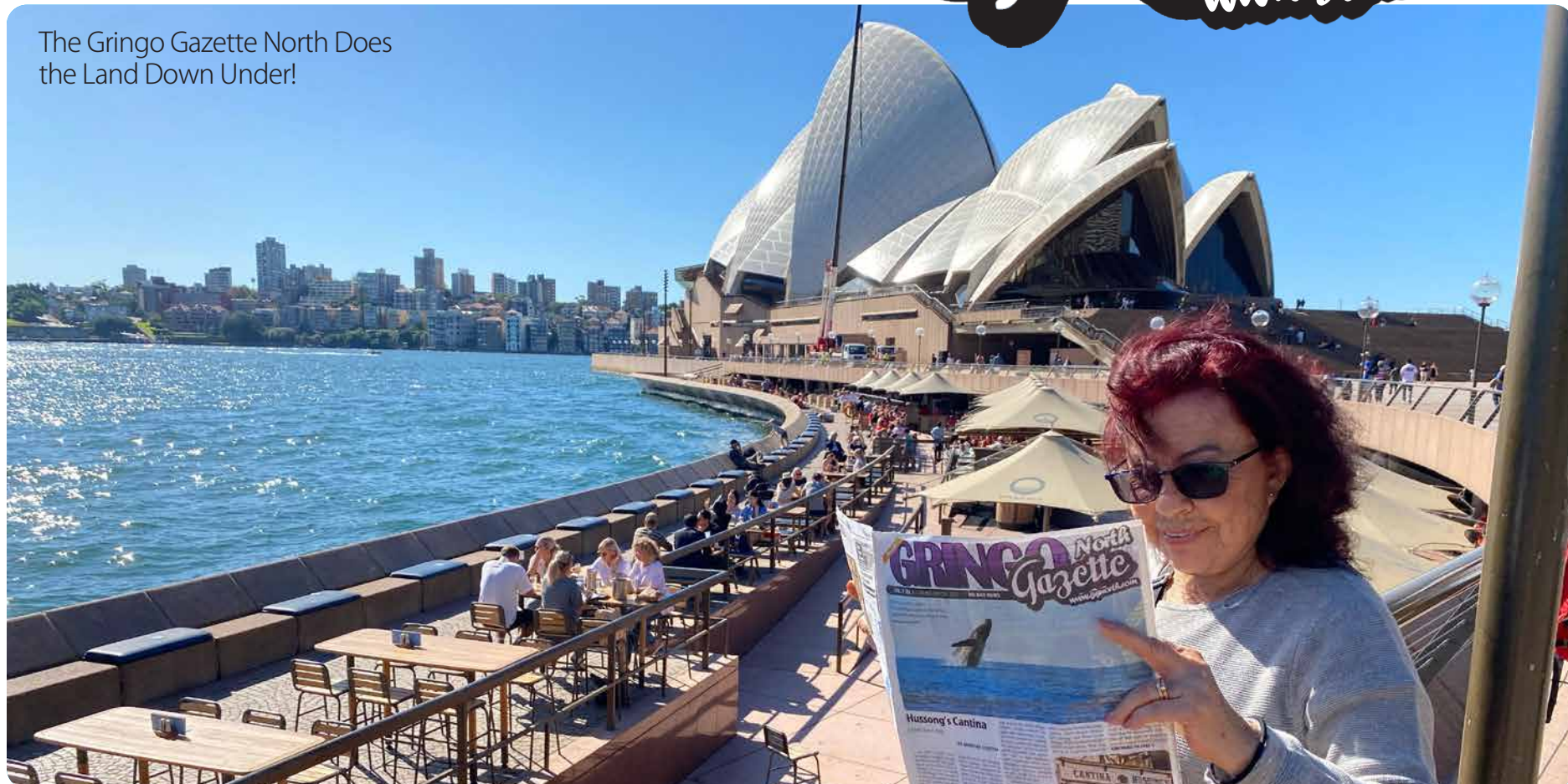


The Gringo Gazette North Does the Land Down Under!



Road Trip! Part 1

Fast Track to Land's End

BY MARTINA DOBESH

Pull out that map! Come with me! One thousand miles of open road beckons you. Taking time to explore the unexplored riches of Baja California is a life changing experience. My first road trip was with my sister to La Finis-terra in 1993 in my 1973 VW Beetle packed to the roof. We exchanged one US dollar for 3,200 pesos, stuffing the bills into bags, feeling very rich with the freedom of the road beckoning. Today, crossing the border into Mexico the pesos has remained fairly steady at 20.0 to one US dollar. Stop at im-

migration for your tourist visa. Tijuana can be a bit daunting for the first time traveler. However, if you want to make the dive into a rich culture, you'll find Tijuana is emerging as a dramatic destination place in the 21st century. You can easily spend a weekend exploring the Tijuana Cultural Center, fine art galleries, world class gourmet restaurants, quaint bistros, micro breweries and the wines of northern Baja.

Rosarito Beach, just 45 minutes south of Tijuana, has made its own changes in the last twenty years. When I first

visited, the town was a dusty two lane road with dirt parking in front of the Don Pisto's liquor store; my sister's favorite first stop. The town was known as a place for the spring breakers to come and tear it up. Now, there are four lanes running through town, modern condominiums, Smart & Final and a

Wal-Mart making it feel like you never left the US. Oh, and town is classier now; a warning for the "Breakers" after an all-nighter; it is against the law to throw up and pee in the streets! Headed to Ensenada you can't miss the Sacred Heart of Christ statue or the four-story home, built in the shape of a volup-

tuous mermaid. It also claims the first eco-friendly Earthship built from old tires, bottles and cans. Gorgeous, self-sustained living with a million dollar view.

At La Fonda you have an option to drive through La Misión, a small pueblo that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Que Pasa In Baja?

BY OLIVER QUINTERO



Only One Case of Monkeypox Detected in Baja California. The single case of monkeypox that was detected in Ensenada is still the only case detected in all of Baja California.

The patient has already completed 21 days in isolation, but authorities reported that they will recommend a few more days because he still has visible wounds, which are highly infectious.

The family and close friends of the patient have already been tested and it has been determined that no one else was infected by the virus.

"The patient is evolving very well, he is still in his home, he hasn't had to go to the hospital and at the moment

he is not using any analgesics or anti-inflammatories", said Adrian Medina, head of the state health office.

Guadalupe Valley in USA Today Top 10. Our very own Guadalupe Valley was classified as the third best wine region in the USA Today Best Reader's Choice 2022.

State Tourism authorities announced the results of the popular guide, which highlights not only the places but also the experiences that people have in there.

Other wine regions in the list where the Walla Walla Valley of Washington, Temecula Valley, Paso Robles and Sonoma County.

Sportfishing Interest Increases in Baja California.

According to the state fishing and aquaculture authorities in charge of Alma Rosa Garcia, sportfishing has had a steady increase in our state mainly because a great climate, iconic species of the region and a greater promotion of sportfishing services.

One of the notable factors that have favored this increase, has been the capture of grand species of blue fin tuna, which has been a prized fish for Baja and southern California anglers.

Luis Manuel Robles, head of fishing in our state, took the opportunity to invite anglers to participate in the 12th Sportfishing Family Tournament that will be celebrated on

August 13 and 14 in Ensenada. For more information call 646 218-2227.

We are Leaders in Job Creations. Governor Maria del Pilar announced recently that Baja reached a record number of formal jobs with 1 million 13 thousand persons registered with the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), which is the most we have ever had.

In this year alone, over 38,500 new jobs have been created, which makes Baja California a national leader in job creation.

The employment rate for Baja California has reached 97.8%, the highest between all the states that share a border with the United States.

Ensenada Announces Success with Breathalyzer Checkpoints. An 80% reduction of alcohol related traffic accidents has been achieved in Ensenada, stated Pedro Antonio Lemus, Commander of Municipal Transit.

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What Mexico Has Taught Me

BY THE UNKNOWN GRINGO



Editor Note: Our friend "The Unknown Gringo", has deviated a little bit from his usual subjects to talk about things that you don't see everyday, hope you enjoy it!

I was walking on Juarez in downtown Ensenada and saw a man dump a large amount of crushed aluminum cans into the street. He formed them into a mound then started waving his arms at approaching municipal buses. He was pointing at the pile and they started swerving.....TOWARDS THE PILE OF CANS. When one bus would run them over, he would reshape them into a mound, and another bus would run them over. Again and again. It seemed obvious he wanted those cans totally flattened and they certainly were before he gathered them

up in his trash can and took them into the tiny lunch counter that I'm guessing he owns. Then I understood. He didn't have a lot of space for storage and he sells the cans for their weight in recycling. And then I watched him take cold cans of soda and bottles of water out to passing bus drivers while also making lunches for customers at his lunch counter. The bus drivers didn't give him any money, they just honked their horns and he delivered the goods. They didn't stop, they only slowed down. I bet they called him in advance on their cell phones. He knew what they wanted and they got their drinks on credit. The drivers ran a tab that they would pay later. You don't see that every day. At least not in Los Angeles where I live.

Then there was the 2' x 2' hole in the road on a busy street in Ensenada. It went down a full 8'. A 10' tree limb of 3" diameter was sticking out of the gaping hole and had a girl's pink chiffon dress tied to the top of it to warn approaching cars. No bright orange cones. It was the best someone could do and it was effective. The hole would have broken any car axle or caused me on my motorcycle or bicycle to crash HARD. Thank you, Good Citizen.

The free mariachi concert at 3 in the morning in front of my hotel and under my balcony on Lopez Mateos / First Street. Who was paying for it? I don't know. I never got out of bed to look. It didn't really bother me and I didn't hear anyone yell at them. They were good.

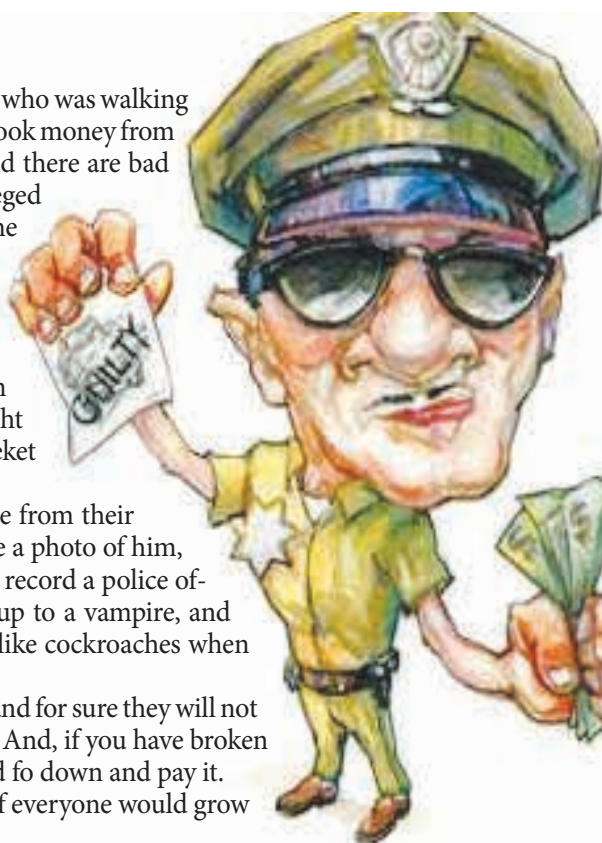
What To Do If You're Stopped By The Police

We recently got a report from a local Gringo who was walking back home and a police cruiser stopped him and took money from him to let him go. That's extortion anywhere, and there are bad hombres anywhere. If you are stopped for an alleged traffic violation, ask for a ticket and go down to the police station later on or the next day, and pay it. They will take your driver's license to ensure that you show up, and that's OK. They do not want your license, and there's nothing they can do with it. You will get it back. And no, do not give them money if they ask you to pay the ticket to them right there. Just keep asking for a ticket, "Dar may un teeket por favor." Be polite and firm.

If they get nasty, write down their last name from their name badge, or pull out your cell phone and take a photo of him, her, or them. No, it's not illegal to photograph or record a police officer doing it's job. That's like holding a mirror up to a vampire, and they will jump in their vehicle and scurry away like cockroaches when you turn on the light.

It's extremely rare for them to write a ticket, and for sure they will not cite you when you haven't done anything wrong. And, if you have broken a law, the ticket is ridiculously small. Man up and fo down and pay it.

This police extortion would stop in a week if everyone would grow a back bone and stand up to them. 🐾



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A group of children being taught how to use wooden stilts by older teenagers in a city park. The stilts were only 3' tall and each child had a teenage "spotter" as they learned. It appeared to be sponsored by the city. Each child was thrilled at being as tall as an NBA center instead of only four and a half feet tall, even if only for a little while. To watch their joy was wonderful.

The gas station in Tecate that has only female gas pump attendants. It's called Rendi

Chicas and the women wear identical pink tops as uniforms. It is next to the Soriana supermarket. I don't know if other Baja cities have one as well. 🐾

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Poor Chili Harvest in Mexico Leads To Sriracha Shortage

BY KATHRYN REED

Drought made the spring harvest of chili peppers in northern Mexico dismal at best. This in turn has led to a shortage of Sriracha throughout the United States and everywhere it is exported.

Many people think Sriracha is imported into the United States, but it's actually a Southern California company that makes the spicy sauce. David Tran started Huy Fong Foods in Irwindale in 1980. Chinese by birth, Tran immigrated to the U.S.

from Vietnam.

"Sriracha is actually made from a very special type of



pepper that only grows in the southern U.S. and northern Mexico," Murray Tortarolo, with National Autonomous University of Mexico, told NPR.

The company has not disclosed exactly where in Mexico it is sourcing the chilies, but said it is hoping the fall harvest will be more successful.

"We have several sources sometimes and we don't want them to know who each other are," Donna Lam, executive operations officer for the company, told the Los Angeles Times.

Huy Fong Foods uses about 100 million pounds of chilies a year.

Prior to a 2017 lawsuit with Underwood Farms all Huy Fong Foods' chilies came from the Ventura County outfit. Since then, chilies have come from Mexico, New Mexico and California. Today, Mexico is the sole provider.

This spring the company sent an email to customers stating, "Currently, due to weather conditions affecting the quality of chili peppers,

we now face a more severe shortage of chili. Unfortunately, this is out of our control and without this essential ingredient, we are unable to produce any of our products."

The bottle with the rooster and distinct green cap is a favorite in cuisine of all kinds. Sriracha is super popular in Vietnamese food. Often a bottle of it is on the table at Vietnamese restaurants much like ketchup is at

a burger place.

Marketing research company IBISWorld said in 2019 Huy Fong Foods controlled nearly 10 percent of the U.S. hot sauce market. At that time the hot sauce was a \$1.55 billion market.

However, according to NPR, "The original Sriracha is actually Thai—and comes from the seaside city of Si Racha, where most residents haven't even heard of the U.S. brand, which is now being exported to Thailand."

ROAD TRIP!...

continued from page 1

once was a mission site. This is the "free-road" on the old highway #1. It will gift you with a lovely drive east into wine country. The Guadalupe Valley has over several hundred wineries and artisanal wine producers. Baja California wines are poised at the threshold of discovery, just as Napa Valley was in the 70s. It is recognized as a region where fine wines are produced including the rich Nebbiolo and the delightful organic Mision red. The Vine and Wine museum gives a comprehensive look into the valley's history.

Or you can stay on the toll road and head directly to Ensenada. Ensenada claims a scenic harbor where great cruise ships seem to emerge from the sea. It takes a hearty ocean breeze to unfurl the majestic Mexican flag over the plaza. Near here is Lopez Mateo with a touch of old world where shops, restaurants and coffee houses invite you in. Husson's is the lusty

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night life for a true traveler's experience. Heading south through town, major shopping centers have grown up around Wal-Mart and mega grocery stores. Continuing on out of town with a destination of La Bufadora, agricultural farm land stretches out in all direction. A hidden road to the east will take you to a secluded hot spring with healing mineral waters filling rock pools. At this point you make your way through the dusty town of Maneadero. I have a funny memory about this town when my sis yelled, "Tope! Tope!" just as we slammed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Ask a Mexican

Since the beginning of the year to this day, there's been an average of 7 accidents a day along the San Jose-Cabo San Lucas highway.

Who drives the fastest? Mexicans or foreigners, and why? Do you think drivers here need to take more extensive exams and driving courses like our Northern neighbors? What would you do to slow down the speeding traffic in Los Cabos?



Illustration by danjazzia

Efrain Perez, 54, teacher.

I definitely think Mexicans drive the fastest. It's a common belief to think that if you drive fast you're good, and many men do it to impress each other and the ladies. I do think we need more extensive courses to get drivers' licenses but also

a stronger authority system to make it worth it; what good does it serve when we can get away with almost anything with a few bucks? To really slow it down, I would put more speed bumps and rubber wheel stops. Only physical barriers make the Toretto wannabes

slow down to avoid hurting their precious cars sometimes.

Olivia Franco, 23, student.

I think it's not a matter of where you're from. I've seen foreigners and Mexicans speed just about the same. It's a matter of education, and not everyone has that. Not even school gives us the kind of education it takes to be civil. I think we need ruthless transit agents like in our neighbor country who will not accept apologies and give big tickets for speeding, and we need a breathalyzer at both the San José and San Lucas entries every night, especially on weekends.

Julian Camarillo, 46, artist.

For sure Mexicans speed the most, but foreigners have and create the most accidents. We are smoother drivers. We may speed, but our reflexes are much better and we are used to being alert and watching out to avoid accidents. Most foreigners I've seen freeze when they get spooked at the wheel. If we need to, we might just need to better our security measures at night, especially around party time.

Luis García, 24, construction worker.

I think Mexicans drive way faster and more recklessly, and since we live in a tourist place with people from all around the country, some people from the mainland are even worse. The true locals don't drive that bad, not like "chilangos." Locals are slow and have old American cars that can't even speed to start with. I think we should have more speed-bumps, red lights and better transit agents who take their jobs seriously.

Martin Huezo, 41, electrician.

Most of the accidents I've seen have been by Mexicans; the smaller ones by foreigners. I think foreigners are more careful, they are respectful of speeding limits and signs and take things more seriously than us Mexicans. To change this

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awful statistic, we need the police force to step up and go hard on people who drive badly.

highway and cops with laser speed guns who will not take money for tickets. 🚬

Silvia Gutierrez, 27, dental assistant.

Foreigners who come here and live like there are no rules drive the fastest, and Mexicans think they rule because they have a good car, too. It's not just one group or the other, it's both, but mostly men. We need to put checkpoints along the

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Cooking Like a Mexican

BY ALEJANDRA BORBOLLA



Many traditional vegetables in Mexico have been a staple in our diet since before the Spaniards arrived, and most of them grew and thrived with no scientific intervention, like the verdolaga. Verdolaga is a vegetable green used in many countries in Latin America, Europe and the Middle East. In Latin America it is called verdolaga; in English-speaking countries it is often-times referred to as purslane.

Verdolagas are not really weeds though, but I'm sure foreigners will frown upon eating something that also grows from a crack in the sidewalk. You might have heard of it as purslane, and it's classified as a noxious weed in

the United States. Truth is, it's quite the superfood and has more properties than kale but has not yet been "discovered" in U.S. or Canada.

It's a tiny fleshy plant, comprised of small leaves, averaging 2 to 5 centimeters in length, that are oval to tear-drop shaped, attached to thick, fleshy stems. The dark green leaves are flat, curved, and tapered and bear a smooth, waxy appearance with a crisp, succulent, and tender consistency. The stems are thick, aqueous, cylindrical, and dense, ranging in color from pale green to red-green. In mid-summer, the plant also produces edible yellow flowers, which later give way to tiny black seeds.

With tiny yellow flowers, it's bright green, a little shiny when young and tastes like lemony cucumbers. Mothers in Mexico cook verdolaga, often collecting it from around the house and neighborhood. Others buy it from markets. Now hipster chefs and food wannabe connoisseurs are starting to use it kind of like arugula or any other micro-green, in salads, tossed in omelets, or as a side dish, but Mexicans have been eating it since before the Spaniards conquered Mexico. Verdolaga grows plentiful for most of the year in central and northeastern Mexico.

Verdolaga, considered a leafy green vegetable, has been proclaimed a superfood



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due to its high content of omega-3 fatty acids – higher than any other vegetable. It is also an excellent source of Vitamin A (100 g provides 44% of RDA) Vitamin C, and some B-complex vitamins like

analyzing all the properties these two ingredients have, I have no doubt. She says, with tears in her eyes, that she ate nopales and verdolagas because she lived a very hard life and the economy was not great



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riboflavin, niacin, pyridoxine and carotenoids. It also contains essential dietary minerals such as iron, magnesium, calcium, potassium, and manganese.

Maria Felix (not the actress) is 117 years old, and lives in Tlaquepaque, Jalisco. She says that she has reached this age from eating nopales (cacti) and verdolagas and an-

after Villa's disputes. There was no corn, no beans, and she could not find anything to eat. "Mariquita", as her family calls her, is exceptionally healthy, she does not suffer from diabetes, hypertension, and her lungs work perfectly. Once in a while, she will have a sip of beer just to give her body the joy, or as we say in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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QUE PASA IN BAJA?...

continued from page 2

Lemus said that breather checkpoints located in different locations of Ensenada have been able to save many lives, and that they also increased awareness between our community of the consequences of drinking and driving.

Nevertheless, he said, there are still irresponsible citizens that continue to drink in excess and drive, and because of this we still detained over 50 persons for driving under the influence.

Congressman Proposes City Manager Figure in Baja. Stater congressman, Roman Cota, proposed creating the City Manager figure for every one of the cities of Baja California.

The initiative doesn't look to diminish the autonomy of every city, as they will be responsible of naming who the City Manager would be, as long as this person has the technical skills and experience required for the job.

This proposal focuses on separating the technical issues from the political issues in public service, as the mayor would still be the political leader, main promoter of public policies and community spokesperson. On the other hand, the city manager would be tasked with managing city projects, and effectively complete every assignment ordered by the city council.

Rosarito Desal Plant Project Still on the Table. Amid a statewide water crisis, Governor Marina del Pilar Avila announced recently that she is trying to revive the huge desalination plant that had already broke ground in Rosarito but then was cancelled by ex-governor Jaime Bonilla.

Governor Avila said that the coastal area of Baja California can't continue to depend from the Colorado river water.

"We need to find other alternatives, we are trying to sort out the desal lawsuit and con-

tinue with the project because it will have a huge cost, since it's an international lawsuit, and it will bring no benefit to Baja California."

Work Will Finally Continue in Playa Hermosa. The federal environment and natural resources office authorized the city government of Ensenada to continue working on the skatepark and beach volleyball court they had planned and had been cancelled because of a lack of environmental impact studies.

Said public works where suspended 14 months ago, and affected the area greatly, as if designating Playa Hermosa the most contaminated beach in Mexico wasn't enough.

Meanwhile authorities stated that the water contamination problem is being fixed,

The hotel already looked as it had seen better times, as it now looks very neglected and abandoned.

Rosarito Prosecution Office Helps Tourists. In order to fulfill the commitment made with the local AMPI in Rosarito, the prosecution office announced an informative program so tourists know their rights and where they can report abuses by the police.

The program highlights that if you feel intimidated by any police officer you can call 911 from your phone and say: "Blue Code", they say that with this the operator will assist you immediately.

They also stated that recording an authority while doing their job is not a crime, and you should not be intimidated to stop recording a police of-



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and that they already have a reading from COFEPRIS that has the water quality of Playa Hermosa between the approved parameters but that it hasn't been officialized.

The Committee for Clean Beaches in Ensenada has already stated that more than one reading is needed in order to approve the reopening of the beach to the public.

Calafia Hotel Closed Down. The once-famous Calafia Hotel was closed down by local water authorities from CESPT citing an 800,000 USD debt with them for not paying their water consumption and sewage services for a bit more than 10 years.

CESPT said that they had required payment from the Hotel since 2020, but the hotel filed for a legal protection instead of paying.

To make matters worse for the hotel, they were fined for manipulating CESPT distribution system in order to divert water to the hotel, effectively stealing water from the city.

ficer if you want to.

Another important thing that the prosecution office said was that the Civil Judge is the only authority that can authorize a vehicle to be towed and that they work 24/7. ✈

ROAD TRIP!...

continued from page 4

into an unmarked speed bump, knocking my head into the roof. Stunned and laughing I said, "Well that is one way to learn Spanish!" Modern signs announce the turn off to La Bufadora, or blow hole. This is a natural point of land overlooking the Pacific; and at high tide a geyser of sea water pushes up through a volcanic rock opening, shooting into the sky accompanied by Oohs and Ahs.

Swinging up through the hills and mountain passes, over the top and sliding down through switchback turns, brings you to El Rosario for a brief gas stop or breakfast at

the famous Mama Espinosa restaurant. Some say this is where the real magic of Baja California begins. The traveler meets the whimsical Boojum, Elephant trees and the gigantic Cardón cactus growing amongst great boulders of this vast desert garden. Just after a rain, the desert literally comes alive with sudden green and splashes of color. Cataviña is a wide spot in the road, approximate 150 miles beyond El Rosario. A beautiful hacienda hotel is in the midst of this wonder, and full moon desert nights are mystical. Catavina is easily reached in 6 hours from Ensenada. This is a lovely 3 day weekend destination. In another hundred miles is the turn off to LA Bay. This is a favorite get away for fishermen as it is only a day's drive to the Gulf of California. Don't miss stopping in to visit a fabulous art gallery and a nicely done museum.

We will be on our way to Baja Sur in part two!

*Editor's Note: Don't miss part two of Road Trip! Will finish the fast-track journey all the way to Cabo San Lucas when it was only a sleepy fishing village. Read this and more in Martina's book, **Dust in My Sandals, Tales from a Baja Traveler.** See our ad and order today! ✈*

COOKING LIKE A MEXICAN!...

continued from page 6

Mexico, "para dares gusto".

There is a Mexican leyenda or story about verdolagas and women. The story says that there were once two girls who were best friends since they were little. They always played together, went to school, did homework and helped each other in chores. Maria and Piedad were joined at the hip until they reached the age when they started liking boys. As good Mexican stories go, they had a little drama in their life; they liked the same boy. Maria was the one who

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COOKING LIKE A MEXICAN!...

continued from page 7

got asked out by the boy, and Piedad was green with envy but never lost hope. Then, the boy became a man and Maria and Piedad grown women and Maria was to marry the boy.

Piedad began drifting away from her friend but had to be there for her wedding. At the wedding, a nice man asked Piedad to dance, and they married quickly after, since it's a Mexican "curse" to be a single woman if your close friend marries and you don't. Piedad became pregnant first, happy to have won at least one battle and Maria could never have children. To smooth things out, Maria asked to be the baby's godmother, thus being tied forever to her childhood friend. As the baby grew up, he was spoiled rotten by his mother and godmother so he

was often throwing tantrums and what not, but Piedad was quickly becoming tired of her son's behavior.

One day, the boy threw a big fit and was about to be punished by his mother. He ran out of the house and looked for shelter in Maria's house. Things turned even more complicated because Maria was not happy about Piedad's ways with her son, so they started fighting. It was such a big fight that they pulled each other's hair out and the husbands had to separate them. Piedad moved away with her family and Maria never saw the little boy again.

They both died on the same day for a strange reason and stood at the gates of heaven. The story says that when the creator saw them, he refused to let them in and instead sent them back to earth as a plant. The creator turned them into a small plant

that grows in humidity for all the tears they made each other shed, that grows like the hair they pulled from each other's head, and that was often mistaken for a weed, to learn their lesson. Grandmothers say that for that reason, verdolagas must be thoroughly cleaned because there will always be a hair found tangled up in the little stems.

Ingredients

3 lbs. pork stew meat, bone-out cubed

3 lbs. pork stew meat, bone-in cubed

1 onion, quartered

2 -3 jalapeño peppers, chopped

4 -6 tomatillos, quartered

1/4 cup cilantro

3 bunches of verdolagas

salt and pepper to taste

Procedure

In a pot add water almost mid-way. When the water has come to a boil add all the pork meat, salt and black pepper


to taste.

When the pork meat has changed color, lower to medium heat and let simmer.

In a saucepan fill the pot halfway. Add the quartered onion, jalapenos, tomatillos, cilantro, and boil until the skin falls off the tomatillos. When ready place everything in the blender and liquify.

Add the sauce to the pot and make any adjustments to the seasonings. Let simmer for 15 minutes and then add the verdolagas (after rinsing and disinfecting them) and let simmer for another 30 minutes or until meat is tender and verdolagas are soft.

Serve with beans and tortillas and enjoy! 🍴



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