New Bike Path, Less Parking In San Jose

And the taxi drivers aren’t happy about it. But since when do we care about the happiness of the taxi robbers?

BY CALEB HOOGLAND

Drive along the hotel zone in San Jose and you might notice something: More cyclists. San Jose residents have been asking for a safe bike lane for years, hoping for something similar to the malecon (concrete boardwalk) that runs along the shoreline in La Paz. San Jose finally obliged and tasked Fonatur with the project. The new bike path, which is now officially open, cost $550,000 USD.

The plans Fonatur used for the project were given to them by IMPLAN (the city’s planning and development department), like most city projects. However, Fonatur tells us the plans they were given were much more extensive than what they were expecting, so they didn’t follow them very closely (plans are really just suggestions, right?). Fonatur recently repaved the entire hotel zone, so they decided to put in the bike path at the same time.

The bike path is approximately three miles long and starts at Las Mananitas resort (in front of the Hyatt Place), heads all the way to the Holiday Inn, and then up Boulevard Mijares towards downtown San Jose, stopping one... CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

A Very Trashy Article

Burning garbage is not the answer

BY WILL RECYCLE

Expats who have been here for a while, or anybody that’s spent some time in a third world country, know that burning trash is just part of how things are done in certain parts of the world. This is not an ideal solution. The garbage we throw away can be toxic – mostly due to plastics – making the smoke created by burning this garbage toxic as well. And as communities grow, what started as a small dump site can quickly turn into an unmanageable pile of trash that gets burned on a regular basis. CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
This place is littered with foreigners

by David Flores

Estate Sale, East Cape, Buenavista

4,400 sf, 5 bedrooms, 4 baths, office, maid’s quarters, $795,000 USD. Cash sale, Realtor cooperation. lizzieart@sti.net, 001.559.281.7956

Open house, Saturday’s Feb 10 and 17th, 12 – 4 pm

February 19th, 2018

Que Pasa in Cabo?

This place is littered with foreigners Timeshare sales rooms say they hire foreigners because 95% of their customers come from the United States and, the theory goes, these visitors trust their own kind more. Ha! They’re the worst thieves.

According to immigration officials there are about 60,000 foreigners living in Southern Baja. 40% of those have permanent residency, but many more are just working under the radar. 90% of local foreigners are American and 10% Canadian.

One reporter for a local Mexican newspaper believes that 15% to 20% of managers of the 120 hotels in Los Cabos are from the United States, and most of those have jumped through the hoops to work here legally.

The official word is they are hired because they know what the guests want, since the guests are foreign. But, there is also the reality that they usually have a better education.

Immigration says they get about 30 visa applications for work, or to acquire temporary or permanent residence, every day.

Are you ready for some football? In May, the Baja Bowl Fest will come to Los Cabos for the first time. The Baja Bowl Fest is an annual event meant to develop American football in Mexico. The Intercalifornias Youth Athletic Association and the Liga Juvenil de Futbol Americano have joined forces to host the event. For information, visit www.bajabowlfest.com.

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Ho hum Of tourists visiting from Arizona, California, New York, Texas and Wisconsin, none had heard of the State Department's advisory saying Mexico is a bad place to go.

For Kristen and Matt Olmschenk, a couple who traveled from Phoenix to get married in Los Cabos, the advisory was a surprise.

"Though that might be true, I've never felt safer in my entire life," Matt Olmschenk said. Kirsten Olmschenk added: "We had 50 guests come. People didn't shy away from coming."

So why are we obsessing about our bad press? Obviously, nobody reads. Or maybe they do read about our druggie problems, but they're toughened warriors from Chicago.

Can we believe this? One of two priests were gunned down in a road ambush last week. One had a picture of himself on social media the previous week holding an assault rifle and standing next to him were men in ski masks. As if that weren't bad enough on the priest behavior scale, the two priests were coming home from a pretty wild party with various drug gangs in attendance.

Can we stand one more disappointment? There were two senoritas in the car with the priests!

Bishop Salvador Rangel, who oversees the diocese where Muniz was assigned, called the photo "an indiscretion."

More taxpayers Five years after key reforms were put into place, the nation's formal economy is beginning to grow. In the first half of 2017, a record number of workers joined Mexico's formal economy and were registered with the Mexican Social Security Institute. The uptick of 517,000 workers marks a 17 percent increase from last year, the biggest jump in two decades.

This is important because it shows people working under the table are starting to crawl out from under there and are paying their taxes. That means they're getting their social security, their housing credits, their free child care, free health care, and numerous other benefits.

And they are mostly free benefits because taxes are very low for those making very little.

Pennies from heaven Remittances were at an all time high in 2017. That's the money sent home by Mexicans working abroad, mostly in the United States, sent US $28.771 billion to Mexico, an increase of 6.6%, according to the Bank of Mexico. The average remittance amount was $308.

Several factors influenced the increase in remittances, including Trump's immigration rhetoric, (people are afraid of getting deported without their money), the peso's decline in value, and high employment in the United States.

This explains why the Mexican government does not discourage its people from crossing the border. That money is important to Mexico, right up there with tourism and now beating out oil money.

Nimby's go home Those are people who say, not in my backyard. They are objecting...
It’s been said that the greatness of a nation could be judged by the way its animals are treated, a thought that doesn’t reflect well on Mexico. But while a collective cultural indifference toward animals exists here now, one man is on a mission to do what he can to motivate a change of attitude, and ultimately, of heart.

The Baja Equine Vet in San Jose, owned and run by Dr. Joshua Hyswick Estevez, does whatever possible to give care to any and all animals. Although, first and foremost, the facility is for the care and rehabilitation of horses and other four legged creatures - horses, cows, sheep, etc. - their most unexpected and interesting patients have two legs, or even none at all.

“I don’t think there is any kind of animal I wouldn’t care for,” Dr. Estevez says, having worked with a badger, raccoon, armadillo, owl and even a rat. Last year, he rehabilitated and assisted with a surgery on a rooster that was left to die on the side of the road after being run over by a tractor. Several years ago, he cared for a goat, amputating his leg after losing blood flow to his extremities from exposure. And he currently has a fish with a tumor in his charge, giving daily care to shrink the mass.

“It’s important to remember that the quality of life supersedes the length, and that every animal, no matter how short their life span may be, is valuable in nature,” he says, giving an opinion that isn’t necessarily popular in the Mexican way of life.

Several times a month, Dr. Estevez ventures out with his mobile clinic, dragging his trailer all over Baja Sur, from La Paz to Loreto. Typically, he’s called out to ranches to look after a large animal, most often horses or cattle. But all too often, his visits become something of a Doolittle project.

When Dr. Estevez and his mobile clinic arrives, word spreads quickly, and ranchers tell their neighbors from all around to visit with whatever sick animal they might have. Soon, the masses arrive with pets in tow, hoping for a checkup from the man who some refer to as the “Animal Whisperer of the Baja.” Dr. Estevez extends his trips in each town by three to four days to offer care, typically working on a pro bono basis or in exchange for meals and a place to stay.

“The culture is such that, if ongoing treatment is recommended for an animal, it often won’t be given,” he says. Dr. Estevez stays on to offer continual care.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
You Want Bull Fights With That Food?

Local restaurant is owned by famous bullfighter

BY SUSAN WOOD

Pablo Velez owns a restaurant in San Jose, but in his youth he was a bullfighter known all over Mexico.

“I made the decision at the age of 12 that I wanted to be a bullfighter,” he tells us. “After four years fighting in different type of arenas and visiting beautiful great haciendas where I lived the magic of “La Fiesta Brava” as we call the art of bullfights, I met a business man who helped me become a top bullfighter. He owned a chain of good restaurants in Mexico City, and one day he introduced me to the business. That is when I found my second passion: Gastronomy.”

Lucky for us, Pablo ended up in San Jose. El Matador restaurant is a compilation of his experiences in many restaurants in Mexico City, Cancun, Ixtapa, Zihuatanejo and now here.

He tells us, “My taste for cuisine is not casual. I wear the chef jacket with dignity like a bullfighter wears the suit of lights, to create art for those who come together to enjoy life.”

The sophisticated menu includes whole lobster steamed in white wine, sea bass with shallots, herbs and capers, and scaloppini marsala with entrees starting at about $25. The wine list is extensive with prices from $45.

“The food is outstanding, so the company that comes with it makes this an outstanding choice. Pablo is usually there, telling us his matador stories. Honestly, have you ever had a chance to talk to a real matador? You can ask him any questions about the “fiesta brava”, but he’s better left to tell us the stories that are on block short of downtown. There’s a place to park your bicycle so you can walk around downtown.

Another bike route goes from the hotel zone and circles the La Comer (formerly Mega) grocery store before ending at the Vidanta Golf Course on Highway 1. The lane runs along the right side of the road parallel to the curb and is for two-way bicycle traffic with a centerline down the middle. However, mind the icons, those pictures of bicycles on the path. It routes traffic on the left, like in England, not on the right like in the US and Canada. A series of tall cones separate the bike lanes from the street. There are a few places along the route to park your bike, but you will need to bring your own lock.

While cyclists are happy to finally have their bike path, others aren’t as thrilled with the new addition, for one main reason: the parking spaces it took out along the entire hotel zone. If you had a hard time finding parking before, it’s even worse now. There are only a handful of spots where you can legally park. There is no parking whatsoever on one side of the road thanks to the new bike path. And nearly all the parking on the other side has been converted to taxi parking to accommodate the taxis that lost their parking to the bike path.

But the relocation of the taxis and bus stops hasn’t deterred the taxi and bus drivers, who now just stop in the middle of the road to pick up passengers. Maybe it’s better to cause an accident than to lose a customer.

The short answer: Plenty

Spa Cielo has for all of its 12 years in San Jose, been forward thinking in cutting edge preservation of youth and good looks. But now owner/manager Cathy Dammann is branching into the use of recent developments in DNA technology to guide us into being as healthy and feeling as good as she has made us look.

She can guide you into how to run your DNA, and the doctor who heads her program, Dr. Joseph Dib, reviews your entire DNA report with you, interpreting it for you so you know what you’ve got cooking in your genes.

But the value in knowing your DNA is, oftentimes the doctor can get into a gene that has run amuck compensate for it. It is a little scary to peek into the future and see your potentially gravely ill self, but wouldn’t it be worth that fright if it can be fixed? Or even if it can’t be fixed today, to know that technology is coming at us so fast, that it will probably be fixable in a few years, and that you will watch for that development? You owe it to yourself to run your DNA now. Your future self, and your loved ones, will thank you.

Cathy Dammann is a Medical Aesthetics Practitioner and has certifications in Aesthetics, and Light and Laser Therapies. She is a member of the International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine and the recent recipient of the 2012 “Successful Women of the Baja” by Baja Traveler Magazine. She has made numerous appearances on talk shows including Oprah. Spa Cielo’s physicians and staff are trained and certified in United States and Mexico and are bilingual. Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center holds a five star rating and received the “2013 Award of Excellence” from Trip Advisor and has the experience you look for in a laser medical spa, with 10 years in Los Cabos area, 14,000 patients and over 70,000 procedures performed, Spa Cielo is your answer to skin and body rejuvenation.

Call Cathy Dammann at Spa Cielo in San Jose. 624 105 2209. Go to www.spa-cielo-cabo.com

Rated with five stars on
plans to do is have Alma Perez, the sub-delegate from Pescadero, contact the necessary officials to set up a community meeting where residents can voice their concerns and request an official landfill for the communities. Education and community outreach will also be a main focus for the group, as well as starting initiatives to reduce the amount of plastic that gets thrown away.

You can find more information on trash and recycling options in the Todos Santos and Pescadero areas, and learn about future meetings by joining the Facebook group (just search for Trash Problems Todos Santos/Pescadero). Maybe these folks should talk to those living in the Zacatitos area, because they’ve been facing the same problem for years. They too, tried to get the government to do something, and they failed. The problem is, it is very, very difficult to snuff out a dump fire. A dump fire will smolder literally for years, and it takes special knowledge and equipment to extinguish.

A VERY TRASHY ARTICLE... continued from page 1

That’s what has happened in the Todos Santos/Pescadero area. The dump is located between these two towns, and the smoke billows in a volcanic-like cloud almost daily, especially during the winter tourist season.

There is an area designated for a landfill, located about four miles east of the highway, down an unpaved, washboard road. It’s basically just a large, dug out pit, but there is a little guardhouse that indicates it’s supposed to be something official. What’s missing is any guidance for the locals as to where exactly they should be dumping their trash. Maybe it’s not their fault, but they’re not going anywhere near the pit. Maybe the garbage trucks missed a turn, and everybody followed.

The only empty desert ground is in the middle of that pit and you can’t get to it because everybody is dumping their trash underneath surrounding cacti in all four directions, like some kind of religious ritual.

Also missing is the necessary heavy equipment needed to turn a dump into a landfill. Compacting garbage with a bulldozer significantly reduces its volume, and then covering it with dirt gives you a manageable way of dealing with a lot of trash. But, things being as they are here, not everything that’s needed is available, so the garbage gets burned even though it’s illegal in Mexico. Also, decomposing garbage frequently bursts into fire all by itself.

Local expats are fed up with the whole situation and have started a grassroots movement to change it. They’ve created a Facebook group called Trash Problems Todos Santos/Pescadero, and 20 or so residents recently met to discuss the issue and what they’re going to do about it.

One of the first things the group
Society of Todos Santos

Featured on the tour are 17 homes, five hotels/inns, two city government buildings, the Mission church and a sugar cane processing plant. Program books are available in English and Spanish and bilingual guides will be at each site. You drive yourself around using the map you get upon payment.

A new addition to the tour this year is the find the saints challenge; see if you can spot the statues of saints that are perched in niches of exterior of buildings around town. Find and mark all of them on a map and you’ll be entered into a drawing for by local artist Erick Ochoa. That’s kinda like find Santiago the cat in this rag, but we don’t pay rewards. We have standards. Ok, so we’re cheap.

Also new this year, several restaurants will offer discounts on breakfast and lunch to wristband holders. Tickets will be on sale at the Cultural Center on the day of event for $20 USD or 300 pesos. For more information, visit www.palapasociety.org.

How can we say no to this? Well, unless the only way you like your cheese is in grilled cheese sandwiches, like our boss. The 6th annual Wine and Cheese Festival will take place this year from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 10 pm at the Sheraton Grande Los Cabos, Hacienda Del Mar.

This festival is a favorite among locals, as it features many different wines and a wide variety of cheeses. The cost per person is about $53 with tax and tips included. For information and tickets, call 624-145-8000 or email hacienda.delmar@sheraton.com.

Film fest coming up

The annual Todos Santos Film Festival will take place March 7 to 11, featuring some of the best films from Mexico, Spain and Latin America. You better be bilingual or ready to read some subtitles, but reading them is worth it. The event benefits the local Todos Santos film school. For information, visit www.todos-santoscine.org.

Costco sells gas? Yes, in the real world, and that service is coming to Cabo soon. The store has already filed a request for a permit with the city. Costco fuel will come with an additive approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Bonus: Costco members will get special promotions. This was almost inevitable. Pemex no longer holds a monopoly on gas stations.

New cops trained

30 new cops are being trained at the state’s police academy in La Paz. They are being trained by Navy officials, so at least they will know how to swim. Actually, probably not.

The training lasts about five months, and the trainees have already passed the confidence exams, which include polygraph tests. Confidence here means honesty.

Congrats

The U.S. News & World Report has named the best hotels in Mexico, according to tourist industry people and TripAdvisor. Among the top five, four are in Los Cabos: The Resort at Pedregal, Esperanza, Palmilla and Ventanas.

U.S. ambassador drops by

Roberta Jacobson, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, was in Cabo recently.

Money talks... but all mine ever says is good-bye.
these days to communications towers, and it’s becoming a big problem. There are currently about 27,000 of these towers but about 80,000 are needed. The latest to be shot down was in Todos Santos.

While the telecommunications market has grown in terms of users, broadband mobile coverage has stagnated, says an analyst. “Perhaps a shared network could work” said Efrén Páez Jiménez last week. “There are few countries in Latin America, and perhaps in the world, as complicated as Mexico in terms of telecommunications infrastructure, and while this industry is often described as a gold mine, in reality it is very far from that.”

Well, maybe, but in 2015 foreign telecommunications firms began to arrive, and less than five years later they own nearly half of all the telecom towers in the country.

Profits in oil In 2016 Mexico was the destination for 52% of US gasoline exports and 15% of distillate exports, and that’s projected to grow by 40% over the next 25 years, unless Pemex wakes up. Mexican oil production hasn’t been able to keep pace with the growing demand, and that’s not getting any better since deregulation of the national oil company in 2013.

A handful of US companies have started building the needed storage and terminal infrastructure to handle the surge in rail and marine shipments of petroleum products. Did you hear that Pemex? Get off your duff!

Is your pet a frequent traveler? The federal government has come up with a new frequent traveler program for pets to simplify and speed up the entry process at a select number of airports. No, we don’t know yet if we’re one, they haven’t announced which.

Once dog or cat owners have registered their animals in the program, agriculture sanitation authority Senasica will issue an official entry document for each pet.

You will need to fill out an application, attaching a health certificate issued by a Senasica authorized vet, and provide proof of a current rabies vaccination and treatment against ectoparasites and endoparasites. The new program eliminates the previous requirement to have a new health certificate for each entry in a six-month period and owners will not have to wait for an import certificate to be prepared when entering the country. Instead, it will be sent via email.

What are we, chopped liver? Our airport operator, Grupo Aeropuerto del Pacífico (GAP) will invest around $97 million this year in the 12 airports it operates. Just not ours. Guadalajara is getting a big chunk, to try to get the new runway finished by 2022. However, the people who own the land under the airport claim they were never paid for that purchase back in 1975. Justice, blocks in the Gulf of Mexico have been sold, exceeding government expectations. This was Mexico’s biggest oil and gas auction since opening its energy sector to foreign companies back in 2013. We’re talking almost US $100 billion investment.

Many Mexicans are angry apparently, moves slowly here.

Among the 11 airports GAP operates are those in Tijuana, Puerto Vallarta, Morelia, and Los Cabos.

Mexico gets shot in the arm 19 of 29 deep water oil and gas blocks in the Gulf of Mexico have been sold, exceeding government expectations. This was Mexico’s biggest oil and gas auction since opening its energy sector to foreign companies back in 2013. We’re talking almost US $100 billion investment.

Many Mexicans are angry that foreigners will be digging up their oil, but that’s $100 billion in oil that would have stayed untapped until wind and solar take over, or until hell freezes over, whichever arrives first.

Royal Dutch Shell was the biggest winner, securing nine contracts — four on its own, four in a joint venture with Qatar Petroleum and one in partnership with Pemex. There are now more than 60 companies that have committed to investing and developing in the Mexican hydrocarbon sector.

I think my neighbor is stalking me as she’s been Googling my name on her computer. I saw it through my telescope last night.
Have $15,000 To Spare?  
The film festival needs it, maybe more than you do

BY ANDREW STACK

With only two weeks until the kickoff of the 2018 Todos Santos/ La Paz Film Festival, organizers are appealing for extra funds to ensure the festival expenses get paid. The Mexican government helps the festival with a $7,000 USD contribution, but this falls short of costs associated with transporting film makers from locations around Latin America, Europe and the United States.

The government funds are intended to offset expenses related to travel and lodging but it’s simply not enough. “We are a lot more established than we were 15 years ago, but it’s not reflected in the amount of support we receive,” says Sylvia Perel, film festival founder and director. “We are in desperate need of funds.”

To solve the funding problem, festival staff has organized a Kickstarter campaign. Kickstarter, a website that allows people to “crowdfund” their projects. Crowdfund basically means that they ask people to donate to their cause by sending money in over the internet. They make their plea for funds on a page in Kickstarter.

Sylvia says they got the idea for a Kickstarter campaign after seeing others in the industry do the same thing. “We had friends in Spain that were using Kickstarter for a film and we thought, if they’re using it for a film, then we can use it for the festival.”

Festival organizers are hoping to raise $15,000. They consider this a small amount, given that the total budget for the film festival is $55,000. That’s a minuscule budget by Hollywood standards. Carlos Gonzalez, who is in charge of the Kickstarter campaign, says the amount is so small (again, that’s by film industry standards), it’s hard to believe it could make a difference in funding. But that’s why it’s so crucial for supporters to contribute. “Even a small donation makes a big difference,” he says.

Especially given that the fact that, with the way Kickstarter is set up, if the organizers don’t reach their goal of $15,000, they don’t get any of the money they raised. That’s right: They could raise $14,000 but wouldn’t see a penny because they fell short of their original goal. And right now, they’re very short: They’ve only raised a whopping $32, and only have until March 1st to raise the rest.

Carlos is drawing attention through social media via the
CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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Stem Cells: An Alternative to Knee Replacement?

By Dr. Dick

When your knee joint is hurting you, and your mobility is limited, and can’t enjoy your daily activities, it’s time to do something about it. Up until recently, the only treatment was invasive knee surgery that takes months of recovery time.

However, knee replacement should be considered only after non-surgical treatments have been studied because of the numerous risks and significant recovery process involved. Before deciding on knee surgery, you should consider the benefits of stem cell therapy. It can fix your knee, is cheaper, easier, and much less painful. With the recent advances in stem cell therapy, and its growing use to treat joint pain, this is becoming one of the most popular knee replacement alternatives to surgery.

Stem cells are the foundation cells for every organ and tissue in our bodies. It is the name given to a category of cells which can divide indefinitely without losing their properties and can produce specialized cells. Stem cell therapy uses stem cells that are derived from the patient’s fat cells and bone marrow, or from the placenta of a donor, and injected into the damaged area. These cells naturally supplement the body’s stem cells and help the injury heal. Stem cell therapy is a non-invasive procedure with none of the risks and complications encountered with knee surgery, and eliminate months of recovery time of knee surgery. Adult stem cells are found throughout the body, inside different types of tissue such as the bone marrow, brain, blood vessels, skeletal muscles, skin, and the liver. They remain in a dormant or non-dividing state for years until activated by disease or tissue injury.

These soldier stem cells can be guided into becoming specific cells used to repair diseased or damaged tissues. Stem cell therapy can be of particular benefit for people who suffer from degenerative joint disease such as osteoarthritis.

The stem cell procedure for knee treatment is a simple non-surgical outpatient procedure and takes about 50 minutes from start to finish. The doctor injects the stem cells into the knee joint under ultrasound guidance which allows the doctor to pinpoint with absolute precision the exact location of the injection, as well as the dispersion of the cells into the tissues. Up 50 million stem cells are injected into the knee joint, depending on the severity of the patient’s condition. Platelet-rich plasma (PRP), which is produced from the patient’s blood is mixed with the stem cells and injected into the affected area to keep the stem cells activated and promote additional healing.

Combining PRP with stem cells will stimulate the movement of cells towards the knee joint and make those stem cells worker harder to heal damaged tissues.

Immediately after the procedure, you can use the joint normally, and the rate of improvement depends on the patient’s previous condition, in general improvement is documented between 30 to 90%. You may be a suitable candidate for stem cell therapy and owe it to yourself to find out about stem cell treatment for your knee, shoulder, back and other painful joint conditions. Why not schedule a free doctor consultation at PRMedica to review your condition to see if you’re suitable for stem cell therapy. The doctors are English speaking and specialize in stem cell therapy and medical tourism.

For more information contact:
PRMedica Inc.
Center for Preventive and Regenerative Medicine
By Dr. Dick

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Developed by Solmar
Los Barriles Arts Festival Coming Up Soon

Annual event supports arts in the schools, so be sure to buy a lot

BY LEO D. VINCI

The Festival de Artes in Los Barriles is one of the longest, if not the longest, continuously running art show in Baja California Sur, celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The first festival was held on April 1, 1993. It all started with a group of artists who needed a place to sell their art. Well, that's still why it's around, no?

One of the artists lived in the Juanitos Garden neighborhood; the park was centrally located, and had plenty of space for artists to set up their exhibits. The festival was able to get several Mexican artists from Santiago, Miraflores and Agua Caliente, as well as a group of folk dancers from the Los Barriles elementary school, provided the food so they could earn some money for one of the school projects, and they were thrilled with the money they made that first year.

The money generated from the festival’s raffles and silent auctions help support art in the schools to this day.

The festival still has the same basic format as it did the first year, featuring art, food, beer and entertainment. This year’s Festival de Artes will go from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 18 at the Hotel Palmas de Cortez in downtown Los Barriles. More than 120 vendors will display their works, including oil, acrylic, water color, fabric, pottery, silver and precious stones, leather, wood, glass and more. Organizers are vigilant to ensure the artists design and create original works, so you know you’re getting hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind pieces.

The odors coming from the food court will include the Palmas casada taco stand, hamburgers from San Antonio gourmet burgers and pizza, and the Sausage Ladies. And don’t panic, there will be a bar for the guys to wait for their shopping partners.

And make sure you bring plenty of money for the raffle and silent auction; remember, this is how the kids get money for their art supplies.

This year’s packages include: fishing trips; hotel stays in Todos Santos, Los Barriles, La Paz and Cabo Pulmo; golf packages; guided tours; whale watching; jewelry; paintings; shopping trips; and dinner packages.

You can see a complete list of auction items at www.castacpearst.com. If you’re interested in becoming a vendor, email festivaldeartes20@gmail.com. For general questions, castacpearst@gmail.com.

Los Barriles is a charming town about an hour and 10 minutes north of San Jose. On the highway. Which highway? How many highways do you think we have?

After the festival’s success, organizers realized they were on to something and did it again. And again. They formed the Asociación de Artes del Mar Cortez, an official Mexican non-profit that supports arts and provides supplies for area schools. Back when the group was formed, art wasn’t taught in the elementary schools, and there was no money for art supplies anyway. The money generated from the festivals still has the same basic format as it did the first year, featuring art, food, beer and entertainment. This year’s Festival de Artes will go from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 18 at the Hotel Palmas de Cortez in downtown Los Barriles. More than 120 vendors will display their works, including oil, acrylic, water color, fabric, pottery, silver and precious stones, leather, wood, glass and more. Organizers are vigilant to ensure the artists design and create original works, so you know you’re getting hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind pieces.

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CABO SAN LUCAS

CULTURAL PAVILION Downtown next to the marina
February 21. 7:00 pm and 9:30 pm. Las Arpias. Play by Robert Thomas, directed by Benny Ibarra. Tickets at www.xticket.mx. More info: 624-144-3102.

May 12. From 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Chaski Fest. A festival of harmony and peace with concerts, meditation and yoga classes, conferences and vegan food. Spanish with some help in English. Free.

March 17. 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. Congo Republic Magic Show. Tickets are 150 pesos. Spanish. All audiences.

March 24-25. 5:00 pm to midnight. Cabo Music Fest, featuring different music from around the world. Spanish. Free.

Every Thursday. 7:00 pm. Pavilion’s Movie Club. A different movie every week. Sometimes in English, sometimes other languages with Spanish subtitles. Free. February is German cinema month.

February 22. 7:00 pm. The Life of Others. In 1984 East Berlin, an agent of the secret police spies on a writer and his lover and finds himself becoming absorbed by their lives. English and German with Spanish subtitles. Free.

CERRITO DEL TIMBRE GALLERY. Main entrance on Lazaro Cardenas, downtown Cabo
February 23. Friday. 7:30 pm. Art ‘N Ready. Visual arts and poetry project. There will be a silent auction to benefit children from low income families. Spanish with some help in English. Free.

LEON COTA PLAZA Next to Red Cross and Elegation buildings
Every Sunday. 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Every two weeks, four hours of PlazArte workshops with live music, dance, and different artists. Spanish. Free.

Every Wednesday, 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Danzon Afternoons. Traditional Mexican dance classes. Spanish. Free.

LA RANA VEGANA Playa Migrino St. up from Miguel A. Herrera St. Turn right 2 blocks before the gas station (Pueblo Bonito Sunset area).

Every Thursday. 7:00 pm. Vagabond Movie Club. A different movie in the original languages with Spanish subtitles. Short films and art videos before the movie. Free.

CABO MARINA Next to Solomoni’s Landing
Every Friday. Starting in March. 5:00 pm. Arts exhibit. Live music, children’s workshops. Spanish with some help in English. Free.

MACONDO BOOKSTORE New location at Hidalgo St. and Marina Boulevard. The building with a ship’s bow coming out of it.

Every day. 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Live music. Spanish with some help in English.

Every Sunday. 1:00 pm. Movies for kids, storyteller, table games and more. Spanish with some help in English.

Every Tuesday. 5:00 pm. Literature reading sometimes with the author, sometimes with special guests. Spanish with some help in English.

Every Wednesday. 8:00 pm. Movie Club. Every month a different theme in the original language with Spanish subtitles.

Every Thursday. 8:00 pm. Trova and Bohemian Latin-American music. Spanish with some help in English.

Every Friday. 7:30 pm. Rock Bands Encounter. Different rock groups playing together, sometimes a real battle of the bands. Spanish with some help in English. Free.

Every Saturday. 8:00 pm. Jazz Night. Spanish with some help in English.

CASA ROOTS Corner of Mayas and Cuithualacu in the 4th of Marzo neighborhood (Only for adventurous people.)


VARIOUS LOCATIONS Throughout Cabo San Lucas
March 15 to 17. Mariposas Festival 2018. A festival of sexual diversity. Workshops, conferences and cultural events in different locations throughout Cabo. More info: 624-159-0004.

CAPITAL BAR Zaragoza and Lazaro Cardenas, downtown Cabo
March 15. 7:00 pm. Mariposas Festival 2018. Princesses at War. Play by Akelarre with music by Melt Beat & AdeuMaizel. Spanish.

URBAN BAR Marina Boulevard and Melchor Ocampo, downtown Cabo

AMELIA WILKES PLAZA Downtown Cabo

SAN JOSE

KORAL CENTER/EL MERKADO Kilometer 24.5 on Highway 1
Every Wednesday. 5:00 to 10:00 pm. Art Day. Art, paintings, books, live music. Spanish and English.

PLAZA EL PESCADOR Across from Cabo Azul resort in the hotel zone
Every Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. 6:00 to 10:00 pm. Art Fair. Food sampling and wine tasting at the restaurants and shops in the mall. Live music and local artists showcasing their work.

PLAZA MIJARES Main plaza downtown
The PlazArte Program will continue during renovations, next to the remodeling area.

Every Saturday. 6:00 to 10:00 pm. PlazArte. Four hours of arts workshops, music, dance show and family fun. Spanish.

March 14. 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Danzon Afternoons. Traditional Mexican romantic dance. Everyone is invited to dance. Spanish.

March 14 to 19. 5:00 pm. Fiestas de San Jose, traditional celebration for the town’s Saint patron. Folk music, folk dance, cultural programs. Spanish.

March 16. 8:00 pm. Music, dance and visual arts show by Fabula Danza and guest artists. Spanish with some help in English.

ALFREDO GREEN CULTURAL HOUSE Downtown San Jose
Every Tuesday. 8:00 pm. Documentary Movie Club. A different documentary every week. In the original language with Spanish subtitles. Free.

CITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC Cultural Institute in downtown San Jose
January 23 to March 13. Juegos Florales (Flowers Games) Poetry Contest. Entries may be submitted now through March 13 at 5:00 pm at the Culture Institute office. More info: (624) 120-5702.

TODOS SANTOS

LA POSTA DEL OASIS Zaragoza St and Rangel streets
Every Wednesday. 7:00 pm. Vagabond Movie Club. A different movie every week in the original languages with some help in English. More info: 612-145-1056. Free.


LOS BARRILES HOTEL BUENA VISTA BEACH RESORT March 9 to 11 & 14 to 17. 7:00 pm. Matinee at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 11th. The Baja Shake Up, a musical spoof of Woody Allen’s Bullets Over Broadway. Tickets are $20 at Baja Homes & Land or Galeria Los Angeles. Will call, 624-141-0314 or nanatembden@gmail.com.

HOTEL PALMAS DE CORTEZ March 18. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. 25th annual Festival de Artes. Live music, painting, sculpture, art & crafts, food and more. More info: eastcapearts@gmail.com.

EL TRINIFO MUSEUM OF MUSIC CONCERT HALL February 25. 11:00 am. Concert by pianist Christian Schleifer. Donations at the door. Spanish and English.
Fixer-Uppers In Los Cabos
A dream home you can afford

BY LEEROY JARVIS

A once-a-year getaway to Los Cabos is often not enough. The combination of ocean, desert and mountain landscapes that offer ridiculously beautiful sceneries and plenty of fun-filled activities, the perfect beach weather almost all year round, the fresh and delightful Mexican food and the warm reception of the locals - all these and more are reasons why people would want to stay longer or visit more often. And there are those whose heart’s desire is to stay here for good.

The idea of owning a place in this paradise appeals to a lot of people. But sometimes, even if Los Cabos real estate is comparatively cheaper than similar properties in other regions, a Cabo dream home just seems too expensive. But it doesn’t have to be.

Benefits of Buying a Fixer Upper in Los Cabos
Yes, there are fixer upper properties in Los Cabos. And the benefits of buying one will make it easier for you to finally achieve your dream of owning a house in this ultimate vacation destination.

Price: Fixer uppers are homes in need of renovation and are priced lower than market value. This gives you the choice to own a property in a location where move-in ready homes are just beyond the budget.

Custom-make: They say, putting a personal stamp on a house is what makes it a home. A fixer upper will give you the freedom to customize a house according to your taste, preference and lifestyle.

Tax Savings: Property taxes are based on the home’s sale price. Therefore, your biannual property taxes will be less if you buy a fixer-upper as opposed to a new home.

Investment: Fixer uppers can be a profitable investment. Find one that needs mostly cosmetic repairs and is offered at a remarkably low price and you get a diamond in the rough. These types of houses help you build equity faster and make your initial investment more valuable after renovating.

There is great selection of fixer uppers to choose from. Why buy a house at face value when you can buy a house that needs a little love with built in equity and fix it up?

A team of renovation specialists can bring old dated homes back to life. Giving these old homes new VALUE. It’s hard to see the value in an old dated house that needs absolutely everything. It can seem like a daunting risky task and a very long painstaking process as well. None of those concerns are actual reality.

For the same renovation in the US would cost about 60% less in Mexico. At least it would be with our staff.

Some of these homes, because of the repairs they need, may not seem like a good deal at all and probably wouldn’t be if they were in the US. But here in Mexico, with labor being so affordable, your dollars go a lot farther.

It’s the growing trend here in Los Cabos. There are so many older homes now that need updating it’s mind blowing. Yours is waiting for you. With built in equity just waiting to be brought back to life!

By Leeroy Jarvis, Broker of Cabo Cribs. For more information, feel free to call us at our US number: +1-310-860-6063 or our Mexico number: +52-1-624-688-6841. You can also email us at info@cabocribs.com. We also offer property management, concierge services, vacation rentals and a lot more. Check out CaboCribs.com. Cabo Cribs has a team of renovation specialists. We can get all the numbers together for you before you even make an offer. We base our offer prices with the estimated repairs already calculated to make sure you come out on top.

Los Barriles Featured Property
Vista Coral Residences

Located in the gated and guarded luxury resort vista coral. Located right on the water at the end of the malecon in La Paz. Resales of Phase 2 now offer-ing 20-2 bedroom condos, 20-3 bedroom condos and 4 penthouses. Starting at $349,000 USD

Includes covered parking, roof top gym, pool, spa, gymnasium, bar and restaurant.

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CASITA DE JEAN #67 Cabo Corridor MLS 17-1776 2/2, fenced yard, roof top deck, firepit, views, pool. $199,000 624-157-3987.

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$3,650,000 USD

Enjoy all the water and beach activities on a swimable beach, fish from shore, or enjoy a day boating on the calm waters of the Sea of Cortez. Located in the gated community of Rancho Leonero, 55 and 3 half baths, pool, extra large.

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Los Barrioles Featured Property
Vista Coral Residences

FOR SALE IN CABO CORRIDOR

THE AFFORDABLE PACIFIC SIDE GATED COMMUNITY IN CABO

THE MULTI-LISTING SERVICE OF BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR
Capital Gains Tax and Construction

If you are building or even buying, you need this

BY JANET JENSEN

So you are thinking about buying a property or selling your property in Mexico. Here is an overview of capital gains and how it affects the sale or purchase of a property in Mexico.

According to the law in Mexico, tax is owed on the profit received when selling a property. An owner who sells property in Mexico is liable, much like the United States, for the payment of I.S.R. tax (Impuesto sobre la Renta), which is the Mexican equivalent of the Capital Gains tax. By law, the tax paid is either -
1. 25% of the declared value of the transaction (gross sales price); OR,
2. 35% of the net gain, less the qualifying improvements made, commissions paid, and any other allowable expenses.

The formula is complicated and the tax should be figured both ways and confirmed by the Notary Public (Notario Publico) who will be involved at closing with the税 declarations. It is the lesser of the two calculations. Your real estate agent’s office can often help with a preliminary estimate; however, consider this is simply a guideline.

The tax is calculated based on your investments, both land acquisition and construction, in Mexican pesos. The purchase price is exchanged into pesos for taxation purposes using the official exchange rate on the date of closing for the acquisition. Construction or remodel investments will be exchanged on the dates either the facturas are issued (should they be paid in US dollars); or, the investment value will be converted to pesos for the ‘termination of works’ and ‘manifestation of construction’, more on these certificates below. The sales price will be converted to pesos on the date of closing of the sale. Exchange rate fluctuations play an important role in taxation.

The only exception is those for who reside in the property as their principle residence – in this case there may be an exemption of up to $4,000,000 MX pesos (approximately equivalent to USD $200,000.00). For this scenario, as a foreigner, the requirements include; having a permanent resident status at immigration, an ‘RFC’ (Mexican Tax ID number), and a ‘CURP’ (personal ID code). Receipts for public water and/or electricity in your name (as it appears on title), with your RFC code referenced will also be required. This exemption is only applicable for ‘individuals, not foreign entities (such as an LLC, corporation or foreign trust).

Mexico has several laws and procedures, which allow one to maximize the cost basis, thereby reducing net profit and potentially lowering capital gains. The key is having an understanding of these laws before you buy, not when you decide to sell. Your local Los Cabos real estate agent and/or their closing officer can help with an introduction and overview.

Manifesting is the recorded amount of money spent on a home’s construction. Accounting for improvements for cost basis is the key to correctly calculating capital gains tax. Proper documentation, such as obtaining a construction license and manifesting your construction, are vital when building a new home or facilitating a remodel in a condominium or home. When remodeling, be sure to collect facturas (official receipts) from contractors, suppliers and/or materials – these facturas must be issued in the name of the title holder(s), and reference the subject property, in order to be accepted as a tax deduction.

Agent Profile

Michael L. Mattos

Lounge Chair Marketer with CaboProperties.com

After selling his electronic banking company in 2008, it was a dream of Michael’s to relocate to Cabo San Lucas to really live and appreciate the lifestyle that Los Cabos has to offer. As avid golf hacker, a wine connoisseur and an appetite towards incredible food, Cabo San Lucas was just made for him to enjoy the semi-retired life.

After selling his company, Michael knew that he had to discover a new passion with for career and Michael knew his new craft would have to be something related online where he can utilize his sales and marketing skills and background to promote properties throughout the Los Cabos area. Where a house will typically remain on the MLS for 450 days in Los Cabos, Michael’s online promotion with video and Social Media - a home will average only six months on the MLS. Without the right promotion and supportive tools and resources, a home remains on the market. Your home is a sizable investment and working with Michael and his team will get you the results you expect plus working with Michael is a totally different experience and a great decision!

Living full time in Cabo San Lucas since 2012, Michael has established relationships with many real estate investors and local real estate businesses that will ensure your home transaction is properly represented with a safe, enjoyable buying and selling experience.

Contact Michael of Windemere Los Cabos at (949) 230-3456 US Cellular, or (624) 225-5765 Mexico Cellular, CaboProperties.com

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Real Estate Held by US Owners Impacted by New US Tax Laws

We’re talking 2018 impact here

BY DON D. NELSON

Most buyers and sellers of real property in Los Cabos are concerned about the effect the US new tax laws will have on their ownership of real property in Mexico. The new law is complex and it provisions involving foreign matters are often confusing.

If you own your Mexican property in your own name or through a fideicomiso (bank trust) there may be some changes under the new Trump tax laws. Most of the major rules are set forth below. However, you should consult a US tax expert to determine if there are other items not mentioned herein which might have an effect on the tax aspects of the property you own in Los Cabos.

Personal Residence. You can deduct as an itemized deduction any mortgage interest on your Mexican residence when combined with the interest you may pay on a second home up to the interest paid on $750,000 face amount of mortgages. Excess interest above this amount is not deductible for your Mexican taxes. You can deduct as an itemized deduction of $12,000 if single and $24,000 if filing jointly. Therefore you itemized deductions including medical expenses, taxes, interest and charitable contributions must exceed this standard amount before you get a tax benefit. The personal exemption deduction for you, your spouse and children has been eliminated.

SOLDs

Villa Vista Encantada, Amazing Villa with Breathtaking Views Sea of Cortez 4 bed/4.5 bath, Freshly renovated Fully Furnished in La Jolla community MLS# 17-1618 $1,030,000 USD N. Fong/Los Cabos Agent and D. O’Connor / Engel & Volkers Snell Real Estate.

Casa Brisas, Beautiful Single level home, 3bd /2.5ba, furnished and private pool. MLS# 17-653. Price $248,500 USD. N. Fong/Los Cabos Agent

OPEN HOUSE

Monday Feb 19, 2018, 9am -2 pm Ventanas Club House Phase 2. MLS#17-1922 From $152,700 Brand New Condos and Houses - El Tezal. Natalie 624 217 9562 info@NatalieEvaniew.com

Tues, Feb 20, 2018 10am -4pm –Soleado – Zippers Beach. MLS# 17-1518 From $449,000 Beach Front 3 bdrm Fully Furnished Brand New Condos. Natalie 624 217 9562

Tuesday Feb 20th from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Ventanas. Villa Poolside Ground Level Condo in Ventanas ph 2.3 bed/2.5 bath home with incredible Ocean view just steps from the community pool. MLS#17-2177. Price $299,000 USD. Evy and Consuelo ph. 624 129-7001, Los Cabos Agent

Wednesday Feb 21, 2018, 2 -7 pm Ventanas Club House Phase 2. MLS#17-1922 From $152,700 Brand New Condos and Houses - El Tezal. Natalie 624 217-9562 info@NatalieEvaniew.com

Wednesday Feb 21th, from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Cabo Bello. Casa Desert Sun - Amazing Arch & Ocean View from terrace plus a Lot included in the sale MLS#17-2411 Price $699,000 USD Evy and Consuelo ph. 624 129-7001, Los Cabos Agent

Thursday Feb 22th from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Las Palmas 5 in Casa Mexicana community – 3 bed/3.5ba, Furnished and Ready to move in! MLS# 17-2407. Price $269,00 USD Evy and Consuelo ph. 624 129-7001, Los Cabos Agent

Friday Feb 23, 2018, 9am -2 pm Marina Location Ventanas Booth across from Dos Mares Restaurant, MLS#17-1573 From $155,350 Brand New Condos, Townhomes & Houses - El Tezal. Natalie 624 217 9562 info@NatalieEvaniew.com

Sunday Feb 25, 2018, 2 -7 pm Ventanas Club House Phase 2. MLS#17-1922 From $152,700 Brand New Condos and Houses – El Tezal. Natalie 624 217 9562 info@NatalieEvaniew.com

Monday Feb 26, 2018, 2 -7 pm Ventanas Club House Phase 2. MLS#17-1922 From $152,700 Brand New Condos and Houses – El Tezal. Natalie 624 217 9562 info@NatalieEvaniew.com

Wednesday, Feb 28, 2018 10am -4pm –Soleado – Zippers Beach MLS# 17-1518 From $449,000 Beachfront 3 bdrm Fully Furnished Brand New Condos. Natalie 624 217 9562

limit applies to purchase money mortgages. Excess interest above this amount is not deductible. You can deduct your Mexican property taxes combined with any other property taxes you pay on personal real estate plus any US state income taxes you pay up to a maximum of $10,000US per year. You will receive a standard itemized deduction of $12,000 if single and $24,000 if filing jointly. Therefore you itemized deductions including medical expenses, taxes, interest and charitable contributions must exceed this standard amount before you get a tax benefit. The personal exemption deduction for you, your spouse and children has been eliminated. If your Mexico casa has been your primary personal residence for 2 out of the 5 years prior to sale, the first $500,000US in gains on sale are exempt from US income taxes. Any gain above that is taxed, but you can claim a foreign tax credit for taxes paid in Mexico against your US tax on that amount. Mexico has similar rules (with some variations from the US rule) on exclude foreign tax credit for taxes paid in Mexico against your US tax on that amount.
How Is Los Cabos Real Estate Doing?

2017 end of the year Cabo real estate stats

BY NICK FONG

# of Sold Units (All Property Types)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Units Sold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Sales Price (All Property Types)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Sales Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$443,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$426,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Sales Volume (All Property Types)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Sales Volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$348,045,27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$403,805,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Capital Gains Tax and...

continued from page 14

deduction by a notario. Confirm this information with your contractor, attorney and/or directly with a notario to ensure accuracy.

When selling a property, the manifested cost plus the cost of the lot stated in the trust (title), in pesos, will be used to determine the basis for capital gains tax. If you have not manifested your construction, construction costs (improvements) will not be added to the lot value, you will need to explore alternatives such as a ‘referred appraisal’. Receipts, cancelled checks and/or bank statements may not be used unless the manifestation is completed.

In order to manifest the improvements, the building permit needs to be submitted at the Departamento de Obras Publicas (Public Works) with a letter stating the total amount spent on construction and confirmation the construction is finished. You and/or your contractor can write the letter. This letter is a request for the official statement of completion called an “Aviso de Terminación de Obra,” which is a “Letter of Termination of Works.” This letter will state the amount you spent on your construction, which should be in accordance with the amount stated on the building permit. A reputable builder or contractor will take care of this as part of the construction agreement. After obtaining this letter submit it to the Catastro office to be manifested. When listing a property for sale, your real estate agent will ask for the letter of termination and the manifestation as part of the listing file.

There can be a ‘reverse’ capital gain scenario – This means if you purchase a real estate property for less than 10% of the tax appraised value, as a foreigner...
should consult you Mexican tax advisor to determine how to qualify for that benefit.

Second home: You may be able to deduct your property taxes and mortgage interest on your Los Cabo second home. These deductions are limited when combined with other personal mortgage interest and property taxes as set forth previously under the personal residence rules.

Rental Property:
You must report on your tax return the rental property and its income and expenses in the same manner as you would report a US rental property. The special vacation home rules for property rented part time and used by you part time also apply to your Mexican property. You can get a foreign tax credit against the tax you pay in the US on that income for the income tax you pay in Mexico on that rental income. Yes you are obligated to pay Mexican income tax on your rental income. You are fortunate if your only asset in Mexico is real estate held in your name or in a fideicomiso since you are not required to report it in Form 8938 where a US taxpayer must report their foreign financial assets with values that exceed a certain amount. Foreign real estate held in the tax-payers name is excluded from the definition of a foreign financial asset. However, if you own your Mexico real estate in a Mexican Corporation it may be reportable as foreign financial asset.

Foreign Bank or Other Financial Accounts:
If you have bank account, brokerage account or other financial account in Mexico or located elsewhere do not neglect filing FORM 114 (FBAR) each year if the combined highest balances at any time during the year exceed $10,000 US. This form can only be filed on line and is very simple. It does not cause you to pay any taxes, but is a reporting form only. Failure to file this form can result in the IRS assessing a penalty of $10,000 or more.

For more information about these changes, email Don at ddnelson@gmail.com.

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Wheel chair accessible. MLS 16-2220
Prime Properties Available
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Foreign Financial Asset Reporting
You are fortunate if your only asset in Mexico is real estate held in your name or in a fideicomiso since you are not required to report it in Form 8938 where a US taxpayer must report their foreign financial assets with values that exceed a certain amount. Foreign real estate held in the taxpayers name is excluded from the definition of a foreign financial asset. However, If you own your Mexico real estate in a Mexican Corporation it may be reportable as foreign financial asset.

Don D. Nelson, US Attorney at Law and partner in Kaufman Nelson LLP. US Certified Public Accountants has advising US taxpayers on US taxes in Mexico for over 25 years. Assisting clients with the purchase, sale and ownership of their real estate located in Mexico is one of his specialties. Visit his website at www.taxmeleon.com for more information.
If you have questions on any of these changes, email Don at ddnelson@gmail.com.

You are subject to a 25% capital gains tax on the difference. A Mexican National can also be subject to this tax, however, their rate is 20%. A government appointed appraiser determines the appraised value at the time of sale. This capital gains information is intended for properties held by individuals or foreign entities, and is not applicable for Mexican companies. Over time these regulations may change, therefore it is important to make sure that the process outlined here is still in effect by contacting a certified accountant or a Mexican Notario.

*Source - 2018 Mexican Tax Code. Check with an Accountant or Notary for any changes in these percentages - all information has been verified by Lic. Javier Mazoy – Lex Advisors.

By Janet Jensen The Agency Los Cabos, Contact Janet for more information at Office Phone - +52(624) 146-9200, Mobile - +044(624) 141-6726, Vonage - (604) 595-2444 or write her at janet@theagencyloscabos.com.

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Cabo is Booming
And here are some examples

Here’s why: In very many ways, Mexico especially Los Cabos today; is like the U.S. was 60 years ago. Way before big government, big business and special interests groups slowly whittled away the much freer lifestyle our parents took for granted and we did as children. Los Cabos is full of many, overlooked retirement havens where you can retire in luxury without spending a fortune. Los Cabos’ lower cost of living and just about everything else, means a comfortable, enjoyable life here will likely cost you a fraction of what you are paying in the USA or Canada.

If you live in the good ole US

BY TERRY GRAY CURTIS

of A or have recently then you are accustomed to having the government involved in most aspects of your life to some degree on a daily basis. Most everyone is just so used to it, that they don’t even notice it and if they do they think; well this is how it is. Now maybe our local, state or federal government would be more involved if they could but the resources to do so, do not exist to the same degree as in the USA. Another sense that has deteriorated over the years north of the border is the “family”. Between electronics, both parents having to work these days to make ends meet and the media, family values have been reduced. Here in Mexico and Cabo family comes first, just look around the next time you are here to see how many generations are running a family business. And yes, maybe the 17 year old daughter is serving your Margarita, less government remember! Grandpa is in the kitchen and if one of the kids has to go to the hospital, the family business may open late that day. These are the inherent values of the culture for the most part. Again reminding us of nicer and kinder times we live with, in Los Cabos.

From real estate to groceries, from entertainment to healthcare, life in Mexico simply costs less. Here you can still find comfortable homes for under $150,000 USD in nice communities and pay pennies on the dollar for fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and entertainment. As for healthcare, across the board healthcare in Los Cabos costs a quarter to a half of what you pay in the U.S. for treatment by well-trained medical professionals in first-class hospitals and clinics. Add this to our spectacular climate in Los Cabos, never ending list of activities and it might make you ask yourself, what am I waiting on? With Los Cabos’ varied facing shores and geography, you can find a slightly different climate and lifestyle, depending on which side of the peninsula you are on. It is no wonder more than 1.2M expats from the USA have made their full or part time home Mexico. I myself am very proud to call Los Cabos, Mexico my home and have no plans to leave. If you long for the sense of community, respect and family you recall growing up, you’ll find lots to appreciate and enjoy about life today in Los Cabos.

By Terry Gray Curtis is a veteran Century 21 Paradise Properties agent and Property Manager, he operates www.caboresortproperties.com & www.cabosecrets.com & a blog at http://blog.caboresortproperties.com Drop him a note to receive his very informative, bi-weekly Newsletter. His e-marketing program can give you incredible exposure if you are a Seller. Terry can be reached at terry@c21cabo.com or USA Tel 310.272.9500 Mex Cel (011-521) 624.151.5530.
There's a thing about Mexican moms: They make soup year-round. Everyone jokes about how you’ll get home on the hottest day and there will be mole de olla waiting for you.

Mole de olla is a rich soup that a little bit of mole flavor. (pronounce it like mol lay, olla means pot). I would actually consider it more of a stew. It has many variations across the country but is most popular in the central states of Mexico, where it is a common main dish in the mid-afternoon. In most regions, it is usually made with a mix of bone-in beef cuts and pork meats, accompanied with vegetables native to the area.

Cooked slowly over the stove, this dish is a robust meal. The bone-in pieces of meat create a nutritious broth, and the vegetables - carrots, squash, corn, green beans, chayote (a pear-shaped squash) and xoconostles - form a perfect combination of flavors. Xoconostle is a close relative of the cactus fruit, aka sweet prickly pears. However, Xoconostles are not as sweet and have a sour, tart taste. These are one of many prehispanic ingredients, if you couldn’t tell by the name. Xoconostle has been around for thousands of years and was domesticated around the same time as corn. Not domesticated like a dog or a cat, just used since then. This fruit has vitamin C, calcium and fiber. Researchers have had some promising results in studies that involve this fruit’s potential to help regulate the blood sugar of people who are diabetic. Yeah, another superfood!

Before we begin cooking, if you can’t find xoconostle, add slices of green tomatillo or chopped nopales (cactus leaves) to give the dish that slightly sour taste.

Mole do Olla

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1½ pound oxtail
- 1½ pound beef shank
- ½ medium white onion
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- **SAUCE**
  - 2 ancho peppers, seeds removed
  - 3 pasilla peppers, seeds removed
  - 1 garlic clove
  - ¼ medium white onion
  - 1 medium tomato
  - 2 epazote sprigs or 1 tablespoon dried epazote (Fresh makes all the difference; you can buy it at the mercados, and even Walmart sometimes)
  - Salt and pepper to taste

**VEGETABLES**

- 2 corn cobs, cut into thirds
- 1 chayote, cut into quarters
- 3 small or 1 large carrot, cut into bite-size pieces
- 3 xoconostles, peeled, cut into thick slices, and seeds removed
- 2 small potatoes or 1 large potato (optional)
- 2 small squashes or 1 large squash, cut in quarters
- 6 ounce green beans

**GARNISH**

- ½ white onion, finely chopped
- ½ cup cilantro, finely chopped
- 2 serrano peppers, thinly sliced or chopped
- 4-6 lime wedges
- 2 tablespoons fresh epazote finely chopped (optional)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Rinse the meat and pat dry thoroughly with a paper towel. In a large stockpot, place the meat, onion, garlic and bay leaves. Cover with 8 cups of water. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to simmer gently. Use a slotted spoon to remove any foam that rises to the surface. The meat will take about 1 ½ to 2 hours to cook.

2. While the meat is cooking, prepare the sauce. Fill a small pot with 2 cups of hot water and set aside. Gringos are used to eating stews like mole de olla when it’s cold out, but Mexicans eat this dish year-round.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25
There’s nothing like being able to leave your doors and windows open and enjoy the breeze. Retractable screens by Phantom® are insect screens that disappear out of sight, giving you fresh air without the bugs!

Now introducing the latest innovation from Phantom Screens - new retractable screens for multi-panel, sliding and folding glass wall systems that cover openings up to 24 feet wide and 10 feet high.

We know it’s a dog on the outside, all white concrete walls that make it look like a fort, but once you’re inside it’s stunning.

There are versatile meeting spaces, 194 hotel rooms, suites, and villas, and 50 fully owned residences. It’s along hotel row in San Jose.

The hotel, whose main attraction is its incredibly unique design by a forward-thinking Mexican architect, will undergo some new updates and renovations including a beach bar, beach pool, and a better gym.

The hotel has four restaurants open to the public, you, Bunky, Go.

and representatives of the local Economy Development Council. Among the issues discussed were the latest State Department travel

QUE PASA IN CABO... continued from page 7

to attend the annual meeting of the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC).

Jacobson held private meetings with governor Carlos Mendoza, members of the local hotel ass,
This one, really upscale waterfront living

BY CARRIE DUNCAN

Foreigners who are interested in the culture of Mexico live within this town of 15,000, Canadians live just south of Loreto in what’s known as the Loreto Bay Company, and now the more affluent foreigner who are there for the sun and sea have their place. It’s called Puerto Escondido (hidden port), and it’s only a little further south, still only 20 minutes from the international airport.

With the increase in direct flights between Los Angeles, Calgary and Tijuana, Loreto has become assessable. You can drive to Loreto from San Diego in 10 hours, swears Augie, owner of Augie’s bar in town. (If you don’t drive like a bat outta hell like he does, figure longer.) It’s 700 miles from the border, 140 miles north of La Paz, on the beautiful Sea of Cortez.

Puerto Escondido is a pretty amazing natural basin that’s practically hurricane proof because it’s almost 360 degrees protected. It’s a natural basin with only a small opening to the Sea. And on one side it’s up against an amazing, almost straight up, rock wall 3,000 feet high.

Puerto Escondido has been a haven for small sailboats that would anchor out, totally protected, and totally free. They could afford to stay there for months on end.

A trailer park sprung up on-shore to serve the long term sailors who missed shore (maybe mostly the wives?) and a general store to serve the cruisers. Then along came a hotel with what today is an excellent restaurant, Tripui, which is also the name of the little pueblo. And then came Fonatur. (Spooky music, here.) Fonatur is the federal agency that developed the infrastructure for some tourist areas in Mexico, including Los Cabos. Just a few years ago, Fonatur built a marina at Puerto Escondido, along with dockside services, and started charging for the privilege of anchoring out.

The Marina Puerto Escondido development includes 100 slips, dock-hand services, concierge services, two restaurants, a store, and oh yes, waterfront homes.

Everyone said the party was over, people would stop coming, sail boaters would zip right by. (Except sailboats don’t zip, they glide agonizingly slow.)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26
Monday to Saturday. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Rancher’s market in Todos Santos. Featuring homemade products from rural areas. Artisanal cheeses, organic chicken and eggs, liqueurs and virgin honey, as well as handicrafts such as furniture made with regional woods, leather goods and clay pottery all made by ranchers’ hands.

The Mercado (market). Todos Santos on Calle Morelos between Rangel and Cauahtemoc inside the San Diego Feed Store.

**Every Monday.** 8:30 am. Pickleball in San Jose. Contact rondumbarton@gmail.com.

**Every Tuesday.** 8:00 am. Rotary Club at the Sheraton Hacienda del Mar resort. In the Chapel. RSVP: 172-0009 or 172-0010

**Every Tuesday.** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Liga MAC’s used book store and thrift shop. El Chamilal (Paseo de Los Marineros Street, almost on the corner of Calle Goleta) in San Jose. Runs through until April.

**Every Tuesday and Saturday.** 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. La Paz organic market. Postal Park, Constitucion and Madero streets. Free.

**Every Tuesday.** 6:00 pm. Music. Mexico Tuesdays. Downtown San Jose. Live music, mariachi band, and artisans.

**Every Wednesday.** 7:00 am to 12:30 pm. The Organic Market at Pedregal. Fresh, organic produce, coffee, fish, seafood, eggs, whole lamb, (Little Bo Peep!), pigs (Porky? Is that you?) handicrafts, plus breakfast and lunch at Penny Lane’s Café.

**Every Wednesday.** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. At La Esquina in Todos Santos. Organic eggs, honey, locally made jewelry and beauty products, traditional baskets and more! Info: marimardelmar@gmail.com. Facebook.com/laesquinas.

**Every Wednesday.** 7:30 to 8:30 pm. Bike ride in San Jose. Free if you bring your own bike, or rent from Sportia bike store. Form up at Plaza del Pescador in San Jose, across from the Royal Solaris hotel at 7:15 pm. Call (624)130-7159 or email info@sportia.mx for information.

**Every Thursday.** 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Art Walk. Visit different galleries; many serve free wine. Art district in downtown San Jose.

**Every other Thursday.** You guess which one. Los Cabos Tomatoes, ladies’ social group. All women who aspire to be a tomato are welcome. Email loscabostomatomes@gmail.com for more information.

**Every Friday.** 5:00 to 10:00 pm. Los Cabos Products. Sale of products made in Los Cabos by residents from the rural areas. Fresh produce, jams, sweets, arts and crafts and furniture. At the main plaza in downtown Cabo on Hidalgo street, two blocks up from the Tesoro hotel.

**Every Friday.** 6:00 pm.Trivia Night. Todos Santos Brewing. English and Spanish with short rounds and prizes available each round. Alvaro Obregon (between Militar & Rangel). Facebook: @TodosSantosBrewing. Ph 612 1452023 or email info@todos santosbrewing.mx

**Every Friday.** 5:00 to 9:00 pm. Todos Santos Farmers Market. Music and fun stuff. At The Distillery (but it moves around, so check where it is this week). Email James Black at merlo4u@gmail.com...or visit Pez Gordo Gallery at the Pedregal. Small home appliances (except TVs of all kinds), cellphones, small home appliances (except HP, Samsung and Xerox only, please), in the area of the corner. The Pedregal is between Militar & Rangel. Facebook: @TodosSantosBrewing. Ph 612 1452023 or email info@todos santosbrewing.mx

**Every Saturday.** 7:00 am to 12:30 pm. The Organic Market at Pedregal. Fresh, organic produce, coffee, fish, seafood, eggs, whole lamb, (Little Bo Peep!), pigs, (Porky? Is that you?) handicrafts, plus breakfast and lunch at Penny Lane’s Café.

**Every Saturday and Sunday.** 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. La Paz organic market. Postal Park, Constitucion and Madero streets. Free.

**Every Saturday.** All Day. The grandaddy of all markets. In addition to organic produce, there are handicrafts, books, critters to adopt, food to eat and who knows what. Behind the town of San Jose. Go to their website and study the map: www.sanjono.com.

**Every Saturday.** 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Children’s library open. Story tellers at 10:30 and 12:30. Looking for a story book? Email. theranchkidz@yahoo.com, Todos Santos. Spanish.

**Every Sunday.** 6:00 pm. Sunday Sessions Live Music. Todos Santos Brewing. Enjoy the beautiful star filled Baja sky, live acoustic music, fabulous handmade craft beers and delicious food. Alvaro Obregon street (between Militar & Rangel). Facebook: @TodosSantosBrewing for more information. 612-145-2023 or email info@todos santosbrewing.mx

**Every Sunday.** 7:00 to 11:00 pm. Live music and fun stuff. At The Distillery (but it moves around, as well as live music every night).

**March 3, Saturday.** 2:00 to 7:00 pm. Spirits of Mexico. In El Triunfo, one hour north of San Jose. Tequila, mezcal, sotol, baconera and raicilla will be paired with samples from local restaurants. Tickets are $50 USD. More info: facebook.com/Triunfoorcs/March 4. 10:00 am to 3:00 p.m. Palapa Society’s Annual Historic Home tour. Todos Santos. Tour includes 17 homes, five inns, the Mission Church and more. Starts at the Cultural Center. Tickets will be for sale at the Cultural Center. The day of the event, ticket price: $20 USD or $30 pesos. More info: www.palapasociety.org.

**March 7 to 11.** Todos Santos Annual Film Festival, featuring some of the best films from Mexico, Spain and Latin America. Benefits the local Todos Santos film school. More info: www.todossantoscine.org.

**March 10.** 7:00 to 11:00 pm. 6th annual Wine and Cheese festival, at the Sheraton Grand Los Cabos, Hacienda Del Mar. Tickets are about $33 USD, with taxi fare and tips included. For information and tickets contact 624-145-8000 or email: hacienda.delmar@sheraton.com.

**March 18.** 8:00 p.m. Baja Salé’s 11th Annual Gala, hosted by Flora Farms. Includes dinner, silent auction and musical performance by Rosalia de Cuba. Tickets are $150 USD, call Isabelle at 310-728-6954 or visit Pez Gordo Gallery at the Sheraton Grand Los Cabos.

**March 18.** 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. 25th Annual Festival de Artes in Los Barilles, at Hotel Palmas de Cortez. Featuring more than 140 art vendors, food, beer and wine. More info: eastcapearts@gmail.com.

To get your event listed here, email the details to david@gringogazette.com. There is no charge. And, if an event we list here does not get off the ground, please don’t shoot the messenger, this is Mexico, and every event is, well, fluid.
New Mega Resort Pops Up

Well, a $5 billion project on 834 acres doesn’t exactly pop, it’s a grind

BY CARRIE DUNCAN

The Bulnes family was one of the handful of pioneers who saw the future of Los Cabos clearly. Luis Bulnes is gone now, but the second generation carries on. The original Solmar was a collection of bungalows on the beach, and the timeshare owners were fiercely protective of that way of life, carrying on like the world was coming to an end when they were torn down, but those owners were moved into the new six stories first class resort. The resort is an easy walk to town, but on the other side of the little hill, so it’s quiet and peaceful. It’s a great location and the bungalow owners came out way ahead, most of them would agree now.

The family is now spring boarding off that success to build Rancho San Lucas, an 834 acre piece of land on the Pacific side, just north of Diamonte. At the junction of the toll road from the airport and the highway to Todos Santos, turn west, towards the ocean.

Our guide, Claudia Velo, tells us this will be a six to 10 year build out, and warns me not to get too excited about some of the features that are coming at a way later date.

Currently, on a Saturday, it looks like there are hundreds of men buzzing around. I’m told there are actually 1,200 men employed full time on this six to 10 year build.

The structures are built on sand, so they are digging down so far it looks like they’re building an underground parking structure. Nope, they’re just sinking the foundation on bedrock. After they sink the columns, they will fill in the hole with sand again. It’s an expensive build, on sand, because they’re going down so deep to make it right. It’s interesting to watch.

There will be two story detached full ownership homes built to your specs starting at $800,000 for 2,800 square feet. There will be only 32 homes and 36 full ownership condos, so

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27
Cabo San Lucas

There’s been great weather and great fishing in Cabo recently! Marlin numbers are still the strongest, with Golden Gate being the go-to spot for odds at catching numerous billfish in one day. More dorado have been showing up there as well, and tuna have been showing up closer in, although many boats still must go out several miles to find them. Other species, such as grouper, snapper, roosterfish and sierra, are being caught closer to shore.

Cabo conditions: Calm seas, maximum wave height of two to three feet, with mostly sunny skies. Average water temperature at 75°F.

Best location: Golden Gate, Las Margaritas, Old Lighthouse and out 20+ miles for most boats looking for tuna.

Best bait/lures: Mackerel and ballyhoo bait, cedar plugs, feathers, and chumming for other/small game fish.

Puerto Los Cabos

Dorado action continued, with most of the fish being found within a couple of miles of shore. Most of these were smaller, with an occasional larger dorado in the mix. They were striking on bait best, with a smaller percentage on lures. Along the shoreline, particularly near Cabo, off Chileno, there were some nice sized sierra hitting on slow trolled sardina, with a few weighing over 8 pounds. Also, a handful of juvenile-sized roosterfish were hooked.

Sardina were being netted near Cabo Real and towards Chileno. Strips of squid and some rigged ballyhoo were also being used along with the sardina. Mackerel and sardina schools were still on local grounds and have been another bait option.

The action for the larger grade of tuna (over 100 pounds) faded out on the Gordo Banks, mainly because the conditions turned over, bringing greener water. There were some yellowfin tuna coming up on the Iman Bank earlier, but these fish proved very elusive and few were hooked.

Midweek there were sizable pods of porpoise encountered two to four miles outside of San Jose and towards La Laguna. The yellowfin tuna were traveling with them. Charters were able to land from one to two, up to 10 tuna weighing up to 35 pounds, depending on where they were at a given time. Schools have been moving quickly and must be chased around. Dropping various baitfish into the action has been the best bet, as very few were striking on lures.

There has been more activity with the pelagic red crab drifting to the surface some days where they were netted and used for bait. There have also been some decent catches of red snapper, though this was not a consistent bite.

Commercial fleets have been eager to get a supply of the red crab, at times saving some in make-shift live tanks to be used on the following day if they could not be found on the surface. This was the same scenario last year during approximately this same time frame.

Weather conditions: Warmer ocean conditions most days, with ocean water temperatures still ranging from 70 to 75 degrees. Clarity has been a bit off-colored on the Gordo Banks and on towards the north.

Best location: Most fishing action has been centered from Iman Bank, to Punta Gorda, straight off of San Jose and towards Santa Maria.

East Cape

Well, winter is here! With a high of 78 degrees and a low of 56 degrees, local anglers have had to scramble for a sweatshirt in the morning. Add a little north wind to that and it is downright frigid by East Cape standards.

When the wind backs off, there are always plenty of anglers ready to jump in their boats (ranging from tin boats to cruisers) to go out and see what’s biting. Everyone’s posting pictures of their trophy-sized dorado and yellowfin tuna, and gleefully releasing billfish, in some cases.

The smaller tin boats troll close to shore catching sierra and roosterfish — the former for fun and the latter for eating.

La Paz

Not many folks fishing on the typical windy days and then, on the great sunny days, the key is really figuring out which days will be windy or not. On the days it’s windy there are two choices: stay ashore and figure a different day to fish or go out and fish inshore where the usual structure fish - pargo, cabrilla or snapper - are being caught. Just a little outside, bonito, sierra and jack crevalle are added to the catch with maybe the occasional dorado.

On the calmer days, when the boats can move off just a bit farther, especially over to Cerralvo Island, there’s yellowtail, big dog tooth snapper and some decent 15 to 30 pound yellowfin tuna. Slow trolling deep running Rapalas, live sardines and chunked frozen squid have been working best.

Cabo San Lucas

Fish Killer Of The Week

Drake Roy from Llewellyn Park, New Jersey caught this 200 pound tuna out at Gordo Banks on a super rough day aboard The Hammer.

Water conditions: Great ocean conditions most days, with ocean water temperatures still ranging from 70 to 75 degrees. There has been a bit off-colored on the Gordo Banks and on towards the north.

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often expendable. Domestic animals are not protected by the law in Mexico, and behaviors might be considered animal abuse in the U.S. could be considered normal here. It wasn’t until very recently that one could even obtain non profit tax status for an animal related charity.

While the laws in Mexico do not protect domestic animals, those related to livestock of ranchers are in place and are actually and vigorously enforced; although, they are intended to protect the owners themselves rather than the animals. The law does not determine whether or not the extent of care (or lack thereof) is abuse. It is within the rancher’s right to care for the animals as they wish, since “it” is lawfully their property. (By the way, if you hit a cow on the highway, the rancher who owns it is financially responsible you’re the damage to your car, but good luck with enforcing that. You should get the brand off the beast and take it to the police station for your best shot at getting compensation.)

These laws aren’t changing (not yet, anyway), but Estevan’s clinics are doing their part to alter the attitude of the people in Baja. He aims to reach the kids of the ranchers, those who are not inundated with the cultural things just as they do, and they have value just like we do, and they have value just like us,” he says. “They are more than just things.”

COOKING LIKE A MEXICAN...

continued from page 19

3. Roast the tomato, garlic and onion. The garlic will take less time to roast, so remove it promptly. Remove its peel and place in a blender. Once the tomato, onion and peppers are roasted, add them into the blender, along with a cup of hot water. Puree until you have a very smooth sauce. Set aside.

4. In another medium size saucepan, add 3 cups of water and the corn. Cook over medium-high heat for 8 to 10 minutes. Add the xoconostle, chayote and carrots and cook for about 3 minutes. Add the potatoes (if using), squash and green beans and cook for 4 more minutes. Don’t worry if they look uncooked after this time, they will finish cooking with the meat and sauce.

5. Check your meat. Once it is cooked and tender, remove the garlic, onion and bay leaf. Add the sauce and epazote sprigs and stir, simmering for about 8 more minutes. Add the vegetables and stir well. Let it simmer for another 6 minutes to allow all the flavors to blend.

6. To serve, ladle the soup in large bowls. Garnish with chopped onion, cilantro, epazote and lime juice. Serve the mole de olla with some warm corn tortillas. And there you have it, a whole meal in a bowl!
**Pancho, Now In Bronze**

The unofficial mascot of Cabo, Pancho, is now immortalized in bronze. A large sculpture of some peoples’ favorite marine critter has been erected in front of the Caboland trinket store, which is where the old Liverpool used to be, across from Squid Roe.

The sculpture was made by Mexico City artist Alejandro Echeverria, and was commissioned by Fernando Toscana, the owner of all eight very successful Caboland souvenir stores. Fernando wanted to add a bit of personality to this store, is a big fan of Poncho. He thought the sculpture was a good way for everyone to have the chance to see the big guy who actually might be several big guys.

Can you really tell the difference between one sea lion and another? Pancho(s) hang out inside the marina, and follows boats into the harbor, fully expecting to share in the catch of the day. Fishermen often feed him scraps, which encourages his sometimes pretty push behavior. You’re almost guaranteed a Pancho sighting every afternoon in front of Casa Country restaurant near the boat ramp. He hangs out there begging for scraps at the fish cleaning station. You can’t miss his hang out, as there are usually a dozen or more tourists watching the show.

Pancho stole this fish right out of the fisherman’s hands in this now pretty famous picture.

No, this is not an exercise in taxidermy, Pancho is immortalized in bronze.

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**LORETO GETS A NEW...**

continued from page 21

Well, Fonatur, the gang that can’t shoot straight, built an amazing infrastructure, dredging the entrance channel deeper, creating two of the three planned artificial residential islands in the bay; constructed an ellipse with seawall and jetty; brought in water, a treatment plant and roads; built the marina, launch ramp and dry storage. And then they bailed.

In 2008 (we all remember that year), the bank foreclosed on the dredged island, which some of the current Marina Puerto Escondido.

**They Need Your Love**

**BOSLEY**

This sweet guy has spent most of his life on the streets of San Jose and was rescued by Baja Safe last year. He is ready for a home where he has his own food dish and maybe even a big, comfy dog bed. Bosley is seven or eight years old, so if you’re looking for an older dog who will be a good companion, he’s your guy!

**JACKIE**

This pretty lady is a San Jose transplant, originally from San Quintin. Even though she had owners, she was malnourished and had mange when she came to Baja Safe. Thanks to a loving foster family, she’s ready for lots of love from a fur-ever family. Jackie is very gently and gets along with kids and other dogs.

If you’re interested in adopting Bosley or Jackie, email Baja Safe at et.safe@hotmail.com.

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If you’re interested in adopting Bosley or Jackie, email Baja Safe at et.safe@hotmail.com.
NEW MEGA RESORT POPs UP...
continued from page 23

shake a leg if you're interested. And if you are a former Solmar guest, chances are you've already been won over. They treat their guests well.
There will also be a handful of multi-story buildings of timeshares and condos. The timeshares are all suites with well-appointed kitchens and beautiful bathrooms. There will be 680 timeshare rooms. These

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DR. MARY ANN BEIMERS. Pay your debts. (18)

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What’s Up With Those ATM Fees?

We get the scoop on the Cashola machines you see all over Cabo

BY BEN DOVER

Last month, one of our loyal readers sent us a picture of an ATM receipt. The reader was unhappy with the high fees he was charged when using an Inter cambio Cashola ATM to withdraw US dollars. The receipt showed a “compensation for the fluctuating exchange rate” fee that amounted to a whopping $27.80 USD. The reader said he agreed to one ATM fee of $6.95, but not this second fee, which was an unhappy surprise.

We reached out to Cashola and get some answers. We interviewed Cristina Gonzalez, the CEO of Cashola, who is based in Mexico City. (Note: this interview has been translated from Spanish and edited for clarity.)

GG: Who exactly are you guys?

Gonzalez: Cashola is a company that provides ATM services on behalf of chartered Mexican banks. (Editor’s note: A charter means the bank complies with banking regulations.) We are currently partnered with both CI Banco and Banco Inter cambio. We are highly regulated, and follow all rules and regulations imposed by various networks, such as Visa and Mastercard, as well as the Mexican Banking Commission.

GG: Why the high fees?

Gonzalez: We operate both US dollar and peso dispensing ATMs. Our peso ATMs charge a “normal” fee, similar to what one would encounter in the US. The US dollar ATMs charge a higher fee due to the costs associated with dispensing US dollars in a foreign country.

GG: Why would you dispense US dollars in Mexico?

Gonzalez: We only dispense US dollars in the tourist regions, and we do so because we discovered, early on, that many international tourists will not use our peso ATMs. There are likely many reasons, such as confusion over converting foreign exchange, or cruise ship passengers not wanting to be stuck with pesos once they get back on the boat. As virtually all businesses in Mexican tourist destinations accept dollars, using dollars is an easier solution for many.

GG: So, about those fees...

Gonzalez: Dispensing US dollars in Mexico is a challenge. We pay a fee to our networks based on a percentage of the cash dispensed, similar to how retail businesses pay a percentage to Visa or Mastercard on credit card transactions. Additionally, we pay fees to acquire US currency, and we often have to ship it in from major currency centers on the mainland. Also, we are settled in pesos, so we have to pay an exchange fee to re-purchase the dollars. As well, we have other unique costs in the tourist areas, such as higher insurance and armored car fees. Unlike regular

A hyperbaric chamber is a cocoon-like apparatus that you crawl into and get comfy cozy for an hour or two. Under pressure, it cranks up the oxygen concentration in the chamber, and pushes that concentrated oxygen throughout your body. This concentrated oxygen, (100% oxygen), goes into any organs that may need a little pick me up, and even into your brain. The normal concentration of oxygen in your system is only about 20%.

The director of Spa Cielo, Cathy Dammann, a registered nurse back in the real world, allows this very expensive piece of equipment to be used by local autistic children for no charge, as hyperbaric concentration of oxygen has been proven to be very beneficial for these kids. She has pictures of brain scans before and after treatment that shows parts of the brain actually normalizing, and more than that, the improvement in these kids’ behavior is dramatic. So why can’t we get plenty of benefit from it as well? We can.

The increased concentration of oxygen in our blood, our organs, and our brain has been proven to result in better health, better feeling of well-being and probably better longevity.

Cathy Dammann is a Medical Aesthetics Practitioner and has certifications in Aesthetics, and Light and Laser Therapies. She is a member of the International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine and the recent recipient of the 2012 “Successful Women of the Baja” by Baja Traveler Magazine. She has made numerous appearances on talk shows including Oprah. Spa Cielo’s physicians and staff are trained and certified in United States and Mexico and are bilingual. Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center holds a five star rating and received the “2013 Award of Excellence” from Trip Advisor and has the experience you look for in a laser medical spa, with 10 years in Los Cabos area, 14,000 patients and over 70,000 procedures performed, Spa Cielo is your answer to skin and body rejuvenation.

If you would like a complimentary session in the hyperbaric chamber, call Cathy Dammann at Spa Cielo in San Jose. 624 105 2209. Go to www.spa-cielo-cabo.com.

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Continue on page 30
LORETO GETS A NEW...
continued from page 26

In 2016, the current company, the Hamann Brothers, together with JEP Real Estate, created a partnership combining assets purchased from the bank and Fonatur. This begins their ownership and management of the harbor and real estate development at Marina Puerto Escondido. Ta-da! Our little stroll through history is over and now a description of what’s currently going on out there. It’s exciting.

They are building a gated waterfront community on one of the islands. The completed first phase includes 19 lots for custom homes on land that sits right on the water, overlooking a private dock with state-of-the-art amenities for yachts up to 100 feet.

The community has the strange name of Waicuri (some kind of Indian thing), and the first home is scheduled to be finished in a couple of months. This is a 6,000 square foot 3 story home including 4 bed/4.5 bath, with a two-car garage, plus storage for lasers and paddleboards. There are also three balconies, and a fancy swimming pool. High end.

The construction of that first home is underway by the two companies, the Hamanns and JEPs, an American family and a Mexican family, all of whom met a generation ago in Loreto, sharing a love for scuba-diving, snorkeling, hiking, fishing, sailing, and paddle-boarding that Loreto has to offer. Both are now involved with real estate development and construction in San Diego and the mainland. This is not their first rodeo.

So, Now Puerto Escondido has 100 slips, dock-hand services, concierge services, dry storage, fuel, car rental, boat repair services, launch ramp and travel lift, and rental of water toys. There’s a general store and a second story restaurant/bar with a pool, all overlooking the marina. Also, a new pizza restaurant has opened.

For more information about Marina Puerto Escondido, go to www.MarinaPuertoEscondido.com.

The Rancho San Lucas development is a six to 10 year build, but a few restaurants, a bar, deli and grocery are open now.

New Mega Resort Pops Up...
continued from page 27

The pool in your raft or inner tube. There will also eventually be a 15 acre lagoon, one that is definitely not real, but looks real. No swimming pool look here. But that’s down the road.

Currently, there are 89 rooms CONTINUED ON PAGE 30
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DR. ROBERTO LEON

REINA

My favorite time of day is when my shadow reveals just how tall I am supposed to be. Although I am regal, strong and as queenly as my name implies, nature saw fit to short-change me several inches of leg length. A cruel joke to be sure, but I have developed a tremendous amount of charm to make up for it. I also enjoy the side benefit of being closer to the floor when someone drops food…

CECI

The true essence of a feline is to be noble, confidant, clever and yet playful. I possess all of these skills and raise the bar higher still by having such a unique and lovely Calico coat pattern. Beauty and brains to match any decor!

NEW MEGA RESORT POPS UP...
continued from page 29

in service with 200 staff. The current guests don’t mind all the building going on around them, as they spend their time facing the ocean in their lounge or in the pool with the swim up bar. It’s a bit remote, but vans run to town like every half hour or so. Actually, to keep the taxistas happy (are those robbers ever happy?), the van only goes to the original Solmar, but it’s a quick walk to town from there.

Finished at this point are a couple of restaurants, a full service bar, a deli and a little grocery. Enough to keep the sun bunnies who are staying there now very happy.

For more information, or even a tour by Claudia in her Jeep, like I had, call 624-143-0906. Or go to their web site at www.grandsolmaranchosanlucas.com. Or even drop by the Grande Solmar near downtown and check out the big model of Rancho San Lucas on the floor of the lobby.
Mexico’s tourism secretary recently suggested that marijuana be legalized in tourist destinations – Baja California Sur and Quintana Roo, specifically – to help curb drug gang violence in those regions.

**This week we asked:** What do you think of this idea? Do you think it would help?

1. **Lizeth Garcia, 38, stay at home mom**
   I do not think it will help anything, except turn them into even crazier destinations for spring breakers. Marijuana is a gateway drug and only gets our young adults closer to the edge of other things. When they start feeling like marijuana is not enough, they will try harder things and, in the long run, ruin their life. If we wanted to cut drug gang violence then we would invest in educational programs instead of making these dumb decisions.

2. **Jose Zepeda, 21, student**
   I think that is one of the few good ideas the government has had in a long time. Marijuana is harmless, it actually has many medicinal properties and there is no risk of overdosing. The gang violence happens because they all want to sell in the same spot and make money. With legalization, there's nothing to fight about and it can even be regulated, and the government could make great money from the taxes.

3. **Diana Corona, 19, student**
   I do think it would help, given the fact that many innocent people are killed each year because they are caught in gang fights. If marijuana is legal, we could raise the tourist numbers like in Amsterdam, where the government is a lot better than here and the whole city has more money.

4. **Valentina Vallejo, 42, shoe designer**
   I am not against the idea but not necessarily for it, either. I believe there are other ways to stop gang fights, and other ways to raise tourism. The secretary is just taking the easy road so he can do less of his job, leaving it to a popular trend. If medicinal marijuana was made legal then it would be totally different because, although some people fake being sick, others do really benefit from it.

5. **Jaylin Diaz, 18, telemarketer**
   I do not think it’s a great idea, but it’s something. I have seen kids start smoking marijuana when they are about eight years old and then become the typical neighborhood thug. If it was made legal, we must not forget that Cabo and Cancun, besides being tourist towns, also have huge local areas that are already considered “slums” when compared to resorts.

6. **Julia Zepeda, 31, therapist**
   It’s an amazing idea! Finally, the people in government seats are using their brains. Mexican herb doctors have been using marijuana for the longest time, and just because some kids make stupid decisions, it doesn't mean all of us should pay the price. Weed is smoked by all sorts of people, all ages, shapes and sizes. It’s not a gateway drug because it does not create an addiction. On the contrary, it helps regulate stress levels. Plus, we could really make a lot of money as a country, since we have the perfect climate for it to grow.
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