Álvarez de Toledo.” Maybe he went ahead on his own, knowing a request through usual channels wouldn’t stand a chance. Some justification may have been found in the fact that the Capuchinas did not require a dowry for entrance, as did other convents, offering opportunity for the religious life for the less-than-rich.

Although royal permission was not granted until May 1725 to found the convent of



LEFT: Squat columns and arches of Capuchin cloister were designed for earthquake resistance  
ABOVE: Capuchin convent and gardens from above

Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zaragoza de Religiosas Capuchinas, whose title comes from the style of their head cover, it seems that arrangements had already been made in April for the Madrid nuns' travel to Guatemala. The bishop died in July of that year and perhaps had felt some urgency to accomplish what he wanted to do, so he did it his own way.

Travel was tough in those days, and the nuns didn't arrive until January 1726. "Fortunately there were only five," according to the *Guía*. One had died en route. Per the royal edict, the convent would be established in the Church of El Carmen, on 3a avenida between 3a and 2a calles, and its conventual facilities. That church had been almost entirely destroyed by the earthquake, and repairs were not complete until 1728. Originally a simple hermitage to shelter an image of the Virgin Mary, the eventual church was considerably more elaborate, among the finest in town, and "...was very special in its epoch for the sacred music played in it," wrote Rafael Álvarez Polanco in *Antigua*. Today its skillfully sculpted façade is among the most photographed sites of La Antigua Guatemala.

But when the Capuchinas arrived in 1726, that facility was deemed unsuitable; and a new site was purchased by the new bishop, Cervantes. The five nuns stayed with the Barefoot Carmelites of the Santa Teresa convent, maybe out in their orchard huts (talk about unsuitable), where they awaited post-earthquake reconstruction of their own convent. In March the Capuchinas were ushered in grand protocol to their new home, even though royal approval for the switch from El Carmen didn't come until July 1727. Records are not clear about the location of that new home.

In 1728 the order requested permission to expand from the limit of 25 to 33 nuns; that



**Water supply channel above the nuns' cells, part of a complicated hydraulic system**



**ABOVE: Niches in exterior of circular tower  
BELOW: Two sunken bath tubs with hot water supply**



was never granted. Nonetheless, in 1730 yet another bishop was in place, who purchased yet another site, which he believed better for the Capuchinas and on which he would build a church and spacious convent with his own funds. He chose the Niñado, on 2a avenida at 2a calle, literally around the corner from El Carmen and a couple of blocks from Santa Teresa.

The Niñado, or the school of the Niñas Doncellas, a fine school for girls, had a prestigious history dating back to 1553. But its purpose had deteriorated along the way, and it became a detention center until 1643, when the king ordered its return to the original purpose. The property included a formal church and buildings in good condition, and architect Diego de Porres was commissioned to adapt and expand the facility for the Capuchinas.

The Capuchin Convent, with thick walls, squat columns and unique iron reinforcement, is perhaps the best conserved colonial construction, being among the latest and most earthquake resistant. Architecture in Santiago flourished in the period from 1717 to 1773, and Diego de Porres was on the cutting edge. He had learned from his father, working together with him from the age of six on projects such as the churches of Santa Teresa, Compañía de Jesús, Santa Clara, Escuela de Cristo and Recolectión, which Diego finished after his father, José, died. He was a busy man when he took up the job for the Capuchinas, having just finished reconstruction for the Cathedral and the convent and Church of La Concepción, incorporating new decorative elements in the domes, vaults and arches and decorated pilasters, which became one of his distinctive styles.

Luis Luján Muñoz said, "Porres marks the link between the Baroque and the beginning of Classicism." In contrast to the

abundant adornment of Santa Clara, the Capuchin Church is simple and sober. Diego had his own ideas, but all religious orders had rules for their monastery and convent designs as well. For nuns, these included absence of columns, which could obstruct visual connection with the clergy, and private worship space in the nave, usually opposite the altar. The façades of convent churches are typically inside the convent wall, with side doors for public entrance. But there are always exceptions.

While the door mistakenly built in the façade of the Church of Santa Clara caused such a fuss and had to be blocked up to protect the cloistered nuns' space at that end of the nave, the churches of Santa Teresa and Capuchinas do have doors in their façades—their orders being exceptions to the rule. The Capuchin nuns' choirs were above the front door and at the front, next to the altar, off the side of the nave, behind an iron grill.

Sadly, the impressive facility seen today, completed in 1736, was to have a short life. The earthquake of 1751 battered the upper story, and that of 1773 signaled the end, as it did that of the entire town as the colonial capital. But the curious history and mystery of the Capuchin Convent doesn't stop there.

The three-story, round tower at the north of the convent has been discussed and debated.

...continued on page 80



Simple and sober façade of the small Capuchin church



ABOVE: Nuns' cells surrounding round patio  
BELOW: Capuchin Convent cloister





## AUGUST Guide to culture & upcoming events

Compiled by Mercedes Mejicanos

**5 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) LECTURE: Tuesday evening lecture series: *Partnering the Poor: Inequality, Education and Opportunity in Guatemala* with Jeff Barns, also an overview of Familias de Esperanza whose work assists over 2,300 nearby students and families to break the cycle of poverty. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

**7 Thurs., 9:30am, Fri., 8th-1pm & Sat., 9th, 3pm** — (Spanish) WORKSHOP: Clay, use the wheel, molds and paint your creation. Museo Miraflores (tel: 2470-3415) 7a calle 21-55, z. 11, **Guatemala City**.

**7 Thurs., 4:30-6pm** — (English) GET TOGETHER: *Antigua Network*, welcoming individuals/organizations who work to improve living conditions, health, education and economics of others in Guatemala. Q50 incl. beverage, boquitas; additional info., Judy, 7832-9871. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente # 15-C, **La Antigua**.

**7 Thurs., through Sun., 31st** — ART: *Mediterráneo griego*, an exhibition of a beautiful collection of mixed medium drawings by Guatemalan artist Omar Calvillo. Vestíbulo del Teatro Dick Smith IGA (tel: 2422-5566) ruta 1, 4-05, z. 4, **Guatemala City**. ▼



**8 Fri., 8pm** — (Spanish) THEATER: *Anatomía de una escoba*, winner of the Central American Bellas Artes 'Quince de Septiembre' 2004 contest. Q40. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**. ▼



**9 Sat., through Sept. 7, 6pm** — ART: *Contando historias* featuring a collection of oil paintings by Guatemalan artist Mario Sagastume. Sala Marco Augusto Quiroa, Paseo de los Museos Hotel Casa Santo Domingo (tel: 7820-1220, ext. 579) 3a calle oriente #28, **La Antigua**.

**9 Sat., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Artes e historias de Venecia* by Architect Luis Salazar. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 5988-5485) 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

**9 Sat., through Sun., Sept. 21, 7:30pm** — ART: *Un mar de cristales murano 1915-2000*, Museo del Vidrio, Hotel Casa Santo Domingo (tel: 7820-1220, ext. 579) 3a calle oriente #28, **La Antigua**.

**9 Sat., 11am** — (Spanish) FILM: Presentation of the Cuban movie drama *Memorias del subdesarrollo*, directed by Tomás Gutiérrez. Free. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

Revue is not responsible for event cancellations or date/time changes.



**5 Tues., 7pm, through Thurs., Sept. 4** — PHOTOGRAPHY: Work by award-winning photographer Roberto Quesada Arathoon titled *Reflejos venecianos*. Congratulations Roberto. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 5988-5485) 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

**9 Sat., 7pm** — PHOTOGRAPHY: *El andar de nuestra gente* by photographer Ricardo Ramírez. Free. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

**10 Sun., through Sat., 16th** — CELEBRATION: La Peña de Sol Latino celebrates its 2nd anniversary with door prizes every night, great music by Grupo Sol Latino and other invited musical guests; **16th**—Anniversary Party! La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente # 15-C, **La Antigua**.

**11 Mon., through Fri., 15th, 9am-4pm** —(Spanish/English) WORKSHOP: *The Magic of Color*, working with natural color, techniques to dye cotton and hard fibers in a 100% natural process using native plants of Guatemala. Q1,500 includes all dye material, manual of recipes and sample book. Minimum class size. Indigo Artes Textiles (7888-7487), inside Finca la Azotea, **Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez**.

**11 Mon., 5pm** — MAYAN CEREMONY: Presentation of an authentic Mayan ceremony. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

**12 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) LECTURE: Tuesday evening lecture series: *Survival in the City Slums*, Chris Rice talks about life on the fringes in Guatemala City and the work being done to keep children from a life on the streets. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. Sur #8, **La Antigua**.

**13 Wed., 5pm** — PHOTOGRAPHY: *Al descubierto* featuring work by Nathalie Béard. Galería Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**. ▼



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**13 Wed., 7:30pm** — MUSIC: A joint concert of two renowned chamber orchestras, one from Europe and the other from Guatemala, featuring classical music from both cultures. Juan Bautista Gutiérrez Auditorium, Universidad Francisco Marroquín, 6a calle final, zone 10, **Guatemala City**. See highlight on page 40. ▼



**15 Fri., 8pm** — MUSICAL THEATER: *Picando cebolla* by the group Ellatu, presenting combination of dance, poetry and music. Q40. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**. ▼



**16 Sat., 3pm**  
DANCE: Children perform folkloric dances and a benediction to celebrate the restaurant's 2nd anniversary. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle p. #15-C, **La Antigua**.



**19 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) LECTURE: Tuesday evening lecture series: *Combating Poverty Through Education*, the staff of Safe Passage/Camino Seguro talk about their mission to empower the poorest, at-risk children of families working in the community of the Guatemala City garbage dump by creating opportunities and fostering dignity through the power of education. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

**15 Fri., 6pm** — MUSIC: An evening concert presented by the Orquesta de Cámara de Bach (Germany). Q100. Ruinas de San José el Viejo, 5a av. sur y 8a calle final, **La Antigua**.

**20 Wed., 7:30pm** — FASHION: *NEO-PUNK 2008*, presenting the newest collection from internationally known high-couture designer Mauricio Samayoá. Museo Ixchel del Traje Indígena (tel. 2331-3638) 6a calle final, z.10 Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**. ▼



**21 Thurs., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) LECTURE: *El mito del colibrí en el arte Maya* by Dr. Oswaldo Chinchilla, curator at Museo Popol Vuh. Q20/Q10 students w/carnet. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

**22 Fri., 8pm** — (Spanish) THEATER: *Cuerno en Panza*, students from the Facultad de Humanidades de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, present the comedy *Cuatro corazones con freno y marcha atrás*. Q40. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

Revue is not responsible for event cancellations or date/time changes.

**22 Fri., 9:30am-1:30pm** — (Spanish/English) WORKSHOP: *The Natural Palette*, painting with natural pigments on all types of backgrounds (cotton, silk, linen, canvas and paper); plant extracts made into watercolors, temperas, oils and paste. Q250. Note: With a minimum of 4 students, this class can be rescheduled for any day of the week. Indigo Artes Textiles (7888-7487), inside Finca la Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

**23 Sat., 2pm** — PRESENTATION: *La Profecía Maya 2012/The Mayan Prophecy of 2012* with astronomer John Major Jenkins, author of the book 'Cosomogenesis 2012'; sponsored by Jades S.A. Auditorio Casa Santo Domingo, 3a calle oriente no. 28, *La Antigua*.

**23 Sat., 7pm** — ART: *Sustancias intrasferibles que actúan a nivel subliminal*, an exhibition of oil paintings by Javier Azurdia. Free. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*.

**23 Sat., through Mon., Sept. 22** — ART: William Kalwick, 6th annual exhibition. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124) 4a calle oriente #15, *La Antigua*. ▼



**24 Sat., 4pm** — MUSIC: Ensamble Amarilis, soprano vocalist, violins, flutes, violas and a clavecin. Q80. Centro de convenciones, Hotel museo Casa Santo Domingo. (tel: 7820-1220 ext. 579) 3a calle oriente #28, *La Antigua*.

**26 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) LECTURE: Tuesday evening lecture series: *Life in Guatemala—A brief history and current conditions* by Sue Patterson, a U.S. foreign service officer, former U.S. consul, founder and executive director of WINGS, a non-profit dedicated to reproductive health and family planning. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

**28 Thurs., 2:30pm** — CARD & TABLE GAMES: Come and support the Museo Ixchel, meet your friends and make new friends playing bridge, canasta, dominoes and organized duplicate bridge. Q100 includes parking, coffee, tea, cookies and a great door prize! Note: there is an elevator to the entrance level from the parking lot. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2331-3622, 2331-3634) 6a calle final, z. 10, Campus UFM, *Guatemala City*.

**30 Sat., 7:30pm** — MUSIC: La casa de Kello, this popular Guatemalan band will play a mixture of Latino, blues, pop and a lot of their own music. Free. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. Sur #8, *La Antigua*.

**30 Sat., 11am** — MUSIC: A DVD presentation, *Concierto para clarinete de Mozart* performed by the Orquesta Filarmónica de Viena, presented and commented on by Ing. José Ángel Lee. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, *La Antigua*.

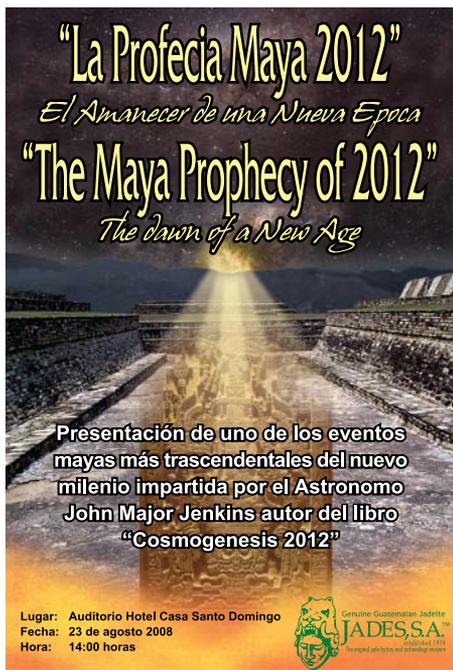
**30 Sat., noon to 4pm** — PICNIC/U.S. LABOR DAY CELEBRATION in Guatemala: Democrats Abroad Guatemala is sponsoring a picnic to celebrate U.S. Labor Day. All United States citizens residing in Guatemala are cordially invited. Q50. Casa Convento Concepción, 4a calle oriente/calle Concepción #41, (Info: John Chudy, 7832-4581; democratsabroad\_guate@yahoo.com), *La Antigua*.

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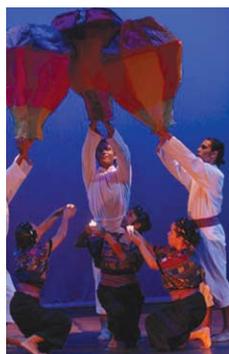
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*El Amanecer de una Nueva Época*  
**“The Maya Prophecy of 2012”**  
*The Dawn of a New Age*



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*There are three things I have always loved but never understood: art, music and women.*  
 —Fontenelle

*Young men are apt to think themselves wise enough, as drunken men are apt to think themselves sober enough.* —Chesterfield.

*The people most difficult to get along with are those who object to our having our own way.*

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**DEMOCRATS ABROAD**

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- (2) **By October 10th:** receive and return your ballot. If not received by October 10th, use the Federal Write In Absentee Ballot provided with the [www.votefromabroad.org](http://www.votefromabroad.org) online registration process.
- (3) **If you need more help:** call your Democrats Abroad Executive Committee. John Chudy, Chair: 7832-4581 or email: [democratsabroad\\_guate@yahoo.com](mailto:democratsabroad_guate@yahoo.com)

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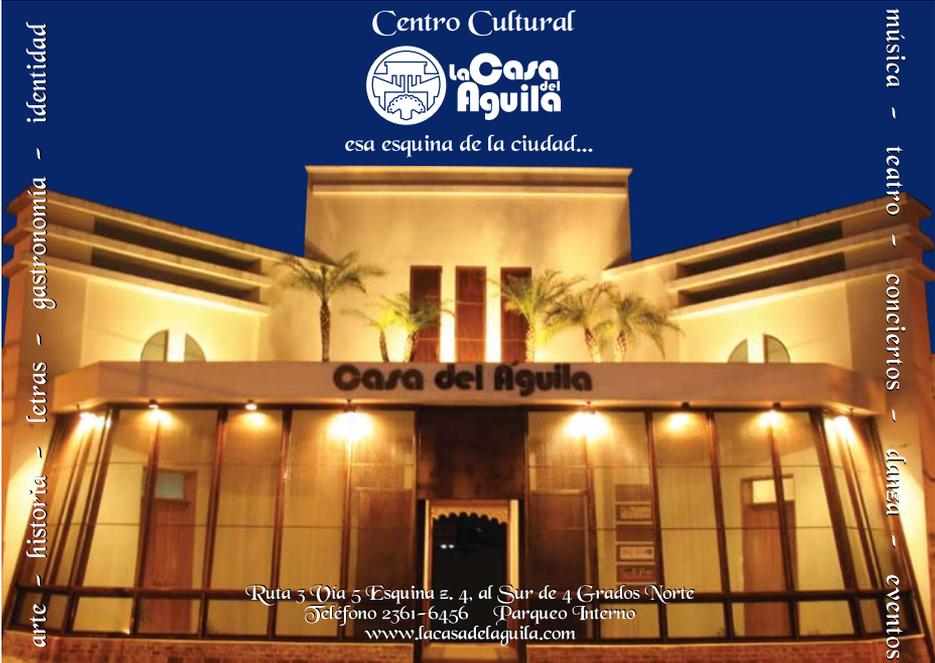
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**30 Sat., 8pm** — MUSIC: *Noche de ronda*, enjoy an evening listening to yesterday's boleros performed by Luis González Arocha and vocalist Manuel García. Q50. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*. ▼



### Plan Ahead - SEPTEMBER

**2 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) LECTURE: Tuesday evening lecture series: Red Kuchub'al, bringing together many small producers in the southwest sector of Guatemala, works to create a fairer economy through coordination, solidarity and mutual cooperation. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

### WEEKLY EVENTS IN AUGUST

**Mondays, 7pm** (English) DHARMA FLICKS: **4th**—*What the Bleep Do We Know?*; **11th**—*What the Bleep: Down the Rabbit Hole*; **18th**—*Tenzin Palomo*; **25th**—*Art Mind: The Healing Power of Sacred Art*. Free. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*.

**Mondays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: Kenny Molina hosts *Open Mike*. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

**Mondays-7:30pm** — MUSIC: Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

### WEEKLY EVENTS IN AUGUST

**Mondays, 8-10pm** — LIVE MUSIC: *Blues Night*. Free. La Cueva Panza Verde (7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*.

**Tuesdays 4 to 7pm** — (English/Spanish) NETWORKING: For NGOs and projects in the area; a place for people who have or are working on projects to present and share ideas. Everyone is welcome; tea, coffee and snacks. Stuardo's place (tel: 7832-3160) Calle Chipilapa #9-A, *La Antigua*.

**Tuesdays, 6pm** — (English) BENEFIT SLIDE SHOW: *Antigua: Behind the Walls* with a one-hour slide show by Elizabeth Bell. Q30, benefits educational program. Fusión Restaurant & Bar (tel: 4144-0171) 1a calle poniente #9), *La Antigua*.

**Tuesdays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: Ramiro performs trova Cubana. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

**Tuesdays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: *Malcolm* will blow you away with some classics and his infamous tequila song. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

**Tuesdays & Wednesdays 6:30pm** — (Spanish) TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION. Free. Bodhi (tel: 7832-5111) 4a av. norte #2, *La Antigua*.

**Wednesdays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: *Open Mike Night* hosted by Juan-Jo and friends. A complimentary drink for all performers. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. Sur #8, *La Antigua*.

**Wednesdays-Sundays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle p. #15-C, *La Antigua*. ▼



*No one is ever old enough to know better.*  
—Holbrook Jackson

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## WEEKLY EVENTS IN AUGUST

**Wednesday-Saturday, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: Guitar: classical, tango and flamenco. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

**Thursdays, 7:30pm** — MUSIC: Son de La Antigua will light up your night. Free. Rainbow Café (tel. 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

**Thursdays and Fridays, 8 to 10pm** — MUSIC: Cuban jazz performed by Buena Vista de Corazón. Q35. La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*.



**Thursdays, 8:30pm** — MUSIC: Live music, 2 *Much Blues*. Free. La Catapeña, inside Casa del Aguila (tel: 2361-6456) Ruta 3, vía 5, esquina, z. 4, al sur de 4 Grados Norte, *Guatemala City*.

**Saturdays, 11am** — ART: Exhibition and sale of clay pieces from Chinautla, ceramic from Patzún and textiles from San Antonio Aguas Calientes. Free. Casa del Aguila (tel: 2361-6456) Ruta 3, vía 5, esquina, z. 4, al sur de 4 Grados Norte, *Guatemala City*.

**Monday through Friday, 4 hrs., am or pm** — WORKSHOP: *A Taste of Weaving*, learn backstrap-loom weaving from a master indigenous weaver. Q280 includes use of threaded loom and instruction manual. Indigo Artes Textiles (7888-7487), inside Finca la Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

**Monday through Friday, 9am-4pm** — WORKSHOP: *Reviving and Innovating Traditions* with master weaver from San Antonio Aguas Calientes, beginning with simple techniques and proceeding to more complex designs. Q650 includes use of backstrap loom and instruction manual. Group rates with a minimum of 5 students. Indigo Artes Textiles (7888-7487), inside Finca la Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

## DATEBOOK HIGHLIGHT



**Indigo Artes Textiles announces its new class curriculum this month.** Designed to accommodate every level of artistic expression and expertise, students are offered the following courses: *The Magic of Color*, Aug. 11 to 15; *The Natural Palette*, Aug. 22; *Reviving and Innovating Traditions*, Monday through Fridays; and *A Taste of Weaving*, mornings or afternoons.

All of the classes are taught by master Maya backstrap-loom weavers, all materials and manuals are provided.

Indigo Artes Textiles is located inside Finca la Azotea, Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez. Contact information: tel: 7888-7487, [indigoartestextiles@gmail.com](mailto:indigoartestextiles@gmail.com)



The entire magazine at [www.revuemag.com](http://www.revuemag.com)



PANZA VERDE



*Al descubierto*  
**NATHALIE BÉARD**

Inauguration: Wed., August 13th, 5 p.m. ~ 5ª av. sur #19, La Antigua Guatemala

### WEEKLY EVENTS IN AUGUST

**Saturdays, 4pm** — (Spanish) THEATER: *El ladrón de palabras*, family entertainment presented by Rompecabezas from Universidad Rafael Landívar. Q30. Teatro Manuel Galich de la Universidad Popular (tel: 2221-1565) 10 calle 10-32, z. 1, **Guatemala City**.

**Saturdays, 7pm** — DANCE: Ballet Guatemala presents *La Silfides y Kinoch* in honor of the original version, 'Les Silphides'. Q30-Q100. Gran Sala Teatro Nacional (tel. 2232 404) 24 calle 3-81, z. 1, **Guatemala City**.

**Sundays** — MUSIC: *Live Jazz* during a la carte brunch. Galería Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

**Sundays, 1pm** — MUSIC: Ramiro plays *Trova Cubana*. Free La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

**Sundays, 6:30pm** (English) — SUNDAY ART FLICKS: **3rd**—*Frida Kahlo: The Ribbon that Ties the Bomb*; **10th**—*Lust for Life* (Van Gogh); **17th**—*Magritte* (by Adrian Maben); **24th**—*Michelangelo: Self Portrait* (4 hrs.); **31st**—*Three Colors*, Cezzane. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

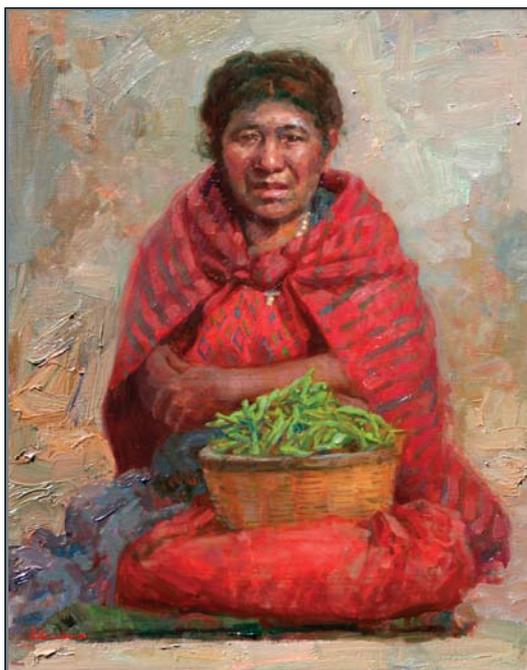
**Daily** — ART: *Fragments y Multitudes*, an exhibition of paintings, watercolor, acrylic and mixed techniques by artist Ricardo Silva Cordero. Galería El Tunel (tel: 2367-3266) 16 calle 1-01, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



**Through Sun., 31st-4pm** — ART: Exhibition of oil paintings by the Guatemalan artist Leonel del Cid. Galería del Artista, Paseo de los Museos Hotel Casa Santo Domingo (tel: 7820-1220, ext. 579) 3a calle oriente #28, **La Antigua**.



The entire magazine at [www.revuemag.com](http://www.revuemag.com)



## La Antigua Galería de Arte

# WILLIAM KALWICK

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by **Dr. Karmen Guevara**  
HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPIST

**B**alance and harmony are the foundations of wisdom, yet they are sorely neglected in our lives—it wasn't part of our everyday life curriculum. Consequently, we often live in a state of "too much" or "too little." In today's world, these gross imbalances are reflected in the financial, socio-economic and environmental arenas. Although we cannot take on the planet, we are the stones that cause the ripples in a pond. Mahatma Gandhi was quoted as saying, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

We are three-dimensional creatures with a mind, body and a spirit. The biggest imbalance lies with the mind because it's ruled by the ego, which makes it top heavy. Our thinking, feelings and behaviors all happen from the neck up. How can you tell if your mind is imbalanced? Simply observe how often you can be without thoughts.

When our spirit isn't connected with our outer lives, we experience an increasing sense of loss of balance and harmony. How can we tell if the spirit is not balanced? When we forget: to feel, to express gratitude, to love without expectations, to listen to the inner voice and to be fully present.

Our bodies hold everything. Like a giant garbage pail, it is forced to deal with junk food and other excesses plus all the negative memories and emotions that we mentally shove aside. Eventually the body becomes imbalanced and falls into "dis-ease."

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spirit and the inner peace that lies within. When we are in this natural state, we are in tune with the universal principle of balance and adjustment.

Remember, it is not about never doing this or that. Sometimes you do and sometimes you don't—but you always come back to the middle ground. As Albert Einstein said, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving." 

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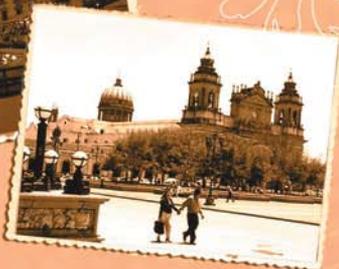


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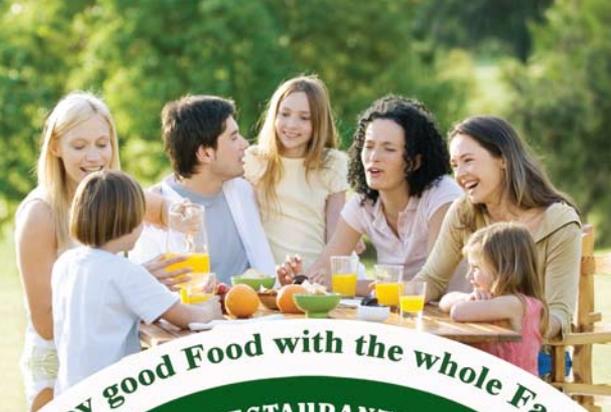


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*Bach Ensemble Leipzig and the Millennium Orchestra*



A joint concert of two renowned chamber orchestras, one from Europe and the other from Guatemala, will take place on **Wednesday August 13** at 7:30 p.m. in the Juan Bautista Gutiérrez Auditorium at the Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala City.

Sharing the music of both cultures, the Bach Ensemble Leipzig and the Millennium Orchestra will perform a program of European and Guatemalan work. The concert opens with the Leipzig orchestra's rendering of Felix Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas Overture, op. 95*, followed by the *Violin Concerto in A-minor* by Bach. Four Maya musicians from Comalapa, Chimaltenango join the ensemble for the performance of a new work evoking the pre-Columbian past.

Next in the program the Millennium Orchestra and the Leipzig Bach Ensemble, under the direction of Maestro Dieter Lehnhoff, will play the charming *Symphony No. 7* written in 1834 by

a Guatemalan classical composer, José Eulalio Samayoa (1781-1866). **This earliest work in that form written by the recently discovered composer is also the earliest symphony known to have been composed in the New World.**

Virtuoso pianist Sergio Sandi, flown in from New York for the event, will be the soloist for the world premiere of composer Dieter Lehnhoff's *Piano Concerto No. 2*. The pianist and the orchestra engage in an animated and sometimes mysterious dialogue with frequent reminiscences of jazz, tango and other contemporary idioms, allowing the soloist to display his brilliant virtuosity.

Closing the program is Lehnhoff's *Tardes de feria*, a danzón of nostalgic old-time flavor, which also has become a favorite of audiences in La Antigua and Quetzaltenango.

The proceeds from the concert will benefit CENSI, a therapy center for children with mental and physical handicaps. Tickets: Q200 are available at the door the night of the concert. For additional information, tel: 2364-6700.

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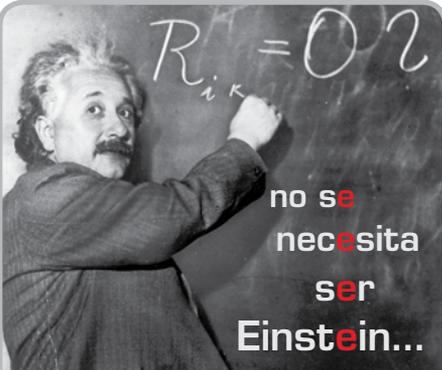
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Pet Q's & A's by Cynthia Burski, DVM




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**Question:** We recently adopted a 3-month-old cat that we are trying to introduce to our older cat Tommy, who is neutered and declawed. When Tommy sees the new cat he becomes quite upset and snarly. What are we to do?

**Answer:** Whether or not these two cats get along in the future depends a lot on what type of "snarly" behavior Tommy has been doing. Hissing and growling (by either cat) are normal behaviors when a new cat is introduced. This can be eased by separating the cats by a door for a week or so, exchanging odors by taking

turns allowing the cats to roam, rotating food bowls and litter boxes, etc. An interim step before getting these two together, nose to nose, could be placing one cat in a carrier in the middle of the other's room, for increasing periods of time.

Mild growling and hissing should diminish with time. Stalking, caterwauling (screaming) and chasing (with vocalizations) are bad signs, as is urine marking (spraying). The cats may call a truce and forever avoid each other or they may mutually groom and sleep together. As long as there is no overt aggression (fighting), they should be fine. ----

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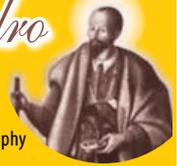
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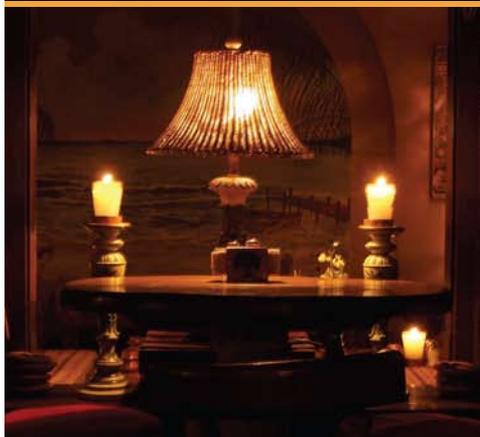
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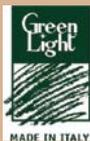


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Looking south through Pasaje Rubio



Interior view of El Portalito

# Portal to the Past

*Hidden within the Pasaje Rubio, Guatemala City's oldest restaurant never forgets* Text and photos by Dwight Wayne Coop

**E**l Portal, Guatemala City's oldest operating restaurant—and the core of today's Pasaje Rubio—could have inspired Hemingway's *A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*.

This short story explores the question of whether good is possible in an impersonal universe. The proprietor (of the coffee house described by the title) tries to answer by nurturing his customers, although he is an atheist. To his poorest regulars, those with nowhere to go, he offers refuge, free coffee and a whiff of bohemian leisure. Life, for him, is the sole chance to practice good. Believers would cheer his goodness but assert that it comes of his creation in a Divine image.

Such questions have been debated at El Portal for decades, even among enemies who checked their aggression at the door but unsheathed fighting words at the tables. The place is aptly named: portals, says Noah Webster, are “doorways, particularly large and impressive ones.” Yet this portal to the past—in Zone One's scrawled-over Time

Tunnel—is called El Portalito because it excites more affection than awe.

The big room started life in 1928 as a typing academy, whose tap-tapping and ring-dinging ceased its thousand-footed march through the Rubio's corridors after four years. Carlos Brolo and Marcos Chávez, two waiters from the (still-standing) Hotel Royal Palace down the Sexta, pooled their tips to start their own restaurant here. The latter's grandsons, Willy and Rodolfo, are the current proprietors.

Immortality was conferred on the Portalito one night in 1936, the first year of the notorious Huelga de Dolores—an outgrowth of a Lenten parade originating from a medical school then located a dozen blocks southeast of the Rubio. Today the “strike” has become a demonstration by hooded universitarios, but even from the start it had a ribald grand marshal—el Rey Feo—who is born on a litter. David Pinto, the first “king,” decreed ...continued on following page

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**Endless Possibilities...**



**LEFT: Strike minstrel José Barnoya, MD, (left) and King David Pinto reunite at the Portalito decades later.**  
**RIGHT: The Pasaje Rubio after remodeling**

that the huelga would end at El Portalito with a boozing session and recitals of the huelga's "drinking anthem," composed by future medical doctor José Barnoya. Today the huelga begins elsewhere, but it still ends here. A Portalito "invention" still enjoyed by the marchers is the mixed-beer shot; it was the first Guatemalan institution to blend local and imported brews into special formulas that claim followings.

Every Guatemalan president since the 1930s has been a customer—though rarely while in power, since the room is an inviting setting for assassins. Col. Carlos Castillo Armas was especially fond of El Portalito; but once in power (1955-57), only his valet came over—to retrieve take-out for the boss. Nobel laureate Miguel Ángel Asturias was another regular, and today you can sit at his favorite table. Countless lesser luminaries, politicians and enforcers were, and still are, among the clientele. But it was also a place for families, which explains why it remains a bar for people who do not like bars. Folks who were children during World War II now bring their grandchildren for sips of lemonade and nostalgia.

During the early years of the 35-year Civil Conflict that began in 1961, El Portalito was considered a relatively safe place to vent dissent. It lost this honor one night in 1972 when a student named Oliverio said too much. Later, when it was time to call it

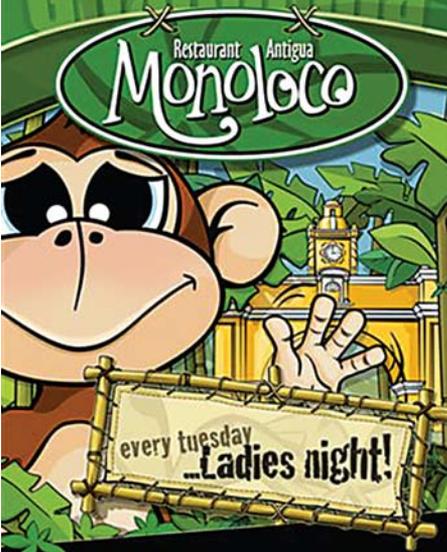
a night, he and a friend sauntered out into Pasaje Rubio—the rest of which was dark after 7. While exiting onto 6th Avenue, he was gunned down on the spot now commemorated by three brass plaques. His friend was "disappeared" and never seen again. Did Oliverio die in vain? It seemed so then. But today, you can say anything in El Portalito.

The restaurant's history is colored not only by its guests, but its employees. Waiter "Chepe" Contreras, now deceased, was for 40 years the "bartender to Presidents" and the probable repository of state secrets. From 1933 to 1953, the musicians on the dais overlooking the restaurant were four blind men playing harp, violin, piano and flute. Their name? *Armonía en Tinieblas*—Harmony in the Darkness. They were followed for 25 years by an organist who, in 1978, was replaced by a marimba band. While the world around it becomes more globally uniform, El Portalito abides in all things Guatemalan.

This is what we find most endearing about it. The menu and recipes have not changed in a lifetime, because they were "authentic" long before food was ever called such. Nor do the décor and ambience change; the photos on the wall date from the 1940s and, except for two cable monitors behind the bar, nothing is different. El Portalito is a social black box, a constant in time, a portal to the past. 



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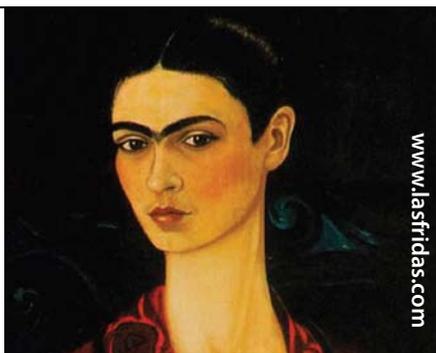
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—Dave Barry

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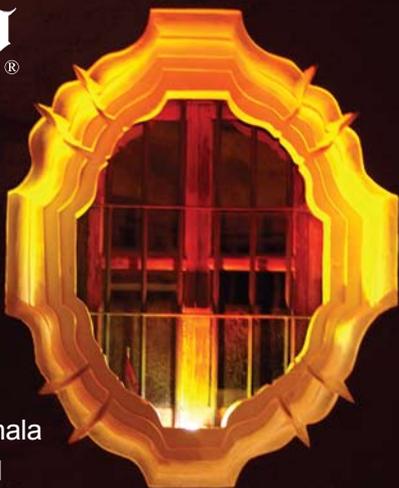
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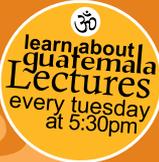
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# The Zen of Fin & Fondo

by Dwight Wayne Coop  
maddogwriter@yahoo.com.sg



Here comes another cluster of words—*fin*, *fondo* and *extremo*—that combine to express a key English word (end). Methinks it would be nice if we could just hybridize them into a something like “findo.” However, there’s the danger that such a word could jump out of a skinny phrasebook and into pidgin Spanish as a noun: “el findo.” Can’t you just imagine someone calling a worthy pizzeria a “goodo findo”?

Back when folks spoke Latin, *finalis* meant final and *fundus* meant bottom. Let’s go to the fundus of fin/fondo by first getting out of the way some equivalents of these English words. Final in Spanish is usually *último* (meaning not “ultimate” but “last”). The Spanish word *final* exists, but with little life of its own. You see it in phrases like *poner punto final a* (“to put an end to”). This is what my wife wants to do to my trips to Becky’s Bar in Panajachel, even though I never “drink” there. Bottom, in Spanish, becomes *base* for many physical and metaphorical foundations, whereas *traseo* is the word used in mixed company for that, um, part of the anatomy the wife must think I go to Becky’s to look at (quick note: I don’t).

Aside from fondo and fin, *extremo* often translates end, mainly in the sense of “tip”

for anything ideological (as in English) or tubular (candles, pipes, pencils, caterpillars, etc.). Trotsky burnt the candle at both *extremos* while writing down his *opiniones extremas*. All in all, *extremo* is not too zenny.

Fin is straightforward, especially for movie buffs who recall that movies made in the 40s and 50s concluded with the uppity French *fin* at the *fin* of the final scene. And the common phrase *por fin* means finally. Fin is also the word for end in geometry and for time periods, lives, events, and civilizations. Admiral Nelson found two *fines* in the battle of Trafalgar: the *fin* of his life (he was fatally wounded), and the *fin* of the combined French-Spanish fleet (Nelson’s costly victory could also be called a *meta*, the proper word for goal).

Fin means purpose or aim in the phrases *a fin de* and *con el fin de*. Before a verb, they mean, “with the goal of” or “in order” or simply “so.” The wife could tell her knitting circle, “I went to Becky’s Bar a *fin de poner punto final a las visitas que mi esposa hace*.”

Fondo is zennier than fin. For abstractions, you need fin. For physical things, especially things big enough to enter—caves, buildings, railcars, peninsulas, fuselages, attics, cul-de-sacs, and the wardrobe in C.S. Lewis’ Narnia ...continued on page 70

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**The Zen of...** cont. from page 64

universe—you need fondo. Boats may be an exception, because the Spaniards were seafarers who thought up nautical synonyms. “All right, boys,” Columbus might have told his crew, “it’s a long way to India, especially since we’re going the wrong way. So let’s think up some good words for stern and bow, so we can quit saying fondo-this, fondo that. It’s something to do!” They already had a word for deep—*profundo*—and depths—*las honduras*. This word went on to become the name of a country, perhaps because the coastal waters are deep enough to drown in if you have had enough rum.

The first zenniness of fondo is that it means both end and bottom. If your movement is lateral, it means the former; if you’re descending, it means the latter. The second zenniness is that for lateral movement, fondo is relative. The fondo of, say, a row of offices in a government ministry is the end where the speaker is not. When you arrive at the reception desk and ask whom you need to see, you might be sent all the way to the *licenciada* at the fondo. And so, after you go there and stand in line (ideally with a copy of *Revue*), the *licenciada* might explain that you’re in the wrong place, and that you need to return to reception for redirection (perhaps to the *fondo* of another floor). Where is the reception desk? *Al fondo*, “at the back.”

Reader, maybe I have not reached the fondo, but I have reached the fin. 📖

*And so I have. This is the fin of “Zen of...” I want to thank all those readers who have, over the years, followed this column loyally, especially those who sent compliments, ideas for future columns, and the occasional correction or barb. There is talk of compiling the columns into a book. But for now, from one student of Spanish to many others, ¡Qué les vaya bien!*  
PS: Look for my new column, starting next month.

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**Fair weather fiancé**

One mid-afternoon on a sunny day, a golfer teed up his ball. After a few practice swings, he steps up to his ball and gets ready to drive the first hole. Just before he swings, a woman in a wedding gown comes running up from the parking lot. She's got tears streaming down her face. Just as she reaches the raised tee, she screams out, "I can't believe it! How could you do that?" The golfer calmly takes a swing and drives the ball straight down the fairway. He looks at the woman, as he puts his driver back in his bag and says, "Hey...I said 'only if it's raining.'"

**Less than bright**

As two NBA basketball referees walked through the countryside, they noticed some tracks. First said, 'Deer tracks?' Second said 'No, bear tracks.' However, the conversation ended abruptly when a train hit them.

**Trapped**

An airline captain was training a new, blonde stewardess. The route they were flying had a stay-over in another city, so upon their arrival, the captain showed the stewardess the best place for airline personnel to eat, shop and stay overnight.

The next morning as the pilot was preparing the crew for the day's route, he noticed the new stewardess was missing.

He knew which room she was in at the hotel and called her up wondering what happened to her. She answered the phone, sobbing, and said she couldn't get out of her room.

"You can't get out of your room?" the captain asked, "Why not?"

The stewardess replied, "There are only three doors in here," she cried, "one is the bathroom, one is the closet, and one has a sign on it that says, 'Do Not Disturb!'"

**Spreading the news**

A man came down with the flu and was forced to stay home one day. He was glad for the interlude because it taught him how much his wife loved him.

She was so thrilled to have him around that when a delivery man or the mailman arrived, she ran out and yelled, "My husband's home! My husband's home!"

**Matchless**

A doctor vacationing on the Riviera met an old lawyer friend and asked him what he was doing there.

The lawyer replied, "Remember that lousy real estate I bought? Well, it caught fire, so here I am with the fire insurance proceeds. What are you doing here?"

The doctor replied, "Remember that lousy real estate I had in Mississippi? Well, the river overflowed, and here I am with the flood insurance proceeds."

The lawyer looked puzzled. "Gee," he asked, "how did you start a flood?"

**First impression**

It was their first date, and she'd shown the patience of a saint as he babbled on and on about his hobbies, his pet peeves, his driving techniques, and even the standards he used to choose his barber. Finally, he came up for air and said, "But enough about me. Let's talk about you." She breathed a sigh of relief. He went on, "What do you think about me?"

**Options**

Wife: "Do you want dinner?"

Husband: "Sure. What are my choices?"

Wife: "Yes or no."

**Art imitating life**

John's dad picked him up from school to take him to a dental appointment. Knowing the parts for the school play were supposed to be posted today, he asked his son if he got a part.

John enthusiastically announced that he'd gotten a part. "I play a man who's been married for twenty years."

"That's great, son. Keep up the good work and before you know it they'll be giving you a speaking part."

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*I never drink water—that's the stuff that rusts pipes. —W.C. Fields*

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## Time Tunnels of Zone One cont. from page 15

A coin-and-stamp store is a miniature museum and one of only three numismatic retailers in town. It is one of a dozen locales exhibiting everything from taxidermy to antique knives and dolls. Almost next door is where the late Policarpio Mejía, “King of Luck,” once reigned. Owing to self-promotion and customer superstition, Policarpio and his heirs are periodically celebrated in newspapers as a source of winning lottery tickets. For years, people from the provinces went out of their way to visit the king. There is a belief that Pasaje Rubio itself is lucky, so the lottery in every permutation has become its chief commodity.

A certain Frenchman visited 45 years ago—but not to see Policarpio. He had read a mention of Pasaje Rubio in a yellowing pre-World-War-II architectural journal and—as a photographer—was intrigued. But Rubio was already in decay, and the man left in a huff without taking a single photo. Why was he blind to its charms? Perhaps from his jading acquaintance with early malls in rundown parts of Paris. But in Guatemala, nothing compares with Rubio, then or now.

Betancourt, a dimly-lit stationer near the asymmetric fork in Rubio’s middle, resembles an outside storefront; nobody knew, when it opened, how centro commercial stores were supposed to look. The place is layered with the strata of time and the ghosts of Guatemalan intellectuals who once browsed the shelves.

“Rubio,” explains Betancourt’s proprietress, “was a living ruin for decades because Mr. Rubio sold out to the individual shopkeepers. We couldn’t agree on anything. When the place needed painting, we couldn’t agree on the color. The floors and windows needed fixing, too. But when we passed the hat, some merchants didn’t chip in. Others squabbled over what their share should be.”

Next to Betancourt, you could buy a book from Edgar Jahniq. His hole-in-the-wall nook was a pasaje within a pasaje, wide enough for just one person at a time. His family immigrated from Germany when he was a boy, and Jacobo Arbenz was President when Edgar opened for business in 1951. Over the years, he became a beacon for Germanic bibliophiles, and every third bargain book on his sagging shelves was in German. A steel *portón* now seals Don Edgar’s memory; he died last year.

There is more to Rubio than its ossified locales. As you stroll through, look not just left and right, but up at the dilapidated grandeur of its second and third floors, and you will feel you are in another era. Take a stairway to the upper levels, which are mostly small apartments. From behind the spindled railings you can look down on Rubio’s movie-set vibrancy and wonder: “if these walls could talk ...”

And so they can—to mice. On the other tine of Rubio’s fork was a wedding accessory shop, Novias Camelia. Over the decades, for a few hours each day, a gifted raconteuse showed up to work her day job. The Rubio owes its private literary heritage to the fertile imagination of María del Carmen Escobar, most famously in *49 Cents of Happiness*, a novel narrated by a mouse. The joys and heartbreaks it chronicles are thinly fictionalized, giving us a snapshot that is gossipy and whimsical on the one hand, but instructive on the other.

In Rubio’s core, near the fork, is its most time-proof artifact: Guatemala’s oldest continuously operated restaurant, El Portal, which—like María Escobar—is a whole other story.

In 2008, Rubio was remodeled and repainted for the first time that anyone remembers. But it is only a makeover; the place is still timeless, still bathed in gold, somewhere you can touch the city’s soul. 

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—J.R.R. Tolkien

*Hot water is my native element: I was in it as a baby, and I have never seemed to get out of it ever since.* —Edith Sitwell

*When you tell people your troubles, half of them are not interested, and the other half are glad to learn that you're getting what you deserve.*



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“Nothing similar was known in a convent of this order nor in any other for women or men...” (*Historia General de Guatemala, Vol. III*). A column in the vaulted basement, 10 feet in diameter, supports a round patio above, surrounded by 18 cells. Suggested uses of the basement, with exceptional acoustics, include food storage, clothes drying and weaving.

The cells of the second level raise further speculation. Each is supplied with water channeled from a higher level. Recesses inside each cell, each with a drain and ventilation holes above, suggest toilets. Were these cells used for the nuns’ private retreat? Were they for novices...or sick or aged nuns? Could they have been used for detention... or a public bath predating the convent? Any of the suggested uses can be refuted.

The tower’s complicated hydraulic system included two bathtubs with connections to heated water. “For an order that was operating with extreme poverty, existing on the alms of the people and professing an austere life, the luxuries of this tower are entirely inconsistent,” wrote Verle Annis (*The Architecture of Antigua Guatemala: 1543-1773*). Luís Luján Muñoz assured that the tower was built at the same time as the rest of the convent, while Annis concluded that the convent was complete without the tower.



**El Carmen Church in 1900, deemed unsuitable for the Capuchinas in 1726**

*El Edificio Circular del Convento de Capuchinas* (University of San Carlos, 1994) goes one further: “There is evidence that Porres built the church but not that he built the tower.” They agree with Annis that “There is no record of its construction date.” This opens possibilities for its uses before and/or after its inclusion in the convent. It is known that, after 1773, the round patio’s uses included drying coffee, growing corn, dying and making fireworks or gunpowder. In any case, it was unique “with no counterpart in the Americas or Spain.”

A tour through the tower today raises more questions than answers. “Despite the various explanations assigned to the circular building...there is no single satisfactory explanation for its construction or use.” (Annis)

Diego de Porres, named master architect of the city of Santiago, was also named principal plumber because of his experience in running water works. His work in the Capuchin Church and convent, the fifth and final convent founded in the town, remains to his tribute.

The Anthropological and History Institute of Guatemala began restoration in 1950, and in 1972 the National Council for the Protection of La Antigua Guatemala (Consejo) located its offices in the convent. Currently the government of Taiwan is working with the Consejo to implement a museum on the site, scheduled to open in August.

While Porres built in Guatemala, the Peter and Paul Cathedral was built in Russia. While music rang in the Church of El Carmen, J. S. Bach served as music director and choirmaster of St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, Germany; and the Vienna Boys’ Choir was more than 200 years old. Thomas Jefferson wasn’t born yet.

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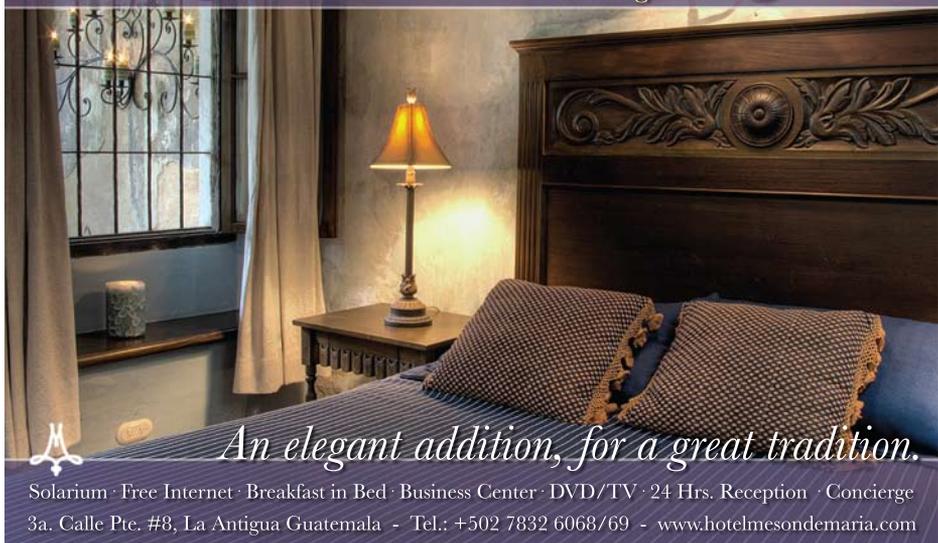
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*I tell the truth, not as much as I'd like to but as much as I dare, and I dare more and more as I grow older. —Montaigne*

*I must be getting old because nowadays I find I'm more interested in the food I eat than in the girl who serves it. —John Steinbeck*

*I judge how much a man cares for a woman by the space he allots her under a jointly shared umbrella. —Jimmy Cannon*

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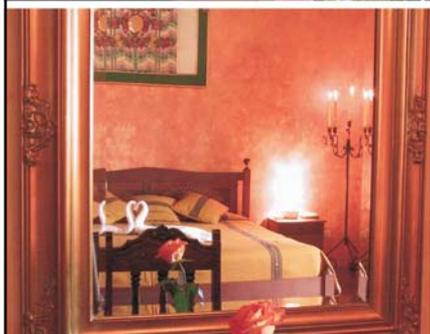
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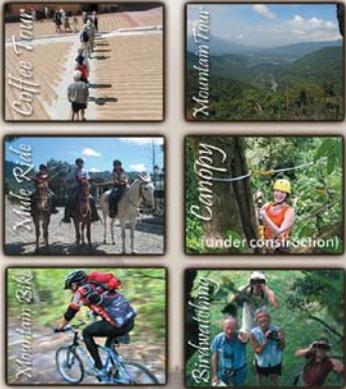


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# FLASHBACK: 1937

*Where am I? As you read on, see if you can decipher which part of Guatemala is being written about.*

by Carlisle Johnson gmg988@yahoo.com

The year is 1937, just when Hollywood first used Guatemala as the setting for a full-length 1938 feature film, *Tarzan and the Green Goddess*. Tourists from the United States had no difficulty figuring out what things cost because the currency was on par with the U.S. dollar, 1:1, and remained so for almost 45 more years, truly one of the world's strongest currencies.

## *So, where am I?*

Excerpts from *Penny Capitalism—A Guatemalan Indian Economy*:

“The community has only 800 people... it is an insignificant place in a rural area which (the country) thinks of as its backwoods.”

“The social institutions and cosmology, strange as they may be to us, are as separated from the processes of making a living as are our own.”

“The hills are mysterious and dangerous, in native belief, inhabited by supernatural beings.”

The following were average prices in 1936: “Corn is one cent a pound; avocados are three for a penny; a 24-ounce bottle of liquor is 50 cents, a beer is 15 cents, a shotgun will set you back exactly a dollar and a coffin (full size) costs \$5.”

Wages: “Among the highest in Guatemala, at 16 ½ cents a day. Every man between the ages of 18 and 60 is required to work on the highway for two weeks (12 days) each year; instead of working he may pay the sum of \$2.”

Housing prices: “Labor is usually provided by the family, and the construction cost of a bare cane house with a thatched roof is \$5.96, while at the middle range an adobe house with a tile roof costs \$27, and at the top end an adobe house with galvanized zinc roof costs \$68.50. The total tax base of the town's 590 structures is \$3,870.11, including six “dog houses, pigpens and rabbit houses” valued at \$1.65.”

Here is the scene as described from inside a house: “Except for chests and a few chairs and tables and occasional beds, house furnishings are homemade. Beds, for example, consist of stagings built out from a wall, the legs implanted in the floor, the surface consisting of canes or bought boards laid transversally... Utensils and clothing are hung from nails or wooden pegs or branches... the fireplace consists of three large stones used as they are found...”

Marriage: “From 1922 to 1937 there were 15 cases of Indian marriage in the legal religious sense. There was none in 1936...”

Real Estate: “Steep and hilly land sells for from \$2.50 an acre to \$8.50 an acre. Land more useful for farming in the delta costs from \$50 to \$150 an acre. Coffee-producing land is even more valuable at \$175 per acre.”

Anyone reading these passages must be impressed by how little things have changed in Guatemala's indigenous villages in the 71 years since 1937 (except for the prices).

...continued on next page




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*Like its politicians and its wars, society has the teenagers it deserves. —J.B. Priestley*

*Each snowflake in an avalanche pleads not guilty. —Stanislaw J. Lec*

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**Flashback** cont. from page 100

If you still haven't figured out where you, here is another hint:

"In 1935 a ladino offered me (the author) a hillock (8 acres) on the lake shore between Santa Catarina and San Antonio for \$90. Eventually a German in Panajachel bought it for \$80..."

The town was Panajachel and the author cited was Sol Tax, the social scientist who performed field work in Panajachel for the years prior to 1937 and published it in *Penny Capitalism—A Guatemalan Indian Economy* in 1953 through the Smithsonian Institution of Social Anthropology. The riveting work, replete with tables and maps, covers the economy of Panajachel, and the reader must be struck by the application of the French expression as applied to today's Guatemala, *Plus ça change, plus ça reste le même* (the more things change, the more they stay the same). Except maybe for land prices.

One other change? The 1953 Smithsonian publication, 230 pages plus maps, cost \$1.75. 📖

*Author's note: With grateful acknowledgement to David E. Lindwall, whose generosity with Penny Capitalism has made it possible to share this fascinating work.*



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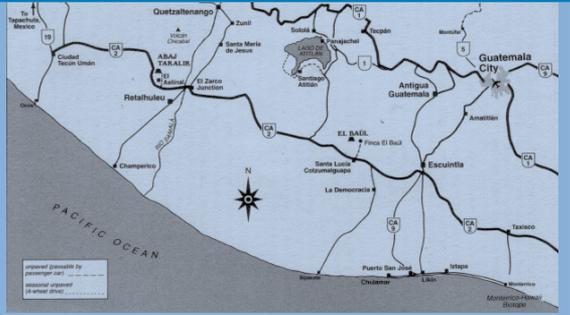
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*A teenager is an adolescent who is going through a trying period—trying to avoid study and trying to avoid work.*

*Success comes to two kinds of people, those who are always on their toes, and those who are always stepping on the other person's.*

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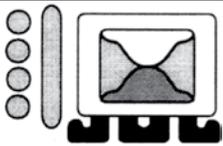
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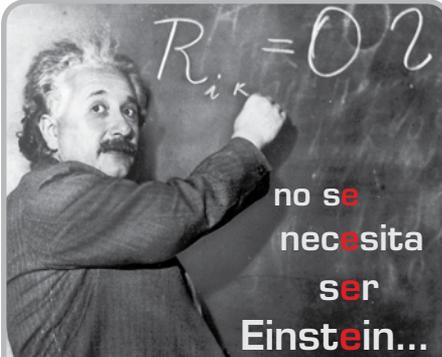
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about the things he puts into his stomach.*



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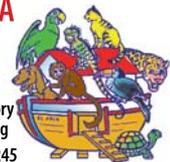
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## WANTED

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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT CASA DE FE,** a home for pre-op and post-op patients from Obras Sociales hospital. Opportunities: SHORT-TERM- data input, office work, cooking. LONG-TERM- (Spanish skills required) - communications/fundraising, health education, patient companions. Contact Sarah @ 7832-8700 or [sschwaller@faithinpractice.org](mailto:sschwaller@faithinpractice.org)

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# Constru Casa

## Building to improve lives in Guatemala

Over half the Guatemalan population has inadequate housing. In some areas, houses are improvised and lack running water and electricity. Living in shelters made of cardboard, steel sheets, stones and pieces of wood, families are cramped and exposed to unhealthy conditions, the elements and natural disasters.

The Guatemalan government has focused its attention on housing needs in Guatemala, thanks to subsidies from the Fondo Guatemalteco de Vivienda-FOGUAVI (Guatemalan Fund for Housing), together with contributions from the private sector, including financing corporations, banks, non-government organizations, cooperatives and international donors.

However, the poorest families are not subject to credit so they cannot be included in the housing programs, even though they may survive on less than \$1 per day per person. Some families have only one room in which to sleep, cook, and sometimes to even raise domestic animals.

The Constru Casa Association was created to improve the living conditions of the poorest people, offering construction of very low-cost housing.

Averaging 60 new houses per year, Constru Casa started in 2004 with the belief that by improving the material and physical conditions of housing, living conditions would improve and as a result, the physical and mental health of the families. Constru Casa works with other organizations involved in education and health programs, which often serve the most vulnerable groups of the communities.

The life style of the families may improve with better quality housing. Also, self esteem as well as physical and mental health will improve considerably with a new home, from which families will also improve their social and economic activities. The construction of a

new home provides families a new form of security, self esteem, health and hygiene.

In these families many women work at home, so a new home brings a better work environment. The construction of a house requires the help of volunteers, carpenters, masons and helpers—and the families themselves. Working toward this common goal strengthens the bonds of solidarity.

The project also provides job opportunities for the local population and the opportunity to establish contacts between Constru Casa, the companies and local suppliers that collaborate with the construction. This applies to the hiring of tradesmen, the notary who prepares the contract and others.

Constru Casa offers the construction of one house for each selected family. The head of the family commits to pay a percentage of the construction, which is financed for two years. The cost varies according to the type of house selected. There are no requirements on the size of the family; attention is placed on the physical and material conditions of the family.

Constru Casa has already constructed new houses in the departments of Guatemala, Sacatepéquez, San Marcos, Totonicapán, Quiché, Escuintla, Chimaltenango, El Progreso and Baja Verapaz. It has been able to build these houses due to the collaboration of local and foreign organizations and companies. It has made alliances with construction companies that donate a percentage to the association for each house sold. It also receives donations for materials, roofing, doors and windows, cement, etc. Constru Casa is ready to build more houses to help families in need and to reduce the housing deficit in Guatemala. 

*For more information, call Constru Casa in La Antigua (502) 5306-8697, 5938-3433, 7832-2369 or [contacto@construcasa.org](mailto:contacto@construcasa.org) or visit [www.construcasa.org](http://www.construcasa.org)*

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For the festival the eight Kings and Queens of Corn, elected from each of the municipality's zones, dress in elaborate outfits decorated with corn.

# Celebrating Corn in Suchitoto

text & photos by Amber Lucero-Criswell [amberluceroCriswell@hotmail.com](mailto:amberluceroCriswell@hotmail.com)

Maybe you haven't thought much about corn lately. True, it has been in the news recently as a potential source of bio-fuel. And, yes, we read the name of its overly sweet derivative—high-fructose corn syrup—on nearly every package of processed food we buy. But, on average, we travelers to El Salvador probably have not thought much about corn, let alone set aside a time to celebrate it.

Not so in Suchitoto. The people of this colonial town in El Salvador gather to give thanks for the corn harvest at the annual Festival of Corn (Festival de Maíz), which is celebrated this year on **August 17**.

Here in El Salvador, corn rules. Much of the national diet is based on products made from corn, and many farmers count on each year's harvest to provide their family income. Not only are large swaths of land

in this small country dedicated to its cultivation, but also tiny plots outside Salvadoran homes—wherever there is space. Stroll through any Salvadoran neighborhood and you will hear the rhythmic clapping sound of women making tortillas inside their homes. This simple crop is a cornerstone of Salvadoran life.

Combining both sacred and celebratory atmospheres, the Festival of Corn unites Suchitoto's urban and rural communities which pay tribute to the corn harvest and to the many farmers who labor to bring the crop to Salvadoran tables. The day begins with a solemn procession through Suchitoto's historic center. Among the many participants are the eight Kings and Queens of Corn, elected from each of the municipality's zones. True to their honorary titles, the royalty dress themselves in elaborate outfits

## Bringing new educational opportunities to locals at El Puerto de La Libertad

As tourism quickly grows in La Libertad, businesses require their staff to be trained in English and several other areas to better serve their guests. For that reason, WISE, an English-teaching company based in San Salvador, recently began offering English courses to locals at El Puerto de La Libertad.

WISE offers regular English courses; technical English for people working in tourism-related businesses (bars, hotels and restaurants); and express Spanish for travelers.

Some 30 students have already enrolled in beach communities from Punta Roca to El Sunzal, and most recently a children's group was formed. Students learn from experienced teachers with a program tailored to their individual needs.

Tourists interested in volunteering to enhance the English-learning experience of locals are welcome to contact WISE. For more information, call (503) 2328-5624 or visit: [www.capacitacioneswise.com](http://www.capacitacioneswise.com) 



WISE teacher with student group (PHOTO: MARÍA ELISA MURRAY)

that are decorated with corn. Following the procession is a special Mass celebrated in Suchitoto's iconic Santa Lucía Church.

The Festival of Corn continues in the Central Plaza with numerous activities. Here, you can see the impressive array of methods in which corn is prepared in El Salvador. If your corn vocabulary is limited to cream-style corn and corn chips, you are in for a culinary awakening. Be sure to sample *atol de elote* (a hot corn drink), *rigüas* (corn patties grilled in a banana leaf), *tortitas de elote* (corn fritters), *elote loco* (corn-on-the-cob topped with cheese and various condi-

ments), and *tamales* (cooked corn dough stuffed with chicken). While you enjoy your corn delicacies, the festival carries on its celebratory tone. The Kings and Queens of Corn present themselves in the Central Plaza, musical groups perform, and another Salvadoran tradition takes center stage: the greased pole climb.

Suchitoto's Festival of Corn reminds us all of the great importance of corn to this part of the world. And, certainly after participating in this event, you will never mindlessly munch on your popcorn the same way again. 



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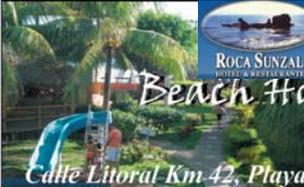
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“Pilares” (LEFT) and the dock at Puerto La Libertad  
(PHOTOS: MARÍA ELISA MURRAY)



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# Salvadoran palate ranks second in world coffee championship

Salvador's Jorge Escobar, official cupper at the Salvadoran Coffee Council and El Salvador School of Coffee trainer, demonstrated his accurate palate to win second place at the fifth World Cup Tasters Championship during The Wonderful Coffee 2008 Fair and Conference in Copenhagen. Held in late June, the event was organized by the Specialty Coffee Association of Europe.

The contest brought together the world's best coffee cuppers, who tasted some of the finest coffees in the world, which were disclosed after the competition. First-place winner was Casper Engel Rasmussen from Denmark; Anne Nordström from Sweden finished third. Other finalists in the competition were Marta

Pilgli (Estonia), Rasmus Helgebostad (Norway), James Hoffman (UK) and Edwin Martínez (USA).



This prize is extremely important since it demonstrates the highly trained and talented coffee professionals in El Salvador, whom Escobar exemplifies. These experts support a steadily growing specialty coffee industry. "This is an award for the passionate coffee growers and everyone involved in this activity in my country, since they are the ones behind the hard work," Escobar said. "This award goes to them. We will keep improving and working hard to demonstrate to the world the superior quality of El Salvador's coffee beans."

Salvadoran coffee growers are widely recognized by connoisseurs around the world for their artisan traditions and their unique heritage as keepers of the special Bourbon and exotic Pacamara coffee varieties.



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For example, express classes in culinary arts provide students with a quick introduction to different aspects of the dining side of the industry. Areas of study include preparing pastry and breads; bar and restaurant services; catering and banquets, sommelier and bartending; and restaurant and hotel administration. There are 295 different courses, 55 in administration. These courses are spread throughout the year so students can participate in multiples classes at the same time.

In all the courses interaction between student and professors as well as a personalized hands-on approach, is a vital part of the methodology. The Academy also provides advisors who can help individuals who want to start a new business in the hotel or restaurant industry.

The hospitality and hostelry academy is the creation of ITCA-FEPADE which since the 1970s has been educating professionals in different technical professions in El Salvador.

In 2000 ITCA began a series of short-term, specialized courses for various fields with both long- and short-term curriculums. The need for specialized education in tourism led ITCA to establish its Hospitality Academy in 2006. ITCA has been administered by FEPADE (Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo) since 1986.

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—Wilson Mitzner

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—Ed Howe



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 — Samuel Johnson

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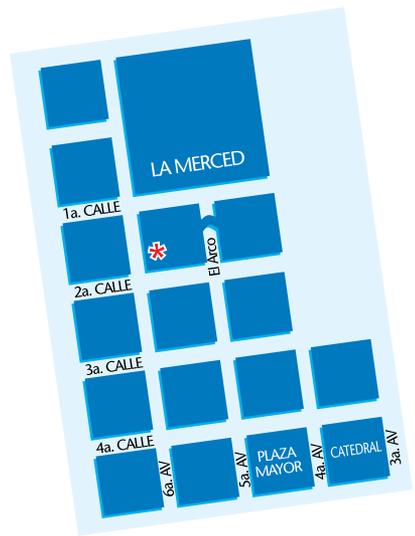
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