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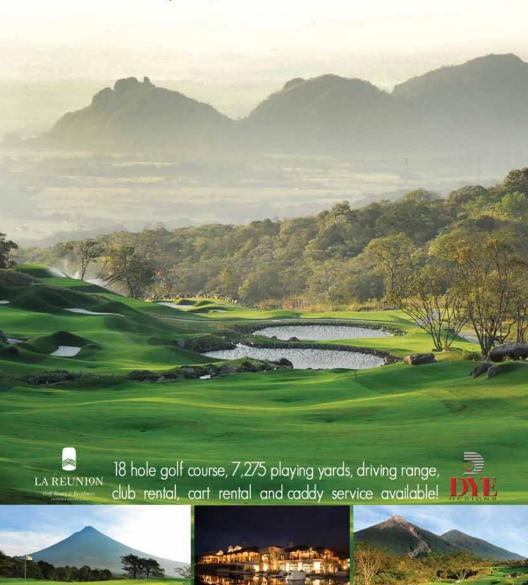
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DATEBOOK HIGHLIGHT by Thor Janson



Contestants from the 2010 Rabin Ajau pageant in Cobán. (PHOTO: THOR JANSON)

Cobán's Folkloric Festival

n 1936 Cobán prospered greatly from coffee exports to Europe. A group of leading businessmen decided that it was time to organize a regional fair, and so the inaugural Feria Departamental" was planned for the first week in August.

As part of the event it was decided to elect two queens, one representing the European population and the other chosen from among the indigenous Maya. The first Ladino queen was given the title "Flor de Café"—Coffee Flower—and the winner was Florence Hempsted Disseldorff, the daughter of a prominent coffee baron. The indigenous title "India Bonita Cobanera"—Beautiful Cobán Indian Girl—was bestowed upon a young lass by the name of Armenia Macz.

Forty years later, with the idea of enlarging the indigenous event and to include candidates from all over the county, it evolved into what we have today: the Rabin Ajau, Guatemala's National Folkloric Festival.

My friend and host when I am in Alta Verapaz is José Sierra, secretary of communications for Cobán. He extends a warm welcome to one and all who wish to attend this year's pageant, which will begin at 4 p.m. Saturday, July 30, at the INJUD Sports Complex gym in Cobán.

Mr. Sierra also encourages guests to enjoy all the other features of the annual Cobán Festival during the first week of August, as well as paying a visit to one or more of the natural wonders of Alta Verapaz, such as Lanquín Cave and the world-renowned Semuc Champey Nature Reserve.

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Rabin Ajau hopeful, 2010

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FROM THE EDITOR

pageant like no other commands our attention this month as young indigenous women from across Guatemala trek to Cobán and compete for the title of Rabin Ajau—Daughter of the King.

Featuring some 80 contestants proudly dressed in regal *traje*, it's among the most spectacular events of the Mayan world. Thor Janson attended last year's coronation; his words and emotive photos are this month's cover feature.

This month's Revue also recognizes the 20th anniversary of the GOD'S CHILD Project, which is changing lives dramatically in Guatemala and internationally. Congratulations to Patrick Atkinson and your bighearted staff and volunteers.

From the nation's capital, Anna-Claire Bevan takes us on a tour of Paseo de La Sexta, where a total makeover has transformed gritty Sexta Avenida into a popular, pedestrian-friendly destination. While visiting Guatemala City, be sure to see the massive Relief Map—an amazingly precise scale model of Guatemala designed in 1905.

Destinations in the Western Highlands are featured this month, including a sprawling theme-park resort and an eco-tourism site founded by ex-guerillas. For a primer on the history and top sites of Quetzaltenango, hop aboard Tranvía de los Altos, a locomotive-like bus that circulates throughout the No. 2 city.

July 25 is a holiday in La Antigua Guatemala and several other cities that embrace Santiago (St. James) as their patron saint. Check out the DateBook for other events and activities on the calendar this month. Amazing to think we're already halfway through 2011.

—(Matt Bokor

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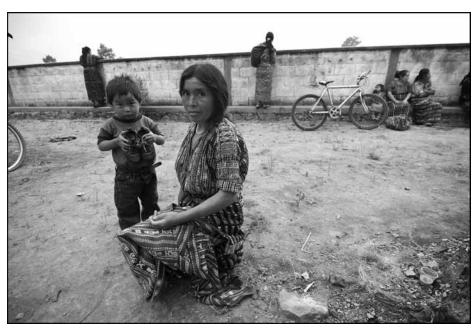
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"P.O.V." (El Baranco, Sololá) — Photo by Anna Morgan (annajmorgan@gmail.com)



ABOVE: Six judges take notes as they prepare to select 10 finalists. RIGHT Nine of last year's contestants (a 10th is the cover photo). In the center is the 2010 winner, Mirna Judith Chavajay y Cavajay.

Maya Princess Rabin Ajau

Daughter of the King

Cobán's annual festival includes a spectacular traditional pageant

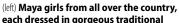
t was a cool July afternoon and the *cheepy cheepy* (misting rain) was refreshing the land when we arrived in Cobán, the capital of Alta Verapaz Department. **The last week in July is when Cobán celebrates its annual festival** with parades, rodeos, expositions, fairs and one of the most wonderful cultural events in the entire Mayan world: the coronation of the "Rabin Ajau," the Daughter of the King.

Nearly 80 beautiful Maya girls from all over the country, each dressed in the most spectacularly gorgeous traditional ceremonial costumes, compete for the title. First they had to be elected as local princesses by their communities during the year. It is a "beauty" contest but the focus is on spiritual beauty, oratory and cultural knowledge. Additional criteria include grace, charm, carriage, sincerity, intelligence and knowledge of history.

The pageant was scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the large gymnasium at the INJUD Sports Complex. As the hour approached, the dignitaries and guests began to arrive, including the governor of Cobán and his









Floating across the stage dressed in formal tribal regalia and crowned with a spectacular eagle-feather war bonnet, Gregory "Apache" Gómez came whirling and skipping.

entourage, cultural representatives from all over the country, families and friends of the girls, and a handful of tourists and other interested parties from Guatemala City.

After setting up my photographic equipment, I was milling about behind the gym when two buses brimming with vivacious Maya girls arrived. They were in high spirits and it was heartwarming to see young women from all over the nation getting along like old friends after only a few days together during preliminary activities. I clicked off a few shots as they emerged from the buses and followed them into the huge hall, by now full of expectant guests.

The place was abuzz: People were drinking excellent local coffee, chatting and eating chuchitos and cambray—corn packets, one savory with a tomato and meat filling, the other sweet and often flavored with anis.

Finally the master of ceremonies, a Maya gentleman dressed in suit and tie, took the stage and officially welcomed all present. This took some time as he individually welcomed all the dignitaries. Before I could hide, the spotlight was on me-someone had given him my name and I had to take a bow. Actually, I appreciated the honor and felt even more welcomed. The event felt like a big family party.

ON WITH THE SHOW

Each girl's presentation included saying prayers, which is usually accompanied with offerings of incense, flowers and other ceremonial objects. "To the Heart of Heaven and to the Heart of the Earth," they chanted. They also had to introduce themselves, tell a little about their hometowns and offer greetings from their people to all those present.

All the while, six judges were taking notes as they prepared to select 10 finalists. Hour after hour went by as every girl gave it her best effort—it was a completely magical marathon event.

Early on I had made my personal selection: a stunning young lady from San Pedro la



Contestants from last year's Rabin Ajau. The focus of the pageant is on spiritual beauty, oratory and cultural knowledge. Additional criteria include grace, charm, carriage, sincerity and intelligence.

Laguna, Sololá by the name of Nancy Graciela González Cortez. She had a certain aristocratic and regal bearing that I found irresistible. Dressed in traditional blue upon blue, her costume was simple but elegant. The whole combination made her truly appear as I imagine a Maya princess would.

It was almost 1 a.m. before the judges made their decision and the emcee read off the names of the 10 finalists, accompanied by cheers from the crowd and squeals of joy from the girls. It was no surprise that Nancy made the short list. The others included princesses from the departments of Sololá, El Quiché, Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango and Alta Verapaz.

After a brief intermission came a special surprise: A visiting dignitary representing the Apache Nation from New Mexico and the Indigenous Institute of the Americas performed one of their sacred dances.

Floating across the stage dressed in formal tribal regalia and crowned with a spectacular eagle-feather war bonnet, Gregory "Apache" Gómez came whirling and skipping; from time to time he would freeze, slowly looking around, to finally sound his sacred whistle. The enrapt audience solemnly followed his every move. With a final great war cry, Apache Gómez exited the stage as the people roared their approval.

Now each finalist was given one more opportunity to display her knowledge of sacred ceremonies and prayers. On top of this the contestants were asked a series of questions by the judges and had to talk about an issue, such as global warming, for which they were not prepared. Most of these girls were coming straight from their villages and farms. We can imagine that most of them were not used to staying up all night—even some of the dignitaries were dozing off and on.

Finally, around 3 a.m. the panel of judges entered into deliberation. And the deliberation was quite heated. On and on they discussed all the fine points ...continued on page 104

GOD'S CHILD Project

20 years of improving lives

Malnourished kids are among the many who benefit

uatemala has one of the highest rates of malnutrition in Latin America, with 45 percent of children under the age of 5 suffering from this chronic and life-threatening illness. When Jose Alberto arrived at Casa Jackson, an emergency recovery center for infants suffering from acute malnutrition, he was the physical embodiment of this sad truth.

Aged 1 year and weighing only 13 pounds, Jose was referred to the clinic for treatment at a local hospital. As his story unraveled it seemed that he had come from a single-parent household where, after being abandoned by her husband, his mother had been unable to cope with raising the four children with whom she had been left.

When Jose was initially admitted to the program, located just outside La Antigua Guatemala, he displayed signs of severe neglect and was a withdrawn and morose character, rarely laughing or crying. Yet, very quickly, he became one of the most energetic and animated babies the staff had ever seen come through the program. As he gained weight he was nicknamed "Gordito" by the nurses, and under their supervision he learned to crawl, take his first steps and then walk.



Volunteer Melanie H. with a child recovering from malnutrition. Photo: Ray Conway

One of several life-changing programs established by the GOD'S CHILD Project, Casa Jackson (Jackson House) provides inhouse and outpatient care to hundreds of at-risk children every year. Although its immediate priority is to rehabilitate its patients in the short term, one of its fundamental goals is to address the underlying causes of poverty and implement sustainable change through education.

By working with the families and coaching them on the issues of nutrition and hygiene, and providing financial assistance or improved housing where necessary, the aim is that the child will be able to return home as soon as possible with a relatively low risk of relapse.

Unfortunately, in the case of Jose, his mother was unwilling or unable to take him back. Eventually, a judge made the difficult decision that Jose be placed into ...continued on page 44

People & Projects by Astrid Barrios



Compañero en Salud

Changing lives through surgery

ince 2004 the NGO Compañero en Salud (CENS) has been providing surgical and health services to needy villagers in rural Guatemala. Our mission includes acting as a bridge between foreign surgeons and the Guatemalan patients. National and international doctors, nurses and medical personnel have helped more than 40,000 patients (75% of them women and children) by performing more than 6,000 surgeries and holding more than 60 medical missions.

Through CENS' work we have increased the quality of life for rural villagers and have helped them become healthy and productive individuals in their communities.

We conduct monthly surgical missions, treating more than 100 patients for tumors, hernias, burns, cleft lip and cleft palate, and pelvic cancer, among other conditions. We also provide patients with informative con-

ferences and emotional support prior to being discharged.

Additionally, CENS has edited a marvelous book, *ISTMO*, which contains beautiful photographs of the most outstanding scenes in Central America. Proceeds from book sales will benefit CENS.

Among future projects, Compañero en Salud wishes to expand its facilities at Albergue San Gabriel, in San Juan Sacatepéquez, to accommodate more patients in a more comfortable setting.

We need volunteers to translate (English-Spanish) during medical missions and to help with financial support, publicity, sales promotions for the *ISTMO* book, a speakers bureau and cultural activities.

Contact us at +(502) 2363-4317 or quieroayudar@ companeroensalud.org. For more information visit www.companeroensalud.org

Sacred Animals and Exotic Tropical Plants by Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth



The Sacred Red Bean

But not from a vine, from a tree — the Palo de Pito

he *palo de pito* tree is commonly found throughout the Highlands of Guatemala. It produces a bright red bean, which is used for divination by Maya shamans. The book of Popol Vuh is very clear about the red beans from this tree being used by the gods when they created the world for humans and animals.

The tree is easy to propagate; all you need to do is put one of its strong twigs in the ground and it will soon grow roots at its base and leaves on top. Within a year, you will have a nice tree with attractive red flowers.

The flowers are pretty and edible, but don't eat the beans—they are toxic! You can also use the green buds of the leaves as a tea to induce sleep, but don't experiment by yourself. Find a

local person with experience to provide recipes and explain which parts to eat.

Legend says the wood from this tree was used to create a species of pseudo-humans during one of the early Maya creations. To-day it is used to carve statues of Maximón (see Revue feature, June 2011).

Many tourist shops throughout Guate-mala offer necklaces and other jewelry made from these red beans. *Cuidado*, be careful! Remember, they are poisonous. U.S. Customs will confiscate any jewelry made from them.

Further reading

Refer to the World Agroforestry Centre, where you can find many articles on various species of palo de pito and ...continued on page 74

TRAVEL by Matt Bokor





Narrated by Blanca Ruth Ríos, the tour begins with historic sites bordering Quetzaltenango's Central Park

All Aboard the Xela Express

Train-like tour hits Highland highlights

ith so many cultural, culinary and spiritual destinations in and around Quetzaltenango, visitors can enjoy a leisurely sampling of the area's most interesting attractions simply by boarding a street-wise locomotive.

Suited to travelers' time-challenged schedules, Tranvia de los Altos shuttles visitors to significant sites in Guatemala's second-largest city (commonly known as Xela, from the Mayan Xelajú) in two-hour tours.

Conveniently answering a tourist's questions of where to go and what to see, Tranvia starts in Central Park with a brief history of the country and city.

Narrated by Tranvia general manager Blanca Ruth Ríos, the tour begins with historic sites bordering the park, such as the Metropolitan Cathedral (dating to 1535), the cultural center and the nation's first private bank.

A few blocks away lies the historic Teatro

Municipal, built with Italian design in 1895 and a Greco-Roman façade added in 1905.

The circuit continues past the historic railroad station (now a museum of typical dress and photography) and offers a stop at the city cemetery and its array of elaborately designed mausoleums. The interred include two former presidents and Vanushka, a young Gypsy circus performer who, according to legend, died of a broken heart and whose spirit helps lovers.

Another stop takes visitors to the restaurant/café Chocolate de Doña Pancha, where guests can make their own chocolate from raw cacao beans.

Itineraries can also be tailor-made for special occasions, special interests and groups, such as business visitors, students or families.

For more information, call 7765-5342 or visit wwww.tranviadelosaltos.com

For Quetzaltenango and the Highlands travel information, package tours and more visit www.adrenalinatours.com or your local travel and tour operator.



Fri., through Fri., 22 — ART: *La Antigua y sus Tradiciones* by William Santos. Salón temporal, Museo Capuchinas, 2a av. norte, 2a calle oriente, corner, *La Antigua*.

2Sat., 10am-12pm — (Spanish) ARTE TERAPIA PARA NIÑOS: Impartido por la experta en el tema, Mayarí Hernández. En este taller utilizaremos tu expresión artística para conocerte mejor y descubrir tu potencial a nivel creativo y personal. No necesitas tener conocimiento previo de arte. Contarás con materiales de arte y un ambiente de seguridad, confianza, no juicio y descubrir lo mejor de ti. Reserva tu espacio al 2361-8088. Q75, incluye materiales y parqueo. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final, z. 10, *Guatemala City*.

Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.

— Pablo Picasso

2Sat., 11am — ART: Inauguration of the exposition *Artesanía Antigüeña en Madera*. Monumento de Santa Clara, 2a av. norte, *La Antigua*.

2Sat., 11am — (Spanish) TEATRO INFANTIL: *La Luna y el Sol*, El señor Maíz, nos cuenta cómo fue creada la tierra cubierta con las montañas, plantas y animales de muchas especies, los gemelos iluminan el cielo por primera vez, transformándose en luna y sol. Entrada libre. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

2Sat., through Aug. 1 — ART: La Antigua Galería de Arte presents more than 40 of the latest works by Guatemalan artist Doniel Espinoza. Most of his works reflect a strong sense of magical realism and a hint of surrealism. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124), 4a calle oriente #15, *La Antigua*. ▼









3 Sun., 10, 17, 14 and 31, 11am & 4pm — (Spanish) THEATER FOR KIDS: *ImaginaMar*, the new musical adventure for the whole family written by John Tartaglia, chronicles the underwater adventures of three fish friends who discover a treasure map. The Spanish version is produced by Fundación Paiz and presented as part of the XI Festival Internacional de Cultura Paiz. For more information visit www.fundacionpaiz.org.gt Tickets Q60 at todoticket.com or at the door. Museo de Los Niños (tel: 2464-4545 ext. 4552), 5a calle 10-0, z. 13, *Guatemala City*. ▲

Mon., through Thurs., 28 — ART: Obra Sobre Papel, drawings, watercolors and collages by Moisés Barrios. El Attico (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, Guatemala City. ▼



Tues., 4pm — (English) LECTURE: Jade and Chocolate, ancient Mesoamerican trade routes by archaeologist Mary Lou Ridinger. Jades, S.A., 4a calle oriente #34, La Antigua.

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the AUG., 2011 edition of the REVUE by Monday, July 11

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

Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: ArtCorps (www.artcorp.org) uses art to promote social change and has inspired and educated people across Central America to improve their communities through music, parades, documentaries, radio shows, silk-screen and other media. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

Thurs., 7pm — PHOTO CLUB: Meets the first Thursday of every month with photo talks and workshops as well as photo contests in color, black and white and digital categories. Visit www.clubfotograficoantigua.com or Facebook.com/ClubFotograficoAntigua. Restaurante El Sabor del Tiempo (tel: 7832-0516), Calle del Arco and 3a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

Thurs., 8pm — MUSIC: Jorge Sarmientos y el Impresionismo Francés. More information www.alianzafrancesa.org.gt Sala Efraín Recinos, Centro Cultural Miguel Ángel Asturias, Teatro Nacional, z. 1, Guatemala City.

R DateBook online: www.REVUEmag.com

8 Fri., through Sun., 31 — ART: Semblanzas de Guatemala. Convento Capuchinas, 2a av. norte, 2a calle oriente, corner, *La Antigua*.

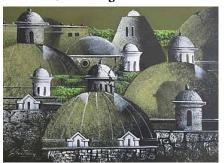
8 Fri., 6:30pm throuth July 29 — ART: Inauguration of *Érase Una Vez* by artist Mayra Fernández. Cocktail. Vessica Galería de Arte, 3a av. 7-35, z. 1, *Quetzaltenango*.

8 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: Videoclip launch of Na'ik Madera *Chambeadoras* with invited artists. Trovajazz (tel: 4647-4146), vía 6 3-55, z. 4, *Guatemala City*. ▼



Sat., 6:30pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: Inauguration of work by members of the Club Fotográfico de Guatemala. Casa Noj, Galería Rafael Mora, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, *Quetzaltenango*.

Sat., 7pm — ART: Inauguration of *Cañones, Cúpulas, Pilas y Campanas* by César Fortuny. Free. Cocktail. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*. ▼



9sat., 9am — PARADE: Carriages with Miss Antigua contestants travel through the streets, *La Antigua*.

Sat., 10am-11pm and Sun., 10, 10am-5pm — ART: *Todos 4rte* features 10 gallery spaces, 30 architects, 150 musicians and hundreds of artists incorporating music, movies, art, dance and all kinds of communication and artistic expressions of the 21st century. Free. More info and other events at: www.todos4arte.com Cantón Exposición, z. 4, *Guatemala City*. ▼



Sat., 10am-1:30pm — (Spanish) TALLER PARA NIÑOS: *Títetres de Varilla y Pies*, cada participante construirá un títere de varillas, donde sus propios pies serán los del personaje. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte entre 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.



"Mujer del Samurai" by Paloma Navares, part of the *Otros Paramos* exhibit at Cooperación Española, July 16-Aug 28 (see page 29)



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All art requires courage. —Anne Tucker

Very few people possess true artistic ability. It is therefore both unseemly and unproductive to irritate the situation by making an effort. If you have a burning, restless urge to write or paint, simply eat something sweet and the feeling will pass. —Fran Lebowitz



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We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand. The artist must know the manner whereby to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies. —Pablo Picasso





La Cueva de Panza Verde tel: 7832-2925 5a av. sur #19, La Antigua

Mondays — New Orleans Blues with Nelson Lunding.

Wednesdays — Classic Jazz Trio.

Thursdays — Buena Vista de Corazón, Cuban Jazz by Ignacio.

Fridays — Latin Trio.

Saturdays — Julio & César, Guitar Duo. Nightly cover: Q35

La Peña de Sol Latino tel: 7882-4468 5a calle poniente #15-C, La Antigua

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

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

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



Sundays — 12:30-3pm: Ramiro plays Trova Cubana, with Bill on Congas. Free.

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

Thursdays — 7pm: Live music. **Fridays and Saturdays** — Belly dancing.

If your bar or restaurant has live music on a regular schedule, send info to: publicidad@revuemag.com

Rainbow Café

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Mondays — 7:30pm: Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free.

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

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

Thursdays — 7:30pm: A variety of musicians.

Saturdays — 7:30pm: Don Ramiro y amigos! Don't miss the chance to enjoy a few drinks and relax to the classics.

Sundays — 7:30pm: Sergio y Choko y amigos; some of Antigua's best-loved local musicians with some great improvisation.



La Posada del Pintor—Circus Bar tel: 7832-1033 4a calle oriente #10 (2nd level), La Antigua

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays — 8pm: Live music, featuring a variety of artists.

Thurs., 8pm — MUSIC: Jorge Sarmientos y el Impresionismo Francés. More information at www.alianzafrancesa.org.gt, *Guatemala City*.

8 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: Videoclip launch of Na'ik Madera Chambeadoras with invited artists. Trovajazz (tel: 4647-4146), vía 6 3-55, z. 4, *Guatemala City*.

Music

Ocelot

tel: 5658-9028 4a avenida norte #3, La Antigua

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

9pm: Mike & Moriah, Piano & Vocals.

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

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

9:30pm: Mercedes, Guitar Blues/Rock/Folk.



Pub Quiz hosted by Brendan Byrne; Sundays at 6:30pm

Las Palmas

tel: 7832-9734 6a av. norte #14, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 8pm: Bossa, soft rock and blues.

Saturdays — 8pm: American folk music.



Fridas tel: 7832-1296 Calle del Arco #29, La Antigua

Wednesdays & Thursdays — 7:30pm: Variety of musicians.

Posada de Santiago tel: 7721-7366 1 km south of Santiago Atitlán, Lake Atitlán

Every week, usually on Fridays and Saturdays. Check *Gringos of Santiago* on Facebook for details.

Circus Bar

tel: 7762-2056 Avenida de los Árboles, Panajachel

Mondays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic

music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Marco Solo and friends, Pana's Carlos

Santana. Rock, blues and jazz. 9pm: Norte, contemporary trova.

Tuesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic

music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Rockiris, alternative rock.

9pm: Latin ensemble.

Wednesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic

music, jazz and rock. 8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Carlos Rangel and son, swing, Cuban

and rock.

Thursdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic

music, jazz and rock. 8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Norte, contemporary trova.

Fridays — 7pm: Flamenco by Marco El Messina.

8pm: Latin ensemble. 9pm: Trova del Lago.

Saturdays — Los Vagabundos, hot rhythms in a fusion of Rumba, Flamenco and Guatemalan

traditional elements.

Sundays — Latin Ensemble.

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Thursdays — 9:15pm: Nueva Trova and alternative music by the Rony Hernández group.

Fridays and Saturdays

— Guest musicians. www.trovajazz.com



Melancolía Blues Café & Jazz Bar tel: 2331-1114 Av. Reforma 13-89, z.10, Guatemala City

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

12 Tues., 5:30 — (English) TALK: Oxlajuj B'atz' (Thirteen Threads), an NGO guided by the principles of harmony, democracy and sustainability, helps Maya women artisans improve their quality of life. Learn how the group empowers women and inspires change. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

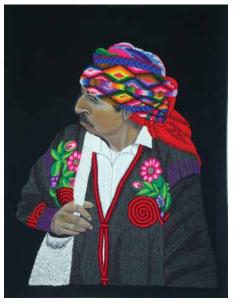
13 Wed., 5pm — ART: Marie-Noëlle Fontan, through botany and plants the artist harmonizes material, color and form. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925), 5a av sur #19, *La Antigua*. ▼



13 Wed., 7pm through Aug. 11 — ART: Muerte y Vida cotidiana de los Antiguos Mayas en Naachtún. Galería de Arte Alianza Francesa, 5a calle 10-55, z. 13, Finca La Aurora, Guatemala City.

15 Fri., 5:30pm — MAYAN DANC-ES: Performed by indigenous children from Nuevo Amanecer K'a k'a' Saqarik - Nuevo Amenecer or New Dawn, a charity dedicated to helping more than 30 indigenous children in San Andrés Itzapa. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

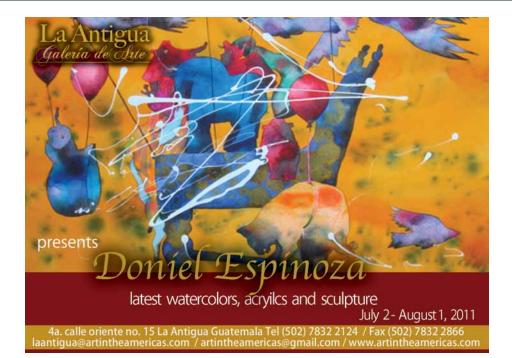
Thurs., 6:30, through Aug. 5 — EMBROIDERY: Fundación G&T Continental presents *Belleza y Colorido Guatemalteco*, by Academia de Bordado Arte en Lana de Sandra Mencarelli de Paredes and students. Vestíbulo Banco G&T Continental, 6a av. 9-08, z. 9, *Guatemala City*. ▼



15Fri., 7pm — PHOTO EXHIBITION: Annual exposition of the best photos by members of the Club Fotográfico de Antigua. Free. Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, *La Antigua*.

16sat., 8am-6pm — ART: I Photographic Congress of the Club Fotográfico de Antigua, an entire day of workshops, technical support, advice and more for photography lovers. Special prices (members & nonmembers) for workshops. Visit www.clubfotograficoantigua. com Palacio de los Capitanes Generales, La Antigua.

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





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16 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: VIVOras en La Antigua, by Skalda2, interpreting reggae, punk rock, pop and surf, among other genres. Q60, includes 1 hour of parking at Hotel Camino Real. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), La Antigua. ▼



16Sat., through Aug. 28 — VISU-DAL ARTS: Otros Paramos by artist Paloma Navares (Spain), showing different worlds of women through video, photography, installations, small objects and collages. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

17Sun, 10:30am-4pm – FOOD FESTIVAL: The *Festival Gastronómico* features 85 food vendors serving local and regional favorites. Cultural Center César Brañas, 5 calle, *La Antigua*. See related article on page 68.

17Sun., 8am — MARATHON: *Medio Maratón Las Rosas*, the 30th annual half-marathon (21km) is open to the public. Entrance fee of Q75 can be paid at any branch of the race's sponsor Banco Agromercantil. Central Park, *La Antigua*. ▼





19 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: Safe Passage / Camino Seguro provides poor families working in the Guatemala City dump with a comprehensive program that incorporates healthy living, academics, creativity and fun for students young and old. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), *La Antigua*.

20Wed., 2-6pm — DANCE: Folk dance festival. Centro Cultural César Brañas, 5a calle poniente #44, *La Antigua*.

20Wed., 4pm — (English) LEC-TURE: Cosmología Maya: Understanding 2012 (also includes Izapa) by archaeologist Mary Lou Ridinger. Jades, S.A., 4a calle oriente #34, La Antigua.

Thurs., 4pm & 30 Sat., 1pm — BENEFIT DANCE: The Niños de San Antonio Aguas Calientes dance and play the marimba, flutes and bombas. Donations benefit educational pursuits. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

R Just tell 'em, "lo vi en la revista REVUE"

21 Thurs., 7:30pm through Sun., 31 — ART: Inauguration of Amor Contemporáneo2, exposition and sale of works by Guatemalan contemporary and emerging artists. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final, z. 10, Guatemala City. ▼



23 Sat., 6pm through Sat., 30 — ART: CDFYT, Collage La Fe en la Tradición. Palacio del Ayuntamiento, Central Park, La Antigua.

23 Sat., 11am — (Spanish) TEATRO INFANTIL: Las Sorpresas de una biblioteca, Pollito Pito por confusión piensa que el cielo se va a caer, y decide ir a contarle al rey, en el camino se encuentra con varios de sus amigos y encuentran juntos una solución. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, La Antigua.

23 Sat., 6:30pm — ART: Inauguration of latest works by Antonio Barrios. Casa Noj, Galería Adrián Inés Chávez, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, *Quetzaltenango*.

23 Sat., 7pm — (Spanish) THE-ATER: Los Monólogos de la Vagina. Q70, incluye 1 hora de parqueo en Hotel Camino Real. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, La Antigua.

DATEBOOK continues on page 32

Art is a shadow of what a person is thinking...
a small glimpse of what they hold inside.
Little secrets, regrets, joys... every line has
its own meaning. —Sarah Middles





23 Sat., 7pm — (Spanish) TEATRO: Como Piedras, una creación que indaga en el mundo de la infancia, una mirada a nuestro pasado y también un viaje al futuro con un especial sentido del humor. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, La Antigua.

25 Mon. — CELEBRATION: *Dia de Santiago* (St. James Day) honoring the patron saint of La Antigua Guatemala. There will be processions and cultural events throughout the month. *La Antigua*. See page 72.

25Mon., 4pm — PROCESSION: Santiago Apóstol, patron saint of La Antigua, comes out of the cathedral and travels through the streets, *La Antigua*.

26Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: Partnering with the Poor: Inequality, Education and Opportunity in Guatemala by Jeff Barnes, Common Hope / Familias de Esperanza, which partners with over 2,600 students and their families to break the cycle of poverty. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), **La Antigua**.

DATEBOOK continues on page 34

30 Sat., 4pm – INDIGENOUS PAGEANT: Over 80 young indigenous women from throughout Guatemala compete for the title of Rabin Ajau / Daughter of the King. INJUD Sports Complex gymnasium, *Cobán*. See page 14. ▼ (PHOTO: THOR JANSON)



Artists can color the sky red because they know it's blue. Those of us who aren't artists must color things the way they really are or people might think we're stupid. —Jules Feiffer There is in every artist's studio a scrap heap of discarded works in which the artist's discipline prevailed against his imagination.

-Robert Brault

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When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years. —Mark Twain





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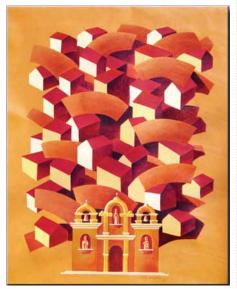
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THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Through Sun., 17 — ART: Drawings and Paintings by Byron Rodas. Antiguo Palacio de Correos, 7a av. 11-67, z. 1, Guatemala City. ▼



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



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

Saturdays, 4pm — (Spanish) CINE INFANTIL: Cada sábado una película diferente, 2nd — Mi Vecino Totoro; 9th — Bolt; 16th — Anastasia; 25th — Toy Story 3. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, La Antigua.

Daily — BIRD WATCHING: Come see over 200 egrets return to their home tree for the night. 5:15, SHARP! The birds are never late! La Peña de Sol Latino Restaurante, 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

Wednesdays, 8pm — (Spanish) THEATER: Encuentro con María Callas, dirigida por Guillermo Monsanto. Q50. Solo Teatro, Av. Las Américas 7-20, z. 13, Guatemala City. ▼



Any great work of art revives and readapts time and space, and the measure of its success is the extent to which it makes you an inhabitant of that world—the extent to which it invites you in and lets you breathe its strange, special air.

—Leonard Bernstein

PHOTO CONTEST Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their work (color or B&W) with the theme *Fiestas Patronales de Guatemala* (Municipal Fairs of Guatemala). The best 12 photos will appear in Museo Ixchel's 2013 calendar. Deadline Oct. 3, 2011. For more information visit Museo Ixchel Galerías in Facebook. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, *Guatemala City*.





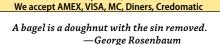








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The bagel, an unsweetened doughnut with rigor mortis. —Beatrice Freeman



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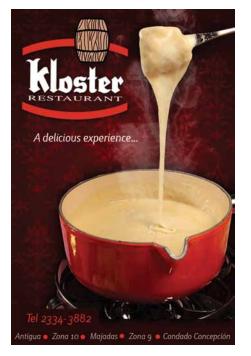
Viaventure donates bus to Global Visionaries

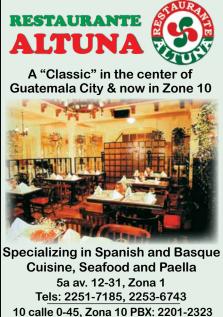
any years ago, Viaventure purchased a school bus and had it driven down to Guatemala from the United States by two staff members. The bus was never used to the extent that had been anticipated by the La Antiguabased tour operator; it remained parked for long periods of time.

During a recent conversation with friends from Global Visionaries, the idea came up to turn the bus into an environmental and educational unit, with a focus on reforestation. Viaventure directors agreed to donate the bus, which now is undergoing a makeover for its new role.

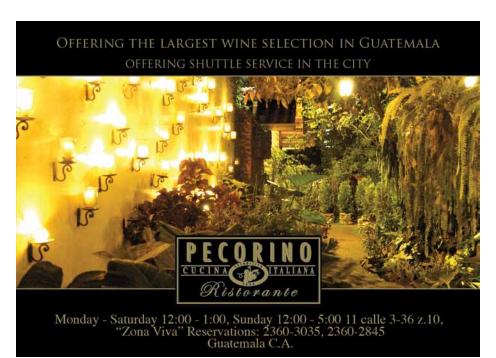
Global Visionaries is a non-profit NGO, which has been building schools and planting trees for the last 15 years in Antigua, and the Viaventure Foundation has been supporting its cause for many years. —Kevin Garcia, Viaventure







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MIRROR MIRROR



great challenge in life is to see ourselves as we really are. It's one of those twisted tricks the universe plays on us! Our image of ourselves has been carefully pieced together from what we can see in the mirror (though often with blinders), from what we've learned about ourself through personal experiences, and by internalizing the judgments of others. The self-image is powerful beyond imagination, for it determines what we become. Our actions, feelings and behaviors are all the result of the image we have of ourselves. This is why if you can change the self-image, you change the personality and the behavior. Easier said than done. The self-image is heavily guarded and not relinquished without a fight.

This leads to the discrepancy that can exist between how one sees him- or herself and how others see them. It has been said that if we could see ourselves as others see us, we would vanish on the spot. How very

true—for to see ourselves as others see us can be a real eye-opening experience.

Often in close relationships the gaps are painfully exposed. "I'm flexible!" declares a woman—the man laughingly responds, "You gotta be joking—it's my way or the highway with you!" Not all gaps have an "ouch" factor—sometimes they carry a "wow," like when someone sees something special about us that we had not seen. It's very easy for us to fall into a false sense of self—whether it's an inflated or a deflated sense.

We all like to think of ourselves as being trustworthy, honorable, generous, kind, compassionate, loving human beings. And, of course, smart, witty and charming, too. However, if we look at ourselves through rose-colored mirrors how can we be sure that we are all that we think we are? A good start is the question, what do you believe people think about you? A good ending is to ask a trusted friend.



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Is life not a hundred times too short for us to stifle ourselves. —Friedrich Nietzsche

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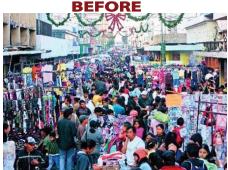
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CITY SITES by Anna-Claire Bevan photos: Johannes Blijdenstein









Paseo de La Sexta, Zone 1

Restoration brings new life to an old district

ast year, the municipality of Guatemala City undertook a project to conserve and revitalize the city's heritage, and it started with La Sexta Avenida, Zone 1: the backbone of *el centro histórico*.

Historically, La Sexta was the fashion capital of Guatemala—the place to see and be seen—with shops selling luxury goods and the latest in European trends. However, after decades of neglect it endured a long downward spiral and became a chaotic jumble filled with street vendors, oversized billboards and congested traffic.

But now the tide is turning.

After encouraging various businesses such

as Pollo Campero and McDonald's to invest in the project, the municipality has transformed the crowded mess into a vibrant avenue—safe for pedestrians to wander down.

The restoration team started by relocating dozens of street vendors who used to clutter the sidewalks, selling pirated DVDs and designer knock-offs. They then spent a year cleaning (and widening) the pavements, putting up new artwork and taking down old signs that covered every inch of the buildings. The emphasis on orderliness is now so strict that not even presidential candidates are allowed to decorate the avenue with their campaign propaganda.





Today the street, which has been renamed Paseo de La Sexta, runs from Plaza la Constitución (central park) to 18 Calle and is mainly pedestrian-only with just the Transmetro and a handful of cars allowed through. Regularly patrolled by uniformed police officers on bicycles, it's once again a safe haven for Guatemalans to shop, socialize in coffee shops and admire the public art that adorns each side of the walkway.

The avenue has fast become a popular venue both day and night. Some city dwellers have even described the transformation as "another world" and say the radical changes have injected life into the capital and given the people access to a cleaner and safer place to visit.

However, despite the marked improvements, a small number of locals lament the changes and believe that the municipality Cable TV, Hot Water, Private Rooms with Bath, 20 mins, from Airport.
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has stripped La Sexta of its identity. Once a symbol of the 1980s fighting between the army and the people, they say these poignant marks from the clashes 30 years ago have been removed and the important years of yesterday now lie forgotten.

The municipality plans to continue restoring over 100 historic monuments around the city and still has further plans for La Sexta. These include opening art galleries and bookstores and restoring an old movie theater in the recently transformed public space.

It may only be a small change to a small avenue in a city filled with problems, but it's a start at improving the quality of life for the people who live in the surrounding areas.





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I've never seen a smiling face that was not beautiful. -author unknown Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it. —Confucius



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God's Child Project cont. from page 18

someone else's care.

There was a lot of concern over where this hugely popular and unique little boy—the cheeky chappy who had become the resident smile of the second floor—would end up, possibly an institution. When Jose left the Casa Jackson six months later, however, weighing a healthy 25 pounds, it was to join the family of the staff nutritionist who had offered to take on the responsibility of fostering him. He is now thriving in a loving and stable home.

Although Casa Jackson itself is relatively new, having opened in 2008, its parent organization, the GOD'S CHILD Project, celebrated its 20th birthday last month.

Founded in June 1991 by international educator and human rights leader Patrick At-

kinson, it has grown exponentially over the past two decades. The GOD'S CHILD Project now operates various programs, including the Dreamer Center School, the Scheel Center Dental Clinic, Santa Madre Homeless Shelter, an anti-human trafficking department (ITEMP) and Atkinson Clinics.

Providing services in several countries, the GOD'S CHILD Project cares for and educates 5,000 orphaned, abandoned and poverty-stricken children, and nearly 8,700 widowed, abandoned and single mothers and their dependents in many of the world's poorest neighborhoods.

To donate, volunteer or for more information, visit www.godschild.org or www.casajackson.org

Editor's note: The child's name and some details have been altered to protect his identity.



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Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart. —Kahlil Gibran



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A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books. —Walt Whitman

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Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need. —Kahlil Gibran

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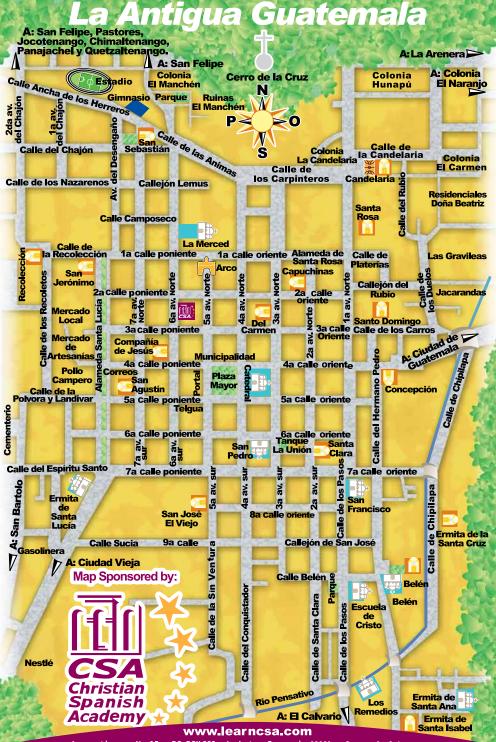
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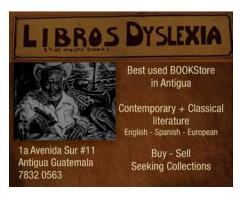
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Some people, no matter how old they get, never lose their beauty - they merely move it from their faces into their hearts. —Martin Buxbaum

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



Question: My 3 year old cat, Raymond, hates riding in his carrier. He hides when he sees it and struggles when I try to get him into it. Is there a way to help him overcome his fear?

Answer: First of all, get a new hard carrier that can be easily taken apart. Put a soft towel at the bottom of it (without the top or door) and place it in a room where he spends a lot of time. Put some of his favorite treats and toys in it, too. After he's comfortable spending time in it, secure the top, minus the door, to the bottom. Continue to feed and play with him in the carrier. Reward him whenever you see him inside the carrier.

Next, reassemble the carrier with the door in place. Leave the door open and again persuade him to go into the carrier using treats and toys. Gradually increase the criteria until you can close the door, pick up the carrier and carry it a short distance while he is in it. If he shows any signs of stress or fear, you are proceeding too quickly and need to backtrack to where he is comfortable and then proceed more slowly. Keep the carrier where it is accessible to Raymond, so that it becomes a permanent part of his world.

Why try to be someone you're not? Life is hard enough without adding impersonation to the skills required. —Robert Brault

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You were born an original. Don't die a copy. —John Mason



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pose to keep up. —Oscar Wilde





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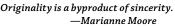
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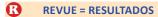


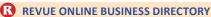


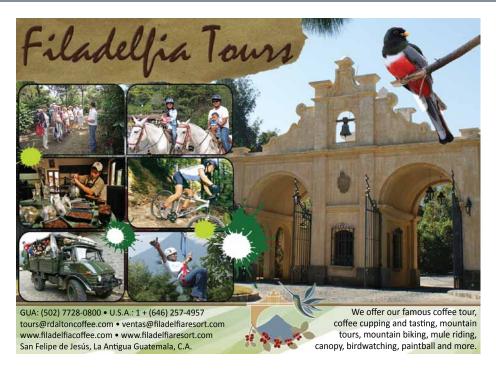
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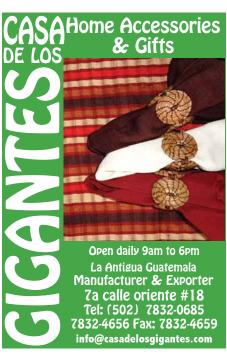














"Be yourself" is about the worst advice you can give some people. —Tom Masson







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Wherever you go, go with all your heart. -Confucius







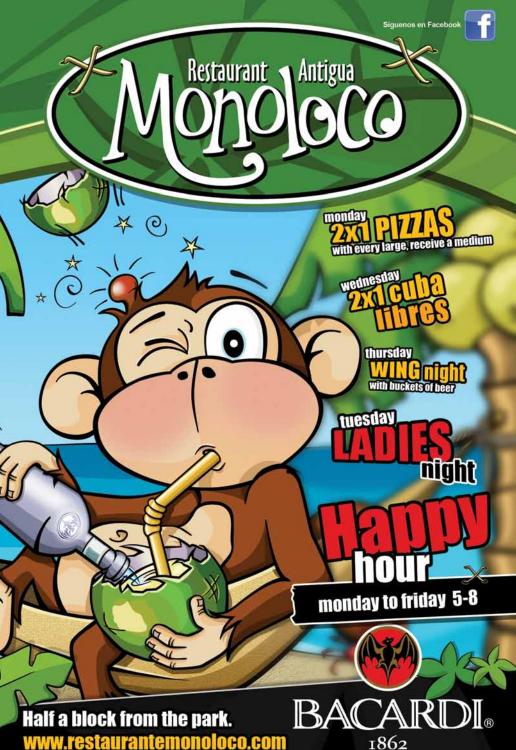
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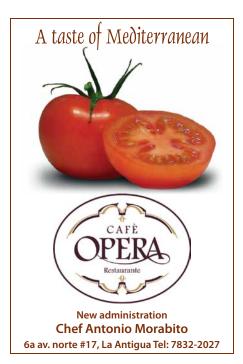
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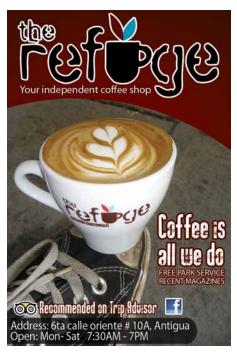


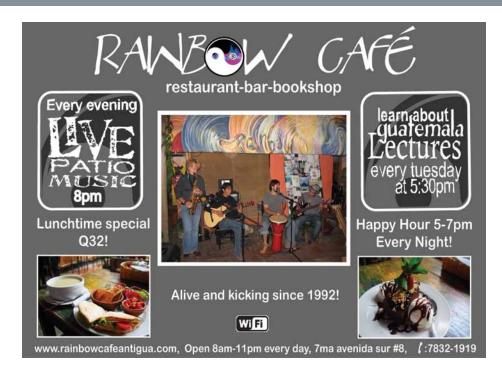














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As a child my family's menu consisted of two choices: take it or leave it. —Buddy Hackett

Those who forget the pasta are condemned to reheat it. —author unknown



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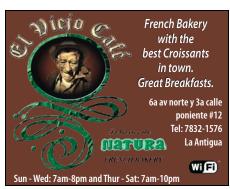
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Talk doesn't cook rice. —Chinese Proverh



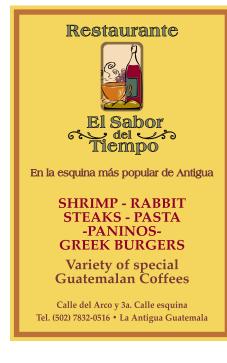
Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread, and pumpkin pie. —.Jim Davis





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Amazing Terrace

Incidents of Travel by Eric Mencher

Chance Reunion



Eric (I) and Matt (r) meet up after 35 years (photo: Shaun Paul Griffiths)

ears ago in the infancy of my photojournalism career, after I complained yet one more time about a dropped credit line under one of my artful, award-winning photos (or so I had naively thought), an editor once told me that only mothers and other journalists read credit lines and mastheads. I can't vouch for the mother part, but I'll bet my Leica that credit gazing is still a habit among journalists.

So I was sitting on my hotel balcony in San Marcos La Laguna, thumbing through the first few pages of the Revue Magazine, and even the three majestic volcanoes across Lake Atitlán couldn't distract me from the editor's name.

Could there be more than one journalist in the world named Matt Bokor? The same Matt Bokor who was the editor of The Oracle, the student newspaper at the University of South Florida in Tampa where I got my start as a photojournalist? The same Matt Bokor who had put up with my sort of

sophomoric rants about the lack of respect in the world for photography? If it were the same dude, would he even want to hear from me after 35 years?

For once I actually appreciated the ease of finding old friends on Facebook, because two months later, there I stood with Matt (and my lovely wife Kass), sipping free drinks in La Antigua Guatemala at Ocelot's first-anniversary party (journalists like free drinks almost as much we like looking at credits), talking about old times, old girl-friends and much, much more.

Even after 35 years, I felt an immediate connection with Matt, and didn't even consider reviving my old mantra of "you ran my picture too small and you didn't even publish my credit!"

After The Tampa Tribune and St. Petersburg Times, Eric Mencher spent more than 20 years with The Philadelphia Inquirer before starting his own freelance photography business. Visit www.ericmencher.com





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Musician Profile by Matt Bokor



NELSON LUNDING

ike thousands of his New Orleans neighbors, blues piano player and singer Nelson Lunding was uprooted by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"There was eight feet of water in the street, three feet of water in the house, cars were underwater...my neighborhood didn't exist," Lunding recalls. "People became insane, angry, heartbroken—including myself."

After more than a decade of performing in New Orleans with some off seasons in San Francisco, Lunding watched helplessly as the remnants of his life "turned to cheese" amid mold and mud.

With nothing to lose, Lunding accepted an invitation from a Mexican guitaristfriend to perform in beachfront Playa del Carmen, just south of Cancún.

"I came down and realized I could travel

and make my way as a musician. I used the Yucatán as a springboard to get down here," says Lunding, 38, who started on the piano at age 6 in his hometown of Yonkers, N.Y.

By 2009, Lunding was playing a circuit that included Playa del Carmen, Oaxaca and Lake Atitlán, which led to La Antigua and introductions to John, of Café No Sé, and Bruce, of Mesón Panza Verde. "They really opened doors for me and put me to work."

Lunding is now a fixture at La Cueva de Panza Verde, Café No Se, Ocelot and Reilly's 2000, with occasional gigs elsewhere. He has a CD of his piano music recorded live on an 1890s Steinway piano.

In the case of this musical talent, New Orleans' loss is Antigua's gain. "I've been here 15 months, and I like it," Lunding says.



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Red Dragons in the Market

hey are sweet, spiny and flaming red, rushing into your local markets by the dozens. Red dragons—in fruit form—are in season.

Pitaya (dragon fruit) is common throughout Mexico and Central and South America, but is more popular in consumption in Asia (Vietnam, Thailand, Japan and China). The fruit looks like a prehistoric orb, a painted artichoke, if you will.

Dragon fruit comes in a variety of colors (outside and in), but the most common variety in Guatemala is the red dragon fruit, so named for its magenta skin and creamy, red fruit inside.

Whether from Latin America or Asia, all dragon fruit is eaten the same way: Cut

open the fruit and spoon out the soft center, which is dotted with tiny, edible black seeds. Dragon fruit may be consumed raw, added to fresh lemonade for a natural pink look, or processed into frozen yogurt and ice cream treats.

Selecting pitaya at the market is easy, just look for the biggest, reddest fruit and you've found your dragon.

Here's a refreshing cocktail for your next party:

Ginger Dragon Delight

1 oz. rum (preferably white)1 oz. dragon fruit juice (dragon fruit muddled with a pinch of sugar)Splash with ginger ale

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DATEBOOK HIGHLIGHT by Anna-Claire Bevan



Presentations at last year's festival

Food Festival in July

2nd Annual Sacatepéquez Festival Gastronómico

ulinary fiends beware! Prepare your taste buds and tummy for a feasting, as **July 17** is La Antigua Guatemala's annual Festival Gastronómico in celebration of its patron saint, Santiago Apóstol (St. James the Apostle).

The event, which runs from 10:30 a.m. to approximately 4 p.m., takes place at The Cultural Center César Brañas on 5a calle with some 85 food stands serving a variety of regional cuisine.

From mole to chinchivir, the festival aims to promote the region's local dishes and revive some of its oldest recipes.

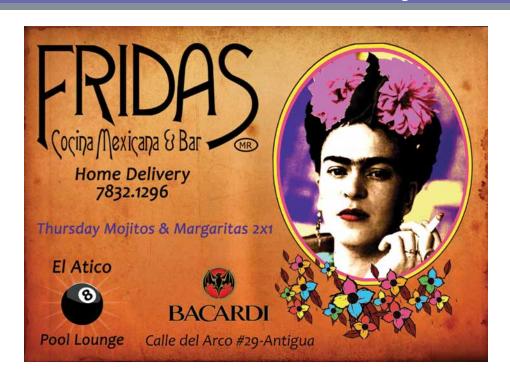
As well as tasty platters available from families and individual cooks in Antigua and surrounding villages, local schoolchildren will also be cooking some of their favorite meals.

With prizes for the best dishes judged by professional chefs, the competition is set to be sizzling.

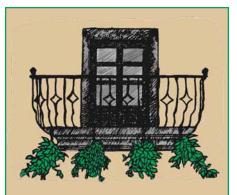
The food selling and sampling will be accompanied by marimba music, and whether you want to get involved in the cooking side or just the tasting side, admission to the event is free.

El Festival Gastronómico is supported by La Muni de Antigua, CAT, INGUAT and INTECAP and will take place alongside the city's half marathon, Carrera de la Rosas.

For more information please contact Johana de Contreras at 5327-4761 or email: catsacatepequez@yahoo.com







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Machinery alone doesn't produce a great cup of coffee

wning a piano doesn't make you a musician. Using expensive cookware doesn't mean you're a chef. And from Jim Mclean's perspective, operating an espresso machine doesn't qualify you as a barista.

"It's amazing the number of machines in Antigua—it's the training to use it that's critical," says Mclean, owner of the Refuge Coffee Bar in La Antigua Guatemala.

Originally from southern Alabama, Mclean started his barista career in Kansas City in 2002. "From there, I was hungry to learn," so he prevailed upon his boss to let him attend a coffee conference and training in Portland, Oregon.

Trainings in Los Angeles and Atlanta followed. Mclean and his wife took a road trip from Seattle (birthplace of Starbucks) to Portland and another throughout California, solely to check out cafés. "I like to go into cafés, try their drinks and rate and analyze."

In addition to sheer enjoyment of coffee, Mclean is hooked on the cozy, café setting: "It's the idea of a third space between work and home where you can go. I'd rather be out and about than sitting in my house."

Although he had considered opening a café in Kansas City, a holiday trip to his wife's home country of Guatemala persuaded him otherwise. In February 2010, the Refuge opened at 6 calle oriente #10a. "We felt like this was the place to start it."

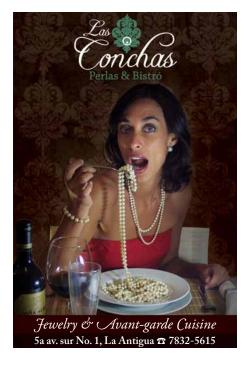


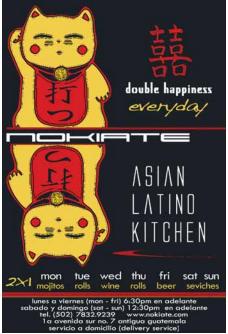


It's bizarre that the produce manager is more important to my children's health than the pediatrician. —Meryl Streep



The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for thirty years she served the family nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found. —Calvin Trillin

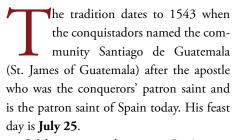






ASK ELIZABETH by Elizabeth Bell AUTHOR/HISTORIAN

Why does La Antigua celebrate St. James' Day?



Celebrations in what is now La Antigua Guatemala have been exciting over the centuries, but the fiesta has come to life in recent years with events throughout July!

As late as the early 1980s, celebrations included a July 25th Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph with a small procession headed by the mayor of Antigua, a marimba (and sometimes disco) concert in Central Park and a school parade. Through our efforts, we created a "Semana de Santiago," which has grown into a month-long celebration with the participation of just about every cultural, educational and sports group in town. Alas, time for a fiesta!



(PHOTO: JUAN DOMINGO PÉREZ)

Although celebrations begin early in July, the big day is July 25. Highlights include a 7 a.m. Mass at the cathedral, followed by the 8 a.m. school parade, which this year focuses on "Yo Vivo Mi Ciudad," Antigua's program of cultural identity, manners and customs. This magnificent show of schoolchildren and bands parades throughout the streets of Antigua, finishing up at 12:30 p.m.

At 4 p.m. the marimba concert in Central Park showcases seven marimbas from all over the country, followed by the 7 p.m. concerts with a wide range of music. Don't forget the fireworks!

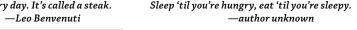
Banks and many businesses will be closed on July 25 so plan accordingly.

For more information contact public relations at City Hall (Sergio Ortiz is very helpful) or visit www.munideantigua.com. See you at Central Park!





I take a vitamin every day. It's called a steak. -Leo Benvenuti













I would like to find a stew that will give me heartburn immediately, instead of at three o'clock in the morning. —John Barrymore



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Vegetables are interesting but lack a sense of purpose when unaccompanied by a good cut of meat. —Fran Lebowitz

Palo de Pito cont. from page 20

related trees. While university and government websites provide technical information, other sites tend to make non-proven claims, for instance, on subjects including the hallucinogenic and aphrodisiac properties of the palo de pito.

Scientific name: Raphael Girard is one of the early users of Erythrina corallodendron as the scientific name for palo de pito. All subsequent translators of the Popol Vuh have used Erythrina corallodendron, seemingly not checking with botanists. Today botanists use the name Erythrina berteroana for the species in Guatemala. Erythrina poeppigiana is primarily in South America. Erythrina herteroana is one species mentioned in Chiapas, Mexico.

One goal of the FLAAR research on plants and animals of the Mayan world is to suggest which topics are good for thesis or dissertation research. The palo de pito is definitely an interesting tree. I hope this article and our website, www.maya-archaeology.org are an inspiration to students for thesis topics.

You can contact Dr. Hellmuth at frontdesk@ flaar.org or FLAAR (Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research) at readerservice@flaar.org







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"Ceiba will quickly be the market leader in Guatemala and set the standard for spas in the country. The concept, design, service standards and product line all combine to make a world-class spa, something that Guatemala has not seen before," said Spatality CEO, Ingo Schweder.

Toni Casper, former owner of Your Private Adobe Spa in Albuquerque, New Mexico (U.S.) was pleasantly surprised by her experience at the Ceiba: "So many spas are really just beauty salons with massage tables. The Ceiba truly offers a first-rate spa experience." The facility boasts five treatment suites, men's and women's locker areas with steam rooms and infrared saunas, a couple's suite with a Jacuzzi, a salon and nail studio, a co-ed relaxation lounge, a unique outdoor Temazcal, plus a Reflexology pathway to the treatment patio.

Some of the spa's signature services include the Jade Stone Facial, Aromatic Spice Body Scrub, Stone Hearth Herbal Wrap, Hunabku Balancing Massage, the Árbol de la Vida (Tree of Life) Signature Ritual and the Temazcal Ritual. Yoga classes led by experienced instructors are also offered.

The spa and salon present innovative and nature-inspired Comfort Zone products for facials, as well as Davines products for hair care, all of which combine high-grade natural ingredients with scientific rigor.

Contact information: Ceiba Porta Spa, Interior, Porta Hotel Antigua, 8a calle poniente #1, tel: +(502) 7931-0600, ceibaspa@portahotels.com





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—Douglas Malloch



Trying to squash a rumor is like trying to unring a bell. —Shana Alexander





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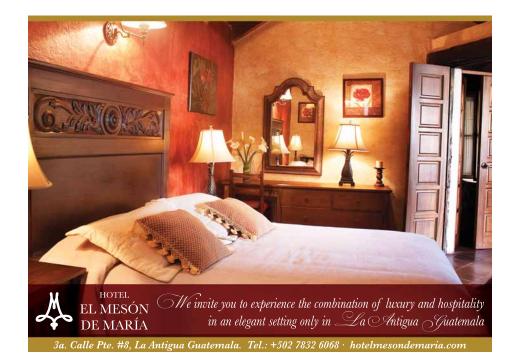
I am told to just be myself, but as much as I have practiced the impression, I am still no good at it.

—Robert Brault

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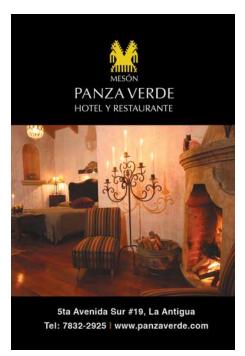




I look at it this way. I'm not an eavesdropper; I have an attention surplus disorder. —Robert Brault



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Tierra bendita —Lusvin González Zuleta (flickr.com/photos/lusvingonzalez)





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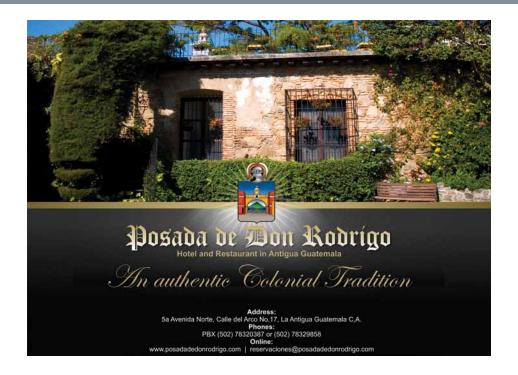
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If you cannot be a poet, be the poem. —David Carradine

He who trims himself to suit everyone will soon whittle himself away. - Raymond Hull



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Relief Map is a 3-D wonder in the capital

nce upon a time a man made a map. Accompanied by a donkey, he traveled around Guatemala, took measurements of the country and then returned to the capital to scale up.

That man was engineer Francisco Vela, and with the help of his assistant, Claudio Urrutia, in 1905 he designed a three-dimensional cement map—the only one of its kind in the entire world. Drawn almost perfectly to scale (in relation to the original geography of the country) the Relief Map is an exact reproduction of Guatemala.

It features volcanoes, mountains, towns, roads, ports and rivers—one of which even boasts running water. With the country's borders clearly marked and both the Pacific and Caribbean shown in blue, the model also incorporates Belize—since the Caribbean nation once belonged to Guatemala. In recent years a number of petrol towers

have also been added to the map to ensure it keeps up to date with the country's development.

Located in Minerva Park in Guatemala City's zone 2, the Relief Map is hugely patriotic, paying homage to Guatemala and its culture in a multitude of ways. The concrete railing around the perimeter of the model is intricately designed with six medallions, each displaying a different symbol of Guatemala, from its national bird (the quetzal) to its national tree (the ceiba).

Even the small forest that surrounds the attraction consists of more than 100 hormigo trees, the wood of which is used in the construction of the marimba—Guatemala's national musical instrument. Known as the "Sonorous Forest," the trees were planted to commemorate the country's marimba players and composers, many of whom are named on plaques within the forest.



Side view of Vela's Relief Map shows the actual elevations of the entire country. An observation booth can be seen on the left. The small forest surrounding the attraction consists of over 100 hormigo trees, the wood of which is used in the construction of the marimba—Guatemala's national musical instrument.

From the two observation towers positioned on either side of Vela's creation, you can appreciate the diverse geographical reality of Guatemala. The complex level of detail is not only apparent in the naming of the country's 22 departments, but also in the hundreds of smaller pueblos that are represented. The exact pinpointing of the country's altitude, latitude and longitude along with the accuracy of the model—1:10,000km horizontal and 1:2,000km vertical—is an astonishing act of engineering that allows you to gain a bird's-eye view of the country.

Having been praised as one of the "Wonders of Guatemala," the 1,800-square-foot

structure is a popular attraction in the capital. As you enter the site you are greeted with a monument showing the engineers measuring landscapes with a manually operated theodolite.

This unique open-air exhibition is now considered national heritage due to its artistic and historical value. Upon leaving you will be wondering how on earth Francisco Vela could have achieved such a feat without a computer. His creation, Guatemala City's Relief Map, is a 3-D spectacular and is, hands down, the country's foremost topographical guide.

Located at Hipódromo del Norte, zone 2



Monument commemorating the engineers



Close-up of map showing labels with information



Plenty of entertainment at IRTRA, Xetulul and Xocomil

he first thing you'll notice at the resort are the peacocks. Male and female, big and small, it's like No-ah's Ark hit ground in the Highlands and covered the place with more birds than Ireland has sheep, strutting around like Freddie Mercury at Wembley.

A short bus ride out of Quetzaltenango takes you to IRTRA, a sprawling resort that stands out like a colony on the moon. The school I work for paid for a weekend retreat with the entire faculty, and we enjoyed our break from students by strolling through colonial courtyards (with peacocks), bowling at the private alley (near peacocks), and playing tennis (they have yet to train peacocks to retrieve your equipment).

There are two major waterslides near the pools, each slide is accompanied by lifeguards who don't like it when you go down them attached to three other people. When chastised for doing just that, I realized that saying *No puedo hablar español* undermined my case.

More fun lies just a few blocks away in the form of two theme parks: Xetulul and Xocomil. The latter is a water park with all the bells and whistles: Relax in their lazy river, hit a few volleyballs and then swirl down a massive bowl. When waiting at the top of one of those super-steep speed slides, I suggest waiting for your ride-mates to start first so you can make all the *Star Wars* noises you want while you blast off the top into light speed.

...continued on following page



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A person who has good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a crooked mouth and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely. —Roald Dahl

Anywhere is paradise; it's up to you. —William J. Bennett



The most beautiful view is the one I share with you.—author unknown



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IRTRA cont. from previous page

Xetulul is divided into several countrythemed sections. Want to admire the Trevi Fountain? Head to the Italian water ride. Need carnival games in the Moulin Rouge? Hang a right at Versailles. Dreamed about watching a live jaguar prowl the base of a full-color replica of Tikal's Jaguar Temple? Done and done.

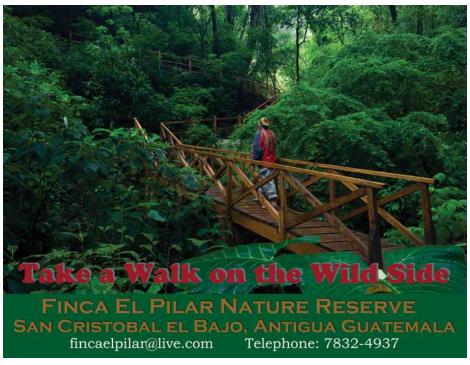
If you like roller coasters, you've come to the right place. After strapping in and swinging upside down, you'll wish that you had waited until afterward for that plateful of lasagna.

The entrance fees at the theme parks are reasonable—about \$20—and they regularly offer promotions to different areas of Guatemala in the form of Q10 entrances, so befriend a local with tickets to spare. IRTRA itself is a bit pricier (Q500 a night is as cheap as it gets) but the same offerings would be considerably more expensive Stateside.

The "real" Guatemala this isn't, but if you need a break from Spanish school or your visiting parents aren't quite ready for dormitory hostels, you really will feel like you're on Noah's Ark—if the ark were a cruise ship. Grab your board shorts, pack some sunscreen and enjoy the peacocks.









Santiago Bay view INSET: The Santiago Apóstol Church dates back to 1547

enovations and initiatives are under way in Santiago Atitlán to enhance tourist attractions, historic landmarks, infrastructure and the overall image of one of Guatemala's most distinctive communities.

Among the sites are the Santiago Apóstol Church, one of the oldest churches in Central America, dating back to 1547, and Chutinamit, ancient home of the Tz'utujil whose residents were displaced by mudslides from Tropical Storm Agatha in 2010.

Working on the improvements are the municipality of Santiago Atitlán, CAT (Committee of Self-Managing Tourism), Prosol (Canada), Andalucía (Spain), the Peace Corps (USA) and many others. Projects include:

Floating docks and piers: Two big docks and a pier are being built.

Visitor center: Including Politur offices, tourist information, restrooms, displays,

etc. Construction hopefully will be finished by November 2011.

Playa Pública Park: Transforming the washing area into a public park for the town.

Central Park: Under way by the municipality.

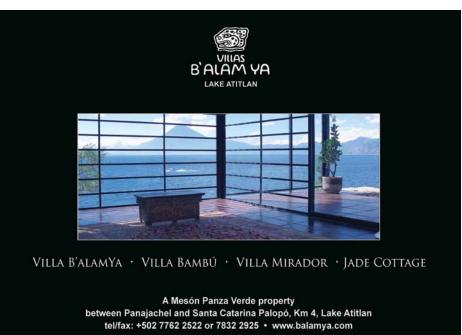
Security: 7,000 neighbors participate monthly in the town's security group. The Politur office is under way.

House-painting project: 220 houses facing the lake are being painted; projected completion by January 2012.

Further work to enhance tourism, involving guides, artisans, boaters, street transportation and much more, is also being carried out, as is work to repair and improve cultural treasures and traditions. Recycling and street-cleaning projects are under way, too.

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You've got a lot of choices. If getting out of bed in the morning is a chore and you're not smiling on a regular basis, try another choice.

-Steven D. Woodhull





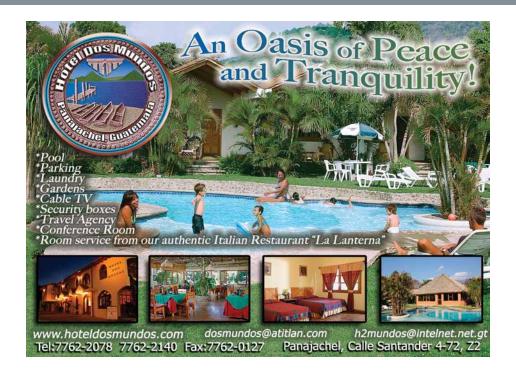




SAN PEDRO LA LAGUNA



Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see possibilities - always see them, for they're always there. -Norman Vincent Peale

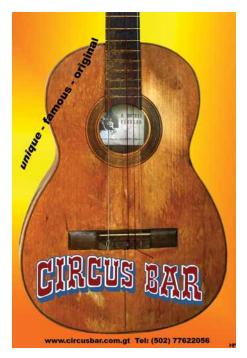








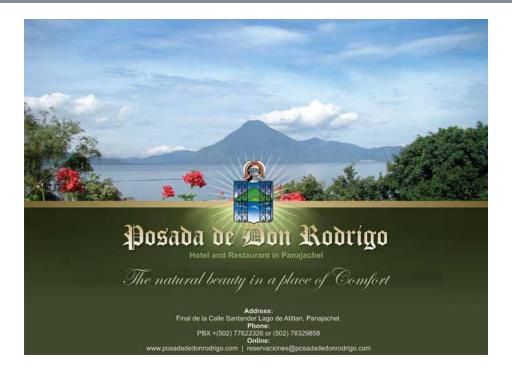
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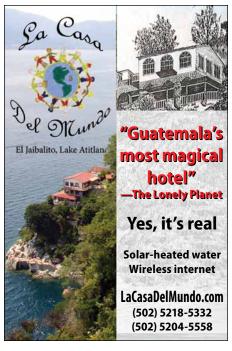




Panajachel « Jaibalito « LAKE ATITLÁN







SIDE TRIPS by Blake Nelson



A mural on the side wall of the dormitory gives a short history of the war.



Side view of the main building where you can stay.

EX-GUERILLA ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The calm (and coffee) after the storm: Santa Anita La Unión

ebels are on the move in Libya, Egyptians are overhauling their constitution and Tunisians unseated a multi-decade dictator, but reading about it in Guatemala's relative tranquility makes it easy to forget that the same turmoil engulfed Guatemala not long ago. A history of the 36-year civil war and what has changed since the 1996 Peace Accords has been exhaustively covered in articles and books. But to receive first-hand accounts from those who were there, a few chicken bus rides can put some faces on the statistics.

A little less than two hours outside of Quetzaltenango, Santa Anita La Unión is a fair-trade coffee *finca* and eco-tourism site founded by a group of 35 ex-guerillas.

They've transformed land they camped on during the war into a growing community, boasting schoolhouses and basketball courts. Local women will take you on a hiking tour that offers stunning views, a (very cold) waterfall and demonstrations on how to harvest and roast the beans.

One of the main services offered is a conference with an ex-combatant, and we sat down with a man named Mauricio in the main room of the dormitory. Our rooms had originally been home to the guerillas when they first arrived, and their ghosts filled the walls as he talked about the state of the *finca* today, problems in Guatemala, and what daily life was like on the run from the army. We peppered him with questions, and he gladly answered. ...continued on following page

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Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not. —Ralph Waldo Emerson







Santa Anita La Union cont. from previous page

Visitors are welcome to stay for a single night or several weeks, volunteering while living with local families. Your involvement in the community is up to you.

One afternoon during our second day, we were ushered into a small chapel to participate in Mass led by a priest from Colombia. My wife and I were near the back, next to the couple we had eaten with the previous night.

After Mass we watched some American volunteers play with kids around the school buildings. It was "cooking week," so regular classes had been replaced by cooking work-

shops, and we joined several high school girls and boys making pastries. After some scooping, mashing and a few dashes of cinnamon the creations were put into an oven, and we waited for them to be ready on the steps of the main building. Surrounded by left-wing murals and under the shadow of Santa Maria, I hoped that these kids offered a way out of the history of violence they had inherited.

Accommodations are more than adequate and prices are reasonable; I hope to return with others. For more information visit www.santaanitafinca.com





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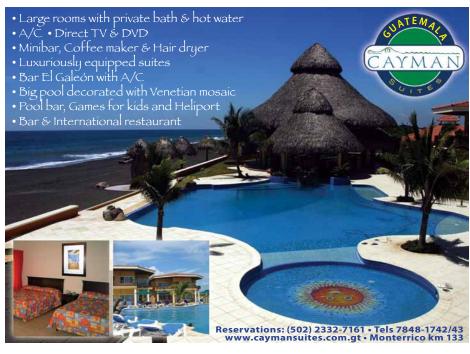
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— G.K. Chesterton

Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor. —Truman Capote

Got no checkbooks, got no banks, Still I'd like to express my thanks, I got the sun in the morning and the moon at night.—Irving Berlin

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Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a little, and if we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick, and if we got sick, at least we didn't die; so, let us all be thankful. —Buddha







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Each girl's presentation included saying prayers, which is usually accompanied with offerings of incense, flowers and other ceremonial objects.

RABIN AJAU cont. from page 17

and reasoned together in a tight huddle. During this time the crowd mingled and more coffee was distributed; the girls met with their adoring public, while some others took a snooze.

Finally, one of the judges delivered an envelope to the emcee and electricity filled the hall. He opened the envelope and read her name: Mirna Judith Chavajay y Cavajay from the little village of Santa Clara la Laguna in Sololá Department. The Sololá contingent—and everyone else—burst into applause and cheers. All the girls crowded around the winner, showering her with hugs and kisses.

A few moments later Mirna was at the front of the stage receiving the Sacred Silver Crown, adorned with jade and quetzal feathers, and the White Orchid Scepter. Upon receiving the symbols of her title, Mirna spoke these words: "I give thanks to Father God and to Mother God. I say good

morning to all Guatemalans and to all my Maya people. I will defend everyone who is of Mayan ethnicity. Thank you all."

She also received a variety of gifts, including money and a trip to the United States where she would meet with the Mayan Diaspora. The press moved in to interview her and all the girls crowded in to congratulate her. It was a joyous moment. And I must add that the judges did well in choosing Mirna Chavajay. She presented herself with great confidence, spoke eloquently, knew well the traditions of her people and would represent the Mayan culture in a way that would make all her people proud.

It had been a magical event. I felt glad that I could finally go back to my hotel and get some sleep but also sad to leave this magic realm. The atmosphere was now curiously somber as everyone filed out of the hall and into the mist and darkness of the night.

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PHOTO OP El Mirador bound (photos: JB, helicopter: Aerocentro)



Flores fly-by, El Petén



Jungle landing, El Mirador, El Petén

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1 Hectare = 10,000 mt² 1 Hectare = 2.471 acres 1 Hectare = 1.43 manzanas

1 Acre = 43,560 ft² 1 Acre = .4047 hectare

1 Acre = 4047 mt² 1 Acre = 5645.4 varas² 1 Manzana = 10,000 vr² 1 Manzana = 6,988 mt² 1 Manzana = 1.7 acres

 $1 \text{ mt}^2 = 10.764 \text{ ft}^2$ $1 \text{ mt}^2 = 1.431 \text{ yr}^2$

1 Vara = 32.9 inches 1 Yard = 36 inches (3ft) 1 Meter = 39.37 inches

Note: the precise size of a vara depends on which source you use!



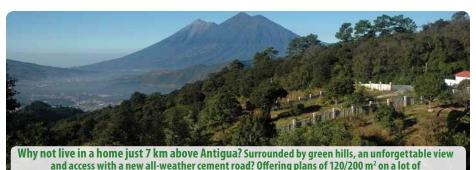


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If you reveal your secrets to the wind, you should not blame the wind for revealing them to the trees. -Kahlil Gibran

All the knowledge I possess everyone else can acquire, but my heart is all my own. —Johann von Goethe

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SENSUOUS GUATEMALA

by Ken Veronda



olor-chart people say carnelian is a reddish-brown somewhere between cardinal and cerise. OK, if you say so. Painters in oil say carnelian is a perfect shade as a skin tone in painting handsome Mesoamerican natives. Jewelry makers and rock hounds say carnelian is a form of quartz, found worldwide, soft and easy to carve. Crafts makers say it's onyx, which isn't true but does help sell a few more of their carved carnelian bookends, ash trays and other trinkets to tourists. We say that carnelian is a beautiful color in Guatemalan weavings and gardens, on Guatemalan hillsides and roadsides, worth your searching out and including on your palette.

We've a plant on our patio with fingersized flowers the locals call *camarónes*, shrimp. They're right with the description, as it does look like something from the sea. The plant comes in two shades, yellow-gold and carnelian—a carnelian as rich as a plateful of shrimp grilled with butter and garlic, which for dinner is a delicious way to enjoy carnelian. Ancient Mediterranean civilizations carved carnelian stone into signet rings, broaches and other decorations. So did ancient Maya, and their descendants still fashion carnelian jewelry, often set in gold that complements the reddish-brown stone. Careful—it's a soft stone, remember. But watch in Guatemalan shops for attractive carnelian set in gold cuff links, hangings and other attractive jewelry at attractive prices.

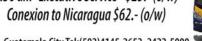
Stick around as the "winter" rains fall these July afternoons, wait a bit for sunshine to reappear as the skies begin to darken for the night, and many evenings the sunset will be glorious carnelian for a few moments as the sun dunks down behind the volcanoes and into the Pacific. That's another marvelous way to enjoy carnelian.

July's traditional birthstone is ruby, a gem that's more expensive than most of us can consider buying. No surprise that the modern birthstone list has carnelian down for this month. It's an elegant shade to be watched for all around this colorful country.

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Nothing travels faster than light, with the possible exception of bad news, which follows its own rules. —Douglas Adams

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Worries go down better with soup. -Jewish Proverb

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solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort.

A positive attitude may not

—Herm Albright



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