

REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine
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May 2012
Year 21, No. 3

FREE

- ◊ Mother's Day Photo Contest
- ◊ Yaxhá Lagoon and the Crocs
- ◊ Santa Cruz La Laguna Fair

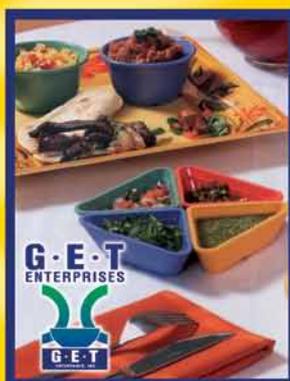




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fotos@revuemag.com

Habrán premios para las fotos ganadoras, incluye cena para dos en La Peña de Sol Latino.

Para más información RevueMag.com

Serán elegibles las fotos que se reciban **hasta el 10 del mes** para el concurso de la edición siguiente.

If you would like to participate in our **MONTHLY PHOTO CONTEST** with the theme **FATHER** for JUNE, 2012 please send ONE HI-RES photo with caption/location and your name and website for the credit line to:

photos@revuemag.com

There will be prizes for winning photos including dinner for 2 at La Peña de Sol Latino.

More information at RevueMag.com

Submissions entered **by the 10th of the month** will be eligible for the following month's contest.

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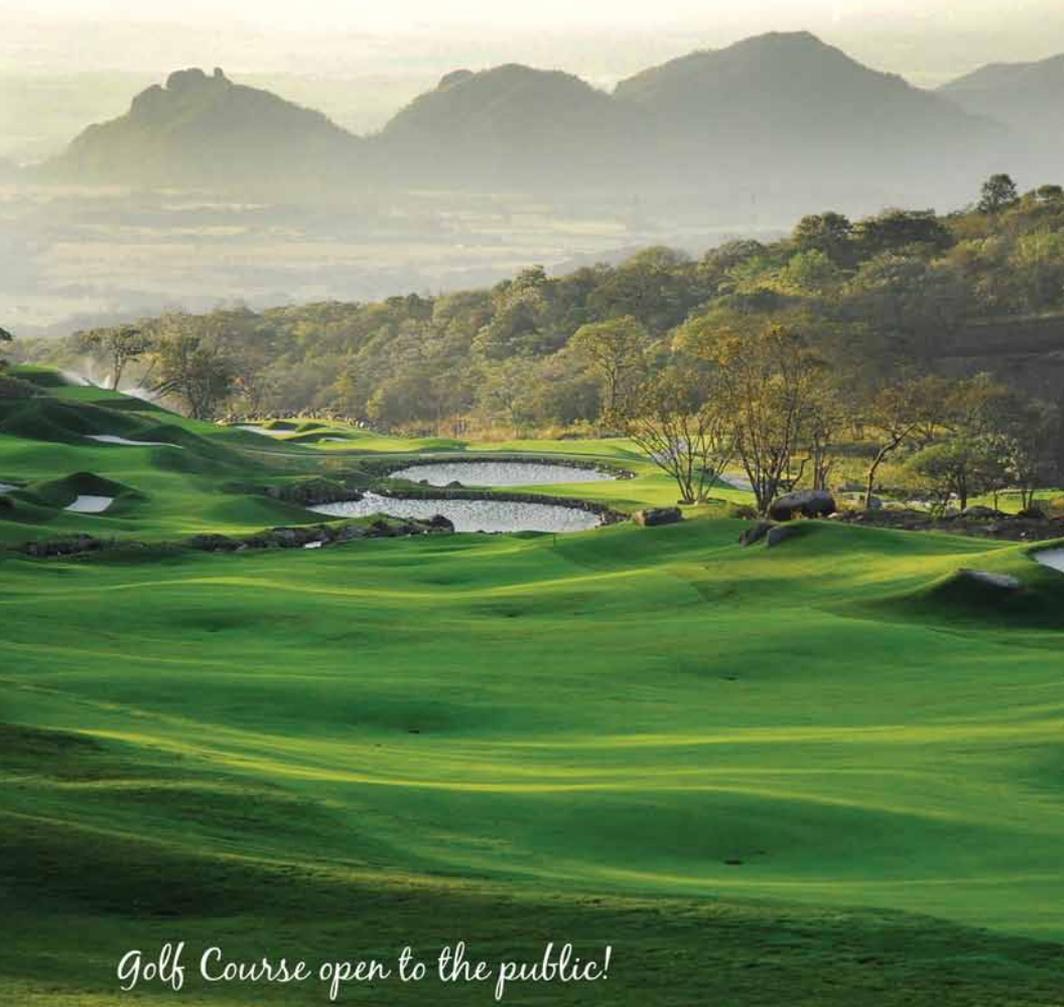
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El Palacio Nacional

Used for the majority of presidential activities, El Palacio Nacional de la Cultura remains one of the most important buildings in Guatemala.

If three is the magic number, then five must be the lucky one—or at least it was for former Guatemalan President Jorge Ubico when his government built El Palacio Nacional in Zone 1 of the capital.

On each of the building's five floors, opulence is grouped together in clusters of five. There are five sets of doors opening onto the presidential balcony, with five small windows above them. Five archways decorate each side of the interior courtyard and five sets of stained glass windows appear in many of the rooms. Reports say that on Ubico's birthday, he would hang a large star in the palace,

which also contained the number five. And all because his first and last names each contained five letters—something he considered to be a lucky omen.

To this day, the renamed El Palacio Nacional de la Cultura remains one of the most important buildings in Guatemala and is used for the majority of presidential activities. The 1996 Peace Accords were signed in the palace's courtyard and ever since this date a fresh white rose has been placed in the palms of the peace statue every day, to mark the spot where the Guatemalan civil war was officially ended. ... continued page 50



Casa Escobar

Steak House



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Swim at your own risk



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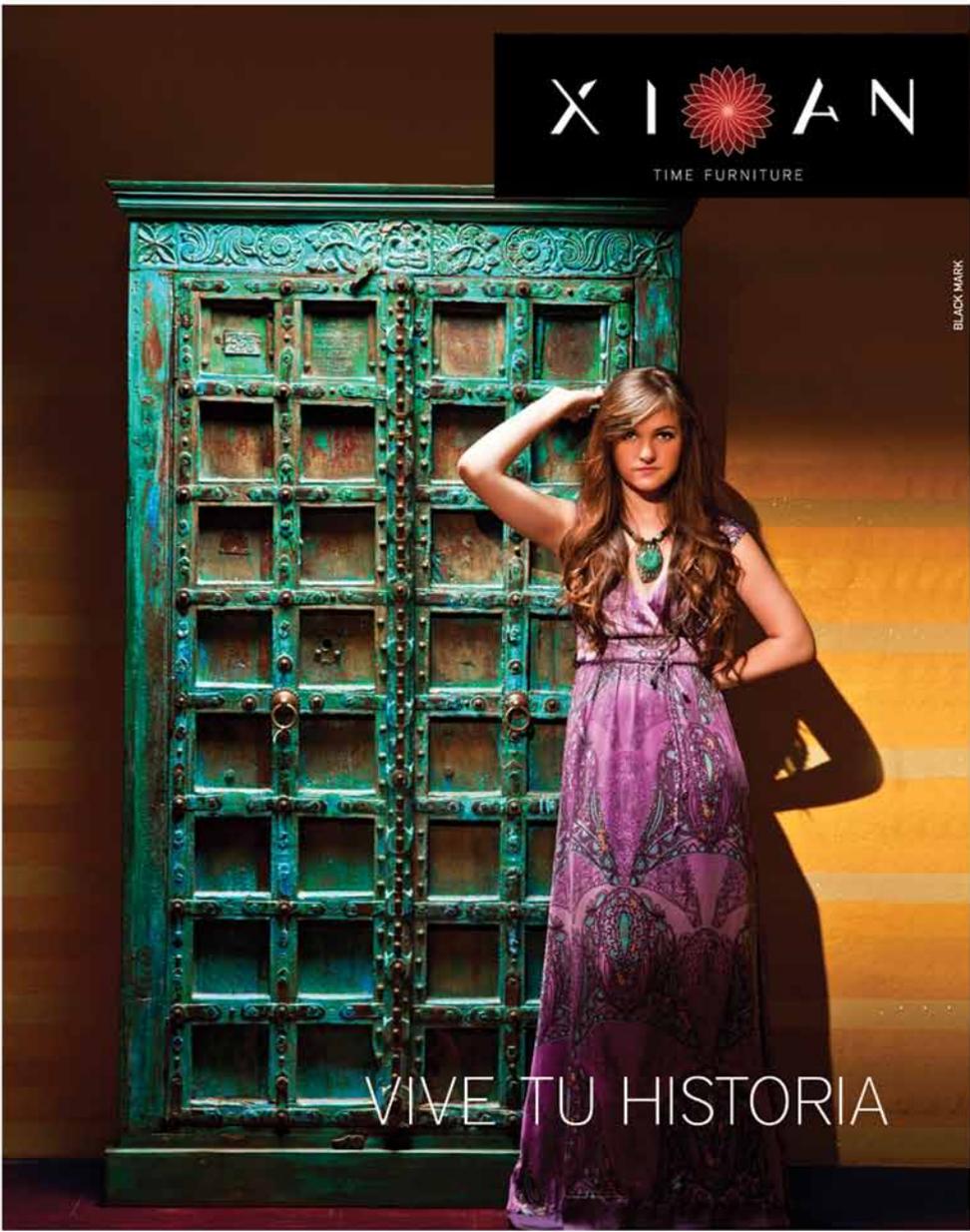
101 Violeta Arredondo

Cover Javier Alvarez Vassaux

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"Vamos Mija"

by
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**Deadline for the
June 2012 issue » May 10**

A left handed Jimi Hendrix
played a right handed guitar.

Upside down.



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From the Publishers

Happy May to one and all. We hope you are enjoying our monthly Revue Photo Contests. As our cover conveys, this month's theme was "Mother." To be fair, the theme for June will be "Father." We welcome all photo submissions, details and prize information can be found on the Revue website, Revue Facebook page and in this issue on page two.

Other fun things this month: a trip to Yaxhá Lagoon (crocodiles included); a visit to the Popol Vuh Museum to celebrate the "Month of Museums;" and a tour of the National Palace in Guatemala City.

As well, you will be: **introduced** to some inspiring women of Guatemala; **invited** to the Lake Atitlán Marathon; **challenged** to discover how much electrical power we need in our life; **informed** about the the high caliber of orthopedic care available in Guatemala; **delighted** with inside information about pepper and peppers; **asked** to envision the color of butter; **inspired** to read the book *Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests*; **encouraged** to celebrate the annual fair in Santa Cruz la Laguna; and **updated** on the cultural events taking place around Guatemala in May.

Thanks for reading the Revue and we hope you find it as it is meant to be... "fun, free and informative."

—John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

By the way: The Revue main offices in La Antigua can now be found in our permanent location at **3a avenida sur #4-A**.

Tels: 7931-4500 or 7832-4619

REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine
RevueMag.com • consultas@revuemag.com

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Printed by: PRINT STUDIO

Publishing Company: SAN JOAQUÍN PRODUCCIONES, S.A.

REVUE OFFICES:

LA ANTIGUA

3a avenida sur #4-A (Central Office)

TELS: (502) 7931-4500 or 7832-4619

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Opinions or statements printed in the REVUE are not necessarily those of the publishers. We welcome your comments.

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Hotels, Restaurants, Travel Agencies, Car Rental Agencies,

Embassies, Spanish Schools, INGUAT offices, Shops,

and other public places in the following areas:

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2nd PLACE by popular vote in the monthly REVUE PHOTO CONTEST, May
 Congratulations to Melissa Estefania Monterroso Contreras on her photograph entitled "Mis 4 razones para celebrar a las Madre" La Antigua, with 208 votes. Prize: Q300. All entries can be seen at www.RevueMag.com



Yaxhá Lagoon and the Crocs

There are two main gateways leading to the Mayan rainforest in the department of Petén, which forms Guatemala's northern frontier. The main route takes you through the humid lowlands of the Motagua Valley and then north passing the magnificent Sweet River (Río Dulce), the jungle outpost of Poptún, and finally to the departmental island capital of Flores. The other, less-traveled route is via the imperial city of Cobán, and up through the land of the Kek'chi Maya and through the population centers of Chisec, Raxrullá, Sayaché and La Libertad.

Naturally, we chose the road less traveled. Once you leave Cobán, the landscape feels like you're back to the old days when

most of the region's rivers were crossed by ferry and where "Latin America" is left far behind as you enter the mysterious realm of Mayan America. And so it remains when you arrive at Sayaché and the roiling waters of the Río de la Pasión. Waiting in a long line of vehicles for the ferry gives you time to chat with locals, drink a cold coconut juice or two and perhaps sample the street food, top on my list being *Pacaya envuelta en huevo*.

From Cobán to Flores it takes about six hours through some spectacularly beautiful terrain dominated by the weird limestone-karst hills and ranges. From Flores we headed due east toward Belize and several hours later

came to the turnoff for Yaxhá National Park.

From the turnoff it's another half hour to the lagoon, at the sight of which only one thought was in my mind: Remove my sweaty clothes and jump in!

But as I trotted toward the shore in my trunks a park guard wagged his finger at me. What? No swimming? He pointed to a sign: Warning Crocodiles!

Here in the sweltering jungle heat, a fantastic crystal-clear lagoon, and you can't swim there. Then he pointed out toward the middle, where I could clearly see the ridged back of a three-meter-long crocodile slowly gliding through the water. I opted to take a cool shower at the campgrounds.

Later that afternoon I interviewed Miss Gabriella Moretti, owner of the one hotel located on the lagoon, the Sombrero Ecolodge. She told me about a memorable event that took place some years back when a tourist, purportedly none other than the royal Dutch chocolatier to the queen of Holland, went for a dip in the lagoon:

“A group of tourists from Holland were staying at El Sombrero. It was about 6 a.m. when I heard a commotion coming from the direction of the pier. I saw some of the visitors shouting in terror and waving as they helplessly watched a crocodile swimming toward a man bathing in the lagoon. I rushed down and saw a man splashing in the water, and at first thought he was drowning because he was submerging ...cont. page 68



Dock at the lagoon, swim if you dare...



Stela in the Yaxhá archaeological site.



MAY PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS, theme: Mother



clockwise from left:

1st PLACE by popular vote in the monthly REVUE PHOTO CONTEST, May

Congratulations to Octavio Cortés Belches on his photograph titled "La verdad detrás de la vida" Quetzaltenango. 276 votes. Prize: 6 bottles of La Chamiza wine. All entries can be seen at www.RevueMag.com

2nd PLACE by judges vote

"Ojos de madre" by María José Carranza. Prize: Q300 Panajachel, Sololá

Honorable Mention by judges vote

"Cargando mi Felicidad" by Flor Ortiz, Autosafari Chapín, Escuintla



1st PLACE by judges vote is on the cover of this issue. Congratulations to Javier Álvarez Vassaux on his photograph "Vamos Mija" La Antigua. Prize: Dinner for two at La Peña de Sol Latino

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Gathering in front of the church, Santa Cruz



Participants in the secular parade march



The parade goes from upper to lower Santa Cruz



Traditional dancers entertain the crowds

Raging Bulls and Aging Saints

Time for the annual fair in Santa Cruz la Laguna

The *feria* in Santa Cruz la Laguna is one of a kind. No other Atitlán fair is more classical, more Guatemalan-in-the-rough, and more “we’re-not-in-Kansas-anymore, Toto.”

There are two Santa “Cruces”: the upper, traditional town and the lower, lake-side district; they are a twain that meet at fair time like they never do otherwise. The lower town is heavy with resorts and expats; the upper town clings to custom and sheer mountainsides. There are no motor roads into them and, understandably, no cars. This shields Santa Cruz from the invasion of video games that vulgarize most *ferias*,

but *chingolinos* — ring-toss and other classical amusements that predate electrification—abound in the upper town. Garish Ferris wheels, likewise too big to bring in, are not seen.

One palpable intrusion of modernity is the piñata-class plastic toys. The vendors of anything small enough to bring by boat are present in force, but their wares are a novelty here. These items, seen year-round elsewhere, appear only at *feria* time. Consequently, youngsters and their grandparents examine them with unjaded curiosity.

“One year, some guy floated in a ramshackle cotton-candy machine,” ...cont. page 84

Fotografías reales
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MUSEO POPOL VUH

May is the “Month of the Museums” and a great time to visit Guatemala’s historical treasures.

Named after the sacred Mayan text that weaves together myths and historical narratives, el Museo Popol Vuh offers a unique insight into the world of the ancient Maya through an exhibition of ancient artefacts from each of Guatemala’s major periods of pre-colonial development.

Situated within the grounds of Francisco Marroquín University in Guatemala City, el Museo Popol Vuh is one of Guatemala’s most modern-looking museums and boasts one of the country’s most impressive collections.





subsequently preserved in the water for thousands of years.

Popol Vuh's pre-Columbian and colonial art is exhibited in chronological order behind glass cabinets and takes you on a journey from Mesoamerican hunting tools to post-colonial Catholic statues.

Some of the most impressive objects include a reproduction of the ancient Mayan text, the Dresden Code, and a giant cracked altar with a detailed narrative of King Aj Wosal Chan K'ihnich, who ruled the city of Naranjo from 546AD-615.

It all began in 1977 when Jorge and Ella Castillo donated the legacy of their collections to the sons and daughters of Guatemala. From domestic tools to funerary urns and jewelry to religious sculptures, these relics can be used to piece together the lifestyles of Maya men and women: the clothing they wore, the activities they enjoyed and the trade routes they took.

Many of the items are in surprisingly good condition, having been discovered in archaeological deposits below the surface of Lake Atitlán and Lake Amatitlán. It is thought that many of the objects were deposited in the lakes during religious rituals and were

Perfect for anyone with a thirst for all things Mayan, the museum is located within walking distance of Museo Ixchel—allowing you to visit both in an afternoon. But while the pieces are indeed impressive, the museum is unlikely to sustain the interests of small children. 

Admission is Q35, with an additional charge for flash photography. The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



DATEBOOK

MAY 2012

The Asociación de Museos/ICOM Guatemala are pleased to announce the **Month of the Museums** with this year's theme *Los museos, un mundo cambiante* (The museums, a changing world). Different activities and special expositions will be held in all the museums countrywide. **Fri., 18** — International day of the museums. <http://www.museosdeguatemala.org>

1 Tues., through June 1 — SPORTS & CULTURE: Registration is open for the *Atitlán Marathon 2012*, a 5-day sports and cultural event to raise funds for lake basin environmental projects. **May 25-June 1**: Recreational & cultural activities; **May 26-27th**: Competitive half & full marathon races. Details available at Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo in Antigua & Panajachel, also www.atitlanmarathon.com or call 7762-2326 (3-6pm daily). **Panajachel, Lake Atitlán.**

2 Wed., through Thurs., 31 — PHOTOGRAPHY: Collective expo by Popol Vuh & Club Fotográfico de Guatemala. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City.** See related article on page 20.

2 Wed., 6pm — TALK: Antigua International School invites the community to a presentation by Juan Carlos Sagastume, *Realizador de Sueños*. Free. El Cortijo de Las Flores, road to Ciudad Vieja, km 48.5, **La Antigua Environs.**

2 Wed., 7pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Social Media*, importancia de la web y redes sociales como herramientas publicitarias. Impartida por la conferencista Ana Lucrecia Glaesel, directora creativa digital, The Ad Company. Entrada Libre. Galería de Arte de la Alianza Francesa (tel: 2207-5757), 5a calle 10-55, z. 13, **Guatemala City.**

3 Thurs. — CELEBRATION: Religious and cultural activities to honor El Niño de la Cruz, Cajolá & La Esperanza, **Quetzaltenango.**

3 Thurs., through Wed., 30 — ART: *Espiritualidad y Arquitectura*, Luisa Stallo's collection of engravings from the XVI through the XIX century. El Attico (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City.** ▼



3 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Arte Hispano Religioso en el Corregimiento de Verapaz*, por Dr. Anibal Chajón. Q30/Q15 estudiantes con carnet. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City.**

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DATEBOOK

3 Thurs., 7pm — MEETING: Club Fotográfico de Antigua (CFA) features photo talks by special guests as well as photo contests in color, b/w and digital categories. CFA welcomes novice and professional photo enthusiasts. For additional information and details visit www.clubfotograficoantigua.com or [Facebook.com/ClubFotograficoAntigua](https://www.facebook.com/ClubFotograficoAntigua). Free. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española, **La Antigua**. ▼



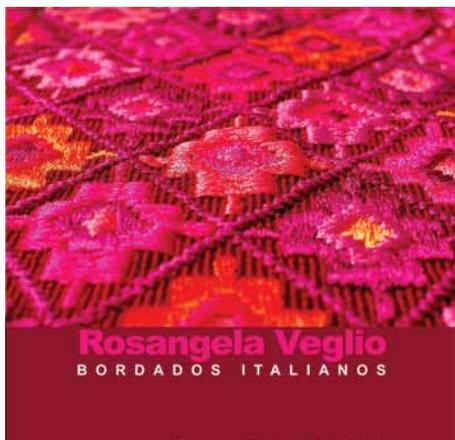
3 Thurs., 7pm — ART: *Exposición de Miniaturas* by artists from Quetzaltenango. Centro Cultural Casa No'J (tel: 7761-4400), 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

4 Fri., 7pm — ART: *Sueños a Tropel*, sculptures by artist Arturo Ruano. Cocktail. Galería de Arte Andante, 8a av. 12-19, z. 1, Centro Histórico (tel: 4360-7840), **Guatemala City**. ▼



5 Sat. — DEMOCRATS ABROAD GLOBAL PRIMARY AND FILM FESTIVAL: **U.S. citizens overseas can vote 9am-6pm**. In addition to President Obama, Democrats Abroad members from the Americas, incl. one from Guatemala, will be on the ballot running for delegate to the Democratic National Convention. **Movies: 10am-noon** — *Margin Call*; **noon-4pm** — *Clinton – It all Began with Hope*. Contact John Chudy, 7832-4581 or mayadems@yahoo.com. Casa Convento Concepción, 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.

5 Sat., through Sat. 26 — ART: Embroidery works by Italian artist Rosangela Veglio. El Attico (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City**. ▼



5 Sat., 5pm — MUSIC: Italian lyric evening, arias, opera duets and Italian music by well-known composers. Featured by Pamela Morales (soprano), Pedro Pablo Solís (tenor) and Hugo Arenas (piano). Q75, Q50/ students with carnet and Q25, kids over 12 years. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**. ▼





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Mondays — Night blues: Nelson Lunding or guest artist.

Wednesdays — Jazz Duo with Lisandro, Grand Piano & Double Bass.

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Fridays — Latin Trio, Denis Medina on Cubano Tres and Coloso Gudierre on congas

Saturdays — Guest artist.

Nightly cover: Q35

La Peña de Sol Latino

tel: 7882-4468 5a calle poniente #15-C, La Antigua

Sundays — 12:30-3pm: Carlos Trujillo, Latin Jazz/Salsa, with Bill on congas.

Mondays — 7-10pm: The magic guitar of Carlos Trujillo, Latin Jazz/Salsa, with Bill on congas.

Tuesdays — 7-10pm: Ramiro plays Trova Cubana, with Bill on congas.

Wednesdays thru Sundays — 7-10pm: Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). ▼



Gaia Restaurante

tel: 7832-3670 Calle del Arco #35-A, La Antigua

Thursdays — 7pm: Live music.

Fridays and Saturdays — Belly dancing.

Como Como

tel: 7832-0478 6 calle poniente #6, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 8pm: Accordion music by Jorge Herrera.

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 — 7:30pm: Gustavo plays Latino classics, western tunes with some harmonica.

Wednesdays — 7:30pm: *Open Mike Night*: come along and show your skills. Free drink for anyone who performs!

Thursdays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.

Fridays — 7:30pm: Segio, this talented local plays a mix of music including lots of reggae!

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Sundays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.



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Mondays — TROVA and surprise guests.

Tuesdays — BLUES Night from 8pm.

Wednesdays — Bossa / Latin / Cuban.

Thursdays — Bossa / Latin / Cuban.

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Saturdays — SALSA grupo CARIBE from 9pm.

Sundays — Late night BLUES.



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Thursdays — 7-9pm: Mike Mcarthy plays some mean blues.

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Fridays — 7-9pm: Ron Fortin saxophone; 9:30-11:30pm: Nelson Lunding New Orleans piano.

Saturdays — 7-9pm: Malcolm Oakley sings and plays guitar.

9:30pm: Mercedes, guitar blues/rock/folk.



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9pm: Latin ensemble.

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9pm: Carlos Rangel and son, swing, Cuban and rock.

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Wednesdays — 8:30pm: Victor Arriaza on piano, Alejandro Álvarez, bass and Julio García on drums.

DATEBOOK

5 Sat., & 19th, 9am-noon — COOKING CLASS: Mariela, Norma, María and the kitchen staff conduct típico Guatemalan cooking classes. \$40 incl. a cup of Antigua coffee, 3-hours class & the delicious meal you cooked (with a glass of wine or other beverage). Next, Mariela will take the class to the mercado to see where to buy the best ingredients. Limited enrollment. Call for a reservation: 7882-4468. La Peña de Sol Latino, 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.

5 Sat., 11am — (Spanish) THEATER: *Te juego un cuento*, es un trabajo de animación en el que los espectadores, niños y adultos participan activamente de diversas maneras: como oyentes, actuando como personajes de los cuentos o animando títeres de manejo directo. Entrada libre. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, **La Antigua**.

5 Sat., 4pm — MUSIC: Accordion Recital by Jorge Herrera de la Cerda. Benefit for the Hogar de Ancianos "Fray Rodrigo de la Cruz," 4a av. sur #6, **La Antigua**.

8 Tues., through Sun., 13 — FAIR: *Feria de Diseño Industrial* (Industrial Design Fair), organized by Universidad Rafael Landívar. Free. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, **La Antigua**.

8 Tues., 5:30pm — (Ixil/Spanish/translation-English) TALK: *Tejidos Cotzal* is a cooperative of 42 Maya women from San Juan Cotzal, which lost many men in the civil war. The women support each other and try to send their children to school by weaving. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

8 Tues., 7pm through Sun., 12 — EXPOSITION: *World War II Testimony*, collection by Marcel Ruff. Galería de Arte de la Alianza Francesa (tel: 2207-5757), 5a calle 10-55, z. 13, **Guatemala City**.

8 Tues., through Thur. 10 — FAIR: Annual Feria. **Santa Cruz la Laguna, Lake Atitlán**. See related story on page 18.

9 Wed., 7pm — ART: *El Mundo de Rompecabezas* Roberto Ralda. Centro Cultural Casa No'J (tel: 7761-4400), 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

10 Thur — MOTHER'S DAY: *celebrated throughout Guatemala with special activities*.



11 Fri., 7pm

— ART: Inauguration of *Complejidad Genética* by Tatiana Salazar. Cocktail. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

11 Fri., 4pm — SPORTS: Final day of bank registration (Banco de Antigua) for Atitlán Marathon 2012, Guatemala.

11 Fri., 7pm — ART: *Sinfonía Lumino*sa by María Eugenia Beatriz Salazar. Centro Cultural Casa No'J (tel: 7761-4400), 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

12 Sat., & Sat., 19, 10:30am-1:30pm — (Spanish) TALLER: *Movimiento y Expresión*, para niños de 6 a 12 años impartido por Cecilia Dougherty. El taller desarrollará los principios de eficiencia del movimiento y la coordinación corporal, que buscará conducir a los niños y niñas al encuentro de una manera personal de expresión, todo esto a través del juego y la experimentación. Entrada libre. Previa inscripción. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, **La Antigua**.

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

La Antigua Galería de Arte

Ongoing
Exhibit

"Guatemala:
A Textural Muse"

by

Jan Ledbetter



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laantigua@artintheamericas.com | artintheamericas@gmail.com | www.artintheamericas.com

12 Sat., 1pm — BENEFIT DANCE: The Niños de San Antonio Aguas Calientes dance and play the marimba, flutes and bombas. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

12 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: Arturo Xicay features *A las Maduritas*. Q70. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

15 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: *Helping One Family at a Time* began in Sept. 2011 with an indigenous family in San Andrés Itzapa. The family wants to give their children a better life, but lacks the resources or know-how. Working with this family is a window to a whole new wonderful life. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

16 Wed., 7pm — ART: *Maya Hackers*, collective exposition by Guatemalan artists. Galería de Arte de la Alianza Francesa (tel: 2207-5757), 5a calle 10-55, z. 13, **Guatemala City**.

17 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Paleoecología de la Región de Lachúa: Implicaciones para la Historia Ambiental de Salinas de los Nueve Cerros*, por Carlos Avendaño. Q30/Q15 estudiantes con carnet. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

18 Fri., 7pm — ART: *Sentimientos* by Werner Vásquez. Centro Cultural Casa No'J (tel: 7761-4400), 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

18 Fri., 9am-8pm — CELEBRATION: *International Museum Day*, guided tours & different activities. Free. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

18 Fri., 8pm — (Spanish) THEATER: *Vida ente máquinas*, presentado por el colectivo Las Atrevidas. Q50. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

DATEBOOK

19 Thurs., 9am-12pm — (Spanish) TALLER: *Aves de Guatemala y el mundo: sus cantos, colores y formas*. Taller para niños a partir de 7 años y adultos con alma de niño. Q100. Precio especial a primeros registros. Para más información: Sofía, Mesa Nacional de Aviturismo, (tel: 2421-3761), aviturismo.guatemala@gmail.com 7a. av. 1-17, z. 4, Centro Cívico, **Guatemala City**.

20 Sun., 8am — SPORTS: *Carrera Arcoriris*, 5-km run/walk, benefits Fundación Ayúdame a Vivir, which helps kids with cancer. Antigua's Central Park. Q70 includes a T-shirt and a medal. Info: 5059-6460, **La Antigua**.

21 Mon. until 8pm — SPORTS: Final day of walk-in registration in Antigua for Atitlán Marathon 2012. Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo, **La Antigua**.

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

22 Tues., 6pm — PHOTO TOUR: *Antigua: Behind the Walls* with Elizabeth Bell. Enjoy a one-hour presentation of Antigua and its heritage through vintage and contemporary photographs collected over the past 30 years accompanied by Elizabeth Bell's expert narration. Q30 per person, tickets available at the presentation. (Only one presentation in May). Proceeds benefit educational programs in Antigua. Proyecto Cultural El Sitio, **La Antigua**.



25 Fri., until 6pm — SPORTS: Final day of walk-in registration in Panajachel for Atitlán Marathon 2012. Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo, **Panajachel, Lake Atitlán**.

26 Sat., 11am — (Spanish) LUDOTECA INFANTIL: Una vez al mes Mininos ofrece un espacio y juguetes pre-clasificados que estimularán al niño/a y a su familia a jugar. Propiciando entonces un encuentro entre padres, madres, niños y niñas a través del juego y facilitando el desarrollo de habilidades afectivas y sociales en los niños y niñas. Entrada libre. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, **La Antigua**.

26 Sat., 7pm — (Spanish) THEATER: *La Herencia de la Tula*, bajo la dirección de Nery Aguilar. Q50. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

26 Sat., 8am — SPORTS: Atitlán Marathon 2012 half-marathon race (see page 88), **Panajachel, Lake Atitlán**.

26 Sat. & Sun., 27, 9am — EXPOCAN PANAMERICANA 2012: Canine expo with over 350 dogs. International judges. Q10, kids under 10 years free. Parque de la Industria, 8a calle 2-33, z. 9, **Guatemala City**.

27 Sun., 7am — SPORTS: *Atitlán Marathon 2012 full marathon race*, **Panajachel, Lake Atitlán**.

28 Sat., 8pm — MUSIC: Dr. Sativo Warriorcandela features *Ya Cayó el "20" tour 2012*. Q70. El Sitio, 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

30 Wed., 9am — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *El jaguar con la lengua de fuera*, notas sobre algunos monumentos prehispanicos de las Tierras Altas y la Costa Sur, por Víctor Castillo. Q30/Q15 estudiantes con carnet. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

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31 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) **CONFERENCIA:** *La circulación del arte maya clásico, monumentos y figurillas*, por Christina Halperin. Q30/Q15 estudiantes con carnet. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Through Sat., 12th — ART: Sculptures by Arturo Ruano. Cocktail. Galería de Arte Andante, 8a av. 12-19, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.



ALL MONTH — ART: Featuring the *Galería Mesón Panza Verde's Private Art Collection* with work by various artists. Galería Mesón Panza Verde, 5 av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

Through May 13 — ART: *Guatemala: A Textural Muse*, a solo exhibition by North American artist Jan Ledbetter, presenting more than 15 water-media paintings. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124), 4a calle oriente #15, **La Antigua**.



Daily, 2pm & 4pm — MOVIES: Different movies every day. Las Palmas (tel: 7832-9734), 6a av. norte #14, **La Antigua**.

Saturdays 4pm — (Spanish) **CHILDREN'S MOVIES:** Cine infantil. Cooperación Española, (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte (between 3a & 4a calle), **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 6:30pm-8pm — (Spanish) **CURSO:** 6 sesiones. El Calendario Maya, por Oswaldo Chinchilla. Adultos Q720 y estudiantes con carné Q540. Tarifa única de parqueo Q30 por sesión. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896), **Guatemala City**.

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2pm — (English/Spanish) Individual players and pairs are eagerly welcomed to play duplicate bridge. Bridge lessons are also beginning. Call Barbara at 5195-7656, for details or to reserve a spot, **La Antigua**.

Wednesdays, 8pm — **IMPROVISATIONAL THEATER:** Improv Comedy. Q55, includes a beverage. Trovajazz (tel: 2334-1241), Vía 6, 3-55, z. 4, **Guatemala City**.

Wednesdays, 5pm (Spanish) **FILMS:** A different film every week. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte (between 3a & 4a calle), **La Antigua**.

Thursdays, 6pm — **FILMS:** Donation, Q15. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

2nd & 4th Thursday, 6:30pm — The Antigua Curry Club meets to enjoy delicious Indian food. Visit www.cernikovsky.com/curry.htm. A members-only club, limited memberships are still available. **La Antigua**.

PLAN AHEAD

June, Sat., 2 through July 2nd — ART: Convivir, Compartir en el Centro Histórico, as part of the XVIII Bienal de Arte Paiz. Collective expositions, including sculpture, installations, painting, photography, in different venues around Centro Histórico. See page 23 For more information, bienaldeartepaiz.org.gt (tel: 2464-4545), **Guatemala City**.



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—Spanish Proverb

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Human rights activists to be honored for work in Guatemala, Latin America

Two human rights defenders who have worked extensively in Guatemala and elsewhere in Latin America will be honored this month in New York with one of the largest human rights awards in the world.

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) and the Puffin Foundation have selected Fredy Peccerelli, executive director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, and Kate Doyle, senior analyst of U.S. policy in Latin America at the National Security Archive, to receive the second annual ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism.

“Both Doyle and Peccerelli are indefatigable defenders of human rights who have played a seminal role in the fight against impunity in Latin America,” said Sebastian Faber, ALBA chair.

A determined and creative researcher-activist, Doyle has spent 20 years working tirelessly with Latin American human rights organizations and truth commissions—in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Peru—to obtain the declassification of U.S. government archives in support of their investigations.

Peccerelli is an innovative forensic anthropologist whose work has been instrumental to the first-ever conviction of Guatemalan military forces for crimes against humanity. As founding director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, Peccerelli leads a team that, over the past 15 years, has exhumed hundreds of mass graves filled with victims of Guatemala’s civil war.

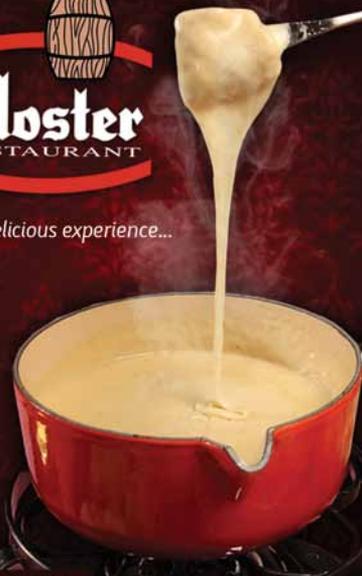
The award ceremony will take place **May 13** at the Museum of the City of New York.

More information at www.alba-valb.org.



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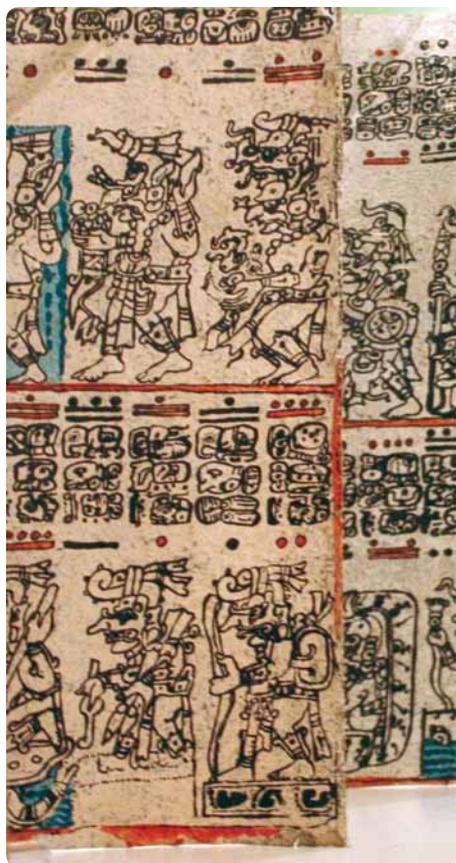


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Sometimes it's a dull ache in the hips or a "slippery," unstable feeling in the knees that gives you concern. Ibuprophen and other anti-inflammatories can work wonders to reduce discomfort. However, when the pain keeps you up at night, and it's difficult to rise from sitting, it is time to see the doctor.

ABOUT HIP

X-rays may show loss of the cartilage in the hip socket and a "bone-on-bone" appearance. Bone spurs and bone cysts are commonly seen on detailed diagnostic scans like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or computed tomography (CT) scans. The goal of hip replacement surgery is to relieve pain and increase the mobility and function of a damaged hip joint, and is usually considered only when other therapies, such as physical therapy and pain medications, have failed.

Minimally invasive hip replacement allows the surgeon to perform the hip replacement through one or two small incisions. Patients usually have less pain compared with traditional hip replacement surgery, and rehabilitation is faster. Total hip replacement, called total hip arthroplasty, is a common orthopedic procedure also; it involves remov-



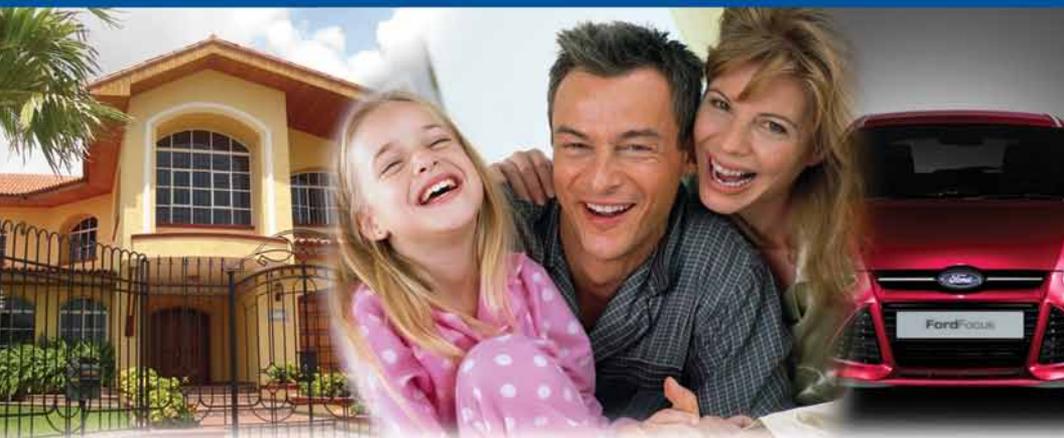
ing the head of the thighbone (femur) and replacing the ball-and-socket mechanism of the hip with artificial implants.

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In Guatemala, Dr. Guillermo Claverie is a leading figure in the field of orthopedics. He has over 25 years of experience and performs 500 total hip and knee replacements per year. Dr. Claverie has documented ...cont. page 52

Lori Shea is the founder of Guatemala Medical Travel (www.GuatemalaMedicalTravel.com); you can contact her directly: lori@guatemalamedicaltravel.com

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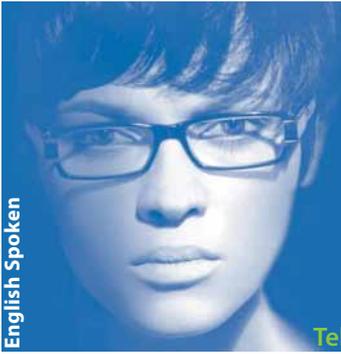
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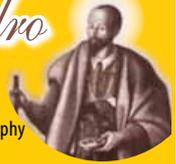
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The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness. —Honoré de Balzac

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Although the palace was built in 1939 and completed in 1942, it has an antique feel to it, which could be due to its eclectic architectural style, or the fact that it was modelled on historic buildings in the Spanish city of Salamanca. Despite the palace's European-looking exterior, its interior pays homage to Guatemala's Mayan roots: two large murals depict the fusion of Spanish and Mayan cultures—referencing Don Quixote and Tecún Umán.

Although Ubico commissioned the palace, the military dictator hardly ever used it, as he was forced to resign eight months after its completion. No president has ever lived in the grand space and most of the rooms are now used as offices by the Ministry of Sport and Culture. In the center of one of the main rooms, *la plaza mayor*, lies a spot called *kilometro cero*, from which the origin of all roads in the republic is calculated.

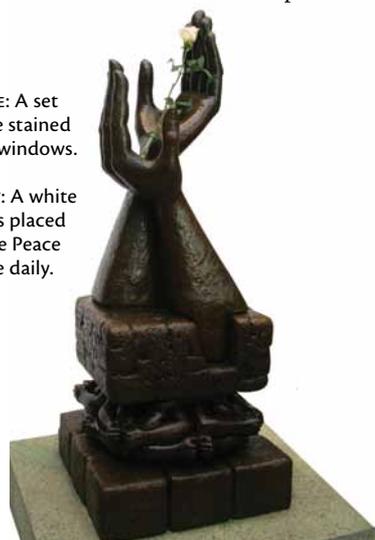
Famed for being an arrogant and paranoid leader, Ubico left his fingerprint on

each of the 718 door handles in the palace. He had 10 stained glass windows made and each one symbolizes a character trait—from peacefulness to a strong work ethic—that he believed Guatemalans should possess.

Free for Guatemalans to enter and Q40 for foreigners, El Palacio Nacional de la Cultura is well worth a visit if you happen to be passing through Zone 1. It is open every day with free, guided tours at half-hour intervals from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. 

ABOVE: A set of five stained glass windows.

RIGHT: A white rose is placed on the Peace statue daily.



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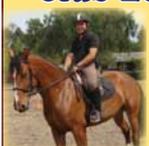
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Healthy Solutions cont. from page 38

high success rates with private patients from all around the world, and with local Guatemalans who benefit from low-cost surgeries through his charitable foundation, Fundaorto. The Guatemalan-American Foundation for Advanced Orthopedic Surgery was founded by Dr. Claverie and his wife in 1999.

Arthroscopy is a common surgical procedure in which a joint (arthro-) is viewed (-scopy) using a small camera. During the procedure, your orthopedic surgeon inserts the arthroscope (a small camera instrument about the size of a pencil) into your knee joint. The arthroscope sends the image to a high-definition television monitor so that your surgeon can see the structures of the knee in great detail. Arthroscopy is a very effective tool that allows your surgeon to feel, repair or remove damaged tissue.

In the prestigious and modern Multimedia Hospital in Guatemala City, Dr. Álvaro Colliá has specialized in traumatology, orthopedics and sports medicine for over 11 years. In his practice, he normally treats 300-350 cases of shoulder, hip and knee problems per month. Dr. Colliá performs about 20 total hip and knee replacements every month with nearly 100% successful results and patient satisfaction. Since 2010, Dr. Colliá has been researching both minimally invasive surgery methods and stem cell therapies in order to offer his patients the most cutting-edge medical treatments available.

The materials used in artificial joints vary, depending on the type of joint being replaced and how the joint needs to function.

Hip joints, for example, need to be sturdy and able to bear your body's weight. Knee joints need to be flexible as well as strong. In general, the components must be durable, flexible and able to function in the body without causing an immune system reaction. Replacements for hip and knee joints include portions made from metal, such as stainless steel, titanium or chrome and cobalt alloys. The patella or kneecap replacement is made of a strong, durable plastic called polyethylene. The zirconium implants are made of metal that has gone through a process that allows oxygen to absorb into the metal, creating a ceramic surface. These implants incorporate the benefits of a smooth surface with the benefits of a hard material, making it an ideal option for both hips and knees.

Artificial joints have improved greatly since they were first introduced around 40 years ago, and all the finest high-tech Biomet implants are imported to Guatemala direct from the manufacturer. There are new types of knee replacement parts that are highly flexible, allowing the knee to bend up to 155 degrees. The pieces are designed to fit perfectly together and to function as closely as possible to a natural joint. Special bone cement is used in some cases to hold static parts of the artificial joint in place.

While traditional implants last about 15 years, those made of these newer materials potentially can last up to 20 or 25 years. Guatemalan surgeons, with many years of global training, extensive practical experience and cutting-edge technical instrumentation, are striding gracefully and confidently into the future. 

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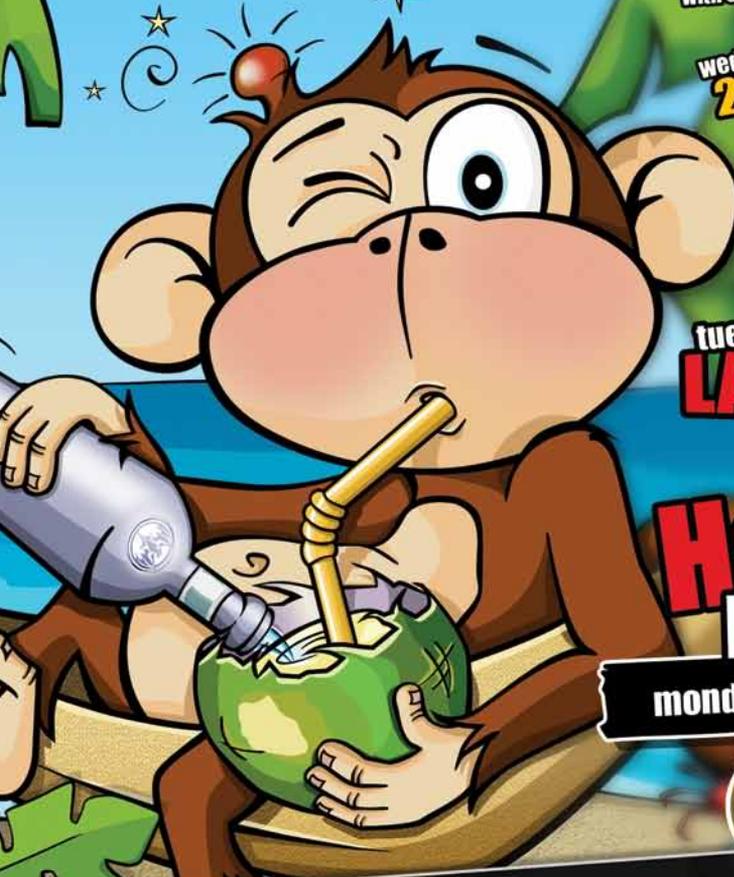
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The tranquility of Yaxhá Lagoon. Story on page 14 (THOR JANSON/WWW.BUSHMANOLLIE.COM)

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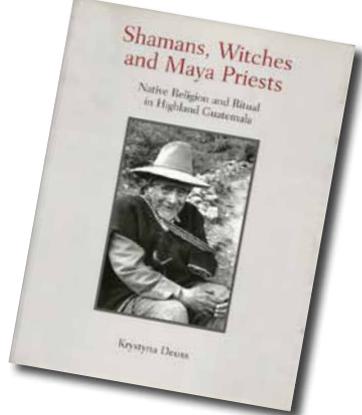


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Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests



As the end of the Mayan long count calendar, 2012 has received much recent media attention. Is it receiving the same degree of attention from today's Maya priests? An emphatic “no” is the answer from Krystyna Deuss, author of *Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests*.

Deuss has spent much of the past 30 years observing and befriending today's practitioners of Mayan traditions in the western highlands of Guatemala. “Traditionalists” is her term for these people, who spend large amounts of their time and material goods preserving the spiritual practices of their grandfathers, as they saw and remember these customs.

Deuss made her first trips to Guatemala during the late 1960s, following a post-graduate year of study in anthropology at the University of Vienna, Austria. During that time, her principal area of interest was traditional dress (*traje*). Her research into the history of *traje* brought her into contact with *cofradías* (religious brotherhoods) and Maya priests, and she attended their ceremonies, initially whenever they coincided with her trips to the area, and then on a more regular basis.

When Deuss realized that she was being allowed to participate in rituals no other

outsider had witnessed, she decided to leave a historical account of the religious rituals and the changes she observed in them from 1987 to 2002.

Although Deuss hopes that her book will stand as a historical record on which future researchers can build, it is her first person descriptions that make this book enchanting to read. Through her eyes, the reader meets the traditionalists as she meets them, observes their *costumbre* (Mayan religious ritual) as she observes it, and hears the conversations in which Deuss attempts to understand what she has witnessed. It is these descriptions that draw the reader into the lives of the people she describes.

Deuss first briefly visited Santa Eulalia in the mid-1970s to buy samples of *traje* worn at that time. In February 1985, with the worst of the civil war past, she returned to document changes in *traje*, and met Doña Ana, widow of a deceased Prayer-sayer (Maya priest), as she mentored her sons, Victor and Antonio, as they assumed the past role of their father. As Deuss made trips back to Santa Eulalia over time, Victor learned to speak Spanish, and a grandson worked in the United States, enabling the family to build a two-story house in the center of town. ...continued on following page

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Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests continued from previous page

The reader feels the magic that Deuss experienced as she participated in her first service marking the change of Prayersayers in the little village of Chimban. The service took place the night of Dec. 31, to mark the end of the old and the beginning of the new, and Deuss was first invited to participate in 1987. She describes that ceremony, in the dark, “with just the glow of the fire and candles lighting the faces of the assembled group.”

“It was a magical and memorable moment,” she recalls today.

Deuss makes a distinction between the customs of the traditionalists she observed, who follow the classic Mayan calendar of the Dresden Codex, and the calendar of the “New Age Mayas” as she calls “the young intellectuals who learn about Mayan traditions in a university class.” One of the many differences that she notes between these groups is the calendar they follow.

The “Mayan” calendar taught at the university level is that of the K’iche’, who originated in Mexico and conquered much of Guatemala prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Deuss feels that the K’iche’ presence may not have reached past Todos Santos Cuchumatán, to the area that she has researched. Travel there is difficult even today, and the area is often bitterly cold and covered by clouds. Deuss feels that the Mayan calendar used, and other aspects of the costumbre, may predate the K’iche’.

The long count calendar, due to end in December 2012, and begin again—much as 1999 ended a millennium and 2000 began

another millennium—is virtually unknown in the areas that Deuss has spent three decades studying.

Two calendars are used by the Maya practitioners of the western highlands, the 260-day Tzolkin and the 365-day Haab. The Haab, or solar calendar of 18 “months” of 20 named days, each with a Day Lord of various benign or malevolent characteristics, has a period of five extra days at its end. Spanish Catholic priests who described Mayan customs in the 16th century called these days “unlucky.” Today’s traditionalists still see these days as a “delicate” period when souls depart their bodies. At midnight of the last day, the Maya priest of some towns still goes to a holy place to recall the souls.

Deuss’ fear, as she ends her research, is that “political activists, who organize conferences of Maya priests and invite the press to photograph them sacrificing turkeys, often undermine true costumbre and spirituality Today’s Maya activists give courses in divining techniques and furnish their pupils with the K’iche’ version of the Tzolkin calendar, completely oblivious to the fact that in the northwestern Cuchumatanes an older system prevails.”

It is hoped that Krystyna Deuss and the research she shares in *Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests* will do much to stop the erosion of the costumbre, which has survived in the western highlands of Guatemala. 

Shamans, Witches and Maya Priests is available in La Antigua Guatemala at La Casa del Conde (5a av norte #4, Central Park); Colibrí, (4a calle oriente #3-B)

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“Ich bin ein Berliner!” —John F. Kennedy

What Kennedy meant to say during his 1963 speech at the Berlin Wall was, “Ich bin Berliner,” or “I am Berliner.” The unfortunate misuse or the article “ein” led him to identify himself as a pastry instead.

When you are dealing with legal, technical, health or any other important matters, it becomes necessary to make yourself understood perfectly to the party to whom you are trying to communicate those matters—whether that party is a medical doctor, an attorney, a dentist, a person with authority or simply someone you want sound advice from.

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A professional translator/interpreter is the person you need in such cases. To trust your health or your money to someone who does not know the nuances of the legal, medical or any other professional field is not sound, whether you are dealing with your health, your patrimony or with jelly doughnuts. —*Sergio Pinto*

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Pimenta dioica, allspice

PEPPER(S)

Piper species — “Pepper” (as in “salt & pepper”) and Chili “Peppers”

Our salt-and-pepper pepper is *Piper nigrum*, which originated in India. There are actually three completely different kinds of native plants in Guatemala named “pepper” (or *pimienta*): pepper leaf (flavoring from leaf, seed or flower stick), pepper vegetables and pepper spice (flavoring from seed or tea from leaf).

Of course the Classic Maya never used the word “pepper” or “pimiento,” the original Maya had their own nomenclature. It is the misunderstanding and confusion of the conquering Spanish (and one botanist) who dumped the name “pimienta” (from the black pepper of India) on all three totally

unrelated plants in Guatemala and Mexico.

The Classic Maya 1,000 years ago, and the modern Maya descendants today, still use spices: for food and for the deities. As well, allspice, (also referred to as *pimienta gorda*, *pimenta dioica*) is native to Mesoamerica; you will see it everywhere at Tikal or around Lake Yaxhá and in most mature forests in Alta Verapaz, Petén and Izabal. Allspice is one single spice; it is not a mixture of diverse plants. It was named *allspice* because its flavor brings to mind many different separate spices. The most common use in rural areas is to make tea from the leaves. ...continued on following page

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PEPPER(S) cont. from page 64

Chili peppers are part of the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*), which produces the edible tomato, potato, plus the several addictive tobacco species, and the rather dangerous nightshade plants. You can find diverse varieties of chili peppers in the markets of La Antigua and most cities around Guatemala. Ask for, and enjoy eating, chili chocolate.

Although I have been drinking tea from *pimienta gorda* since I was young, I did not know about *Piper auritum*, (Spanish name, *Hoja santa*) until a Universidad del Valle biology student, Daniela da'Costa, explained it to me. Actually it turns out we have one growing in our interior patio in the FLAAR office garden (as was identified by Priscila Sandoval, biologist graduating from USAC). *Piper auritum* was once a source of saffras flavoring for root beer. But the leaves of *P. auritum* have high contents in safrol, the active compound that is carcinogenic.



Allspice, pimienta gorda

Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth is director of FLAAR Reports (Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research). For a bibliography from this article and other information, you may contact Dr. Hellmuth and his staff by email: FrontDesk@FLAAR.org

web sites for *Piper* species

www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/Pipe_aur.html

www.rain-tree.com/matico.htm

www.tlahui.com/medic/medic29/hoja_santa.htm

www.maya-ethnobotany.org.

web sites for chili peppers:

www.g6csy.net/chile/var-p.html

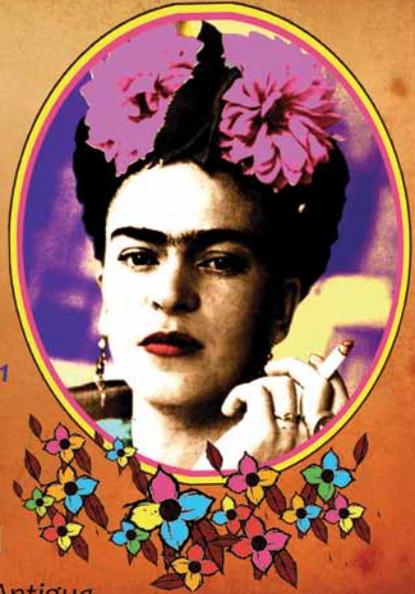
Interestingly, most of the *Piper* species are commonly used as native medicines throughout Mesoamerica. Plus, whether *Piper* is carcinogenic to humans is evidently debated.

So, although Christopher Columbus did not find a direct route to India for the first few years, since their voyages were funded to find a route for black pepper from India, they cleverly came back with at least “pepper.” So now you know why chili is called pepper. Now you know why *Piper auritum* is called pepper. We can't blame the word “allspice” on Christopher Columbus, but as long as we are discussing “pimienta” I thought I would include it as a comment: the scientific name is *Pimenta dioica*. 🍷

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Cruising crocodile, Yaxhá Lagoon



Crocodile skulls held by Petén jungle guide Marco Gross, and Gabriella Moretti, owner of Ecolodge El Sombrero in Yaxhá (www.ecolodgeelsombrero.com)



ABOVE AND BELOW: A couple of local residents



Yaxhá Lagoon cont. from page 15

and then surfacing again while violently splashing.

“When he saw the croc he raised his arm to defend himself and this was where the two-meter-long saurian first bit him, breaking his wrist. I dove into the lagoon and swam towards the man. By now the croc had taken him by the leg and was trying to dive. At the same time several workers had jumped into the hotel skiff and were feverishly paddling toward the man, who was fighting hard for his life. Finally, as we approached the croc gave up and swam off. We managed to get the badly injured man into the skiff.

“Fortunately, he was evacuated to a hospital in Guatemala City, and I am happy to report that they were able to save his leg. It still gives me shivers to remember how, for years, we all, including my young children, would swim in the lagoon without a second thought. Since the attack we never have gone back in.”

Park guards later in the day told me that none of them even wade into the water. Nevertheless, several years back a female tourist, they informed me, would swim way out into the lagoon every day, seemingly oblivious to the presence of the big crocs. The guards would look on with a mixture of dread and amazement.

After several weeks paddling all over the Yaxhá Lagoon I know that it is literally infested with crocs and that there are many big ones

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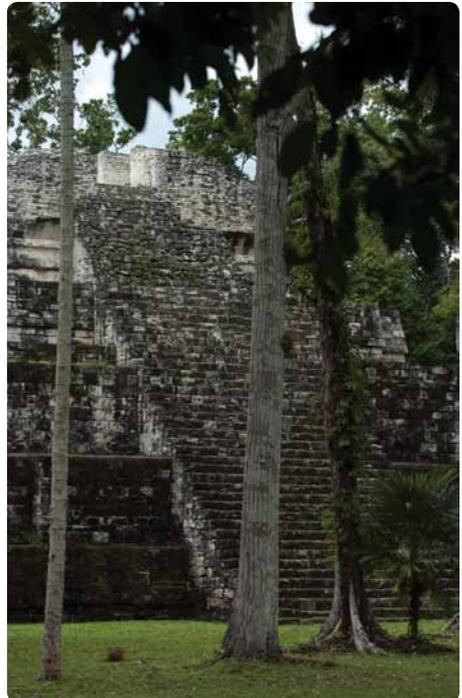
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in excess of three meters. You almost never see them. They are masters at being surreptitious. What looks like bubbles on the water surface are often croc eyes just emerging for a moment to get a better view—of you!

I discovered a hidden inlet formed by the high water, leading to an inundated cenote, a perfectly circular body of water with the jungle towering above. This, I found out, was the croc breeding area, and if I was quiet enough I would see literally dozens of baby crocs sunning themselves and playing around in the muck. 📍

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The Color of Butter

For a Germanic word with five of its six letters so harsh-sounding, “butter” is fairly pleasant in spoken English. Of course, in Spanish “*mantecquilla*” sounds prettier, but that’s true of most words in Romance languages. Maybe it’s the smooth, rich taste of butter on toast that we think of, or butter dripping from a hot ear of corn, that coaxes a smile when we say the word butter.

Or is it the color? Butter is a sunny, bright, warm color, with memories of happy days, children playing in a field, picking wild buttercups for a little bouquet. Ah, remember holding a buttercup under young friends’ chins to see if they like butter?

Or maybe it’s that flower itself? Formally, buttercups are ranunculus, *ranúnculo* in Spanish, from the Latin for “little frogs,” of all things. And there are over 600 species of ranunculus around the world, mostly growing wild from Svalbard at the top of the Earth to Tierra del Fuego near the bottom.

Only a few species of ranunculus are native to Central America, but hundreds of varieties have spread here, involuntarily carried by migrant birds or mixed in grain seeds. Some types have many dense petals on the blossoms, others a few buttery petals spreading out like captured fireworks. Some ranunculus flowers are as large as the *quetzal* coin, other species have tiny blossoms. All are pale to rich dark yellow, varying as butter does with the seasons.

Sure, ranunculus are poisonous to horses and cattle, but animals are put off by the bitter taste and don’t eat enough to get hurt. Neither do we. Buttercup-yellow is there for us to enjoy as we did when children, points of sunshine along pathways, or in shaded areas with enough moisture to keep ranunculus happy.

Ranunculus blossom year-round here, but this warm, sunny season with just enough rain makes them plentiful now. Watch for them—see how many bits of butter you can spot in Altiplano fields. 

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Stressed spelled backwards is desserts.
Coincidence? I think not!
—Martha Kiddle

You haven't had enough coffee until you can thread a sewing machine while it's running.
—Jeff Bezos



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ASK ELIZABETH

by Elizabeth Bell
AUTHOR/HISTORIAN

Who are some of Guatemala's most inspiring women?

With the recent passing of Guatemala literary giant Luz Méndez de la Vega (1919-2012), and with Mother's Day celebrated on Thursday, May 10th, it brought to mind a reflection of the most extraordinary women who have inspired me since I moved here in 1969.

These are women who are famous but also have the incredible quality of commanding attention as soon as they walk into the room—the “WOW” moment!

I met Dr. Méndez in 1972 at the University of San Carlos where she taught literature—an extremely attractive woman and soon becoming one of the foremost literary figures in Guatemala. Luz was the first woman to receive the Miguel Ángel Asturias National Literature Prize (1994), was a member of the Academia Guatemalteca de la Lengua and wrote many articles for the press defending the preservation of La Antigua Guatemala. I worked with her son, architect Rodolfo Asturias Méndez, one of the finest architectural restorers in the country, at the National Council for the Protection of La Antigua Guatemala. To him, she was “just” his mother.

Other women have inspired us throughout the years:

Rigoberta Menchú Tum—who definitely has a presence when she walks into the room—received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 “in recognition of her work for

social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation based on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples.” I was honored to meet her on various occasions, including with the Dalai Lama during his visit to Guatemala. “La doctora” also established a seat for the Mayas at the Guatemalan table of politics and social rights.

Helen Mack, president of Fundación Myrna Mack, which she and a group of Guatemalans founded in 1993 to modernize and democratize the Justice System in Guatemala, standing up for justice in Guatemala. Coming up on 20 years of relentless efforts, she provides us with a sense that we are able, as women, to pioneer extremely difficult tasks.

Ana María Klein, whom I am honored to call my friend. She has done remarkable work with Madres Angustiadas, founded to facilitate Guatemalan men, women and children in the topic of security and exercising one's rights and obligations in strengthening public institutions working in security and justice. I also admired her dedication in the 2011 Supreme Justice elections in Guatemala, a truly monumental task over the years. I also know her also as a wife and mom.

These women have contributed in an insurmountable way to improving the quality of life in Guatemala and inspire us to do better. Many are mothers. Many “mother” causes. Many do both. 



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Grown don't mean nothing to a mother.
 A child is a child. They get bigger, older,
 but grown? What's that suppose to mean? In
 my heart it don't mean a thing. —Toni Morrison

A mother is a person who seeing there are
 only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly
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 —Tenneva Jordan

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—H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

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Question: How can I tell if my dog food concentrate is of good quality? The labels are confusing.

Answer: High-quality dry foods should have a whole-meat source as one of the first two ingredients (for example, chicken or chicken meal). If a list of ingredients begins with whole chicken, followed by three or more grains and no other meat proteins, it's likely that the food contains way more grain than meat. There is no way to know for sure, however, since the makers are not required to specify the amounts or percentages of each ingredient. Ideally, whole, unprocessed grains and vegetables will be used since their nutrients have a better chance of surviving the food-making process.

High-quality food should have the minimum of food fragments. Fragments are lower-cost byproducts of another food manufacturing process, such as Brewer's rice, which is a waste product of the alcohol industry. If the list of ingredients begins with lamb, rice flour, rice bran, Brewer's rice, the product is mostly rice even though lamb heads the list (whole meat has water weight and the ingredients must by law be listed by weight).

High-quality foods should not contain generic fats or proteins. "Animal fat," for example, can be just about anything, including recycled grease from restaurants. It would be preferable to see "beef fat" or "chicken fat."

The food should **not** contain artificial preservatives, such as BHA, BHT or Ethoxyquin, nor artificial colors.

Your pet really doesn't care what color his food is, and a lifetime of exposure to chemical dyes is not necessary. Sweeteners are not necessary (but dogs do like them). They are usually used to enhance the taste of low-quality food.

How beautifully everything is arranged by Nature; as soon as a child enters the world, it finds a mother ready to take care of it. —Jules Michelet

PRESS RELEASE

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Do you have challenges with frizz? Do you need help with out of control curl? Or are you looking to reduce blow-dry/styling time by 50%? Alter your hair's texture, **WITHOUT DAMAGES!** RUSK presents to you the new Deepshine Smooth, Advanced Marine Therapy: Keratin Smoothing System.

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When I was a Boy Scout, we played a game when new Scouts joined the troop. We lined up chairs in a pattern, creating an obstacle course through which the new Scouts, blindfolded, were supposed to maneuver. The scoutmaster gave them a few moments to study the pattern before our adventure began. But as soon as the victims were blindfolded, the rest of us quietly removed the chairs. I think life is like this game. Perhaps we spend our lives avoiding obstacles we have created for ourselves and in reality exist only in our minds. We're afraid to apply for that job, take violin lessons, learn a foreign language, call an old friend, write our congressman—whatever it is that we would really like to do but don't because of personal obstacles. Don't avoid any chairs until you run smack into one. And if you do, at least you'll have a place to sit down. —Pierce Vincent Eckhart



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Alternative Energy: the New Normal

Industrialized countries enjoy a wide variety of technology and conveniences. From washing machines to microwaves, we have grown dependent upon our appliances. We depend upon petroleum-based transportation and consume tons of plastics each year.

Entire infrastructures, especially food production and delivery industries, are based upon petroleum products. A large portion of household electricity depends upon petroleum. Rising prices for food and transportation are a sign of the challenge that await developed societies as we deplete global fuel reserves. Like it or not, the future is demanding that we use alternative energy.

Guatemala offers its residents many hidden benefits. The climate offers the gift of releasing the need for heat or air conditioning, and the weather supports vibrant agriculture. Guatemala offers a natural congeniality; it is easier to connect with nature here as the windows are always open! It is the ideal environment to live buoyantly without dependence upon out-paced infrastructures.

When we moved here we knew it was time to take the plunge and live off grid. We

found a true jewel in a tranquil area of Lake Atitlán and developed it with the goal of disturbing nothing. The property is remote and was without any ties to the grid; we had to go off grid completely. It was an easy decision. We were starting fresh and evaluated our choices from both a spiritual lifestyle and a business perspective.

Once a solar system is installed, a lifestyle choice has been made. Your investment means that you are free from monthly charges, power spikes and unexpected power outages. Living off grid has other amazing advantages including tranquility, independence and a greater sense of security.

There are many subtle benefits from this decision. Sustainability demands self-responsibility. By un-plugging from unconscious electrical use, one gains a respect from the electrical consumption required to sustain our modern life.

For example, building a solar system requires that one make a list of every electrical device you use in your home. From light bulbs to hair dryers, refrigerator to computers, you must identify the amount of power required for every electrical device



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you use. This use analysis helps you decide how many solar panels are needed.

By taking inventory of your power consumption, you stand face to face with the cost of your life and the values and choices that are significant to you. It demands that you become responsible for every purchase you make.

With a review of the electrical devices you use and an estimate of how many hours per week you use them, your needs are determined. From this review one can decide the number of solar panels, batteries and other devices needed to power your life. We found that the review helped us identify unneeded appliances. We no longer ...continued page 98



A crusader in costume for the Christians and Moors dance.



The new fair queen addresses visiting queens who will form her cortege.

Santa Cruz la Laguna cont. from page 18

says Dave Ratcliffe, an unofficial town historian and proprietor of Iguana Perdida resort. “Being from the outside world, it was suddenly the rage. Years later, it’s still a big deal.”

The two districts are linked by a road that, by its length and steepness, separates upper from lower as much as it joins them.

It is no walk but a hike, and no ordinary hike at that. Lake Atitlán fills its vista, and those on the road at dusk can watch spectacular sunsets give way to the lighted clusters of Atitlán’s other and far-flung towns. Feria season lends a unique enhancement to this scenery, infecting everyone present with the unity seen among employees working together on a holiday. There is a sense that, for a few days, everything is different.

Since the event is a “county fair” in a county with no roads other than the twisted umbilical linking Santa Cruzes two unequal personalities, it is a moment when rural *cruceños* “go to town.” Many go farther still, taking the boat into Panajachel for annual shopping and browsing. This is as close as some ever come to Guatemala City or Quetzaltenango.

The vetting for fair queen begins in April and culminates on **May 8** with the investiture of the winner. Other highland queens, attired in dazzling finery and headdresses, come to assist with the coronation.

“But these poor girls arrive in the late afternoon the day before,” says Ratcliffe, “when the *xocomil* has whipped up the lake. And most have never been on a boat.” Some of the queens are seasick by landfall.

Santa Cruz, like Guatemala as a whole, is today largely Protestant. But the pageantry of Guatemala’s Catholic heritage survives here.

“Santa Cruz has five *evangélico* churches,” notes Ratcliffe, “and a single Catholic one. But the traditional pomp endures. There’s not one parade, but two—one religious, one all-inclusive.”

The latter, the town’s premier social event, takes place on **May 9**. It resembles parades in other towns in that the marchers equal or exceed the spectators. Schools send their whole student body, and the city officials and the *cofradía* (town elders) are feted. Entire church congregations fold themselves in. But this parade snakes from lower to upper Santa Cruz—no small feat for ...continued page 94



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Any mother could perform the jobs of several
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You can fool some of the people some of the time,
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Only those who will risk going too far can possibly
find out how far one can go. —T.S. Eliot

Thought is the wind, knowledge the sail, and
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Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending. —Carl Bard

Success is 10% inspiration,
90% last-minute changes. —Ted Reiger

We use 10% of our brains. Imagine how much we could accomplish if we used the other 60%. —Ellen Degeneres

Life is full of obstacle illusions.
—Grant Frazier

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Lap at the Lake

Lakeside run is Guatemala's first non-profit marathon

Marathons are not new to Guatemala, and especially not to Panajachel, where the nation's first foot race originated in 1958 as an eight-kilometer uphill slog. Enthusiasm was such that runners too poor to own shoes ran barefoot. A statue in Panajachel commemorates this early race, which soon became a footrace from Pana to Guatemala City.

Panajachel hosts another running "first" in late May. The Atitlán Marathon is not Guatemala's first true marathon—today there are four others—but it is the first that is wholly non-profit. All proceeds will support the one cause uniting every sector in the Atitlán Basin: the conservation of Lake Atitlán.

You cannot find a run anywhere with a more spectacular venue.

The event includes both a full marathon (42 kilometers) and a half-marathon. Other scheduled activities are a kids run, a "fun run" for adults, a bike race, a *cayuco* (native canoe) race, coffee tours, weaving and *arte naif* painting exhibitions, photo hikes around the lake rim and a concert blending contemporary Latin jazz and pre-Columbian music.

The Atitlán Basin's resident attractions include Guatemala's finest botanical garden (at Hotel Atitlán), a soy foods factory and



Central America's only marine archaeology museum (at Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo). And Atitlán Basin is home to great boating, paragliding, sport fishing, nightlife and international cuisine.

Altitude enhances the challenge, the half-marathon straddles the lakeshore, which is a mile high. But the full marathon ascends another 2,000 feet; the exact profile and route can be seen at the event website. But volunteers will be liberally stationed to provide water, electrolyte replenishment and first aid—and applause.

Special certificates will be awarded to "ultra-runners," participants completing both the full and half marathon over a two-day period. The marathon committee has also obtained discounts and preferential treatment from airlines for international registrants.

Runners from around the world are already signing up, but the organizers are also seeking local runners and volunteers.

The Atitlán Marathon and its associated events are scheduled from Friday, **May 25**, to Friday, June 1. Information is available at 7762-2326 and at www.atitlanmarathon.com, which has details about registration, the program of events, sponsorships and maps and profiles of the routes. 



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Nothing is more conducive to peace of mind than not having any opinion at all. —G.C. Lichtenberg

At a certain age some people's minds close up; they live on their intellectual fat. —William Lyon Phelps



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Traditional dance before announcing the new fair queen

Santa Cruz la Laguna from page 84

for adolescent tuba players at high altitude. The marimbas come out this day and are played continually and ambiently for three days.

The other parade follows on **May 10**, the principal day. A solemn procession honors the Virgin Mary and the town patron, St. Helena of the Cross (Santa Elena de la Cruz), and their statues are marched on litters around upper Santa Cruz. No relics of Helena—bones, garment fragments, etc.—are held in the church vaults, but locals still petition her for miracles.

Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor of Rome, is the protagonist of Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Helena*. The story records that she had brushes with martyrdom but died peacefully at 80. Hollywood's portrayal of her in the compelling 1962 *Constantine and the Cross* alludes to her discovery of the cross of Christ. According to tradition, she went to Jerusalem in search of it; once there, she was presented with three candidates. She directed an ailing woman to touch these, and nothing happened with the first two crosses. But when the woman was cured on touching the third one, Helena pro-

claimed it the true cross. She then went on to uncover the crucifixion nails and, in fact, is today considered the patron of discovery itself. The Santa Cruz procession commemorates her own finds—17 centuries and a hemisphere away.

The fair's climax, also on **May 10**, sees the emergence of masked horse dancers and wild *toritos*. These “bulls” are men running every which way, almost blindly, with their head and torso in a crate studded with rockets that go off as they charge. Screaming spectators part before them like schools of fish fleeing predators. *Toritos* have disappeared from most Guatemalan ferias, but they live on in cloistered Santa Cruz.

“It's worth seeing,” Ratcliffe says. “But it's insanely dangerous. Something best enjoyed from some distance. The women, at least, often plan their cover before it starts.”

The traditional boozing is blunted with a gloppy dish called *pulique*, a blend of chicken broth, corn *masa* and *achiote*, a spicy, red-orange clay made from crushed seeds. Card tables display traditional sweets: candied figs, macaroons, confections of guava, pumpkin seeds or peanuts, homemade mints and more.

Things begin winding down after the town's name is emblazoned on the church campanile.

“And then it's time to start planning for next year,” says Ratcliffe.

Outsiders wishing to experience the fair may lodge in Panajachel or in Santa Cruz itself. The boats disembark from Pana's first dock, Muelle Tzanjuyú. ❀



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If you don't know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else. —Lawrence J. Peter



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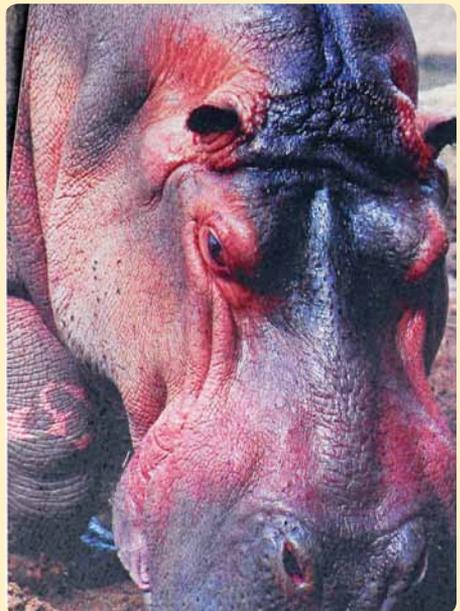
2nd PLACE: Isabela Verdugo Sinibaldi
(4to primaria) ▼



Here are the **Colegio Valle Verde** photo contest winners from the elementary school.
Congratulations to all 55 entries.

◀ 1st PLACE: Isabella Florido Plihal
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3rd PLACE: Mariana Andicoechea Bellamy (2do primaria) ▼





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If a man walks in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer. But if he spends his days as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making the earth bald before her time, he is deemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. —Henry David Thoreau

Sometimes the path you're on is not as important as the direction you're heading. —Kevin Smith

Alternative Energy cont. from page 83

own a microwave or a TV. The internet provides enough information and distraction for anyone.

Living with the power of the sun we gave up nothing. We have all the technologies we enjoy, ample lighting, kitchen appliances, an elegant full-service spa and even a Jacuzzi!

Alternative energy such as solar panels and windmills are no longer cutting edge. The true cutting edge includes perpetual motion and zero-point energy devices, which will appear on the scene as society changes. We look forward to integrating them here in Guatemala.

Solar power depends upon sunlight, and Guatemala has plenty of sunny days. Even in the rainy season, it is seldom cloudy more than half a day. Prices for panels have been dropping every year, and the system we created in 2009 can be re-created today for around a third less...and we are powering five *casitas*, a community center and a spa! Your one-time investment prepaays for many years of electrical use and eliminates all uncertainty for your future.

The impact of decades-long production and consumption can be seen throughout modern societies. The clock is ticking and it is time for a new normal. Are you ready to unplug from unconscious consumption? Perhaps it is time to get acquainted with alternative energy and while you are here in Guatemala drop by Lake Atitlán and say hello, we'd love to show you how comfortable off-grid living and vacationing can be. ☺

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Between the great things we cannot do and the small things we will not do, the danger is that we shall do nothing. —Adolph Monod

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—Tom Stoppard

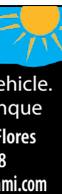
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—Charles Caleb Colton

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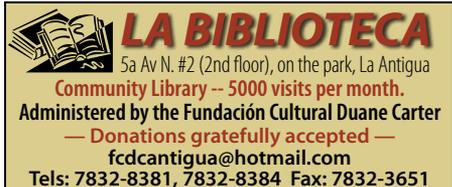
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• LA ANTIGUA: 5a av. sur #6, interior 1, Restaurante Monoloco,
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info@immigrationguate.com / www.immigrationguate.com

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www.antiguais.org

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Condensed milk is wonderful. I don't see how they can get a cow to sit down on those little cans.

—Fred Allen

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—Dan Quayle

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1 Caballería = 45.12 hectares	1 Manzana = 10,000 vr ²
1 Caballería = 64 manzanas	1 Manzana = 6,988 mt ²
.....	1 Manzana = 1.7 acres
1 Hectare = 10,000 mt ²
1 Hectare = 2.471 acres	1 mt ² = 10.764 ft ²
1 Hectare = 1.43 manzanas	1 mt ² = 1.431 vr ²
.....
1 Acre = 43,560 ft ²	1 Vara = 32.9 inches
1 Acre = .4047 hectare	1 Yard = 36 inches (3ft)
1 Acre = 4047 mt ²	1 Meter = 39.37 inches
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Note: the precise size of a vara depends on which source you use!



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The mothers of boys work son-up to son-down.
—Author unknown

If evolution really works, how come mothers
only have two hands? —Milton Berle

Mother—that was the bank where we deposited
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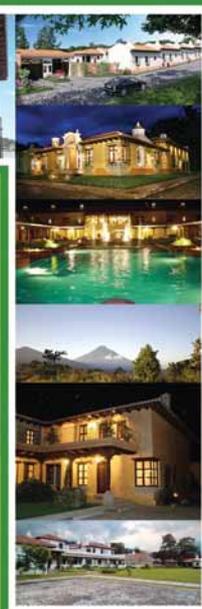


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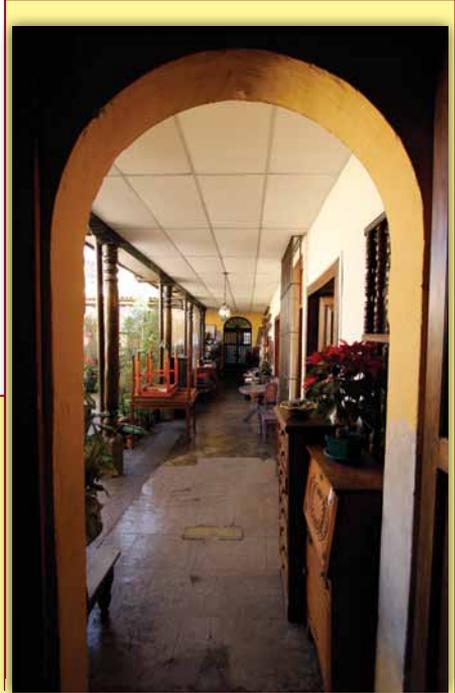
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Most of all the other beautiful things in life come by twos and threes, by dozens and hundreds. Plenty of roses, stars, sunsets, rainbows, brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins, comrades and friends - but only one mother in the whole world.

—Kate Douglas Wiggin

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7832-4131

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Guatemala City

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A mom forgives us all our faults,
not to mention one or two we
don't even have. —Robert Brault

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