



Water Watch 2022 Update

Be Prepared...

"If I've learned anything recently, it's that humans are really reluctant to give things up to prevent a catastrophe," said Brad Udall, a water and climate scientist at Colorado State University. "They're willing to hang on to the

very end and risk a calamity."

"What?! No water!" I hollered as I turn the spigot on and found nothing running out of it. Surprise! Yet I had to laugh a

BY MARTINA DOBESH

little at myself as today I'm writing an article to update my May coverage of *Water Watch 2022*. It shouldn't have been a surprise for all of the community of La Loma and Playas La Misión were served a water warning from

John Stadelmann, the president of the La Misión water board. He pulled no punches and laid out the facts.

"On 12 July 2022, the federal government of Mexico announced that three states have immediate water emergencies: Sonora, Aguascalientes, and Baja California.

We could all see it coming. Our rainy season last year did not produce any sustained rainfall. The estuary is drier than we have ever seen it. We've all read about the drought, and the Colorado River drying up which is the main source of "imported" water here on the Baja. And we've seen those disturbing pictures of Lake Powell. Well, the drought has arrived here in La Misión."

Mr. Stadelmann continued his warning with 5 emergency measures effective immediately:

"These measures are being taken to keep our well from

running dry and to keep our license from being revoked by the government for overuse of the aquifer:

1. The daily water allowance is reduced from 250 to 200 gallons per day.

2. There is a moratorium on new meter installations until further notice.

3. Over-users will be charged at twice the current rate for over-use.

4. Landscape watering is prohibited. Save that water for essential human needs.

5. Daily, we will turn off the water supply if we have pumped over 100 cubic meters.

If we work together and pay attention to reducing demand, we'll have water 24/7."

Here I was standing at the kitchen sink with no water, and all I had was drinking water to wash the dishes, flush the toilet and I'd have to forego my shower.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Que Pasa In Baja?

BY OLIVER QUINTERO



Baja California Under Fire! This past Friday was marked by simultaneous acts of violence in Mexicali, Tijuana, Ensenada and Rosarito, where perpetrators set 24 trucks, cars, and buses on fire in the middle of the main streets of Baja, with no reported casualties.

which was ongoing and had attracted thousands of tourists from southern California and other places in Mexico.

A lot of police and military activity could be seen almost on every street of Baja, while authorities tried to capture criminals involved in the acts.

At press time, 17 individu-

fourth state suffering from these domestic terrorism incidents in this past week alone. Jalisco, Guanajuato and Chihuahua had it even worse, as several stores were also burned down, and civilians were also killed.

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The violent events caused panic among the population which preferred to stay home on Friday and most of Saturday.

Ensenada decided to close clubs and bars located in the first street on Friday, as a safety measure in case criminals decided to attack those places as it has happened in other states, Rosarito on the other hand did not cancel the Rosarito Beach Fest event,

als had already been captured in different parts of our state, and authorities have already attributed the incident to the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG). Although the motive for the acts have not been made clear by authorities, messages being shared in social media attributed to the CJNG say that the cartel was protesting the incarceration of some of their members.

Baja California was the

Roof in Baja. Residential construction in Baja California reached the highest inflation record in the last 20 years, shooting home prices an average of 62% just in the last two years, stated Luis Roberto Valero, head of the Center for Economic Studies in Baja.

At the same time, workers receiving low wages have reached the highest numbers in the history of Baja, making it near to impossible for them

to be able to afford a home, even with the federal government house credit program INFONAVIT.

Playa Hermosa Clean Once Again. Authorities from Ensenada, including Mayor Armando Ayala, stated that the waters in Playa Hermosa beach are once again safe for bathing in them, and they even bathed in the waters themselves to show citizens that its completely safe.

Playa Hermosa had been closed for swimming in its water for about a year, because of the high number of bacteria found in the water, with levels reaching 24 thousand enterococci in every 100 milliliters of water, while the norm establishes that safe water can only have up to 200 enterococci.

Rowing The Pacific. Michelle Lee departed from Ensenada in her boat on a journey that she says, is expected to take around 8 months, with Australia as her destination crossing all the Pacific.

Originally, she wanted to depart from San Francisco but could not get the necessary permits to do so and decided to start rowing from Ensenada.

Michelle has already rowed over 3,100 miles through the whole Atlantic Ocean in 68 only days and is now trying to complete 8,700 miles through the pacific.

You can follow her journey online at www.solorower.com, where she has set up a tracker that updates her location every two hours.

Local Entrepreneurs Introduce Canned Sparkling Wine to the Area. Cristina Puno and Keiko Nishikawa, presented Micha-Micha, their canned sparkling wine to business people of the National Chamber of Industry in Ensenada.

Amalia Vizcarra, head of the industrials, stated that she sees a huge potential for the beverage in the local and foreign market and invited other members to do business with the entrepreneurs.

Their first edition con-

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sisted of 1,000 cans that they rapidly distributed, making a second edition of 2,000 cans supported by the great acceptance the product has had in local restaurants, bars and stores.

Firearms Trade Campaign a Success. Government officials from the public security office in Baja stated that during the firearms trade campaign, the government has received 38 guns, 56 rifles, 272 loaders, 2,956 live ammo and even two explosive devices.

The campaign allow for people to take fireweapons to certain places, where citizens can exchange them for food coupons, no questions asked.

Baja Wins Third Place in Exports. Baja California positioned itself as the third state in Mexico with the highest number of exports, generating 1,582 million dollars in May 2022.

Exports from Baja make up 8.9% of the total exports from Mexico, an 0.3% increase from last year, where we registered 8.6% of the total exports. 🐼

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What Mexico Has Taught Me

BY THE UNKNOWN GRINGO



I enjoy an ice-cold beer. I prefer to drink it out of a clear pilsner glass so I can see its color. It's kind of a ritual.... I have my favorite beer glass in my freezer at home so that my beer will be as cold as possible.... I pour my beer slowly so I won't make too much foam. And it's a rare dinner of Mexican food for me that won't have a beer with it. The hot salsa demands it. And it will be a Mexican beer. Guaranteed.

In Ensenada I have three favorite places to enjoy beer. Each is uniquely different. I will often have just one beer in one place and go to another simply because I like each place so much. Let's start.

Hussong's. Established in 1892 on Ruiz, it is a local institution. I have postcards with pictures of the outside

and inside dating back to the 1920's and the place simply hasn't changed much. I call it "a living museum". If you go early, it can be fairly quiet. But I like it when it's loud. The bands of mariachis will come and go, each going from table to table asking what songs customers want to hear. It's the customers who stand up and start singing with elaborate arm gestures that delight me. Songs of lost love, desire for revenge, or deep regret at past decisions. Sometimes the whole bar starts singing. It's a happy place. I like sitting at the bar up on a stool so I can see the whole place and watch. I've chatted with many people there and listened to their stories about living in or visiting Ensenada. Cats sometimes wander in. I love that. And pigeons rou-

tinely fly in and eat peanuts they find on the floor. You want mixed drinks, imported beers, or shots of tequila and mezcal, they have them. I get a cold Mexican beer and enjoy the show.

The Andaluz Bar. It's in the Riviera del Pacifico, the old casino near the harbor that opened in 1930. First called the Hotel Playa de Ensenada, it was supposed to go gang-busters because of the Prohibition Era in the States. Prohibition started in 1920 and ended in 1933, so the casino got a late start. Plus, the road down from the border was rough and Tijuana supplied a lot of what people were looking for. It closed, reopened, closing finally in 1964. The city eventually got ownership from the federal government

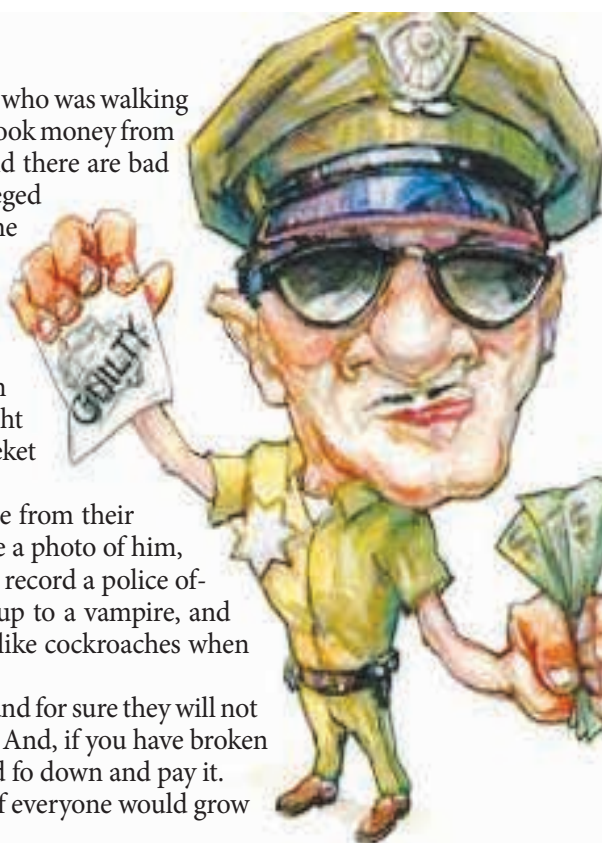
What To Do If You're Stopped By The Police

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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and now uses it as a civic and cultural center. The Andaluz has a full bar, but I buy my beer there and take it outside to enjoy the area that is called The Bougainvillea Patio. It is quiet, calm, and intimate, the opposite of Hussong's. You have the historic casino on three sides to look at. Lots of tile work and the old bell tower is overhead. It just feels good. I get there by going to the rear of the casino off Lopez Mateos and not through any front door on Costero.

Warning: If a cruise ship is

in the harbor, you will often find lots of cruise-goers there taking a tour of the casino and drinking margaritas, plus vendors with booths selling trinkets. The late afternoon usually has those people long gone. I have, however, joined the ship-sters on several occasions and taken a tour of the old casino and ballroom. I highly recommend that.

The Lucky Irish Pub #4. Smack dap on the beach, about two miles north of downtown, above, and right next to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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Road Trip! Part 2

Fast track to Land's End

BY MARTINA DOBESH

In Part one, we explored Ti-juana to the deserts of Catavina and left off at the little fishing village on the shore of LA Bay. We are on our way, now, to Baja Sur. So much more to see and so little time; best to that the time now! A few miles before Guerrero Negro expect a military check point. If you've never been stopped, there is nothing to worry about. Be mindful you are in their country and have a right to check your vehicle. Smile and

give them a soda. Soon you will cross into Baja Sur. This coastal town is best known for the annual gray whales' return. It is also a working town that exports sea salt. You will not find this a town featuring tourist amenities. The town swells with thousands of visitors each year between February to April. Visitors arrive to see the magnificent whales and are amazed by the mothers who bring their babies to meet these strange human creatures who

shriek with laughter as they blow water into their boat. It has been reported they even allow a human kiss on their great barnacle snouts. In this encounter, most people will say they experienced a true interspecies communication which has changed their lives. Continuing south there is a great side trip to Bahía Asunción on the Pacific side for surfing, fishing and the best shrimp tacos anywhere. Artists capture the purity of the light on canvas. Traveling further south the landscape becomes rich in color and texture. The road cuts through the volcanic landscape of red lava rock. San Ignacio is an oasis in the desert, with a fresh water river lined with date palms. It is a bird watcher's delight. An overnight stay can include a day of whale watching. But there are other surprises in this



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small town. Before the Spaniards arrived there were tens of thousands of Indians living on the peninsula. Here you can arrange a tour to a Cochimi cave painting. It might be a little difficult to leave this place as it is has a quiet timelessness and protected from advancement. But the open road keeps calling.

The excitement builds as you head toward the Gulf of California. The road cuts through mountains and desert with only ranchos along the way. You can't miss the Tres

Virgines, The Three Virgins is a sign of ancient volcanic activity. Dropping down a steep grade into Santa Rosalia, the stunning carillon blue gulf waters take your breath away. This whole area has a rich Wild West past with a French influence. However, mining has begun again, and diminishes the stunning beauty that once was the welcome into the bustling port town.

Just 45 minutes south of Santa Rosalia is the small fishing village of Mulegé and Bahía Concepción, a place of

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Photo by Martina Dobesh

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the most incredible beaches and inland protected waters. Enjoy Kayaking to pristine islands, a pig roast or relaxing in town to meet the locals over a cold beer. The historic mission and prison without doors are within walking distance. Mulegé still observes the siesta and has a laid back quality hard to find these days. My sister and I were so smitten with its simplicity and extraordinary beauty; we delayed our departure an entire week!

I wrote in my journal, "Still trying to leave Mulegé." Loreto, two hours south, has created

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Fish With "Human Teeth" Caught in Cabo

A Lithuanian man and wife fishing on the shores of Cabo caught a fish "with human teeth" and shared a video on social media. The fish is actually a Tetraodontidae, also called pufferfish and blowfish, which are usually found along the Eastern Pacific tropical waters and the Galapagos Island.

According to Wikipedia, Tetraodontidae is a family of primarily marine and estuarine fish of the order Tetraodontiformes. The family includes many familiar species vari-

ously called pufferfish, puffers, balloonfish, blowfish, blowies, bubblefish, globefish, swellfish, toadfish, toadies, toadles, honey toads, sugar toads, and sea squab. They are morphologically similar to the closely related porcupinefish, which have large external spines (unlike the thinner, hidden spines of the Tetraodontidae, which are only visible when the fish have puffed up). The scientific name refers to the four large teeth, fused into an upper and lower plate, which are used

for crushing the hard shells of crustaceans and mollusks, their natural prey.

The majority of the pufferfish's species are toxic and some are among the most poisonous vertebrates in the world. In certain species, the internal organs, such as the liver, and sometimes the skin, contain tetrodotoxin, and are highly toxic to most animals when eaten; nevertheless, the meat of some species is considered a delicacy in Japan (as 河豚, pronounced fugu), Korea (as 복, bok, or 복어, bogeo), and China (as 河豚, hétún) when prepared by specially trained chefs who know which part is safe to eat and in what quantity. Other pufferfish species with nontoxic flesh, such as the northern puffer, *Sphoeroides maculatus*, of Chesapeake Bay, are considered a delicacy elsewhere.

The species *Torquigener albomaculosus* was described by David Attenborough as "the greatest artist of the animal kingdom" due to the males' unique habit of wooing females by creating nests in sand composed of complex geometric designs."

Curious data: It is documented that dolphins love to "smoke" their breath, which causes an effect similar to being stoned. If you are lucky enough to be in La Playa fishermen's area in the San Jose marina, ask them for a blowfish, those fishermen know how to cook it and they're delicious! 🐟

WATER WATCH 2022 UPDATE...

continued from page 1

I saw I was not as prepared as I thought I was. I was still thinking there was time. Didn't I just write an article that said, "The cuts are here now?" Chagrined by my own complacency I have turned this Water Watch Update into a real life experience.. This was a good wakeup call.

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are very interested in keeping the water running and have no political agenda governing water delivery as CESPT may. While no one wants to get a warning like this, it is better to step into

reality. The last part of the warning was sobering, "This is not some temporary condition that our community needs to work through until the rains return.

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Cooking Like a Mexican

BY ALEJANDRA BORBOLLA



Mexican National Holidays are right around the corner, which brings out the best in our food, especially the most exquisite, sophisticated dish in Mexican cooking: Chiles en Nogada. This is hands down my favorite dish and the one I'm the pickiest about, knowing the work that comes with it. I have prepared this dish (and I would never do it again); it was a 12-hour marathon in the kitchen and is one of my fondest memories with my mother, who at first refused to help but ended up in the kitchen with me. It's a bonding dish, a very hard one, and requires tons of patience and love but is the most rewarding thing anyone can cook. I personally say that whoever can make chiles en nogada properly can do anything. The flavor that comes from combining sweet, sour, salty and bitter makes the tongue and palate sing. The original recipe calls for more than 100 ingredients. Nowadays, there are many versions but still not as extensive as the original one, which has sadly, been lost, and one of the main ingredients can and should no longer be found, but I will get to that later. However, I searched for the closest one to the real deal with grandma's tips included.

Chiles en Nogada season is only three months long. Whoever says anything different is lying. I know. Science has come a long way to bring ingredients all year long, but still, this dish can only be made and served July, August and September, when the ingredients are traditionally in season and at their prime in flavor.

You know how Champagne can only be made in Champagne France, Parmigiano-Reggiano in Parma Italy, etc.? Well, chiles en Nogada used to be made only in Puebla, Mexico. Some of the ingredients like chiles, walnuts, peaches, pomegranate, pears, apples and acitrón (bishop's weed) can only be found in that state because of the species but modern life has pushed us to use regular species for the same ingredients, thus achieving a very close copy of the flavor.

Acitrón comes from biznaga, a big, round cacti I'm sure you've seen at least in pictures. It is now a protected species because it was so popular and used in so many dishes and candies it was over-exploited and became nearly extinct; it took a very long time to grow. Before it got to that point, the cacti was peeled, the pulp chopped in big chunks and

covered in a thick syrup made up of 70% sugar, and baked.

There are different stories about the appearance of chiles en Nogada in Mexican cuisine, but it is definitely known that the year they appeared was 1821. Some versions say that chiles en nogada appeared around the time of Agustín de Iturbide -- Mexican army general and politician. During the War of Independence, he built a successful political and military coalition that took control in Mexico City on September 27th, 1821, decisively gaining independence for Mexico. After the secession of Mexico was secured, he was proclaimed President of the Regency in 1821. A year later, he was announced as the Constitutional Emperor of Mexico, reigning briefly from 19 May 1822 to 19 March 1823. He is credited as the original designer of the first Mexican flag, and signed the Independence Act and the Cordoba treaties. Santa Monica Convent nuns, the Augustine sisters, are often claimed as the masters behind this dish. When they found out Iturbide was coming to town; it is said that they prayed for inspiration for a main dish that was worthy of being up to huge celebratory

standards.

A little add-on to this story is that the first chile en nogada must be served on Saint Augustin's fete on August 28. Mexico has always been a very fervent Catholic country, and Iturbide's arrival from Veracruz to Puebla conveniently fell on the same day as the Saint's party. It must be mentioned that the shortest way from Veracruz to Mexico City, (where all the important stuff always happened) was through Puebla.

Coincidentally, or maybe

Some people say that the colors of this dish were chosen by the sisters for a very good reason. Some others say the symbolism was added years later to give it a deeper, more heartfelt meaning and as an effort to raise patriotism.

Green: independence and hope; a band of parsley is added rich in A, B2, B6, C and E vitamins.

White: Catholicism and unity; the walnut sauce is almost white, rich in folic acid and vitamins.

Red: the blood shed by those



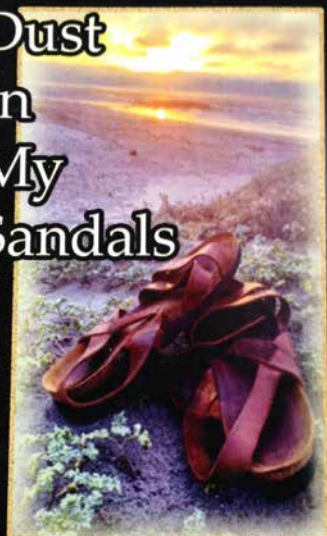
not so, the civil celebration for Iturbide signing the treaties was the same as Iturbide's birthday, on September 27th. He was led to believe that the dish was made especially for him, which is complete BS, since the dish was made a month before. The only difference is that someone had the bright idea to decorate it like the first Mexican flag for Iturbide, who designed it.

who fought for the country; pomegranate seeds are the perfect complement. They have a high manganese content.

A completely different story is that in Agustín de Iturbide's regime there were three soldiers who had girlfriends in Puebla. The ladies wanted to welcome them with a special dish that had the colors in their uniforms,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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WHAT MEXICO HAS TAUGHT...

continued from page 3

Punta Morro Hotel, in a green and red building. This is my current favorite. It's a pub that also offers micheladas and clamatos, a bar, and a restaurant. But what makes it VERY special is an add-on area where you can get Mexican craft beer on tap from over a dozen Baja breweries. Each brewery rents a "station" from Lucky Irish that can house up to six kegs. There are maybe 15 stations. Some only feature three or four beers.... but you have dozens of beers to choose from AND they give free samples before you decide which one to buy. Yes, ask for a sample. They have an outdoor patio that is twenty feet from the waves. No, don't throw your glass into the ocean. The beach is not sand, but rock. And that makes for an interesting sound when the waves come in and go out. The view is stunning as you can see both headlands of the bay plus the islands offshore.

They have a large parking lot, but I take a city bus there for 13 pesos from the corner of Costero and Macheros, where the McDonald's is. The bus should have an "El Sauzal" sign on the windshield. That means it's going north. You want to go north. Some buses go south instead. Ask the bus driver before you get on. El Sauzal? Norte? If he says "si" then get on. I ask to be dropped

off at Punta Morro because I figure all the bus drivers know where that is. I get back on the bus when I'm done drinking at the bus stop that is next to the bridge there. Every bus stops there because it's the bus stop that all the university students use. The area has several universities. Make sure the bus goes "Costero" and not "Centro" if you want to retrace your steps. Otherwise, you will go to inland Ensenada and not end up back at McDonald's. Ask before you get on. Costero? Some buses don't have windshield signs. Hey, just ask. Easy as pie and each ride costs about 60 cents. You will love the view at Lucky Irish AND the beer.

No, I do not live at McDonald's. My hotel is two blocks away on Lopez Mateos. If I want to take a city bus

you about before that won't fool anyone but is good for a big laugh any time you show it. I carry several in my wallet. A large example is in his window. And say "hello" to his cats for me. 🐾

ROAD TRIP PART 2...

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a National Park of protected waters and outer islands. If you are brave, you can take a tour and swim with the Whale Sharks in the turquoise water. Off the malecón and into town you will find Misión de Nuestra Señora where singing voices of the faithful float out into the charming plaza. Everything is within walking distance; art galleries, gourmet foods, oven "fried" pizza, and

great prehistoric backbone. We were thrilled by the completion of the 1000 miles of extraordinary experiences. Back then, Cabo was a quiet little town with warm sleepy streets and sensuous night breezes. Time was transformed. We explored on a shoe string budget and made friends with the locals. We fell so completely with Baja California, we vowed that day to return and the rest is history. 🐾

WATER WATCH 2022 UPDATE...

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This is a permanent condition. Water is becoming scarce. Our life-long habits tend to abuse this once abundant resource." This suggested communities need to learn new living skills. It is time

on how we respond to this as a society. ...we can't really evacuate all of our cities, and we have to find a way to do more with less."

Here in La Misión we see the river in the estuary for bird migration, shrinking beyond recognition. Thunder clouds rise up in the east and we wonder could we call in a few drops of the precious liquid? I talked with George who was getting his water trucked filled up. There were five others waiting in line. He was aware of the Colorado River running dry. I asked him about the water here and did they have enough to take care of the other areas of La Misión community. He assured me that they were having "no problema"... except for one issue... the water is now salty and smell funny. A red flag went up! This is not good. Researching on the USGS site,



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south to La Bufadora, I will also start my ride at McDonald's. And.....on a hot day in the summer, McDonald's has a tiny side counter on Lopez Mateos that dispenses ice cream in cones or cups. You don't go into McDonald's. Go around the corner. If it's open, a single cone is 14 pesos and is a true bargain. Then cross Lopez Mateos to Rudy's Curios and get the fake ID I've told

silver shops. Many people fly into the airport here. A two night stay will allow you to travel into Sierra de la Gigantia to Misión San Francisco Javier, the most beautiful of all the missions founded throughout Baja California.

La Paz the capital of Baja California Sur is built on the water front and sweeping bay. The malecón is a favorite for romantic strolls in the warm evening breezes. It has become a tourist resort that is a gateway to Los Cabos. There are two routes to Lands End at this point. Highway 1 will take you to San Jose del Cabo and the airport or you can go by way of Highway 19 to Todos Santos and on to Cabo San Lucas. Sis and I chose to go the wilderness route into the artist community of Todos Santos, a quiet and charming pueblo. Only 48 miles from Cabo San Lucas we had time to stop at the top of a hill gazing down on the breath taking view. The land penetrated into the shimmering Pacific Ocean like a

to ask your own HOA how they are preparing.

In the last Water Watch 2022 article I suggested to be aware of what is going on in California as Baja gets whatever water is left of the shrinking Colorado River allotments. YouTube show us all quite graphically the reality for those who still might think this will be turned around by a winder rain. Pictures from NASA and their report is that Lake Mead is only 27% of its capacity, while people on the ground note an extreme drop in just weeks. One reporter put it this way. "Lake Mead is like a Bank Account and we are really overdrawn." The media is starting to use the term "dead pool" which is a bit frightening in itself. What it means is if the lake drops to a certain level, there might be a little water left, but not enough to run through the turbines at Hoover Dam, nor complete it run to Baja. The Bureau of Reclamation, a government agency managing water, was asked how much trouble are we in. His answer is chilling: "It depends

my worst fears were confirmed. Being so close to the ocean when too much fresh water is pumped out from the aquifers it stops the natural flow of fresh water from reaching the ocean; this allows the ocean water to intrude inland. The incoming saltwater decreases freshwater storage, "and in extreme cases can result in the abandonment of wells." Lucky for us in La Misión community, the water board keeps watch on the health of our private well. What is not yet talked about is the issue of new homes and mega developments still scraping the hills. Are they relying solely on the water trucks to fill their pilas? Due diligence for any home purchases or building is wise. Ask your agent, "Where does the water come from?" And listen very carefully to the answer.

Go to ggnorth.com for Water Watch 2022 Part 1 and 2

Editor's note: Martina is a freelance writer, journalist and author of Dust in My Sandals, Tales from a Baja Traveler. See our ad and order now! 🐾



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COOKING LIKE A MEXICAN...

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which had the first Mexican flag's colors on them and they didn't want to refer to their momma's recipe books. They prayed to the Rosary Virgin and Saint Pascal for enlightenment got cooking and the result was chiles en nogada.

Which is the real story? Who knows? The bottom line is, the essence of the recipe has been kept throughout the years and it is now a part of our heritage, known worldwide.

For the stuffing:

5 Poblano peppers (Read below for instructions)

½ pound of pork loin, chopped in small pieces, almost ground

½ pound of beef, chopped same as pork

1 big, mature brown pear, chopped

1 big, mature apple, chopped

1 big, mature peach, chopped

1 plantain, chopped
1 pound tomatoes, ripe, chopped

½ onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 oz. raisins, whole

1 oz. almonds, peeled, toasted and chopped

¼ cup of pine seeds (find them as piñones)

Salt

For the sauce:

50 walnuts

¼ lt. crème fraiche (NOT SOUR CREAM. If you can't find it, use "media crema" or half cream)

¼ cup of goat cheese, "queso fresco" or panela cheese (I know these vary in taste greatly. All three are acceptable and depends on your personal preference)

For the batter:

3 eggs and 1 extra white

Vegetable oil to deep-fry

1 bundle of parsley to decorate

1 cup of pomegranate seeds to decorate

Preparation:

In a deep skillet, add two tablespoons of oil and cook the onion until soft. Then, add the beef and pork and brown.

Puree the tomatoes and the garlic and add them to the meat with the saffron and laurel, and simmer until bubbly. Turn the heat to the lowest setting.

Add the fruit, almonds, and raisins and let simmer until liquid is consumed.

Grill, skin, devein and clean the peppers.

Cut a slit in the peppers carefully and stuff them with the picadillo.

Sprinkle flour over the peppers.

Separate the eggs and beat the whites into stiff peaks, slowly incorporate the yolks and make sure you don't stop whisking!

Carefully, soak the chiles in the batter and fry them. Once the batter is golden brown, take out the chiles and rest them in a paper towel to remove excess oil.



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For the walnut sauce, peel the walnuts and blend with the cream, cheese, sugar and cinnamon.

Pour the sauce over the chiles and decorate with pomegranate seeds and parsley, making a Mexican flag!

Tips:

-The stuffing can be made a day before but nogada must be fresh.

-To buy peppers: greener are sweeter, darker are spicier. Remember you're going to stuff them so make sure you buy them as regularly shaped as possible.

-To peel the chiles without breaking them, grill them evenly on an open fire, avoid burning them but make sure they blister up in every side.

- Fruits must be added in order, from toughest to softest. This way, you'll avoid some fruits mashing in a puree and some others being too tough.

-To make the batter, use a wooden spoon to avoid breaking the bubbles and losing volume.

- In the olden days, families used to gather around the table to peel the walnuts. It was a family affair. Whoever did not want to do this could go to a convent and buy peeled walnuts from the nuns, who instead of talking over the walnuts would pray the rosary. People said that the chiles en nogada made with "nun walnuts" tasted better because the walnuts were "prayed".

-Some people say that the true chiles en nogada are covered in egg batter. Some say it's not necessary. It's your preference.

-The consistency of the sauce is tricky. It must be nice and even, not too thin and not too thick, kind of like paint, to coat the chile and quite chunky, because of the walnuts.

-Chiles en nogada can be pricey when purchased at restaurants, because it's quite a hassle to make them. Most restaurants though, serve them unbattered as they are easier to work in busy kitchens. 🍴



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