

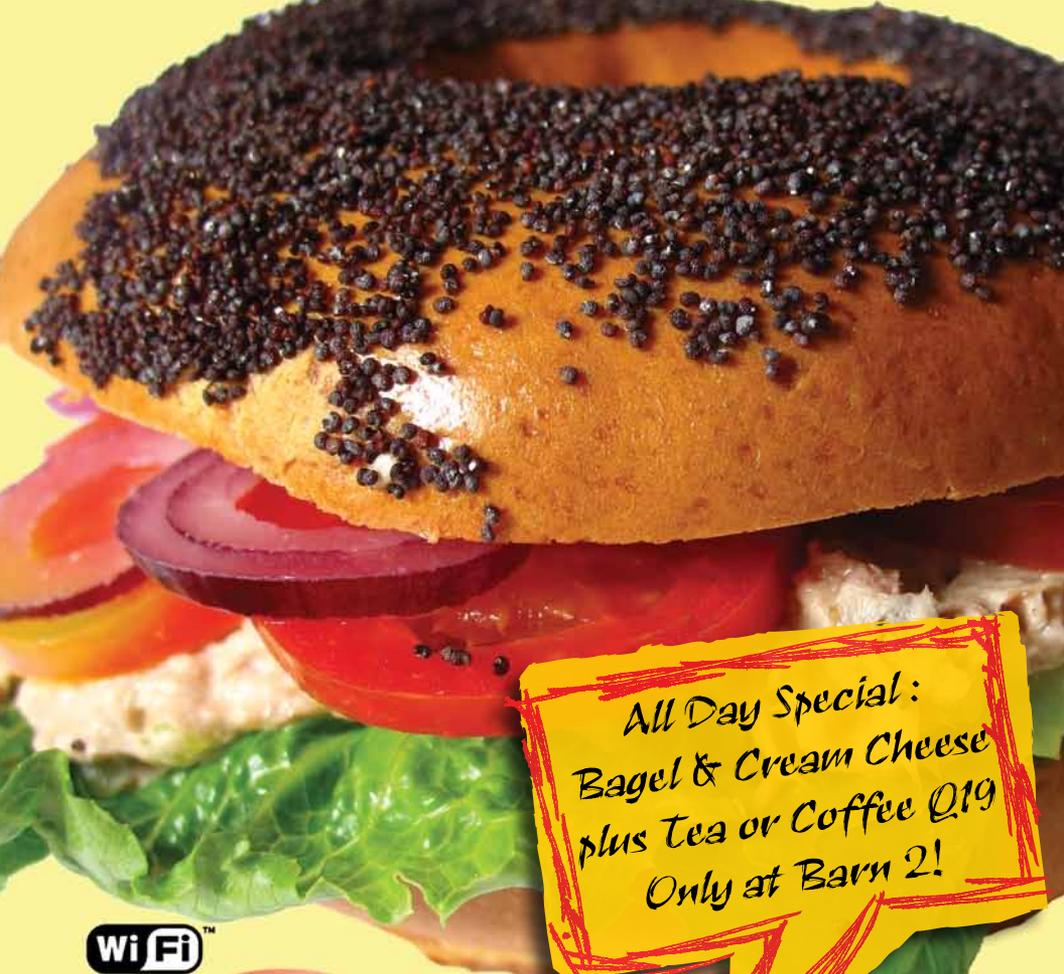
REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine
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May 2010
Year 19, No. 3

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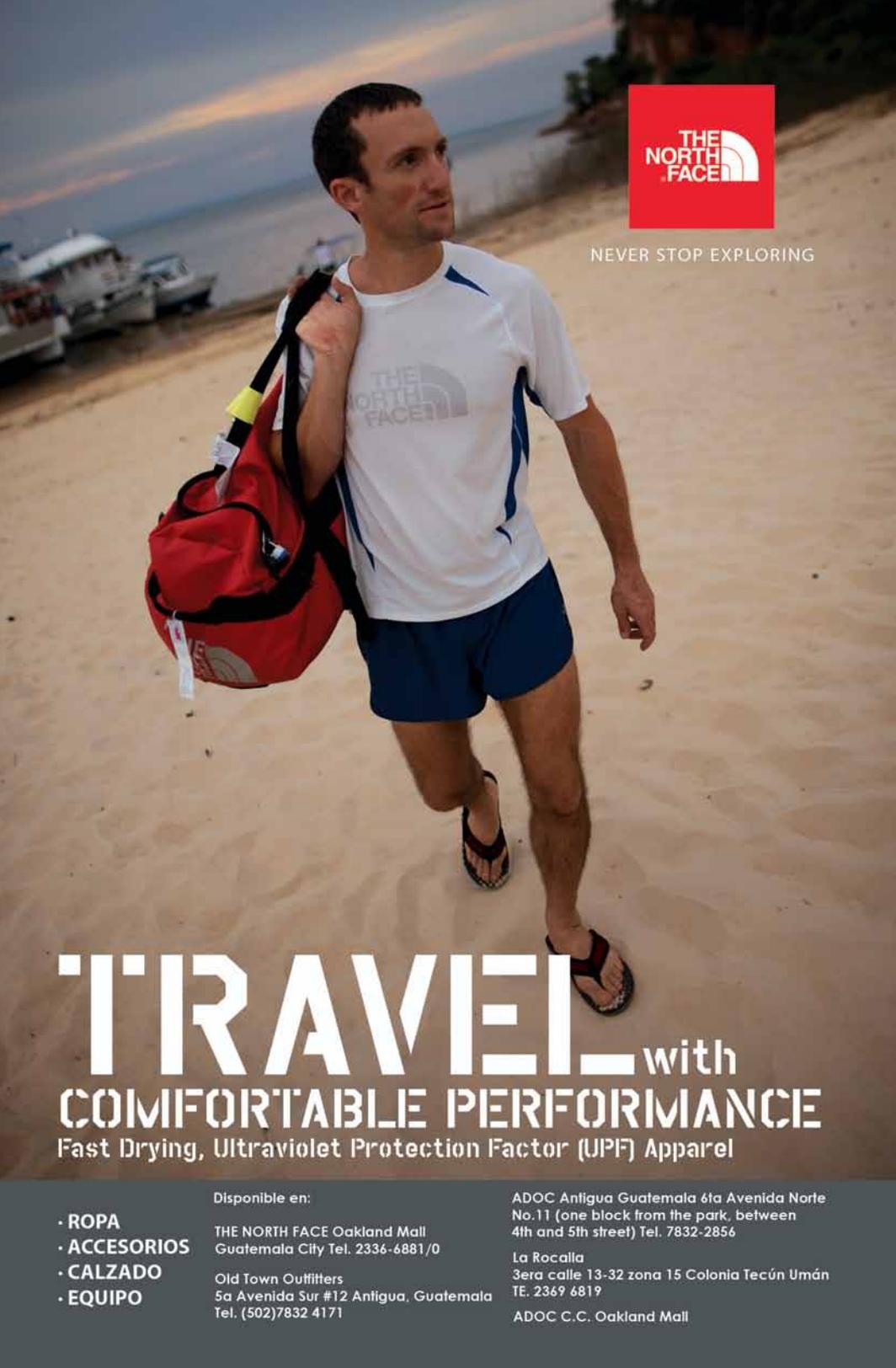


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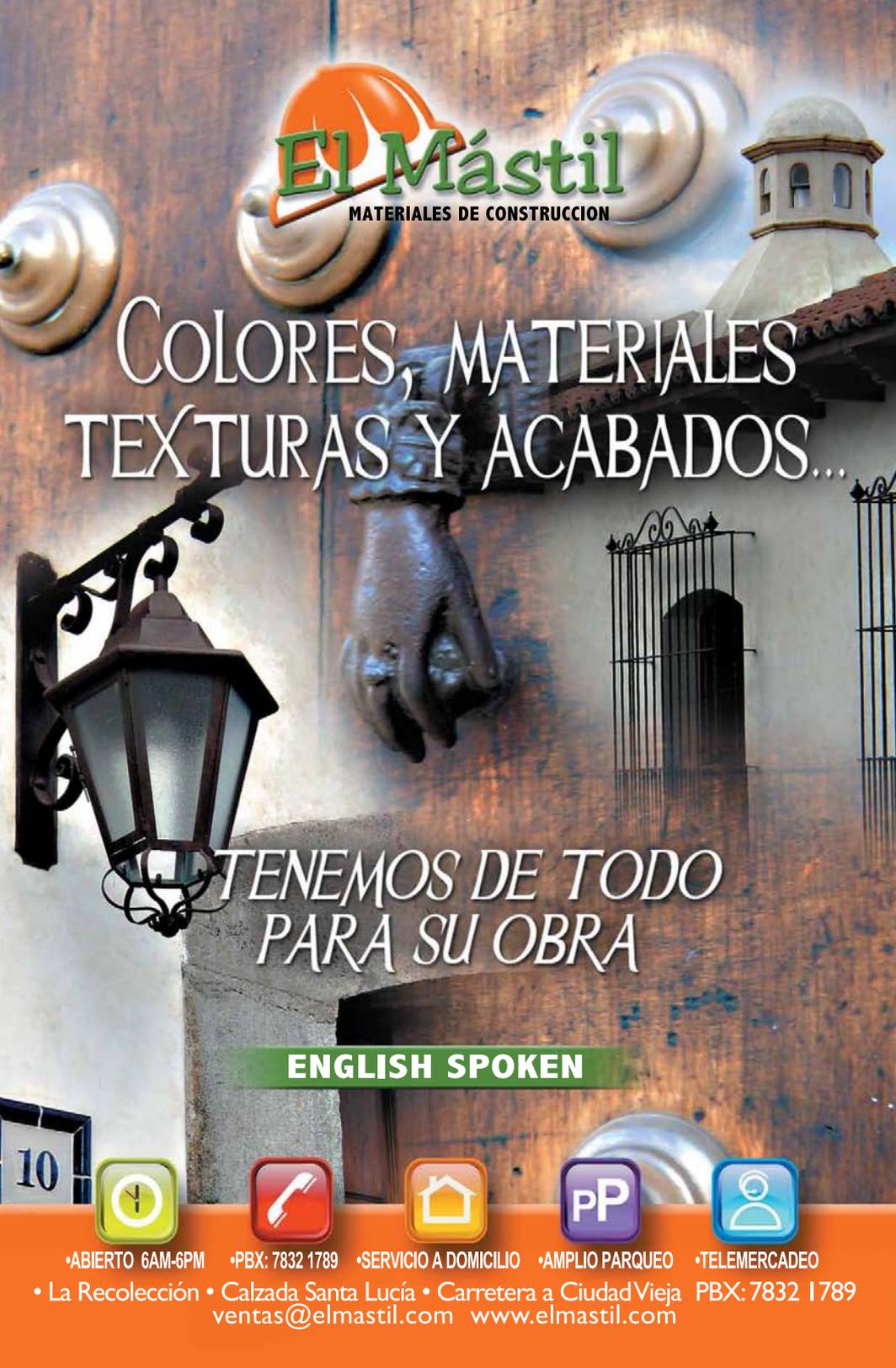


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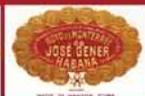
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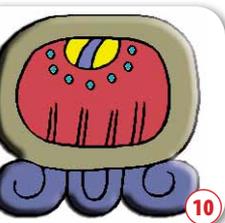


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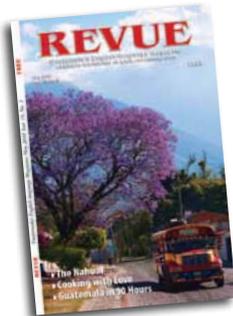
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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

We start off with some storytelling this month with *The Nahual*. It is a word that signifies “moment of radiance” and if that’s not enough to grab your interest, wait until you read what happened to Don Chequel when he followed a trickster nahual into a tunnel.

Ever wonder how much of Guatemala you can see in just a couple of days? Turning a short visit into a long-lasting memory is entirely possible, case in point *Guatemala in 90 Hours*. If you’re ready for some international travel, *You Can Get There From Here, Guatemala to Machu Picchu* offers an interesting historical backdrop accompanied by some excellent modern day trip tips! From storytelling to travel, next up, what to wear in 2010? *Welcome to the Era of Nice Paca Finds!* If you’re a shopper and you haven’t been to the paca, you’re missing some great bargains.

The People and Project highlight this month is *Friends of the Deaf*; Thornwhistle takes on *Luciérnagas, Here Come Guatemala’s Fireflies!* *E-Thinking of You* makes a great case for reaching out via the internet and Guate Life, *Dead or Alive* makes a great case for staying out of the trámite lines! *Cooking with Love* is *Spicing it Up* with Asmena Pankanea and Sensuous Guatemala features *Sunshine*. FYI, *Ask Elizabeth* covers the new municipal construction at the east entrance to Antigua, the much needed parking lot and an update on the World-Class Destination Program.

In honor of Mother’s Day in May we have a great assortment of humorous and serious quotations about mothers and motherhood throughout this issue.

Thanks for reading the *Revue* in print, we’re also fun, free and informative online at www.revuemag.com. Watch for daily postings plus a trailer of *Looking for Palladin* premiering in Guatemala City this month.

—John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

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Guatemala’s English-language Magazine

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A close-up photograph of white flowers with prominent yellow stamens, set against a dark background. The flowers are in sharp focus, with some petals and stamens in the foreground and others blurred in the background.

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The Nahual

In the Mesoamerican cosmology, the word *nahual* signifies “moment of radiance.” It refers to the essence or the spirit of a person, animal or thing, living or dead. This spirit is believed to function as the protector of a person, animal or plant. It is believed that humans have an animal spirit counterpart, received at birth, which accompanies them through life.

The nahual is thought to help individuals in difficult moments when they need protection or have important decisions to make. Often represented in the shape of a stone, a nahual can use its power for good or for evil, depending on its personality. No one can capture a nahual; it always escapes and transforms into something else. During any rite of passage in life, one’s nahual is present.

I found out about the nahual when I was a teenager. It was my 1979 school vacation and I was working on a relative’s farm in

Quetzaltenango, with two coworkers who had the same name: “Sebastián.” Unlike me, they were from indigenous communities. One day, they invited me to their homes in San Andrés Xecul, Totonicapán. I was so happy being there around the fire on the earth floor, listening to the Maya-K’iche’ language spoken by them and their families. After dinner, they invited me to visit their church, since that day was the festival of San Andrés Xecul.

We walked there under the moonlight; the illuminated, decorated church was majestic, with a constant stream of people coming and going. In church, the men removed their hats and proceeded on their knees to the main altar, praying

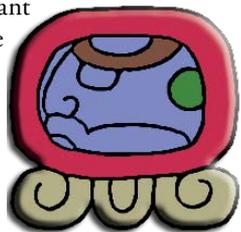




PHOTO BY THOR JANSON

all the way to the famous Black Christ—a statue of Jesus made of dark wood—that holds a special appeal to Guatemala’s indigenous peoples. The women did the same with the children, and I followed them.

Later, we left the church and crossed the patio to the priest’s house – he was a Catholic priest who was also Maya K’iche’, and respected both Catholic and Mayan beliefs. This old man, wearing a traditional sarape and hat from the town of Momostenango, welcomed us and invited us to sit around the kitchen fire. The two Sebastians immediately went to touch a small stone located on a special altar, surrounded by candles, flowers and a clay bowl with burning pine resin incense (*copal*). I



later learned that this stone was a nahual.

They took their time praying before the stone. In the Mayan tradition, one must properly

No one can capture a nahual; it always escapes and transforms into something else. During any rite of passage in life, one’s nahual is present.

address a nahual. To do otherwise would bring bad luck. The priest started speaking in K’iche’ with my friends and asked me where I was from. He asked where I was born, where I was studying, how I had met the two Sebastians, and where my parents and grandparents were.

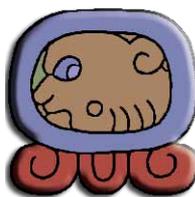
With all of these questions, I suddenly felt far away from my hometown and family, amazed at how culturally diverse Guatemala is and how distant we Guatemalans are from each other—sharing the same territory but separated by volcanoes, mountains, rivers, lakes, valleys, languages and customs. I introduced myself by talking about the village of Quiriguá, where I was

born, and where my parents and grandparents were born.

The priest began to discuss many things I didn't know about the religious significance of the famous Mayan altars at Quiriguá. He asked me what more I could tell them about Quiriguá. Suddenly, I remembered something from my childhood.

The only other thing I knew was that there was said to be an underground tunnel underneath Quiriguá. My grandfather once showed me the entrance, telling me that it went all the way to Copán, Honduras—another sacred Mayan site.

In drawings on the tunnel walls, he saw the story of Yax K'uk' Mo (the green quetzal macaw with a goggle-eye headdress).



I told them a story I had heard about a man named Don Chequel, who had allegedly crossed the tunnel after being enchanted. It was said that he followed a beautiful girl (a trickster nahual) into the tunnel, but got lost inside the tunnel for years and became deranged, or at least, people thought he was crazy with his talk of secret underground tunnels. Twenty years after he first disappeared from Quiriguá, he showed up in town.

One night, Don Chequel appeared, knocking at my grandfather's door. Grandfather noticed that the dogs didn't bark that night (believed to be a sign of ghosts) and was surprised at the man's long, unkempt, dirty hair. After talking a while, he recognized it was Don Chequel and offered him a job on his farm.

The man repeatedly told my grandfather about the tunnel of Quiriguá and wanted my grandfather to accompany him. Grandfather instead invited him to attend the Quaker Church, to see if Don Chequel could be healed from his apparent hallucinations. He believed that bad spirits troubled Don Chequel. The man repeatedly asked my grandfather to accompany him to the tunnel, so one day Grandpa decided to go with him.

Don Chequel described how he had entered it many years earlier, following a lovely woman in a white dress with long black hair, who wanted to show him something he didn't understand. Without fear, he walked behind her as she followed a bright light in front of her. In drawings on the tunnel walls, he saw the story of Yax K'uk' Mo (the green quetzal macaw with a goggle-eyed headdress who was the first ruler of the City of Copán), and saw mounds



of golden coins, gold feathers, gold chains and bracelets and lots of jewelry made of precious jade. He was thrilled by all the jade jewelry and golden coins and the sound of them clinking in his hands.



Along the way, he saw human bones mixed with jade tools. He followed the woman until they entered a cave larger than a cathedral. There, she stopped and sat down on a jade-golden throne with Yax K'uk' Mo sitting beside her. Don Chequel suddenly saw his own hair growing long and his skin turning wrinkled, and he found himself sitting at the edge of the river in Copán, trembling—his hands grasping bunches of small stones at the edge of the river.

My grandfather believed that Don Chequel saw the macaw nahuál, which was part of the myth that indigenous elders in Quiriguá spoke of when he was growing up. He thought this nahuál had enticed Don Chequel through the tunnel and removed his soul. Thus, he felt it was very important that Don Chequel get spiritual help.

My great uncle Ignacio was the pastor of the Quaker Church in Gualán, Zacapa, and agreed to help Don Chequel. The brothers of the Quaker Church cared for Don Chequel and invited him to participate in their religious services. At first, he couldn't enter the church and would tremble and faint. In time, he was finally able to enter and was cured of his spiritual ailments.

When my story was done, the priest brought me the stone that was on the altar and told me that this nahuál was talking throughout my story of Quiriguá, saying that I should continue telling such stories. I left with warm feelings about my encounter with the people of San Andrés Xecul. Later,



as an anthropologist, I would learn more about nahuáls, meet more people who would tell me their experiences with nahuáls, and visit many important Mayan altars and Ajq'ij Ab (time keepers for the Mayan calendar) in Guatemala's countryside.

In 1988, I was assigned with a team to do anthropological field work at Santa María Chiquimula in Totonicapán and two years later I founded La Casa del Nahuál, a Guatemalan cultural center and indigenous and Spanish language school in Quetzaltenango, promoting cultural and international student exchange with Mayan local leaders.

In 2000 in San Diego, California, Bernard Groefsema and I co-founded the Nahuál Foundation, a think tank by and for indigenous peoples of the Americas. In 2004, I returned to Guatemala to create the Fundación Nahuál and to work as a community organizer, teaching about the community development council system and helping people to understand the importance of civic participation in post-war Guatemala. Currently, the work of Fundación Nahuál is to teach Guatemalan community members how to form community development councils and to use them effectively to drive community-determined projects.

Each of us has a *nahuál*, or an animal essence, that can work for positive or negative aims. It is up to us, and the spirit of the *nahuál*, to channel this energy for good. ❀

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Guatemala in 90 Hours

Turning a short visit into a long-lasting memory

Volcanoes. Lakes. Archeology and architecture. History and culture. Ziplines. Coffee plantations. UNESCO World Heritage sites. Plus, of course, shopping. Guatemala has all these attractions for tourism. But what about the tourist who has only a few days and less than \$300? Yes, with planning and time management, that tourist can have a comprehensive Guatemala experience.

As an example, a well-established tour company recently offered a four-night package that begins on Friday night at a four-star hotel near the airport in Guatemala City. After included airport pick-up, travelers are on their own for the day. Depending on arrival time, they might opt for a visit to the historic center or artisans' market or maybe just recoup at the hotel pool.

The package includes a sumptuous buffet breakfast before Saturday 9 a.m. departure for La Antigua, with commentary along the

way for a group of about 10. First stop is a hotel-museum where the guide points out the old and the new, revealing restoration of the Dominican monastery established in the 16th century. By this time cameras are out clicking at burial places, colonial kitchen facilities, fountain and gardens.

A short walk leads to a workshop for a talk on the discovery of jade in Guatemala. After a shot of coffee and a few minutes to shop, the walk continues, toward Volcano Agua with a brief history along the way about the founding of the town in 1542. There's a visit to the tomb of Santo Hermano Pedro, Central America's first and to-date only saint, at the San Francisco Church, and the cameras keep clicking.

The van is waiting for a drive across town—without stops to ensure staying on schedule—past Central Park, the Cathedral and Palace of the Captains General, then on to the La Merced Church. Following must-

take photos of the baroque façade, there's a visit inside to see the 17th century Jesús Nazareno image viewed in procession by thousands every Good Friday, a look at the monastery fountain, the largest in Central America, and then it's up to the terrace for a birds' eye view of the town.

Almost gratefully, the group boards the van for Chichicastenango, glad for time to check photos and process images in their heads before a lunch break at Tecpán—where some hardcore shoppers escape and forfeit food for shopping.

After comfortable and quick check-in at the Chichicastenango inn, conveniently located near the Santo Tomás Church and market, each one does his own thing: wander through the gardens and the town, visit the church, people-watch with coffee...or get a head start on shopping. After choosing a simple or not-so-simple dinner, tired travelers cozy-up by stone fireplaces in rooms furnished with antiques and stocked with wood and candles, reviewing a full day, a full camera and fast-filling-up shopping bags before snuggling under welcome woolen blankets for the night.

Waiters in typical dress serve Sunday breakfast. The market is beginning to bustle, and flower-filled steps of the church lure



Comfortable accommodation in Chichicastenango



Much-photographed façade of La Merced Church, La Antigua



Sun-starved northerners enjoy hotel pool in Guatemala City

visitors inside to incense-scented ceremony. But the van leaves at 11, so there's no time to dawdle. Following a flurry of sights, smells and sounds, satisfied shoppers head for Panajachel, enjoying lush highland scenery along the way.

With wise planning the van bypasses the shopping and heads straight for a launch to take the 10 to the lakeside village of Santa Catarina, where they experience distinctive blue-and-green crafts and clothing. A terrace lunch refuels, with time to absorb the beauty of Lake Atitlán before returning to Guatemala City.

Early evening arrival back at the hotel offers time to reorganize, choose among many close-by dinner options and reflect on another

full day, getting a grip on the fact that arrival here was only one night ago, and there's only one day left with this package. That day is free to spend as each traveler chooses.

Some leave early for an optional one-day trip to Tikal and back. Some choose to climb active Volcano Pacaya and are picked up after that bountiful buffet breakfast. Yet others get a cab to Constitution Square to spend the day freestyle, visiting the Metropolitan Cathedral, the National Palace and the old Post Office, stopping for lunch in a historic hotel. Other options include the zoo, the Ethnic or History and Archeology Museum or a guided tour of the city. Of course there's the market, or one might choose to spend the day soaking up the sun poolside at the hotel. Whatever the choice, the day—and the tour—is over all too soon.



One last evening and night, one last buffet breakfast and then it's off to the airport. It was for sure a whirlwind tour. There's much more to enjoy in Guatemala, and certainly any of the sites in this sample tour deserve more time. But when time and budget are limited, yes, it is possible to get a pretty good idea about what Guatemala has to offer and what the appetite for a return visit. 📍

Tourist does some serious shopping



Ruins of Inca citadel at Machu Picchu

You Can Get There From Here

Guatemala to Machu Picchu

“**S**urprise followed surprise in bewildering succession... Suddenly we found ourselves standing in front of the ruins of two of the finest and most interesting structures in ancient America. Made of beautiful white granite, the walls contained blocks of Cyclopean size higher than a man. The sight held me spellbound... The building did not look as though it ever had a roof... so the sun could be welcomed here by priests and mummies. I could scarcely believe my senses... Would anyone believe what I had found?”

The place now known as Machu Picchu had rested undisturbed for three centuries when Hiram Bingham recorded his discoveries in July 1911 (*Lost City of the Incas*). Today one of the world's wonders, Machu Picchu welcomes half a million visitors a year.

Machu Picchu is not exactly in the neighborhood of Guatemala. But when one has come this far, it's a logical link, historically speaking. In 1533 when the Spanish conquered the ancient Inca capital of Cuzco, Peru, the jumping off point for



Train to Machu Picchu winds through river gorge



Llamas graze on once agricultural terraces



Going first class to Machu Picchu

a Machu Picchu visit, they were also building their own capital in Almolonga, Guatemala, on the skirts of Volcano Agua. Three years later the Inca king slipped out from under Spanish domination, packed up his people's golden treasures and left Cuzco to relocate the royal seat in the remote, fortified mountain sanctuary of his ancestors.

The Spanish succeeded in forcing the Inca from the royal hide-out in 1572 and displayed the king's head on a pole on the plaza of Cuzco. By that time Almolonga had been destroyed by a furious flood, and the Guatemala contingent was busy building Santiago de los Caballeros, now La Antigua. Spanish King Charles V had had enough and abdicated in 1556, turning the whole thing over to Philip II who never looked back.

The citadel of the last Inca was of no matter, its secret existence buried safely under the shadow of Machu Picchu and blankets of vegetation until historical and geographical curiosity reawakened in the 1800s. "The sanctuary was lost for centuries because this ridge is in the most inaccessible corner of the most inaccessible section of the central Andes," wrote Bingham. When discovered the ruins took the name of the mountain "because no one knew what else to call them."



Construction of Cuzco Cathedral began in 1550

Inca civilization has generally been defined by what the Spanish found, but probably dates back thousands of years, the empire to around 1200. But by the time the Spanish arrived it had passed its prime, weakened by civil war. Its history has been shrouded in mystery, partly due to lack of a written record. It seems writing had long since been banned based on the belief that letters caused pestilence. Augustinian monks managed to reach the vicinity of the royal retreat and tried in vain to persuade the Inca to accept Christianity. Their writings fill in some gaps about the last days of the empire.

What cannot be denied is that the ancient Inca were excellent engineers. They built roads through the Andes from Ecuador to Argentina and Chile, bridges of braided vine over mile-deep gorges, amazing agricultural terraces and phenomenal water systems. Bingham returned for fur-

ther explorations in 1912 and 1914-15, sponsored by Yale University and National Geographic Society, painstakingly removing obstacle after obstacle. Still a puzzle, more recent discoveries tell more about the end than the beginning.

Today's traveler from Guatemala typically flies to Lima, about six hours, and then another hour and a half to Cuzco on an early morning flight. The altitude of 11,000 feet might call for adjustment, overnight rest and lots of coca tea. No problem there: Cuzco itself begs exploration, its narrow ancient Inca lanes laced with Spanish influence, its architecture, plazas and convents, its culture spoken through crafts and a brewery, the modern version of an ancient custom and, along with tourism, Cuzco's main industry.

The three-hour train trip from Cuzco to Machu Picchu departs from stations about half an hour from the town. ...continued on page 78



Lake Views

by Dwight Wayne Coop

Welcome to the era of

Nice Paca Finds

I will never forget my 1988 introduction to *Pacas*. I refer not to women named Francisca (Paca, for short), although I have met those, too. Fewer all the time, however, since my wife disdains Pacas in any form, capital P or small P.

In downtown Guatemala, during siesta hour (still observed in the city back then), I spotted this sign on a *persiana*: *HOY SE ABRE PACA a las 3:00* (*persianas* are those roll-up aluminum walls that seal storefronts).

Being new to both the country and the language, I resolved to finish my errand and drift back at 3 to learn what *pacas* were, and also what happened whenever one *se abrió*. Two plumpish middle-aged women were already waiting, and it was only 2:40. I was not expecting anything on the order of the Second Coming, an earthquake or a coup d'état, but I was curious.

At a quarter after three (right on time, in other words), someone came and raised the *persiana*. The half-dozen women now present rushed in with such startling urgency that something in me said, "Follow them!" But I was there to observe.

What I saw resembled a flock of hens, freshly uncooped, getting their Wheaties—or should I say "meaties"—by darting at anything moving in the grass. You can buy "chicken feed" for domestic fowl, but cluckers with free-range privileges prefer beetles and worms.

The women, like the chickens, were

competing. But instead of beetles, their prey were woolen caps, T-shirts, socks, skirts and other attire, all used. I thought, "OK, this is how they do thrift shops in Guatemala."

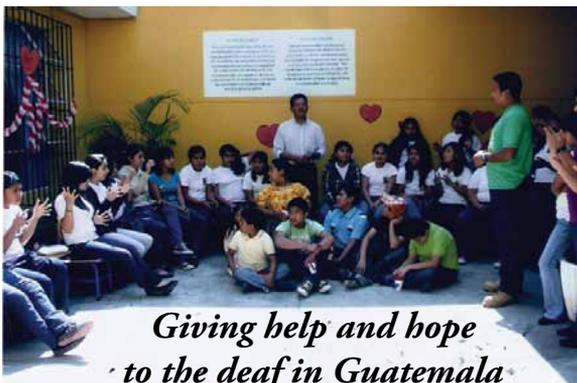
Thrift shops in the old country were still, for me, something novel. As a black sheep raised in a manicured suburb, I discovered them as an adult. My grandparents, who had been poor, knew them well enough. But my parents, who had escaped poverty, made a point of buying only *new* clothes for us kids.

In college, while homeless (but dating one of my professors), I discovered the Goodwill, the Salvation Army and numerous wildcatter thrift shops. I habitually haberdashed at such places, along with other down-and-outers, but also with folks who were destined (or so I imagined) to become wealthy because they practiced frugality without shame. So my observations that day in downtown Guatemala were almost sociological.

Well, *some* were. The first mystery to be solved was etymological. What, exactly, was a *paca*? Compared to the man in charge of the place, I was white and towering. But when I asked him *¿Qué es una paca?* he eyed me as if I were diminutive and green, and begging, "Take me to your leader." It was one of those moments—we all have them—when culture shock is sparked by the painfully mundane. ...continued on page 102

Friends of the Deaf

LAVOSI
(*Las Voces del Silencio*)



Giving help and hope to the deaf in Guatemala

Like so many, Chris Tackett came to La Antigua Guatemala to learn Spanish, but gradually Antigua, and a growing interest in the plight of the deaf here, lured him to become a full-time resident. He met Álvaro de León C. (a teacher of 30 years) and his son Álvaro who is deaf. Álvaro Jr. received a scholarship from USAID to study at Mount Aloysius College in the U.S. and has published volume I of his textbook *Guatemalan Sign Language* and is currently working on volumes II and III.

In June 2009, Álvaro Jr. and his father presented their idea to Chris about starting a local school for the deaf. In order to raise funds and awareness for Las Voces del Silencio (LAVOSI), Chris returned to the States to establish the non-profit Friends of the Deaf. Álvaro's idea became a reality as a school in Antigua for hearing-impaired students opened its doors in January 2010.

Mission

The staff of five teachers is dedicated to helping children become happy, productive and respected citizens through encouragement, education and example. Freddy E. de León C. (also hearing impaired) is an ex-

traordinary local artist who is setting a positive example at the school. Visiting teachers and artisans also provide new experiences for the students.

The Friends of the Deaf school strives to remind the general public that deafness doesn't imply helplessness.

Current Projects

The 2010 curriculum includes technical classes, computer literacy, courses in baking and multi-media art, all of them offering potential career opportunities; plus standard elementary classes and practice in Guatemalan Sign Language.

Wish List

Our first wish is to be welcoming and open to the community of Antigua and to receive visitors and volunteers. Supplies to assist teachers as well as donations are always gratefully accepted. 📞

**For more information:
Friends of the Deaf (LAVOSI)
Valle de Santiago, No. 29-A
La Antigua Guatemala
Tel/fax: (502) 7832-5852
www.friendsofthedeaf.org**



Oliver Thornwhistle On— Luciérnagas

Here come Guatemala's Fireflies: It must be May, or is it?

All seafarers know the importance of light, as in lighthouse or beacon. Before GPS, charts showed lights sequences, say one short and two long flashes of lights followed by darkness, and if the navigator spotted the right sequence, he knew where he was. Lighthouses were built to repel, ward humans from danger.

But what if the opposite were true and sequences of light, say one short, two long, were meant to attract, not repel? Enter the *luciérnaga*, Guatemala's firefly or lightning bug. Fireflies are omnipresent in literature dealing with summer in the Northern Hemisphere. It's hard to imagine a fictional summer without hot nights and fireflies. And is there one of us who did not as a child collect a jar full of fireflies in the evening and go to sleep

by its ever-dimming glow? ("Hey, Mom, he's asleep, let the fireflies out.") Likewise, Guatemala's fireflies mean that the rainy season, or winter, *invierno* is approaching. Fireflies have always meant "May."

No more. Guatemala's *luciérnagas* are coming out earlier and earlier in the year, along with the spectacular purple flowers of the jacaranda, once thought of as the Easter tree, but now blooming as early as February. Climate change, global warming, whatever.

The flashes of light from fireflies have a purpose. Finding the right boyfriend or girlfriend for a firefly is a complicated task. There are several species, each with a distinctive flash pattern. Boy must meet girl and girl meet boy with identical light patterns. If you are ...continued on page 100



Art Exhibit in Quetzaltenango

May 14 - 28

Twenty-one paintings are featured in the exhibition, *Miniaturas por Harry Thomas Danvers*, with the inauguration on May 14 at 7pm.



Danvers began his artistic career in the early 70s, studying drawing at the Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas in Guatemala City.

He explains about his current show, “The idea with the miniature paintings is to make something small seem large, always using the local environment as a backdrop.”

He is also a professor of English and Anthropology at the Universidad de San Carlos in Quetzaltenango, as well as the author of 11 novels and 6 bilingual books.

Open through May 28. *Centro Cultural Casa No'j, 7a calle 12-12, zona 1, Quetzaltenango.*

More info at www.guatemalan-art.com

Moulin Rouge — The Musical Comes to Panajachel

May 28 and 29

Vermonters Andy Hauty and Joby Dan'Sy, who brought *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Producers* and *West Side Story* to Panajachel, are bringing this month their rendition of *Moulin Rouge*.

The couple have pleased audiences of locals and weekenders for more than four years with their troupe, Atilán Youth Theatre. Their productions blend modern dance and music with classical drama. This year's production will, they believe, supersede the pagantry of all previous ones; it will include, among other things, such firsts for Panajachel as acrobats performing on-stage.

Another first is that this will be an inaugural performance for Panajachel's new River House Activity Center. The new playhouse is located on the north end of town, above the Ubico Bridge.

Tickets are Q50 for adults, Q25 for children. **Performances are at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 28 and Saturday, May 29.** There will also be a discounted matinée at 4 p.m. on the previous day (tel: (502) 4090-1912).

—Dwight Wayne Coop



For a DateBook daily event listing, check out “REVUE NEWS TWEETS” www.revuemag.com



MAY Guide to culture & upcoming events

Compiled by Mercedes Mejicanos

3 Mon., through Sat., 29th — PHOTOGRAPHY: Collective exposition by members of the Club Fotográfico de Guatemala. www.clubfotografico.org Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

4 Tues., 7pm — EXPO & SALE: Inauguration of *Primeros Cinceles*, stone sculptures by 18 artists from Estudio/Taller Beverley Rowley; **Sat., 15th, 22nd & 29th, 9am-12:30pm** — workshops & classes begin, Q950 incl. materials. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) Centro Cultural UFM, 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

4 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: *Life in Guatemala: Brief History and Current Conditions* with Sue Patterson, a retired US Foreign Service officer living in La Antigua, Guatemala. She is a former U.S. Consul General in Guatemala and has served in Chile, Iran and Italy. She is also the founder of WINGS, a non-profit dedicated to reproductive health and family planning. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, **La Antigua**.

4 Tues., 7pm — ART & PHOTOGRAPHY: *Atitlán: Inspiración de Ayer; Hoy, Rescate* with photos and paintings by many talented artists including Garavito, Arimany, Arathoon, Ríos and Zadik. Casa Mima (tel: 2253-4020) 8a av. 14-12, z. 1, Centro Histórico, **Guatemala City**.

5 Wed., 9am-5pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: *Miradas del Alma* with work by Ricardo Ramírez. Free. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) Centro Cultural UFM, 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

6 Thurs., 10am — (Spanish) THEATER FOR CHILDREN: *Basurita a tu lugar*, performed by Caja Lúdica, presented by El Teatro Escolar en Antigua (tel: 7831-1176) Asociación Nuestros Ahijados, road to San Felipe de Jesús, **La Antigua**.

7 Fri., time TBA, (English/Spanish dialog) A FILM PREMIER: *Looking for Palladin* filmed in La Antigua in 2006 — Mahyad Tousi (producer), Andrzej Krakowski (writer, director), Jerry Carlson (co-producer), with Ben Gazzara (Jake Palladin), David Moscow (Josh Ross), Talia Shire (Rosario), Vincent Pastore (Arnie), Pedro Armendáriz Jr. (Chief of Police), Angélica Aragón (Helen Rose), Michelle Manterola (Mercedes), the Morales brothers (Sammy and Jimmy), Roberto Díaz Gomar (Ed), Jerry Carlson (Jerry) along with a supporting cast of 500 Guatemalan “extras.” The Pradera-Concepción, km 15.5, Carretera a El Salvador, Condado Concepción, Santa Catarina Pinula, **Guatemala City**. See theater listing and www.revuemag.com for updated information. Highlight on page 76.

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the JUNE 2010 edition of the REVUE by Monday, May 10

8 Sat., & Sun., 9th — **MOTOCROSS RACE:** *Latinoamericano de Enduro* with more than 400 motocross riders from Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Argentina and Chile. For more information contact Club de Enduro de Guatemala www.clubenduroguate.com, and info@clubenduroguate.com. Autódromo Pedro Cofiño (tel: 2363-2240) km 100, highway La Antigua-Escuintla. *Escuintla.* ▼



8 Sat, 10am-noon — **MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH:** Q50. (Nursery provided.) For more info, contact the church office, tel: 2361-2037. Union Church, 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, Plaza España, *Guatemala City.*

8 Sat., 4pm — **DANCE:** Xajoj Q'ojom, music performed with Mayan ancient instruments and dance by Grupo Sotz'il. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (tel: 7832-1276) 6a. av. norte, *La Antigua.*

8 Sat., 7pm & Sun., 9th, 4pm — **MUSIC:** Utah State University presents a lyric recital that includes opera arias, songs from musicals sung in Spanish, English, Italian and French. Q70, Students w/carnet Q50. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua.* ▼



8 Sat., through June 7 — **ART:** Alejandro Leal and Gustavo García present *Duo en Cambio*, an exhibit that combines sculpture and watercolors in an expression of love and loss. Leal's work covers 20 pieces of ceramic sculpture, humorous and down to earth, expressing how we become trapped by certain situations in life and García, through a collection of more than 20 watercolors, relates his visual experiences of what he treasures most: values, traditions, the beauty in women, village life, etc. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124) 4a calle oriente # 15, *La Antigua.* ▼



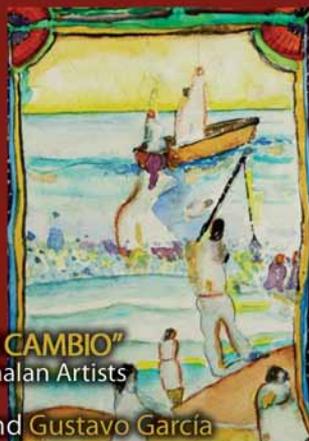
La Antigua *Galería de Arte*



presents

"DUO EN CAMBIO"
by Guatemalan Artists

Alejandro Leal and Gustavo García



may 8th - june 7th, 2010

4a. calle oriente no. 15 La Antigua Guatemala Tel (502) 7832 2124 / Fax (502) 7832 2866
laantigua@artintheamericas.com / artintheamericas@gmail.com / www.artintheamericas.com

10 Mon., — MOTHER'S DAY: Celebrated throughout Guatemala with special activities.

10 Mon., 5pm — CULTURAL EVENT: A glimpse at indigenous culture as a Mayan sacerdote (priest) presents an authentic ceremony/ritual. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), *La Antigua*.

11 Tues., noon to midnight — PERSONAJES POR UN DÍA: Annual fundraising event with food, music and lots of fun. All funds to benefit the Fray Rodrigo de La Cruz nursing facility. Many of these people have neither a family nor a place to live. The project serves over 140 senior citizens; **9pm** — MUSIC: Los Disponibles and Colectivo D will be playing pop, rock, 80s covers and dance music. Restaurante Personajes (tel: 7832-3758) 6a av. norte #6, *La Antigua*.

11 Tues., 6:30pm — (Spanish) BOOK PRESENTATION: *Bordados, Puntadas que Unen Culturas* (embroidery, stitches that unite cultures) written by Barbara Knoke de Arathoon and Raymond E. Senuk. Free. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) Centro Cultural UFM, 6a calle final, z. 10, *Guatemala City*.

11 Tues., & Tues., 25th, 8:30am-4pm — EXCURSION: *Comalapa*, visit this indigenous village famous for its folk painters and textiles. Proceeds benefit the women's cooperative, MayaWorks. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares (tel: 7831-1176), inside Finca la Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

14 Fri., 7pm — ART: Twenty-one paintings are featured in *Miniaturas por Harry Thomas Danvers*; open through May 28. Centro Cultural Casa No'j, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1 *Quetzaltenango*. See page 23.

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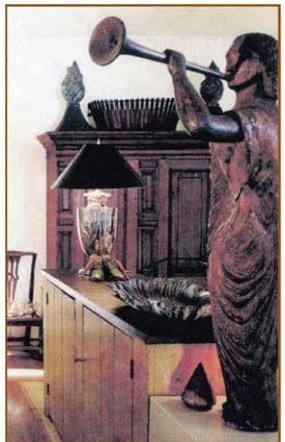


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de Santa Clara
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antigua@
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DEMOCRATS ABROAD PRESENTS

April 22 (tue) — Iraq Today: *Recovery, Reconstruction, The Way Forward* — Dave Evans & Erick Álvarez, presenters

June 22 (tue) — Keep Congress Democratic — John Chudy, presenter

Time: 5:00pm to 7:00pm, Q30 donation Place: Panza Verde, 5a av. sur #19, La Antigua

For more info call John Chudy, Chair: tel: 7832-4581 mayadems@yahoo

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MUSIC

MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925)5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua***Mondays** — New Orleans Blues with Nelson Lunding. Piano & vocals.**Wednesdays** — Live Jazz Trio; Sax, piano, bass.**Thursdays** — Buena Vista de Corazón; Cuban Jazz. Conga and vocals by Ignacio.**Fridays** — Latin Trio; guitar, conga and piano.**Sundays** — New Orleans Jazz with Nelson Lunding. Piano & vocals.**La Peña de Sol Latino** (tel: 7882-4468)5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.**Mondays, 7:30pm** — Kenny Molina hosts *Open Mike*. Free.**Tuesdays, 7:30pm** — Ramiro plays Trova Cubana. Free.**Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7:30pm-Sundays, 7pm** — Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. ▼**Sundays, 1pm** — Ramiro plays Trova Cubana during the Sunday Buffet. No cover.**29 Sat., 7pm** — MUSIC: *Noche de Trovajazz*, celebrating Trovajazz 8th anniversary, performed by Rony Hernández and invited friends. Q60. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*.**Rainbow Café** (tel: 7832-1919)7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua***Mondays, 7:30pm** — Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free.**Tuesdays & Fridays, 7:30pm** — Sergio, reggae music**Wednesdays, 7:30pm** — *Open Mike Night* hosted by Juan-Jo and friends. A complimentary drink for all performers. Free.**Thursdays, 7:30pm** — Güicho will astound you with his guitar skills and improvisation of Latino and pop classics.**Saturdays 7:30pm** — At.One.Ment. Come and listen to Luke and his band. You cannot miss it. Enjoy a few drinks and relax to some classics.**Sundays, 7:30pm** — La Raiz: Luis, Juan-Jo & Choko, great improvised classics. Free.**Posada de Santiago** (tel: 7721-7366), 1 km south of Santiago Atitlán, *Lake Atitlán***Fridays, 7:30pm** — Mark Weinstein's Marco Trio will perform a variety of jazz, blues & rock 'n' roll.**Saturdays, 7:30pm** — La Trova del Lago featuring Juan Sisay, Carlos Rangel and Noe Vásquez.For a DateBook daily event listing, check out "REVUE NEWS TWEETS" www.revuemag.com

CHECK DATEBOOK CALENDAR LISTINGS FOR MORE CONCERTS AND SPECIAL MUSICAL EVENTS

MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Circus Bar (tel: 7762-2056)
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Tuesdays — Nayno Flamenco, Rumba and Latin Ensemble, Trova del Lago

Wednesdays — Nayno, Latin Ensemble

Thursdays, 7:30pm — Carlos and Carlitos, swing and latin rhythms. Trova del Lago, trova

Fridays — a fascinating show of Circus Bar Allstars

Saturdays — Los Vagabundos, hot rhythms in a fusion of rumba flamenca and Guatemalan traditional elements

Sundays — Latin Ensemble

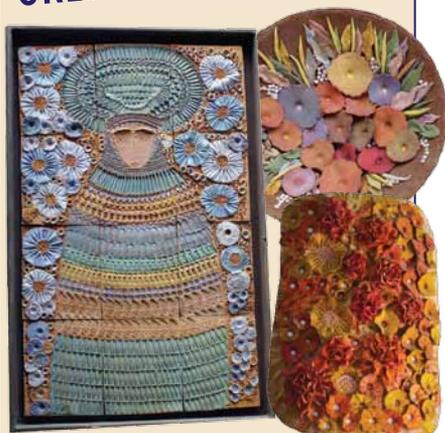
La Parranda Discoteque
14 av. 4-41, zona 1, *Quetzaltenango*

5 Wed., 8pm — Corona Party, beer, live Mariachi music & lots of fun. Cover Q25.

7 Fri., 8pm — Johnny Walker Party, music & lots of fun. Cover Q25.

*I hope my tongue in prune juice smothers,
If I belittle dogs and mothers.
—Ogden Nash*

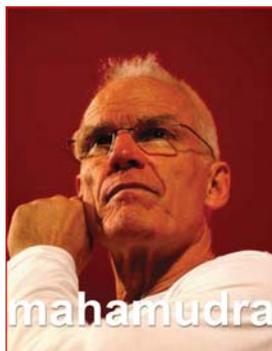
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8 Sat., 7pm & Sun., 9th, 4pm —
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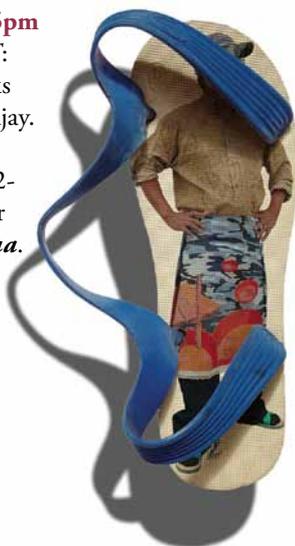
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www.diamondway-buddhism.org
tel: (502) 2369.4241

11 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: Transitions (La Antigua) provides outreach, medical support and health education to disabled people throughout Guatemala. The organization operates a manufacturing and training facility for customized wheelchairs for rough terrain in rural areas, a clinic for prosthetics and orthotics, a graphic design and offset printing business, and a special education program. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, *La Antigua*.

12 Wed., 5pm — ART: Featuring works by Nuto Chavajay. Galería Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*.



15 Sat., 1pm — DANCE & MUSIC PRESENTATION: The Niños de Aguas Calientes dance and play the marimba, flutes and bombas. Donations benefit educational pursuits. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), *La Antigua*.

15 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: *Hay Locuras 2010* by Dúo sin Líneas en el Mapa. Q60. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*.

17 Mon., through Fri., 21st — WORKSHOP: *The Magic of Color with Natural Dyes*. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares (tel: 7831-1176), Inside Finca La Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

18 Tues., — CELEBRATION: International day of the Museums. Special events at museums throughout the country.

18 Tues., 9am-8pm — MUSEUM ACTIVITIES: Special activities all day plus guided tours, 3-6:30pm. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, *Guatemala City*.

18 Tues., 18, 9am-4pm — EXCURSION: *San Juan del Obispo* where the baroque monastery of San Juan el Obispo overlooks Antigua; meet local artisans, minivan transport, English/Spanish-speaking guide and lunch. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares (tel: 7831-1176), inside Finca La Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

18 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: *Microloans: Myths and Management* presented by Franklin Voorhes with As Green As It Gets, a non-profit organization supporting coffee farmers, artisans and other small producers from disadvantaged communities in Guatemala. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, *La Antigua*.

20 Thurs., & Thurs., 27, 8am-4pm — EXCURSION: *Tecpán and Iximché*, Visit this important indigenous community and the Mayan archeological site Iximché; minivan transport, English/Spanish-speaking guide, market day in Tecpán and lunch. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares (tel: 7831-1176), inside Finca La Azotea, *Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez*.

20 Thurs., 10am — (Spanish) THEATER for young teens (12 years and older): *Desafío X*, performed by Grupo ACSA with El Teatro Escolar en Antigua (tel: 7831-1176) Asociación Nuestros Ahijados, road to San Felipe de Jesús, *La Antigua*.



"El Secreto" by William Kalwick Jr.

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Love isn't an emotion or an instinct—it's an art.
—Mae West

Convinced myself, I seek not to convince.
—Edgar Allan Poe



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20 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Investigaciones Recientes en la Cuenca Mirador* by Richard Hansen. Adults, Q30; students w/carnet, Q15. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

21 Fri., 7pm — THEATER for young teens (12 and older): *Desafío X*, performed by Grupo ACSA. Q50/Students w/carnet Q40. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

22 Sat., 3pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Amaranto, el Alimento del Futuro*. Conozca todo sobre este nutritivo alimento, sus propiedades y usos. Impartido por Harriet Gottlob. Vivero y Café La Escalonia (tel: 7832-7074) 5a av. sur final #36-C, **La Antigua**.

22 Sat., 7pm — ART: *Cesárea*, a collective exposition by artists Nery Gálvez, Omar Velásquez, José Godoy and Lisset López. Free. Cocktail. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

25 Tues., 10am-12 noon — ACTIVITY FOR KIDS (8-10 years old): Offering activities to promote harmony between Guatemalan children, tri-lingual activity in K'iche, Kaqchikel and Spanish. Free. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) Centro Cultural UFM, 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

25 Tues., 5-7pm — (English) SLIDES & DISCUSSION: Democrats Abroad presents *Iraq Today—Recovery, Reconstruction & The Way Forward* by Dave Evans and Erick Álvarez. Donation Q30. Info: John Chudy, tel: 7832-4581 or mayadems@yahoo.com Panza Verde, 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

25 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: *Los Patos: Forming Leaders for Guatemala* with project director Juan Pablo Romero. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, **La Antigua**.

26 Wed., 9:30am — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *De Ruinas y Aparecidas, Historias de Fundación en los Pueblos de Los Cuchumatanes* por Lic. Victor Castillo. Adults, Q30; students w/carnet, Q15. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

26 Wed., & Thurs., 27th, 7pm — DANCE: The Instituto de Danza e Investigación del Movimiento y Artes Landívar present *Festival Rondó de Coreografía*. Teatro Dick Smith IGA (tel: 2411-5555) 9a av. 0-31 z. 4, **Guatemala City**.

27 Thurs., 6pm — (Spanish) CON-FERENCIA/RECITAL: *Whitman, el Poeta: Vida, Obra y Legado*. IGA (tel: 2411-5555) 9a av. 0-31 z. 4, **Guatemala City**.

28 Fri. & Sat. 29th-7pm — (English) MUSICAL *Moulin Rouge* presented by the Atitlán Youth Theatre Group. Tickets Q50, adults; Q25, children. River House Activity Center, **Panajachel, Lake Atitlán**. See highlight on page 23.

29 Sat., 9:30am — (Spanish) DÍA NACIONAL DEL POPOL VUH: Taller y visita guiada sobre el Popol Vuh para niños de 8 a 12 años. Q20. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

29 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: *Noche de Trovajazz*, celebrating Trovajazz 8th anniversary, performed by Rony Hernández and invited friends. Q60. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

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THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

ACTIVITY: *Atrévete a Probar, Un Rato en Cada Telar.* Q15/hour. For more information call Museo Ixchel, Tel: 2361-8081, Centro Cultural UFM, 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City.**

Through May 16th — ART: Inauguration of a collection of latest works by well known artists including Doniel Espinoza, Edin Morales, Óscar Ramírez, Lauro Salas, Salvador Gálvez, Edwin Guillermo, Mauro López, Mauro Osorio, among others. Cocktail. A La Mesa Restaurante, Lounge & Galería (Tel: 2470-1294) 5a av. 15-52, z. 10, **Guatemala City.** ▼



Mondays, 2-5pm — BRIDGE, intermediate play. Call Judy, tel: 4048-1242 to reserve a seat or for more info. JP's Rum Bar & Antigua Center, 5a av. sur & 7a calle oriente, **La Antigua.**

Mon-Fri., 9-4:30pm, Saturdays, 9-2:30pm — MULTI-MEDIA, PHOTOGRAPHY & TEXTILE EXHIBIT: *70 plus 30 Years of Mayan Culture* with photographs by Jeffrey Jay Foxx and textiles from the Hank duFlon Collection. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares, (tel: 7831-1176) inside Cultural Center la Azotea, 1a calle, 1a av., z. 3, **Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez.**

Mon., through Fri., 9am-5pm, Sat., 9am-1pm — ART: Permanent exhibitions, *Nuevos colores en el recorrido de la indumentaria y El tejido maya a través del tiempo.* Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City.**

Mon., Thurs., & Saturdays, 9am-1:30pm — WORKSHOP: *Taste of Weaving,* Mayan backstrap loom with an indigenous master weaver/instructor. Indigo Artes Textiles y Populares (tel: 7831-1176) inside the Cultural Center la Azotea, **Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez.**

Tuesdays, 6pm — (English) SLIDE SHOW: *Antigua: Behind the Walls* by Elizabeth Bell. Q30 benefits educational programs. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua.**

Tuesdays, 8pm — (Spanish) THEATER: *El Huésped* presented by Aquelare Producciones and directed by Guillermo Monsanto. Q60. Teatro Dick Smith IGA (tel: 2411-5555) 9a av. 0-31, z. 4, **Guatemala City.**

Fridays, 5-6pm — (English) READING CLUB. IGA (tel: 2411-5555) 9a av. 0-31, z. 4, **Guatemala City.**

The bird of paradise alights only upon the hand that does not grasp. — John Berry





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Happiness makes up in height for what it lacks in length. —Robert Frost



ASK ELIZABETH

by Elizabeth Bell

What is the municipality building at the east entrance to La Antigua?

After much anticipation, the Antigua municipality is building a training center (Centro de Capacitación Municipal) at the entrance to the city—near Santa Inés. The center's focus on weekdays will be on arts and skills for 9th graders, the diversity of classes include everything from baking to mechanical engineering. On weekends the facility will be open to university extension programs. As of this writing, rooms are under construction and sports and parking areas will be well accommodated. ▼

What's all the talk about the much-needed parking lot in order to accommodate the growing numbers of cars and no place to park them.

Ah, yes. An additional area has been acquired for a parking lot! The municipal officials have already begun the archeological study of the property (a requirement) before any infrastructure begins. They will then, hopefully, use this area to accommodate additional parking for small vehicles and tourism vehicles when needed, particularly on weekends and holidays. Visitors may be bused to the historical center

in tourism carts—a project also to be set up by Antigua's municipal officials.



(CESAR TAMAYO/REVUE)

A new fence marks the area of the planned municipal training center (near Santa Inés, on your left as you are leaving Antigua going towards Guatemala City)

On a separate note...

The campaign to position Antigua within the World-Class Destination Program includes the planting of flowers along the highway between Antigua and Guatemala City; also plans are in place to add wide sidewalks and bike-paths, *cicloviás*, which will facilitate workers' access to Antigua, the new training center and further enhance the entrance to town. This program is financed by Antigua's finest hotels and tour operators, and funds provided by INGUAT.

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A dog owns nothing, yet is seldom dissatisfied. —Irish Proverb



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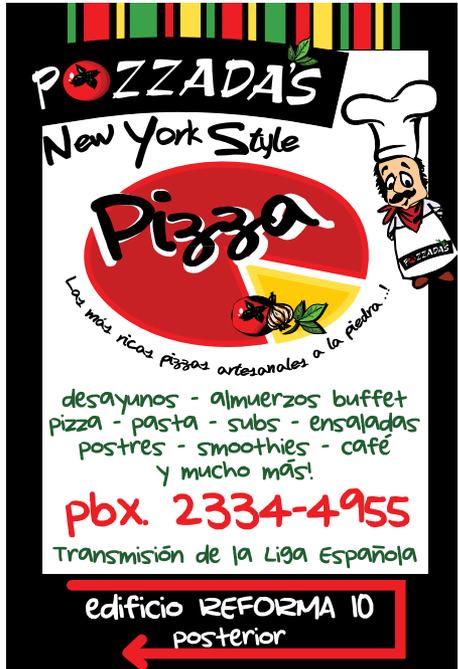
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Save a boyfriend for a rainy day—and another, in case it doesn't rain. —Mae West

Never eat more than you can lift. —Miss Piggy



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Upstairs tenants

A man mentioned to his landlord about the tenants in the apartment over his.
 "Many a night they stamp on the floor and shout till midnight."
 When the landlord asked if it bothered him, he replied, "Not really, for I usually stay up and practice my trumpet till about that time most every night anyway."

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Which way is up? *from the KV attachments*

This two-letter word in English has more meanings than any other two-letter word. The word is 'UP.' It is listed in the dictionary as an [adv], [prep], [adj], [n] or [v].

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP?

At a meeting, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP, and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?

We call UP our friends, brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver, warm UP the left-overs and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and fix UP the old car.

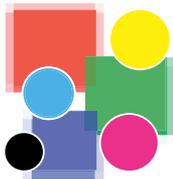
At other times this little word has really special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses. To be dressed is one thing but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night. We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP!

To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look UP the word UP in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4 of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions.

If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP. When it rains, it soaks UP the earth. When it does not rain for awhile, things dry UP. One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now ...my time is UP! Now I'll shut UP.



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E-Thinking of You



Sending joy and laughter through the internet

I send a lot of emails. Sometimes it's articles, sometimes it's photographs, sometimes it's jokes. Occasionally I write a proper letter. I do this in part because I live thousands of miles from most of my friends. I do this in part because I'm retired and have time. But I do it the most because life is uncertain, and I want the people I love to know I think of them often and care about them. I do it because many of the people I care about are going through difficult times, and I want to send a little joy and laughter across the miles. I want them to stop worrying about finances, about politics, about the mortgages, the lost jobs, the health problems, if only for a minute, and laugh, or look at a pretty picture—just for a minute—and to know there's someone out there who is thinking about them, who loves them, who cares.

I don't send the same things to the same people. I don't have "lists." I go through my addresses and select the ones who will appreciate a particular item. I have friends who, to varying degrees, like birds, from "interested" to "passionate." A friend sent me a wonderful site with pictures of hundreds of birds. You click on the bird and the bird's call plays. (Drove my cat wild one evening. He circled the computer for about 10 minutes and then settled down on

the keyboard, which, of course, broke the connection.) Anyway, I sent it to three or four people, including a former colleague I hadn't been in touch with for a long time.

Then there's my friends who like archaeological stuff, which is one of my passions. They get the latest on El Mirador, but not the birds. Those interested in politics get tidbits not found on the evening news. The cooks get recipes; the gardeners, info on plants, especially ones I've encountered here in the tropics. (Since many have been snowbound this winter, it's nice to let them know the whole world isn't icy and snowy.) Even the jokes are selective, because some friends have a bizarre sense of humor, some like puns, some like political jokes, and some are eclectic, like me. It's a lot like shopping for gifts for my friends. I'd never buy the same thing for everyone; I'd choose something that fits their individual personality, something I think they'd like that they might otherwise not have, something that lets them know I "see" them and appreciate them.

I love it when someone e-mails me back to say they liked what I sent, but I don't expect it. I know everyone's busy and I just mainly wanted to let them know I was thinking of them and, ideally, made them laugh. Laughter is so important. When I'm feel-

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Mother's love is peace. It need not be acquired, it need not be deserved. —Erich Fromm

ing down and someone sends a really good joke, it can change my whole day. Sometimes, if I'm really down, I have to wait until I feel better before I read it. But most of the time, I can't wait to get my daily laughs and giggles. We can't live without laughter, at least not really live. It helps put things in perspective somehow. It shows us what we can do something about and what we can't. It reminds us we have a heart.

Sometimes I worry that I send too many emails. But not for long. I figure if my friends don't want to read them, they don't have to. Deleting is easy. No blame, as the *I Ching* says. I'll never know, and even if I did, it wouldn't bother me. They still know I was thinking of them, that they're important to me. It's the acknowledgement of friendship that's important, not the content. I do try to indicate when something is a letter, so that will get read and ideally responded to, if not immediately, somewhere down the line.

So that's why I send a lot of emails. And I hope my friends realize that motivation. I'd feel bad if someone was sick, unhappy, lonely, or worse and I didn't know it and I hadn't sent my little offering of love and reminder of friendship, even if it was deleted unread. They'd still know I was thinking of them, and that's ultimately what's important. ☺

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I recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car. Do you need some help?" I asked. She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery to this remote door unlocker. Now I can't get into my car. Do you think they (pointing to a distant convenient store) would have a battery to fit this?" "Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm too?" I asked. "No, just this remote thingy," she answered, handing it and the car keys to me. As I took the key and manually unlocked the door, I replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries as it's a long walk.



Spitters, Scratchers and Snappers

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

Question: I am going to be traveling by air with my six-year-old Chihuahua in a carrier that will go under the seat in front of me. He is generally a nervous dog, especially when he is not in my arms. Can I give him a tranquilizer?

Answer: Yes, there are specific dog tranquilizers and some antihistamines like *diphenhydramine* that can be used in this case. The medicine and doses (which are very important) must be prescribed by your veterinarian.



Important to note: While it is fine to use an anti-anxiety drug for a pet traveling in the cabin of an airplane with its owner, it is VERY DANGEROUS to use the same drug when the pet is traveling in cargo. When the body is sedated, it cannot react as well to changes in pressure and temperature; when looking at the statistics of problems (including deaths) incurred by animals transported by the airlines, more than half occurred because animals were sedated. ---

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There was never a child so lovely but his mother was glad to get him to sleep.
 —Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Moments of Mindfulness

by Dr. Karmen Guevara
HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Get Out of the Way!

When we cease to stumble all over ourselves, the path we trod in life becomes far less bumpy and boulders become pebbles!



When something or someone treads on our path we stumble all over ourselves to get between them and us. Like a peacock we puff up, fan out our feathers and prance about. Armed with ammunition the old faithful master, the ego, jumps in the way. Clutching fears, desires and thoughts from the tortuous mind, it chews on self-righteous bones.

There doesn't always need to be a perceived threat for us to get in the way. The ego loves a good touse and isn't very discriminating with whom or with what it engages. In the absence of a victim it'll perch on us. It has a vivid and sometimes vicious imagination. There are times especially when we trip all over ourselves. Have you ever sat down with a pen or brush in hand and willed your creative juices to flow? Is there often a chat-

tering creature peering over your shoulder shaking its head and poking you with a finger? What happens when you walk into a room full of beautiful, smart and rich folks you've not met before? Does the comparative calculator automatically switch on? Do you become the peacock or the shrinking violet? The veil that drops when we're in the way distorts the view of things as they really are.

"No self, no problem," a Buddhist master once replied. This elegantly sums up what can happen when we get out of the way. Next time you feel resistance to what is in front of you and the ego sense of self begins to inflate, *jump out of the way!* Stand back and clap your hands and celebrate the opportunity to let things unfold without a meddling ego. What a wonderful training in accepting the challenges of life.



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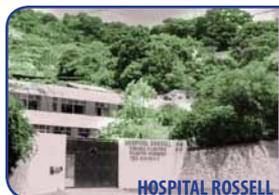
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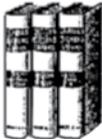
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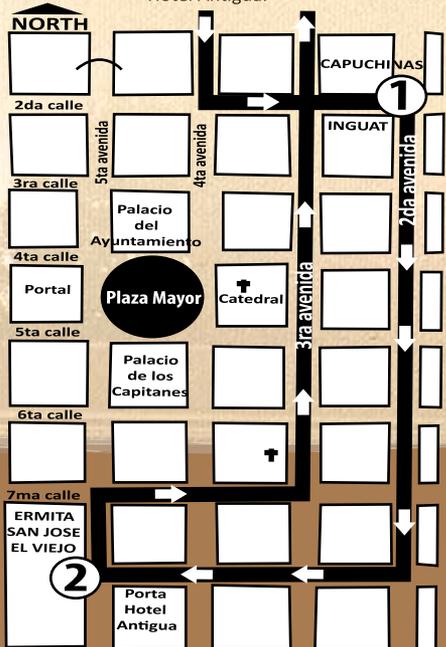
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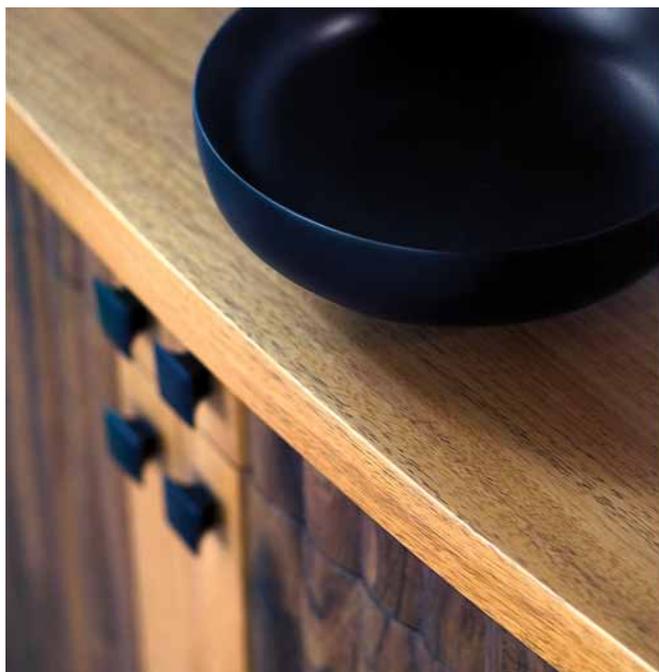


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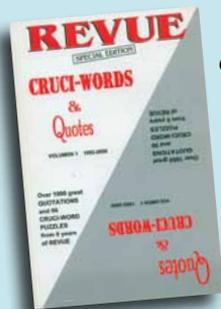
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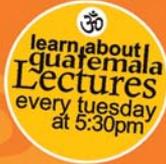
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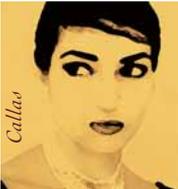
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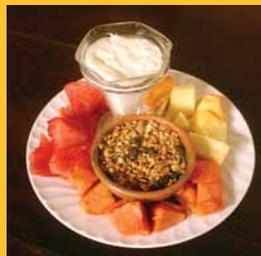
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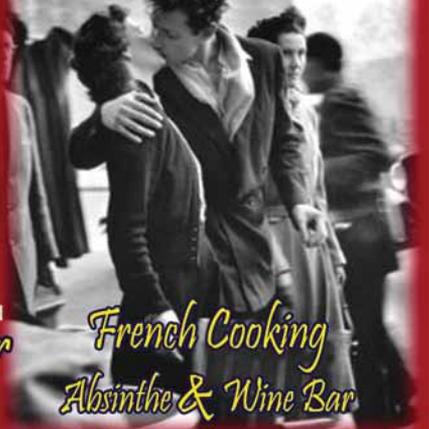
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SPICING IT UP

In the kitchen with Asmena Pankanea



Asmena Pankanea creating a meal (DIANNE CAROFINO)

Cooking with Asmena Pankanea makes me want to go to India. She seasons her dishes with stories of the people of that country and how they live. Of kichri, a combination of white rice and split mung beans cooked almost to mush, she says, “This is a comfort food. In India, it is given to babies and older people with clarified butter or yogurt.” She says this as she is flavoring the cooking oil for brown rice and whole mung beans (a variation of kichri) by tossing into the already heating vegetable oil some whole cumin seeds. The cumin seeds sizzle and the aroma filling the kitchen is that of exotic spices.

I find this desire to go to India as I cook with Asmena a little surprising, as Asmena was born and raised in Kenya, East Africa, as were her parents and one of her grandparents. Her heritage from northern India, though, is strong, not only in her own family, but also in the family of her husband.

Asmena credits her mother-in-law, a vegetarian throughout her ongoing long life, with teaching her to cook vegetarian dishes that produce complete proteins through the use of specific ingredients. The brown rice and whole mung beans that we are cooking, Asmena says, “is an example of creating a balanced, healthy meal” in this way.

It was Kenya, her birthplace, that Asmena recognized in Guatemala. On her first trip here, which was to last three months and to date has lasted five years, she was struck by the similarities between the two countries. The climate; the friendliness of the people; the markets full of fresh vegetables throughout the year; the rural areas where corn and beans are often the crops: All of these reminded Asmena of Kenya. She felt a sense of home in Guatemala.

Before coming to Guatemala, Asmena had immigrated to Vancouver, Canada in the mid-1980s. It was there that she expanded her knowledge ...continued on following page

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of foods, particularly of herbs and spices. She studied herbology, and then worked for a naturopath testing food and explaining diets to clients. She expanded her knowledge of the healing effects that the spices she already used in cooking have on the human body. As we add garam masala, a blend of fragrant spices, to our brown rice and mung beans, Asmena says, “Fragrant spices warm up the body.”

Many of the spices that Asmena uses in her cooking are grown in Guatemala but rarely used in indigenous cooking. One of Asmena’s goals is to provide a guide for the use of these spices in Guatemalan foods. For that reason, she first wrote her cookbook, *A Touch of Spice: An introduction to cooking with spice*, in Spanish. She has now rewritten it in English for those of us who are not as fluent in Spanish as we would like to be.

In addition to her cookbook, Asmena gives cooking classes, which is how I was

fortunate enough to be cooking with her. She also sells curry powders and spice blends, which the food enthusiast can mix from individual spices. The recipes are in *A Touch of Spice*. I was in a hurry to get to the eating part of this process, so I bought several blends: madras curry powder, vegetable curry powder and garam masala, as well as chai tea spice.

Madras curry powder is a blend of spices such as mustard seeds, fenugreek, cumin, coriander seeds, chili, curry leaves, turmeric, yellow split peas and black pepper. It is used for meat or vegetable curries. Vegetable curry powder, which enhances the flavor of vegetables, includes such spices as cumin, coriander seeds, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves and turmeric. Garam masala is a blend of the more fragrant spices such as cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom, cumin and black pepper. It is used for rice, dahls and lentils. ...continued on following page



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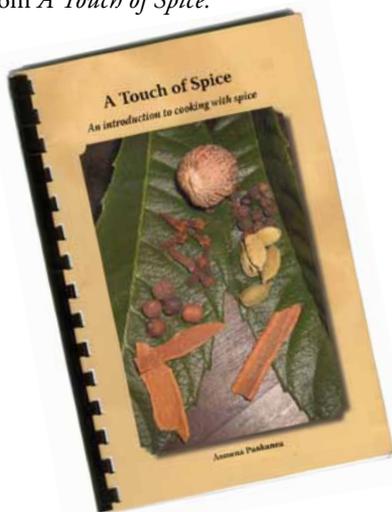

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Cooking with love cont. from previous page

A Touch of Spice may be obtained by contacting Asmena at indian-curry@hotmail.com. Information regarding cooking classes, as well as curry powders and spice blends, may also be obtained at this e-mail address.

The following recipes are two of my favorites from *A Touch of Spice*.



Gujarati-style peas, cauliflower and potato curry

Asmena suggests eating this curry with rice or with pita bread, crusty rolls or tortillas. She also likes it with just lots of plain yogurt.

- 1½ cups fresh green peas
- 1½ cups cauliflower cut into florets
- 3 potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 tomatoes, grated
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground coriander seeds
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- 2 tbs oil
- 2 tbs finely chopped fresh cilantro
- A little water

Salt to taste

Heat the oil in a saucepan; add the whole cumin, which will impart a wonderful aroma. Then add the peas, cauliflower and potatoes, garlic, salt, turmeric, cayenne pepper, ground cumin and ground coriander seeds. Stir and cook for a few minutes before adding the tomatoes and a little water. Simmer gently until the vegetables are well cooked. Add cilantro before serving. Other vegetables, such as carrots, eggplant and zucchini, may also be added.

...continued on following page

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—Roseanne Barr



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Cooking with love cont. from previous page

Gulab jambus

Asmena says this delicious Indian dessert is a favorite of anyone who tries it. It certainly is a favorite of mine! It is usually served at weddings and on special occasions.

- 1 small packet hotcake/pancake mix (100gm)
- 1 small packet milk powder (120 gm)
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp ground cardamom
- ½ cup milk
- 1 tbsp butter
- Oil for deep frying

Mix the hotcake or pancake mix, milk powder, cardamom and baking powder. Rub the butter into the mixture, and then bind with the milk into a rather wet sticky dough. Cover and allow to rest for about 10 minutes before working the dough. Form small little balls of dough. Keep in mind that these will almost double in size when soaked in the syrup later. Gently fry these little balls in hot oil until golden brown all over, making sure they are well cooked.

Syrup for Gulab jambus

- 4 cups water
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 1 tbsp rose water (optional)
 - A pinch of saffron
- Mix sugar and water in a saucepan, stirring until the sugar dissolves over low heat. Increase the heat to medium and, without stirring, allow to boil gently for about 30 minutes. Add the saffron and rose water (optional).
Gulab jambus can be served hot or cold.

Enjoy! ☺



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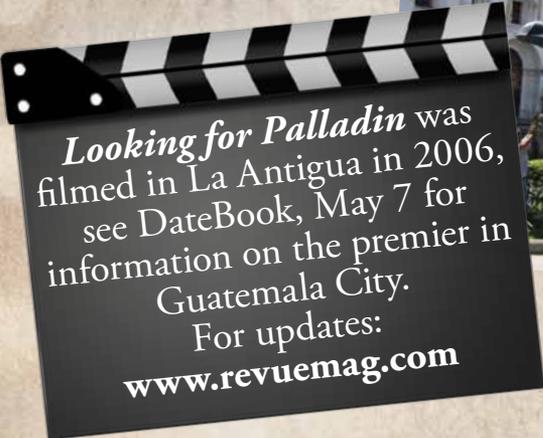
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Looking for Palladin was filmed in La Antigua in 2006, see DateBook, May 7 for information on the premier in Guatemala City. For updates: www.revuemag.com



COMMENTS FROM THE CRITICS

REX REED -The New York Observer: The cinematography beautifully captures the dramatic hues of the gorgeous textiles, shifting moods and architectural splendors of Guatemala, which is neither South America nor Mexico, but a magical combination of both, with azure skies and buildings of saffron yellow and chili-pepper red paint.

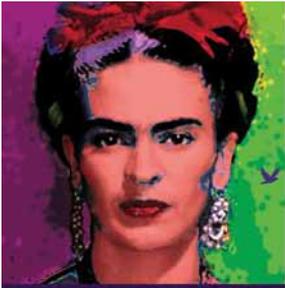
RONNIE SCHEIB - Variety: Local color has rarely been more colorful than in Andrzej Krakowski's resplendent Guatemala-set outing ... Genial showcase for Ben Gazzara casts the indomitable near-octogenarian as a two-time Oscar winner who has abandoned Tinseltown for the laid-back society of artistic expats in Antigua, which the helmer renders with warmth and flair."

AARON HILLIS - Time Out: The rare project shot entirely in Guatemala, Andrzej Krakowski's modestly charming culture-shock comedy has an unusual midpoint game changer, as it suddenly mutates into an intimate familial-generational drama.

STEPHEN HOLDEN - The New York Times: Ben Gazzara's portrayal of Jack Palladin, a long-retired two-time Oscar-winning actor living in Guatemala, lends critical weight to Andrzej Krakowski's *Looking for Palladin*.

ROYD. KORIAKIN - FilmThreat: Andrzej Krakowski's character-driven film takes its time with the characters, giving the audience a chance to get to know them and their lives. The theme doesn't involve transforming robots or building crawling super heroes. It centers on real people and their introspective on the importance and appreciation of relationships and family. [...] *Looking For Palladin* was a breath of fresh air. It deserves to be seen by the masses. And, hopefully, it will.

CHICAGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL: This reporter was privileged to have been present for Sunday night's screening at the 25th Chicago Latino Film Festival, the largest, oldest, and most influential Latino film festival in the U.S. Well over 200 people attended the screening. [...] To describe the reception as tremendously positive is to understate it—seriously. Audience members who hail from Guatemala (and there were many) had tears in their eyes as they praised the picture and participated in the post-screening Q&A session that went on till midnight. Said one such audience member, "I have never seen my country shown so poetically and lyrically."



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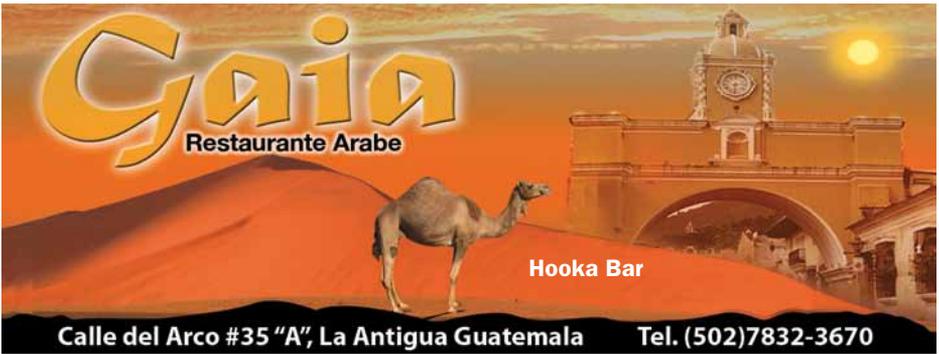
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—Abraham Lincoln

*I can't think why mothers love them. All babies
do is leak at both ends.* —Douglas Feaver



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Citadel sits in the saddle of mountains that rise 2,000 feet above river

Machu Picchu cont. from page 19

The trip ends at the town of Machu Picchu, near Aguas Calientes, at the foot of the mountain. From there buses run every 15 minutes, climbing round and round straight up (it seems) to the top and there the entrance to the sanctuary, where the altitude is only 7,000 feet. After a guided tour of several hours or all day, visitors zig-zag down the mountain for the night or the return train to Cuzco.

Hardy hikers trek, instead, for three or four days, through some of the world's most beautiful scenery.

Both tracks and trails pass a constantly changing panorama, majestic precipices rising thousands of feet, luxuriant foliage, snow-capped peaks, rugged mountains and

rushing river rapids, so close to simple farms and pastoral terraces it seems one could reach out and touch them. Bingham was right: the word is 'indescribable.'

Nor do words do justice to the magnificent sanctuary itself. Terraces with irrigation ditches and grazing llama, stairways carved out of rock, temples, astronomical research sites. This was a place for the royal family and those who served it, who opened their hands and threw kisses to honor the sun.

Peruvians have done a first-class job of packaging their product and orchestrating the implementation for virtually every level of travel. Trains range from backpacker to deluxe-all-the-way on the Hiram Bingham Orient Express Train, with polished wood,

...continued on following page

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—Oscar Wilde



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Machu Picchu cont. from previous page

live music and an open-air caboose club car. Accommodations include tents for hikers and five-star hotels, among them one built on the old Dominican monastery in Cuzco, originally site of an Inca palace, and Sanctuary Lodge at the entrance to the ruins (the only way to overnight at the top)—and everything in-between.

Best time to visit is now, the dry season, between May and November. To avoid disappointment, planning ahead is necessary, especially purchase of train tickets. Researching the Peruvian websites is time well spent.

Whatever the preference or the budget, Machu Picchu promises an unforgettable and haunting experience. 

(Machu Picchu is open for tourism again, following January flood repairs.)



Woman wears colorful Peruvian crafts in Cuzco

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Social



*Joshua Bell plays Bach
at a Metro Station in Washington,
D.C. on a cold, January morning*

Experiment

The man with a violin played six Bach pieces in about 45 minutes. During that time approximately 2,000 people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After three minutes a middle-aged man noticed there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried to meet his schedule.

Four minutes later the violinist received his first dollar from a woman who threw the money in the hat and, without stopping, continued to walk. Six minutes later, a young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again.

Ten minutes later a three-year old boy stopped, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. Every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly.

The musician played continuously for 45 minutes. Only six people stopped and listened for a short while. About 20 gave money but continued to walk at their

normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32.00.

He finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition. No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before, Joshua Bell sold out a theater in Boston where the seats averaged \$200.

This is a true story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the Metro Station was organized by the *Washington Post* as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and people's priorities. In a common place, do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize talent in an unexpected context?

One conclusion reached from this experiment could be this. If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world, playing some of the finest music ever written, with one of the most beautiful instruments ever made, how many other things are we missing? 

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There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance. —Socrates

Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake. —Napoleon Bonaparte



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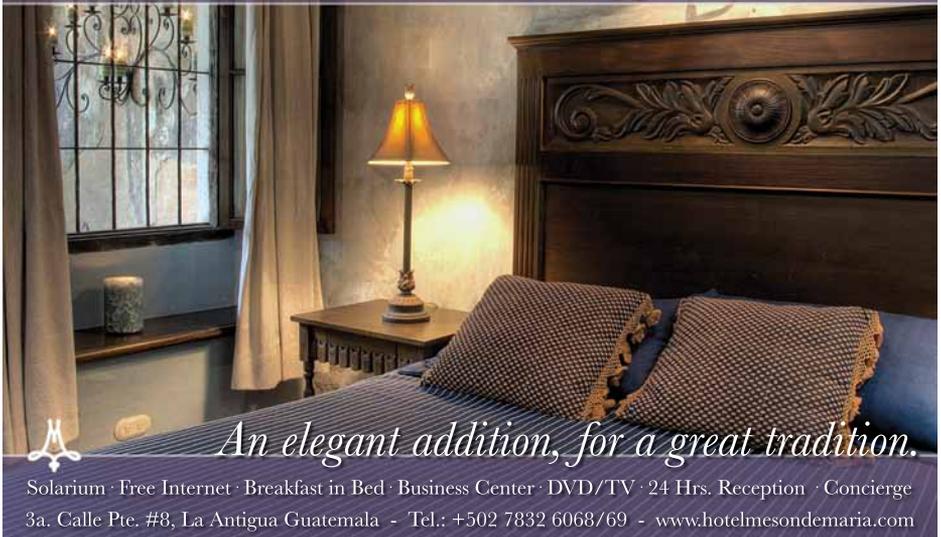
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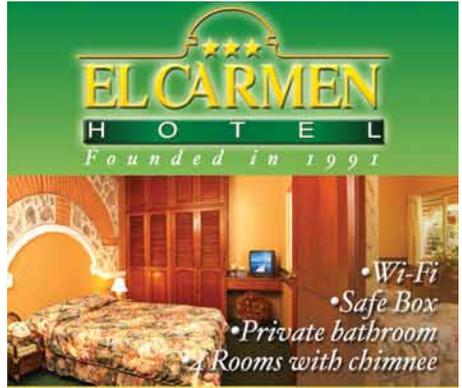
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Am I alive? How do I know? Am I imagining my life? How can I prove that I am really living? This existential question has plagued philosophers for centuries. Theologians and the religiously inclined ask, “What happens after I die?” It took me a long time, but I have found the answer to both questions. I must confess that although I had been struggling with these fundamental questions for years, strong outside pressure finally resolved the issue for me. The pressure came from an unexpected source: The Republic of Guatemala. The lengthy, excruciating process through which I found the answers to these timeless questions is called *trámites*.

As happens to most who seek enlightenment through this process, I thought that I had submitted all required documentation: The obvious photocopy of my *cédula*, the notarized copy of my passport, the less obvious photocopy of nine pages of evidence of my income duly notarized and adorned with stamps and seals, the form from the SAT¹ updating my NIT², the notarized bill of lading for the car with its 28 digit identification numbers for motor and chassis, and, of course, my letter requesting permission from higher powers to buy the car free of import duty, because of my *residencia de pensionado*, repeating all the 28 digit numbers and more.

After I contentedly stood in line at Window 5 of the SAT to naively expect that I was about to receive the definitive answer to my quest, I was dismayed to read in *Providencia* 008205 that an important document was missing: a confirmation that I am alive. No, looking at me and comparing my face to that in the recent passport I was holding beside it, was not enough. Only lawyers can discern whether I am alive.

Licenciada Matamoros³ secretary was visibly embarrassed as she tried to explain that the *licenciada* does not usually extend such documents for people of my advanced age. Finally, after I brandished my passport and *cédula* in a manner as full of life as I was still able, she reluctantly took my passport and disappeared upstairs into the forbidden space of the *bufete*. The hard, wooden bench made the wait seem like an eternity. When the secretary finally approached me with a paper in her hand, I thought all was done. But no, “Would you please write down the name of your mother and father”.

I had already finished reading all worthwhile articles in *elPeriódico* and was now studying the stunning episodes of various half nude celebrities, when the secretary handed me a legal size document on *papel sellado* essentially stating the following on one page and a quarter: The *Licenciada* ...continued on page 112

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My mother drew a distinction between achievement and success. She said that 'achievement is the knowledge that you have studied and worked hard and done the best that is in you. Success is being praised by others, and that's nice, too, but not as important or satisfying. Always aim for achievement and forget about success.'

—Helen Hayes

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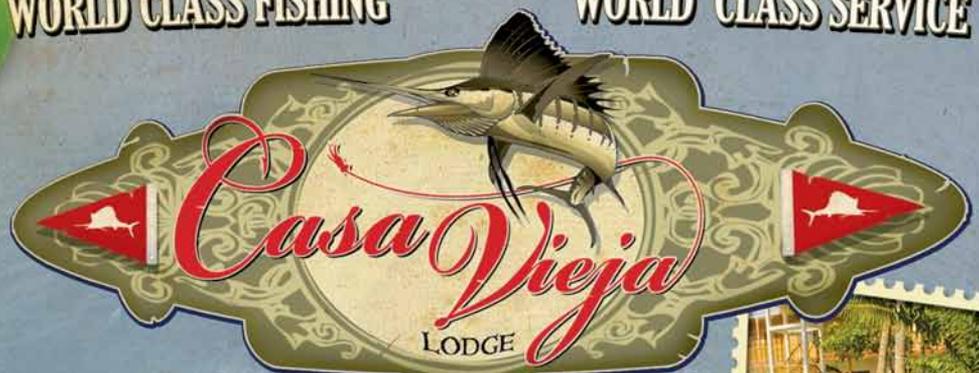
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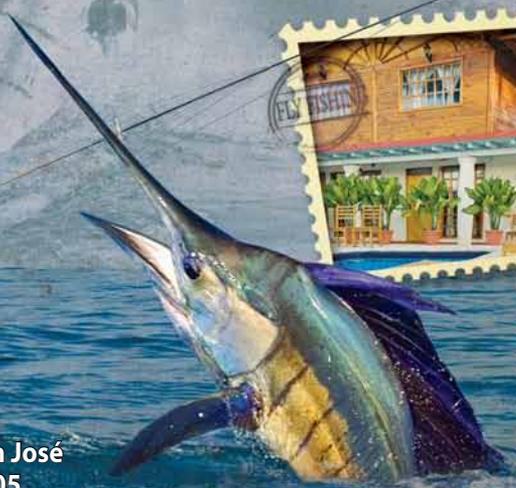
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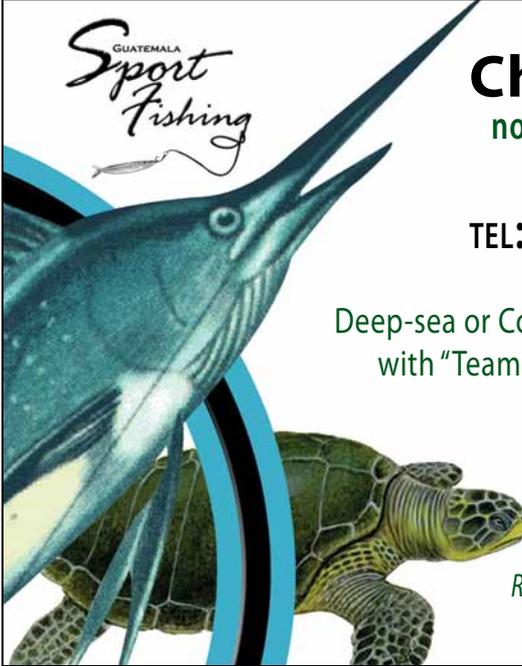


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An illustration of a marlin and a sea turtle. The marlin is shown in profile, facing right, with its long, pointed snout extending towards the top right. The sea turtle is positioned below and to the right of the marlin, also facing right. The marlin's body is a mix of blue and green, while the sea turtle is green with a patterned shell. The text 'GUATEMALA Sport Fishing' is written in a stylized font in the upper left corner of the illustration area.

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Fireflies cont. from page 22

a one long, two short and she is a two long,
take a wave-off, it's not going to happen.

Fireflies have fascinated man since the beginning, evidently scaring the scientist who first dubbed the phosphorescent substance that emits light *luciferin*, after a nickname for the devil. (Poor Devil, always getting the short end of the stick—in many countries a “Lucifer” is a match.)

Fireflies are actually beetles, living underground as grubs before emerging to flit and flash about and are sometimes called glowworms as they emerge. Their chief protective mechanism seems to be their bitter taste, as any puppy can attest. Curiously, they are generally not known to eat as adults, apparently having stored up enough food as underground larvae.

Naturally the Mayan *Popul Vuh* depicts fireflies, usually as stars but in one curious case as the glowing ashes on cigars. That was before anti-smoking regulations. ☹



Trail of the firefly. Ricardo Hurtubia/flickr.com/hurtubia/

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Lake Views cont. from page 20

The paca turned out to be a king-size bedsheet stuffed with used clothing. Maybe what Santa bundled his toys in before Mrs. Claus knit him a proper sack. It could as easily have been a stuffed cargo net.

I soon discovered that thrift shops existed in Central America, but they were called *bazares*. It was a relief to find one while I set up house in the city. But what a disappointment to find that *bazares* were none too cheap. In the old country, you could pick up, say, an oldie-but-goodie toaster for a tenth the cost of a new one. But a used appliance at the *Bazar de Kiwanis* cost nearly what a new one did.

This has all changed, since used clothing, appliances, toys and knickknacks have, in the years since, become a buyer's market. Now those six women do not have to run in and pick over the goods. And the label "paca" is today symbolic. These days, the thing *que se abre* is ingress, not a sheet.

The aging populations of the United States and Canada are the wellsprings. As baby boomers prosper (or fatten) and their parents expire, tidal waves of fine clothes are discarded and shipped down here. Now pacas sit on every corner in some neighborhoods—almost literally. There is even a chain of Megapacas set up to corral and channel the deluge.

The downside is that Spuds Mackenzie T-shirts threaten to displace embroidered finery, simply because they are affordable. This cultural erosion is being exacerbated as I write, and is a topic worthy of its own

Lake Views column. So I will stick with the upside of pacas, or, at least, what they do for me.

The wife despises them perhaps for the same reasons my parents did. But since I find like-new stuff there, I pretend that it *is* new. Good thing she does not read this column!

My son Isaac (who does read it) and I are members of the Panajachel Theatre Company. We recently enacted supporting roles to Billy Mumford, a versatile performing genius who played Arnold Dumpit, a skin-flint vaudevillian. Arnold describes himself as "not cheap but frugal, and knowing the value of a quetzal." In *The Red Suitcase*, his troupe goes on the road in chicken buses. Over the manic objections of Flossy (Mrs. Dumpit), he secures "free lodging" in the form of his father's nursing home room in La Antigua. Not surprisingly, the Dumpits build their costume wardrobe with "nice paca finds."

Yet these days, nice paca finds are not dramatic fiction, nor are they pricey. Isaac and I were told to find spotless white shirts in pacas, since real tuxedo shirts could not, presumably, be found in such places. But found they were; Isaac got one for Q10. My own mint tux shirt was in the reject pile for—are you ready?—Q3. (I also found a pair of cherry tap-dance shoes for a paltry Q1750).

Billy Mumford told me a shirt like that could cost \$60, new. He could not believe I got it so cheap—less than a penny on the dollar.

I told him that, like Arnold, I knew the value of a quetzal. 📖

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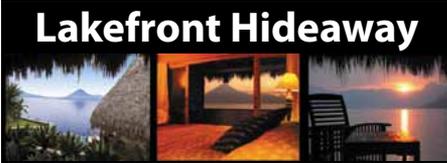
A two minute walk from La Casa del Mundo

Keeping it light

Boss: (to employee) Experts say humor on the job relieves tension in this time of down-sizing, so... Knock, Knock.

Employee: Who's there?

Boss: Not you anymore.



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Exterior and interior photos of Quetzaltenango's historical Teatro Municipal which still hosts theatrical presentations as well as a wide variety of art exhibits, dance expositions, and conferences on topics such as indigenous issues and youth empowerment. — www.casaxelaju.com



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Egotism is the anesthetic that dulls the pain of stupidity. —Frank Leahy

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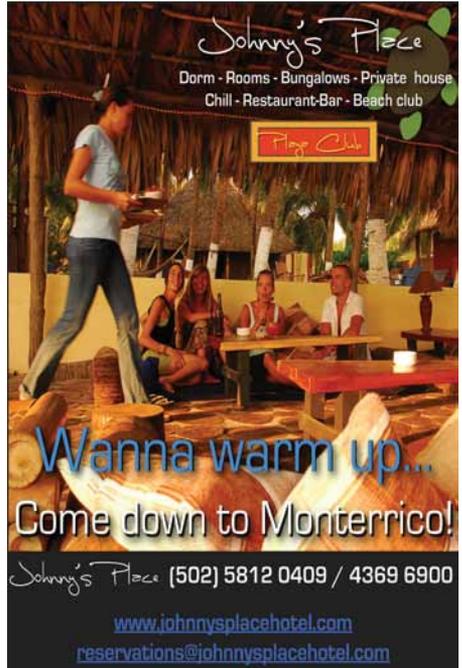


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Dead or Alive? cont. from page 90

had received me on 13 January 2010 at 14:30 hours in her office at *segunda salle poniente* ..., that she was who she said she was, that I am who I claim that I am, that I am alive, and that at 15:43 hours there was nothing left to say and that the declaration is hereby closed.

I signed relieved at this proof of my existence and gladly paid Q250 for this revelation. As I stepped out into the bright afternoon sunshine feeling much more alive than when I had entered, it occurred to me that the licenciada never even saw me.

But what about the second existential question, "What happens after I die?" That is easier to answer; I will no longer do trámites. 

1. SAT equivalent to the IRS = Internal Revenue Service
2. NIT = TIN = Tax Identification Number
3. Not her real name



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 —Sue Woodman

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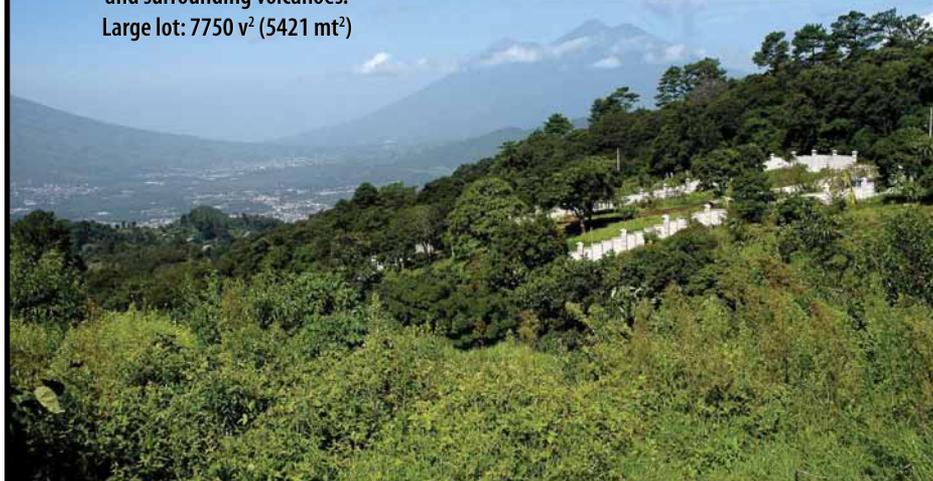


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PHOTO OP: EL SALVADOR by Lena Johannessen





LEFT ABOVE: Ceiba tree in San Ignacio
 LEFT BELOW: Forest path in San Ignacio
 ABOVE: El Pital, El Salvador's highest mountain

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The wise are instructed by reason; ordinary minds by experience; the stupid, by necessity; and brutes by instinct. —Cicero

That best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. —William Wordsworth

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GUATEMALA

A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort. —Herm Albright

Correct me if I'm wrong, but hasn't the fine line between sanity and madness gotten finer?

—George Price



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Sunshine



by Ken Veronda photo: Abner Figueroa

The rains are coming. *Invierno* (winter) rains will arrive soon. But it's all sunshine now, pretty much so. Enjoy the sensuous warmth of this special in-between season. Each day's comfortable temperatures spill into delightful evenings on patios and rooftops. Guatemala is year-round sunshine, but this month is full of bright sunlight.

Families flock to beaches when they can (watch out for the tropical sunshine if you do; it can really scorch non-tropical skin). The Highland slopes lose their lush green tones and take on delicate browns and tans. Sunshine splashes off whitewashed walls, deepens the blue lakes, penetrates the jungle and brings folk to linger in parks and squares.

Little kids everywhere grab yellow crayons and draw a bright sun with rays streaming down. This picture comes to life as the sun crosses this month's skies, as dust on the horizon brings lines of light just as kids draw them.

Yellow sunlight is captured in the feathers of orioles passing through Central America on their way from hemisphere to hemisphere. Sunshine is in the kernels of

corn, dried and ready for milling. Dots of sunshine are mixed in the grasses and lawns, called dandelions dug as weeds by some city folk. (What a shame!)

You'll spot Guatemalan sunshine many places. Just look: your breakfast egg's yolk, on corn roasted by street vendors, in flower markets with yellow gladioli, roses and daisies. Some villages have sunshine-yellow in their weavings, shining in noontime light as women scurry home.

Smell sunshine in freesia blossoms, delicate yellow and lasting only a day or two, their heavy perfume filling a room. Smell sunshine by hanging laundry outdoors. Soon you'll sniff the sweet sun. Clothes driers can't give you that marvelous aroma.

If you're lucky, when temperatures are right after dark, you'll spot captured sunshine as flowering trees host little sparkles. Fireflies are no surprise to visitors who recognize glowworms, but delight tourists who don't have them back home.

Several spots call themselves lands of sunshine. Guatemala is more subtle. We let folk come here, then give them lots of glorious sunshine. 

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