

# REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine

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August 2014  
Year 23, No. 6

*Artist Profile: Ramón Ávila*  
*Bodacious Buses!*  
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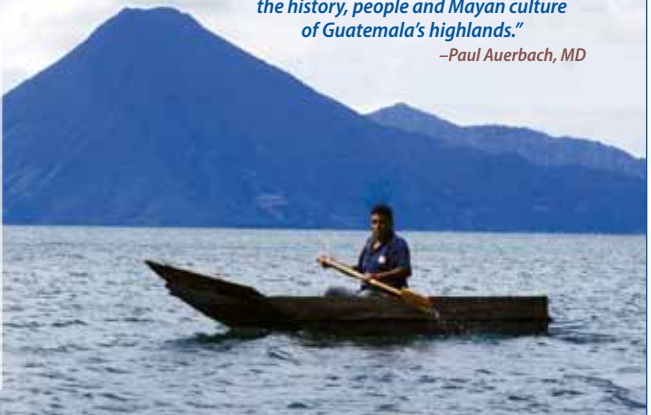
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for enchanting evenings  
of music, colorful people, and  
handicrafts, in the magical  
Parque Central.

*A special thanks to*

Juan Luis Florido for sharing  
with me his passion  
for Antigua's history and culture.

Your pride for your country abounds.  
I learned much.

*Michael Subklew,  
U.S.A.*





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Smiles in Guatemala PHOTO BY NESTOR PAEZ

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### Smiles in Guatemala

All of the August entrants can be seen at [fb.com/revuemagazine](http://fb.com/revuemagazine). Here are the winners

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as well as locations in El Salvador and Honduras.

This month Elizabeth Bell recounts *Francisco Marroquín's* many accomplishments as Guatemala's first bishop and linguist. Next up, Tara Tiedemann reports on *The Collapse of the Ancient Mayan World* presented at the VII Convención Mundial de La Arqueología Maya 2014.

The cover honors renowned artist Ramón Ávila. Linda Conard calls attention to his life and his work in *Abstractions from Within*. In an additional artist highlight, the passion behind the photography of Christian Santizo is explained by Maren Albertsen in *Shooting Stars*.

*Water for Life* by Matt Boker offers an overview of Ecofiltro, and how this product has enhanced the quality of life by providing clean drinking water to many families in Guatemala. Thor Janson covers transportation in *Bodacious Buses*, taking readers on a ride onboard Guatemala's "chicken buses." Also inside is *5 Survival Tips for Travel* by Billy and Akaisha Kaderli.

The focus on food this month includes *Pimienta Gorda, Allspice* by Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth; *Eat 'em to Beat 'em* (Marine menace is Caribbean's new delicacy) by Matt Bokor; and *Refracción Time* by Amalia Moreno-Damgaard.

Be sure to keep an eye out in Guatemala for the color *Cardinal*, Ken Veronda provides hints as to where you can find it. As well, you'll find *Smiles* everywhere in this edition, both visually with photo entries from this month's photo contest and in *A Thousand Word Smile* by Sri Ram Kaa and Kira Raa. Thank you for reading the Revue, in print or online at [www.revuemag.com](http://www.revuemag.com)

—John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

### ON THE COVER

Ramón Ávila (pg. 14)  
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## Guatemala Insight

by Elizabeth Bell  
AUTHOR/HISTORIAN

The church alongside the palace is one of the best examples of colonial architecture in Guatemala and the colonial art inside is fabulous. (PHOTO: CESÁR TIÁN)



# Francisco Marroquín

Guatemala's first bishop and linguist



*Bishop Marroquín was truly a leader in forging the new capital in the 1540s.*

**F**rancisco Marroquín (1499-1563) was the first bishop of Guatemala and the country's first linguist. Born near Santander, Spain, he studied philosophy and theology and was a professor at the University of Osma. He became a Dominican priest and was at the Spanish royal court where conqueror Pedro de Alvarado met him in 1528 and persuaded him to come to Guatemala.

In 1530, Marroquín was appointed parish priest in Santiago de Guatemala (the second capital) and made bishop in 1534. He founded a school for the Spaniards' children and later presided over the move from the flooded capital (1541) to what is now La Antigua Guatemala.

Bishop Marroquín was truly a leader in forging the new capital in the 1540s. He founded the Hospital Real de Santiago in 1541 and was also responsible for building the first cathedral (1543). He was also well known for his efforts to educate the local Maya, becoming a scholar of the K'iche' language and published the first catechism in that language in Mexico and later in Kakchikel (the printing press arrived in Guatemala in 1660). Marroquín was a great friend of Bartolomé de las Casas (Bishop of Chiapas), who campaigned to enforce the Laws of the Indies which helped the Mayas to be declared human in Burgos in 1542, leading to their "freedom" from slavery. ...continued page 74





## Great Destinations

text/photos by Tara Tiedemann  
TRAVEL WRITER  
WWW.VIVAADVENTURES.COM

# The Collapse of the Ancient Mayan World

PHOTO: HADAZUL CRUZ

I recently attended a fantastic gathering of world-renowned archaeologists at the Camino Real Hotel in La Antigua Guatemala during the VII Convención Mundial de La Arqueología Maya 2014. The convention included three days of lectures regarding the theories of the collapse of the ancient Mayan civilization.

Guatemala, being rich in historical treasures, attracts a number of archaeologists and their teams from around the world every year. Decades have been spent excavating, theorizing, excavating some more, and eventually carving out a good hypothesis about the fascinating history of the Maya.

As a tour guide and writer, I have always been enchanted while walking through the ruins of ancient cities such as Tikal, Yaxha, Copán and Lamanai. Standing atop the pyramids, places where great kings once stood, I think about what it might have been like to have lived

in the area thousands of years ago and ultimately what might have caused the abandonment of these large cities.

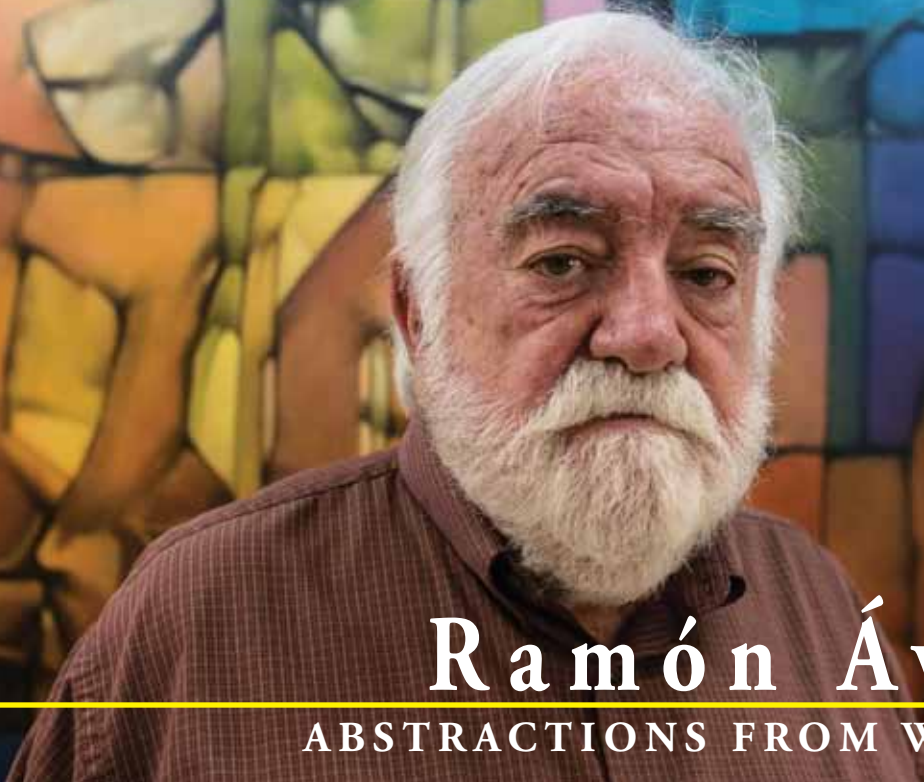
After listening to some interesting theories and seeing photos of a variety of excavations, ceramics and hieroglyphics, the main answer to this question is there isn't one particular answer and most importantly it wasn't an overnight phenomenon, like a natural disaster. The actual word *collapse* is misleading. The collapse happened slowly over a period of time in the post-classic era.

Just as our societies are complex today, similar complexities existed throughout the pre-classic period all the way through the post-classic. Royal lineages came and went, dynasties rose and fell, conflicts and wars broke out, alliances were reached, trade routes changed, and finally the Spanish invaded and even more drastic changes became the new reality.

One of my favorite speakers was Dr. Arthur Demarest from Vanderbilt University. His theory, with evi

...continued page 50





# Ramón Ávila

## ABSTRACTIONS FROM WITHIN

When you step into an exhibit of Ramón Ávila's paintings, you are surrounded by color, emotion and intensity. Many of his oils suggest organic elements, such as earthy roots, plant fibers and even internal organs, in forms that are progressive and reaching, complex and tangled. In other works, distinct lines and robust colors elicit a sharper, more urban impression.

Ávila refers to his work as *reflexi-*

*vo*—arising from deep thought. “My work is very personal, very introspective,” he says. “As I paint, I allow my feelings to carry me, so my painting reflects what I am thinking, whether it is something more internal or external.”

The critical issue for Ávila, however, is not that viewers understand his thoughts as he painted, but rather that they experience the work from their own personal context. “The works are transformed in the imagination of the viewer because they can see in the paintings what they really want to feel,

or what the form seems like to them,” says Ávila. “The viewer may feel something about the painting that is unlike what the artist feels.”

Ávila's vibrant work draws on his 80 years of life experience. He first studied art in Barcelona, Spain,

*“The works are transformed in the imagination of the viewer because they can see in the paintings what they really want to feel...”*

*Galería Panza Verde will present an exhibit of Ávila's newest works throughout August. The exhibit opening will be held on Aug. 13 from 5 to 7 p.m. The artist will attend the opening. Galería Panza Verde, 5a avenida sur #19, La Antigua.*



where he grew up during the Spanish Civil War and World War II. In 1956, he moved to Brazil with about \$40 in his pocket and found work as a publicist while he continued painting. “I almost didn’t have anything to eat when I arrived,” he says, “but it was fantastic.”

His early work in Brazil reflected his love of abstract expression. But the early 1960s marked a significant change in his style when an opportunity to help form the Department of Creative Arts for Publicidad Centroamericana brought him to Guatemala.

“When I came to Guatemala in 1963, for me, the world changed—my life changed,” he says. “I saw another life context, another way to be human and live alongside of everyone else. ...I saw a series of values that returned me to figurative work—purely figurative.”

Ávila traveled throughout Guatemala during the 1960s, painting the



people, landscapes and traditions that surrounded him, using more realistic style than ever before. Nonetheless, his goal was never a strict reproduction of what he witnessed, but rather the expression of his impressions.

“When you paint a landscape, for example, you need to draw out the impression, the reflection motivated

by the landscape—not copy it. You will never improve on nature. The same happens in figurative and folkloric work. You can’t improve on tradition—it’s untouchable, it’s law, it’s sacred, and it’s history,” he says.

In the 1980s, he suddenly returned to abstract painting, partly in response to a very personal loss. “It changed everything. Everything. In part, I returned to the abstract because reality didn’t exist for me. ...There are many negative things that are realities. Injustice is a reality. To be inhuman is a reality. It didn’t make sense. I still find it very confusing,” he says.

Today, Ávila continues to express his thoughts and feelings through abstract forms, often with figurative elements, in oil on canvas, pencil drawing and wood sculpture. He and his son Ricardo also painstakingly produce silkscreen prints for fine artists and commercial designers in an



...continued page 78

**PROFILE** by Maren Albertsen







# CRISTIAN SANTIZO:

---

## SHOOTING STARS

All these shining stars! So many of them—sparkling and lighting up the night sky. This breathtaking photograph was taken by Cristian Santizo during a cloudless night at Lake Atitlán.

“I’m not a professional photographer,” says 35-year-old Santizo. “Taking photographs is my favorite way to express my feelings. It’s my language, revealing the beauty and magic of the world when words aren’t enough.”

Santizo began taking photographs three years ago, initially because of his interest in astronomy—he “wanted to catch some stars.” While walking the streets of La Antigua Guatemala one evening under a starry sky

...continued page 84



## Roads to Adventure

text/photos by  
Capt. Thor Janson  
NAVIGATOR / EXPLORER  
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# BODACIOUS BUSES!

Several years ago a well-known Guatemalan photographer was leafing through one of my books and commented on the many images. Rolando especially liked my photos of the quetzal and the orchids, but when he came to the section that featured ramshackle, rural buses, he asked, “Why would you fill your book with beautiful images of Guatemala and then include photos of these shoddy old buses? Who in the world would want to look at those old junkers?”

I explained that visitors from all over the world are fascinated by Guatemala’s chicken buses. They find them to be charming, colorful and delightful. In fact the Mexican megatourist destination of Ixcaret, near Cancún, has fashioned all its shuttle buses to look like the chicken buses in

Guatemala. They are painted in bright psychedelic colors and patterns, including a roof top of big baskets full of artificial fruits and vegetables and others containing plastic chickens! Many tourists do not visit Guatemala to see modern infrastructure, they come here to experience authentic Mayan culture with all its rough, rustic, rural charm—all part of the country’s magic.

I can recall some wonderful experiences while riding on chicken buses. More often than not the atmosphere is festive, and the people are very friendly. At many stops ubiquitous street vendors offer a cornucopia of food and drinks, including steaming hot chuchitos, which are kiwi-sized corn husk packets of *masa* filled with tomato sauce and some kind of meat, usually chicken, ek, or pork, ak.

*“Tourists come here to experience authentic Mayan culture with all its rough, rustic, rural charm...”*







Chicken buses were given this nickname for a good reason. If you take to riding on rural buses, inevitably you will share space with a basket or two of live fowl, held in place by a twine-net covering that allows the birds' heads to stick out ... cluck, clucking!

On one occasion I was traveling in an old Bluebird bus that was making its way slowly through the mountains of El Quiché province on its way to Nebaj. Everything was going well, and I was having a great time hobnobbing with some women who were returning home with variety of domestic items purchased at Guatemala City's big terminal market.

Suddenly, I felt a strange sensation on one of my feet—something warm, something liquid. “What’s that?” I looked down at a small boy who was smiling at me as he continued to *weesh* (tinkle) on my foot! His mother quickly reoriented the boy’s direction as all the other women laughed

heartily, “*Ay pobrecito gringito... como lo siento,*” chuckled the mother. Ah, yes, for sure, if you don’t have a good sense of humor, a gregarious disposition and a lot of patience, transportation via chicken bus is probably not for you. But if you love people and would like to get a better feeling for the culture by experiencing how most Guatemalans live, then, for sure, take a ride on a rural bus and find out what “livin’ it up” Mayan style is all about.

Although in general I would say that while I have enjoyed traveling on chicken buses, in recent years many drivers have become highway daredevils. This kind of reckless behavior should not be tolerated. Essentially, in rural Guatemala, there is no speed limit. Drivers can go as fast as they like. In other words it is like the “wild west,” and chicken bus drives, in particular, take full advantage. Anyone who travels the roads of Guatemala knows that what I am saying is true.

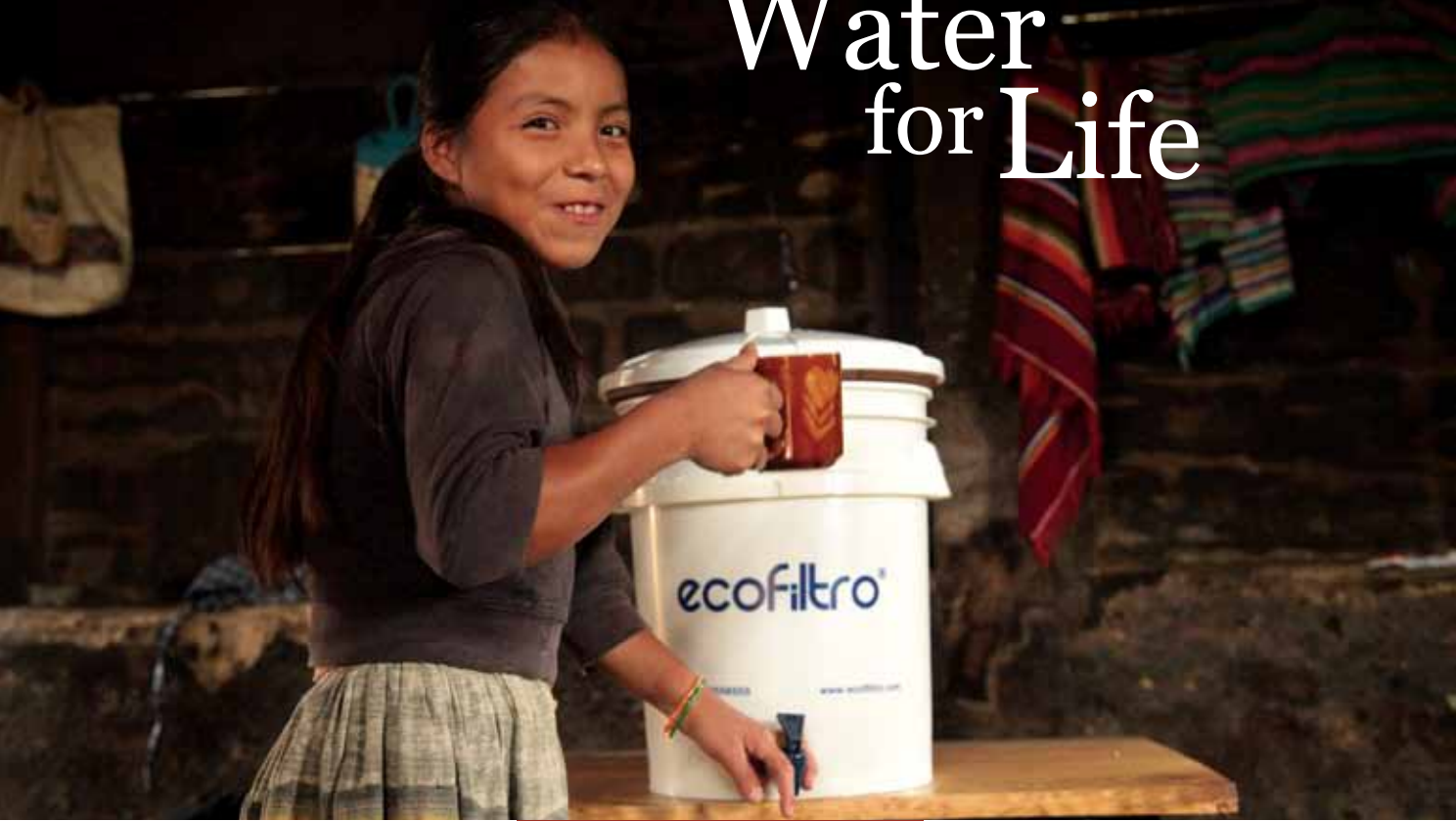
On the other hand, many chick-

en bus drivers could be rated as very good drivers, they must be to survive, since daily and commonly they take exaggerated risks.

During Guatemala’s “internal conflict” I had more than one harrowing experience aboard rural buses that plied the route between Chimaltenango and Sololá. At that time (1980-81) driving your own vehicle was like playing Russian roulette—there was always the chance that you would be stopped by the guerrillas, who might burn your vehicle or worse. So it became the routine of many, including myself, to travel on local buses.

This did not mean that there weren’t some interesting and even hair-raising experiences. Army checkpoints were common. The drill was always the same, passengers were obligated to disembark, and the men had to form a line on one side and the women and children on the other. The men would be patted down and their bags searched ...continued page 105

# Water for Life



**W**ith 75% annual growth, Ecofiltro will meet or come very close to its goal of delivering its revolutionary water-purification units to 1 million rural Guatemalan families by the year 2020.

Philip Wilson Arzú, chief executive officer of Ecofiltro, said this year alone some 60,000 families—45,000 rural and 15,000 urban—will acquire the ceramic-filter units.

Even in remote areas where traditions are closely followed, it becomes an “easy sell” once a few families make the change and start enjoying the cost savings and health benefits, Wilson said.

*While residents of remote areas save big on firewood, urban dwellers say goodbye to the cost of bottled water*

“When an Ecofiltro enters a rural home, these families no longer have to buy so much firewood, as boiling of water is no longer necessary. These families save up to Q100 a month on firewood, as they consume on aver-

age 10 kgs less of firewood a day with the Ecofiltro,” Wilson explains, citing data from an internal study of 65 families in Nebaj, Quiche.

It only takes about a year after the first recipients start using Ecofiltro for the entire community to make the change, he added.

While residents of remote areas save big on firewood, urban dwellers say goodbye to the cost of bottled water.

“The average urban family in Guatemala spends \$200 a year on bottled water. Our Ecofiltros range in price from \$35 for rural models to \$55-\$125 for urban models. Every two

...continued page 36



# Eat 'em to Beat 'em

Marine menace is Caribbean's new delicacy



**W**hen it comes to killer seafood, Caribbean restaurants have gone overboard to serve the venomous lionfish.

“Public reaction to it is great and people love it,” said Joe Christopher, manager of Utila Lodge in the Bay Islands of Honduras. “It is a very smooth, white fish. I think its fillets are very similar to, say, a Chilean sea bass—very light and flaky with no strong flavors about it, quite scrumptious indeed.”

Since being dumped into South Florida waters in the mid-1980s by disenchanted aquarium owners, lionfish have spread exponentially and wreaked havoc in the mid-Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and throughout the Caribbean. Human consumption has surfaced as one of the best ways to slow them down.

“We think it is a three-win situation,” said Dasha Shivers, general manager of the Hatchet Caye Resort and its Lionfish Grill in Belize. “Fishermen have another fish to fish, we have an exotic menu item and our reef gets some relief. We also have dive tours focused solely on hunting lionfish.”

Lionfish has been the only fish on the menu at Pirate’s Treasure Restaurant and Bay at Ambergris Caye, Belize, since the eatery opened in late 2012. “We have a crew of four to six fishermen that goes out to sea every other day and spears lionfish just for us,” said Maresha Reid, chef/owner of Pirate’s Treasure. “We have saved the reef of approximately three to four tons lionfish and counting!”

Native to the South Pacific and Indian oceans, lionfish became popular aquarium fish in the United States because of their colorful vertical stripes; broad, fan-like fins; and tall dorsal spikes, which happen to be a venomous defense mechanism. Before long, many aquarium owners lost interest. ...continued page 64

*“They grew quickly, they consumed all those other expensive reef fish that people were also keeping in their aquarium...”*

# datebook

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COMPILED BY MERCEDES MEJICANOS

**1 Fri.** — DINING at KIDS Restaurant: Reservations: kidsrestaurant@gmail.com or tels: 4550-7798 or 5251-0202. **5pm:** shuttle in front of Cafe Condesa (5a av., central park, Antigua): in collaboration with *La Cocina del Obispo*. **San Gaspar Vivar**

**5 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) TALK: *Camino Seguro: Combating Poverty through Education*. Safe Passage works with the poorest at-risk children of families working in the Guatemala City garbage dump by providing them with a comprehensive and integrated program that fosters hope, good health, educational achievement, self-sufficiency, self-esteem and confidence. Its primary focus is on creating opportunities and dignity through the power of education. Suggested donation Q25, all which goes directly to the NGO. Info., & reserve, tel: 7832-1919. Rainbow Café, 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**

**5 Tues., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Monument to the Railroad of 1914* by Anibal Chajón. Q35, students & tourist guides Q15. Parking Q40. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7836), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**



**6 Wed., through Fri., 29th** — ART: *Susentrismo*, paintings by Werner Vásquez. El Attico, Salón del Coleccionista. (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City** ▲



**6 Wed., 7pm thru Fri., 29** — ART: Inauguration & cocktail premiering *Soda Pop*, paintings and objects de arte by Ana Lorena Nuñez. El Attico, Sala Principal, (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City** ▲

**7 Thurs., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *The Frieze Holmul*, ancient Mayan history and the Golden Age of the United Kaan. Q35, students & tourist guides Q15. Parking, Q40. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7836), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**9 Sat., 5pm** — MUSIC: *Más música menos violencia*, a unique musical recital by students of sistema de Orquestas de Guatemala, (SOG). All proceeds support SOG & its programs. Suggested donation Q150. Info & reservations, tels: 7955-8282 & 7832-2925. Mesón Panza Verde, 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua** ▼



**12 Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) TALK: Professional Midwifery School in Guatemala/Ucux Já offers a professional Midwifery degree with an intercultural approach. The project is training 16 young indigenous women from 14 communities in the departments of Huehuetenango, Totonicapán, Quetzaltenango and Alta Verapaz. In this three year program, students prepare to assist in the the sexual and reproductive health of women in their communities and ensure a qualified, respectful and culturally appropriate care during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum. Join us to learn more about the program. Suggested donation Q25, all which goes directly to the NGO. Info., & reserve, tel: 7832-1919. Rainbow Café, 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**

**12 Tues., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Encuentros con el arte: Raffaello y la escuela de Atenas* by Marcia Vásquez. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 2366-8394), 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**12 Tues., 5:30pm** — ART: *Toscana Arte 2014*, expo & sale of work by students of the Toscana art school. Profits benefit self-sustaining communities ASSAP. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**13 Wed., 3pm** — (English) TOUR: Open Windows Learning Center, San Miguel Dueñas; join David Dean on a visit to this educational and community development foundation. Meet in front of the Cafe Condesa, Central Park; return by 4:40pm. FREE! [www.openwindowsfoundation.com](http://www.openwindowsfoundation.com), **La Antigua**





**13 Wed., 5pm** — ART: Inauguration of newest works by renowned artist Ramón Ávila who will be in attendance. See related article on page 14. Galería Panza Verde, 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua** ▲

**13 Wed., 7pm** — ART: *Punto de partida 2014*, expo sale by students of the Toscana art school. Profits benefit self-sustaining communities AS-SAP. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**13 Wed., 6pm** — (English) PRESENTATION: *Antigua: Behind the Walls* with Elizabeth Bell. Enjoy a one-hour slide show of Antigua and its heritage through vintage and contemporary photographs collected over the past 40 years, accompanied by Elizabeth Bell's expert narration. Proceeds benefit educational programs in Antigua. Q30 per p/p. Questions encouraged. Autographed books available. Hotel Sor Juana, 4a calle oriente #45, **La Antigua**



**14 Thurs., 6:30** — (English) FILM: *Far from the Madding Crowd* (Julie Christie & Peter Finch). Numa Restaurant, 7a av. norte #16, **La Antigua**



**13 Wed., 6:30pm**, through Sep. 18 — ART: *Secuencia*, paintings by Karla Higueros. Galería del Centro, Fundación G&T Continental, 5a av. 12-39, z. 1, **Guatemala City** ▲

**14 Thurs., 4pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *La arqueología del Clásico Temprano en el Totz*, Guatemala by Edwin Román. Q30. Casa Popenoe, 6a calle oriente #16, **La Antigua**

**14 Thurs., 7pm** — ART FESTIVAL: *Festival de Arte Antigua* incl. chamber music by Cuarteto Asturias. Q80. Convento de Capuchinas, **La Antigua**

**15 Fri.** — PATRON SAINT DAY: *Fiesta de la Virgen de la Asunción* with celebrations, parades & fairs. **Guatemala City**

(PHOTOS BY OSCAR VELÁSQUEZ)





**16 Sat.,** — ART: *Dos Miradas*, with work by Nuni Canals and her son Sebastián Sarti. Her sculpture evokes feminine strength and nurturing with a focus on her role as a woman, mother and global ambassador for peaceful relations. Sebastián Sarti's ink & watercolor are darker urban themes, such as immigration, drug trafficking and repression in Central America. His tense, arresting drawings raises disquieting questions about society and our everyday experiences. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124), 4a calle oriente #15, **La Antigua** ▲▼



Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the SEPT 2014 edition by Aug. 11

**16 Sat., 11am-2pm** — U.S. VOTER REGISTRATION: Members of Democrats Abroad Guatemala can help U.S. citizens register to vote before the 2014 mid-term election. Questions: John Chudy, mayadems@yahoo.com. Conexión, 4a calle oriente #14, comercial La Fuente, **La Antigua**



**18 Mon. thru Tues., 26, 6-9pm** — (Spanish) PHOTO WORKSHOP: Advanced photography by masters from the Club Fotográfico de Guatemala. Info., & details: info@clubfotografico.org Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**19 Tues., 5.30pm** — (English) TALK: *De La Gente: Generating economic opportunity*. Many small-holding coffee farmers are economically marginalized. De la Gente offers an innovative approach by working with coffee communities to create economic opportunity through direct trade, community tourism and targeted support. Suggested donation Q25, all which goes directly to the NGO. Info., & reserve, tel: 7832-1919. Rainbow Café, 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**

**21 Thurs., 9pm** — CULINARY EVENT: *Pastas y Salsas*: according to the standards of Italian cuisine from the Accademia della Cucina Italiana. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 2366-8394), 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**22 Fri.** — DINING at KIDS restaurant, in collaboration with Finca Filadelfia. Details, see listing on 1 Aug. **San Gaspar Vivar**

**26 Tues., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) READING: *Novecento of Alesandro Baricco* with visuals and musical accompaniment. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 2366-8394), 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**26 Tues., 5.30pm** — DANCE: *Mayan Dances* performed by indigenous children from Nuevo Amanecer (New Dawn), a charity dedicated to helping more than 30 children in San Andres Itzapa. Its programs focus on health, education and preserving local traditions, including language and dance which is being lost at an alarming rate. Enjoy the show and learn more about this project! Suggested donation Q25, all which goes directly to the NGO. Info., & reserve, tel: 7832-1919. Rainbow Café, 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**

**27 Wed., 7pm** — FILM: EUROCLINE 2014: Inauguration of *Gli equilibristi*, directed by Ivano de Matteo. Gran Sala Efraín Recinos, Centro Cultural Miguel Ángel Asturias, 24 calle 3-81, z. 1, **Guatemala City**

**28 Thurs., 6:30pm** — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Metals in the pre-hispanic age* by Elisa Mencos. Q35; students & tourist guides, Q15. Parking Q40. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7836), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**28 Thurs., 7pm** — (English) FILM: *Working Girl* starring Melanie Griffith, Susan Sarandon and Harrison Ford. Numa Restaurant, 7a av. norte #16, **La Antigua**

**28 Thurs., 7pm** — (Spanish) PHOTOGRAPHY: Monthly meeting of the Club Fotográfico de Guatemala. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**30 Sat., 10pm** — (Spanish) FESTIVAL: Activities for kids inspired by the book "La fiesta de los Animales," paying homage to its author Jorge García Murga (+). Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

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





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More than a half, maybe as much as two-thirds of my life as a writer is rewriting. I wouldn't say I have a talent that's special. It strikes me that I have an unusual kind of stamina.  
—John Irving



**U.S. Citizen in Guatemala? Make your voice heard!**  
You must file a new Federal Post Card Application this year to vote from overseas in the 2014 mid-term elections.  
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<http://www.votefromabroad.org>  
Contact John Chudy at mayadems@yahoo.com with questions.

**Need help?**  
See us at Conexión,  
4a calle oriente #14, La Antigua  
11am to 2pm on  
August 16



## U.S. Citizens Abroad: *Are You Ready to Vote this November?*

**C**ritical U.S. mid-term congressional elections are just around the corner. All 435 members of the House of Representatives and 33 senators will be elected this November. Federal elections are important, even for overseas citizens. To vote while you are outside the USA, you must send a completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), available from [www.votefromabroad.org](http://www.votefromabroad.org), to your local election official every year. This applies even if you voted in the previous election and you automatically receive a ballot from your local election official.

Why is this so important? If an election is challenged,

un-requested ballots will not be counted. So, if you haven't already completed the FPCA in 2014, you are strongly urged to complete one now. You can submit the FPCA by international mail, or have a friend, family member, or Democrats Abroad Guatemala volunteer drop it off for mailing at the U.S. Embassy American Citizens' Services window. Make sure the envelope is addressed to the local election official for your voting district, which will be listed on the instructional materials that accompany your FPCA.

Democrats Abroad Guatemala volunteers will be available to collect completed FPCAs or to help you to complete your FPCA on Saturday, **August 16**, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Conexion, 4a calle oriente #14, La Fuente, La Antigua Guatemala.



### REVUE Photo Contest

Te invitamos a participar en nuestro **CONCURSO FOTOGRÁFICO** de septiembre 2014 con el tema **Arquitectura en GUATEMALA**. Enviar UNA (1) foto en ALTA RESOLUCIÓN con el título, lugar donde fue tomada, su nombre y el sitio web para el crédito a: [fotos@revuemag.com](mailto:fotos@revuemag.com)

We invite you to participate in our **MONTHLY PHOTO CONTEST** for September 2014 with the theme **Architecture in GUATEMALA**. Please send ONE (1) HIGH RES photo with caption/location and your name & website for the credit line to: [photos@revuemag.com](mailto:photos@revuemag.com)

Habrá premios para las fotos ganadoras, incluye **Q200 para los dos primeros lugares**. Para más información [www.Revuemag.com](http://www.Revuemag.com)

There will be prizes for winning photos including **Q200 for both 1st place categories**. More information at [www.Revuemag.com](http://www.Revuemag.com)

Serán elegibles las fotos que se reciban hasta el **10 de AGOSTO de 2014**

Submissions entered by the **10th of AUGUST** will be eligible.

After submitting your FPCA, most states allow you to confirm your registration and ballot delivery selection online. Forty-five days before any election for federal office, states must sent ballots to U.S. citizens who have completed their FPCA. If you do not receive your ballot within 30 days of the election, you should submit a Federal Write-in Ballot (FWAB), also available from [www.votefromabroad.org](http://www.votefromabroad.org).

Your vote matters. Many U.S. elections within the past ten years have been decided by a margin of victory of less than 0.1%. To learn more about candidates, their voting records and their positions on issues before you vote, check one of the nonpartisan websites, such as Project Vote Smart at [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org).

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Mankind will never see an end of trouble until lovers of wisdom come to hold political power, or the holders of power become lovers of wisdom. —Plato





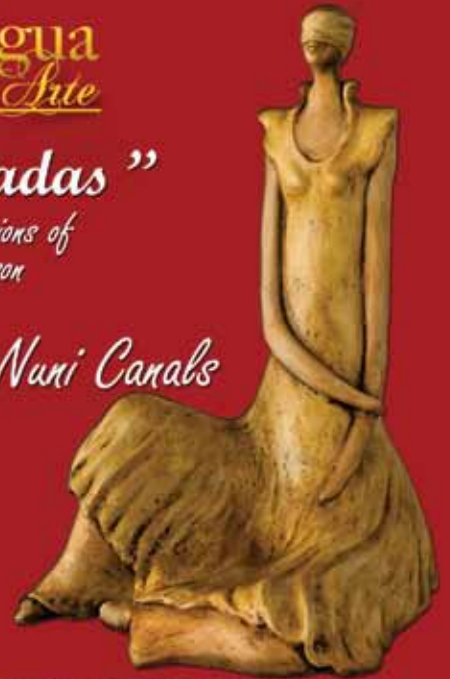
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*“ Dos Miradas ”*

*Artistic expressions of  
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*Nuni Canals*

*Sebastián Sarti*



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# LIVE MUSIC

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**Mondays, 8-10pm** — Nelson Lunding. Q35 cover

**Thursdays, 8-10pm** — César Barrios,  
Latin American guitar. Q35 cover

**Fridays, 8-10pm** — Latin Trio, Denis Medina on Cubano  
Tres. Q35 cover

**Saturdays, 8-10pm** — Sergio Zepeda, guitar. Q35 cover

**August 9, Sat., 5pm** — MUSIC: *Más música, menos  
violencia*, a unique musical recital by students of Sistema  
de Orquestas de Guatemala, (SOG). All proceeds support  
SOG and its programs. Suggested donation Q150



**Saturdays, 8-10pm**

Sergio Zepeda, guitar. Q35 cover

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tel: 2334-1241 Via 6, 3-55, zona 4, Guatemala City

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## Fridas

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

**Fridays** — World music.

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**Thursdays** — Gustavo: this local musician plays a mix of Latin and western classics

**Fridays** — Bonfire Night! Different guest artists and drink specials from 8pm

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## TRATTORIA LA NONNA

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**Saturdays** — 7-10pm: Live music



## Las Palmas

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

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## Los Tres Tiempos

Tel: 7832-5161 5a av norte. #31, La Antigua

**Sundays** — 2-5pm: Live music: Bolero

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**THROUGHOUT THE MONTH**

**ART:** through Wed. 6th — PHOTOGRAPHY: Exhibition by Fernando Castillo. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

**ART:** Through Fri., 8th — *Testigos Urbanos*, by Jorge Mazariegos. Galería del Centro de Fundación G&T Continental, 5a av. 12-38, z. 1, **Guatemala City**

**ART:** Through Mon., 14th — *Agua y Cultura* by artists from Lake Atitlán. Instituto Italiano de Cultura (tel: 2366-8394), 16 calle 2-55, z. 10, **Guatemala City**

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

**Mondays, 10am & Thursdays, 2:30pm:** Common Hope offers a free two-hour village tour, learn about its education, health care & housing programs. Meet at the fountain, central park; also private tours avail., tel: 7922-6600. Visit [www.commonhope.org](http://www.commonhope.org). **La Antigua**

**Mondays, 4:30pm; Tues., 3pm; Wed., 3pm** — DUPLICATE BRIDGE: Asociación Guatemalteca de Bridge. Info., Eva: 7832-4327 or Denni: 2478-1595. Vista Hermosa, z. 15, **Guatemala City**

**Thursdays., 8:30am** — TOUR: Visit Ciudad Vieja, you'll see where many *Niños de Guatemala* families work and live. Also, visit the school built by Niños de Guatemala. Q200/Q100, students. Proceeds benefit Niños de Guatemala projects. [Antigua\\_office@ninosdeguatemala.org](mailto:Antigua_office@ninosdeguatemala.org); tel: 7832-8033. **La Antigua/Ciudad Vieja**



**Thursdays, 5-6pm** — DOCUMENTARY: Wings presents *Blessed Fruit of the Womb: The Fight for Reproductive Rights in Guatemala*. Free. The Bagel Barn, 5a calle poniente #2, **La Antigua**

**All month long** — PATRON SAINT FESTIVAL: *Fiesta de la Virgen de la Asunción* with celebrations, parades & fairs. **Guatemala City**



(PHOTOS BY OSCAR VELÁSQUEZ)



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(2nd place by judges vote in the Revue Photo Contest, August)



2014  
Spirit

by  
Sri Ram Kaa  
& Kira Raa

## A Thousand Word SMILE

**T**hey say a picture is worth a thousand words...but what about a smile? An authentic smile offers such a positive experience. Have you ever noticed that when a person responds to you with a sincere smile that there is an immediate sense of reassurance?

Smiles, like words can also be deceiving! We are referring to that amazing, sincere spontaneous smile that is drastically different from the

manipulated marketing-type smile.

A sincere smile is universally recognized as a sign of peace and an invitation for connection.

We see more spontaneous smiles from Guatemalans than we ever saw in New York City, London or Cairo! It is a fascinating cultural fact. Guatemalans smile! Perhaps they carry less preoccupations? This is hard to know for sure, because people here struggle

to earn a living just like everywhere else. However, the fact remains that Guatemalans smile more!

There is an independent organization that has created the "Happy Planet Index" which shows the extent to which 151 countries across the globe where people produce long, happy and sustainable lives. Guatemala's "happiness index" is in the top ten worldwide! While the UK

*Sri and Kira have authored several books and are the owners of TOSA La Laguna.  
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is down at 41 and the U.S. far lower. (Source: [www.happyplanetindex.org](http://www.happyplanetindex.org))

Scientists also confirm that smiling is good for your health. When you smile, it stimulates pleasure centers. It also releases endorphins into the blood stream. Your smile sends the signal to your unconscious mind that you are safe.

Experiment with this. Hold a scowl or frown and notice your inner experience. Breathe and relax and then smile. Notice how your energy shifts. Smiling lowers your blood pressure, relaxes the flight or fight response and supports good health.

What does all this mean to you? Can happiness be measured by the number of smiles you radiate? Can you improve your overall sense of health and wellbeing by smiling more? In our life experience we believe this to be true.

Every time you consciously smile you make a choice to be at peace and send a signal to the universe that "I am content." This signal is an energetic message that has been proven to improve health and we invite you to consider that the energy of smiles can change the outer world experience in your life.

Try radiating the energy of a sincere smile every chance you get! Make it your spiritual practice to smile more! We guarantee that not only will you feel better; your relationships will improve. This is another way we can co-create a better world and what a great place to start... right here in Guatemala. ☺



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years the filter unit must be changed out for a cost of \$25—the filter is paid over a very short time vs. bottled water,” Wilson said.

A study by the Pan American Health Foundation confirmed that a combination of an Ecofiltro and its health and hygiene education program reduced intestinal infections by over 55 percent in rural areas of Guatemala.

As for environmental benefits, Ecofiltro’s Gold Standard audit concluded that since Ecofiltro reduces the use of wood-burning fires, carbon pollution is diminished by four tons every year. Plus, villagers no longer need to cut down as many trees for fuel, a significant cause of deforestation.

The system dates to 1981 when Guatemalan scientist Fernando Mazariegos developed ceramic pot filtration at the Central American Research Institute (ICAITI) and in

collaboration with artisans from the town of Rabinal in Alta Verapaz. The following year his design was awarded the top prize by the Latin American Institute of Water Engineers for its effectiveness in treating contaminated water.

Throughout the years, Ecofiltro has received numerous awards from prestigious organizations, including the World Bank, proving not only the effectiveness of the product itself, but also the delivery model in the field. Recent honors include Entrepreneur of the Year from the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship (Davos, Switzerland), the Achievement Award (the first in Latin America) from the International Project Management Association (Dubrovnik, Croatia), and Sustainable Brands’ Innovation Open winner (San Diego, California).

Each filter takes around four weeks

to build and lasts over two years. Locally sourced clay and sawdust are mixed with water to form the filter’s shape, then it is left to dry for up to two weeks before being fired in kilns and coated in colloidal silver. Every single filter is tested to ensure meeting national and international water purification standards. Once distributed, the filters are placed inside a container and clean drinking water filters through at a rate of 1.5-2 liters per hour.

Sales of higher-priced urban filters help subsidize filter costs in rural areas. Since the Ecofiltro social business was founded in 2009, 181,000 Ecofiltros have been delivered, 75 percent in rural areas, 25 percent urban. Wilson and his colleagues make their entrée into rural communities through local schools.

“We donate filters to schools through our partners like Fundación







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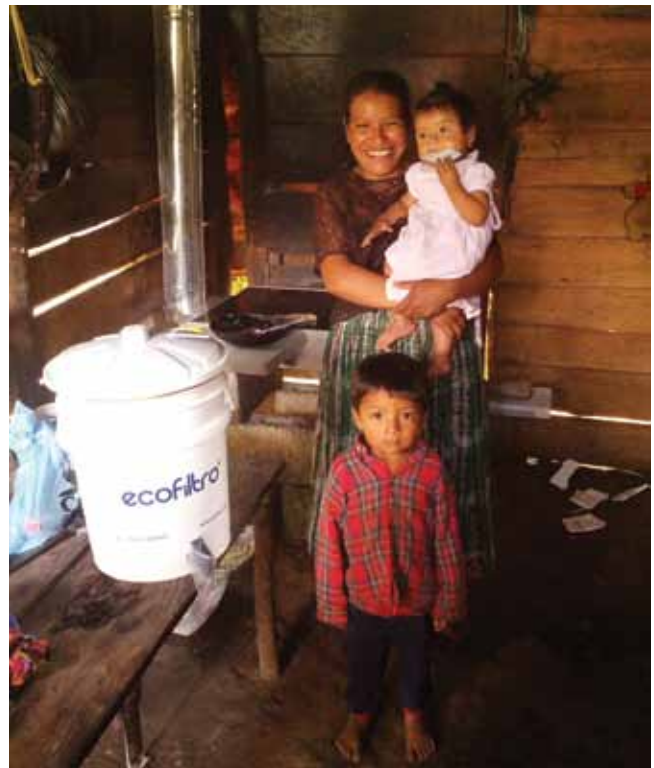
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Tigo, and after we set up the school with filters, we put together a meeting with all the parents of the students and introduce our Water for Life program to them.

“The Water for Life program entails giving these families the filters at a subsidized price and we provide five payments. We work through community entrepreneurs in each community that promote our program in their community and make sure payments are collected and deposited and that filters are renewed every two years,” Wilson said.

Although the first filters were originally created in Guatemala, the first factory to start using the technology was built in Ecuador. Today, there’s an Ecofiltro factory in Ciudad Vieja, Sacatepéquez, but the same ceramic-pot filtration units, developed initially in Guatemala, are being produced in over 35 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. 📍

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"Sonrisa de Guatemala" by Mario Mejia. Prize: Q200



Third Place by popular vote in the REVUE PHOTO CONTEST, August.  
"Cofrade" by German Velásquez. Prize: Carved Jade from **Jades Xibalbá**







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**D**uring our extended stay at Lake Atitlán Billy and I went to lunch at a popular, open-air restaurant on the main street in Panajachel. It serves delicious Guatemalan fare, full plates of pork, chicken or beef with sides of rice, guacamole, fresh buttered vegetables and your choice of garlic bread or tortillas for Q28 (quetzales) or about \$3.50 (U.S.)

As we were enjoying our meal, some tourists about our age (50ish) walked by. They slowed their pace down enough for Billy to say to them, “Hey, the food’s great here, why not give it a go?”

The man looked interested, the woman looked horrified.

I chimed in with, “Order the *almuerzo económico* and you will pay half the price on the menu.”

The man took about two seconds to decide that this was certainly a good deal and made a move to sit at a table next to ours.

“We’re going to eat here?” the wife asked.

Clearly she held resistance to entering this clean, brightly decorated eating establishment.

It was no dump. There was a flat screen TV on the wall (for the soccer games) and lively salsa music on the stereo system. Clean, hand-woven Guatemalan tablecloths covered every table, which also supported flowers in vases and salt and pepper shakers in the center. Original indigenous artwork adorned the walls.

The woman, who was noticeably beautiful and well-kept, had her hesitation distinctly written all over her scrunched-up face.

“I hope they speak English here,” she said as she flopped down.

“I want a Coke. Do you have Coke? What do you have to drink here?” she said in rapid-fire English.

The waiter, who was bilingual (at least in the basics of taking her order), kept up with her rush of questions pretty well.

“You have chicken or pork? I’ll take the pork. Honey, they have chicken or pork.”

Meanwhile, the husband and Billy were chatting away about retirement, finance, travel and what-have-you, having a grand ol’ time.

Bottles of Coca-Cola and empty glasses promptly arrived at the table and again, this poor woman looked stricken. Simply appalled.

I couldn’t imagine what the problem was, and actually I was rather intrigued by her responses to things as her husband was seemingly so relaxed. I tried to catch as much of her

...continued page 72



### About the Authors

Billy and Akaisha Kaderli are recognized retirement experts and internationally published authors on topics of finance and world travel. With the wealth of information they share on their popular website [RetireEarlyLifestyle.com](http://RetireEarlyLifestyle.com), they have been helping people achieve their own retirement dreams since 1991. They wrote the popular books, *The Adventurer's Guide to Early Retirement* and *Your Retirement Dream IS Possible*.



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I've had Botox, but then again pretty much everyone I know has. To me, Botox is no more unusual than toothpaste. It works. You do it once a year - who cares?  
 —Simon Cowell

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We cannot change our past. We can not change the fact that people act in a certain way. We can not change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. —Charles R. Swindoll

My recipe for dealing with anger and frustration: set the kitchen timer for twenty minutes, cry, rant, and rave, and at the sound of the bell, simmer down and go about business as usual. —Phyllis Diller



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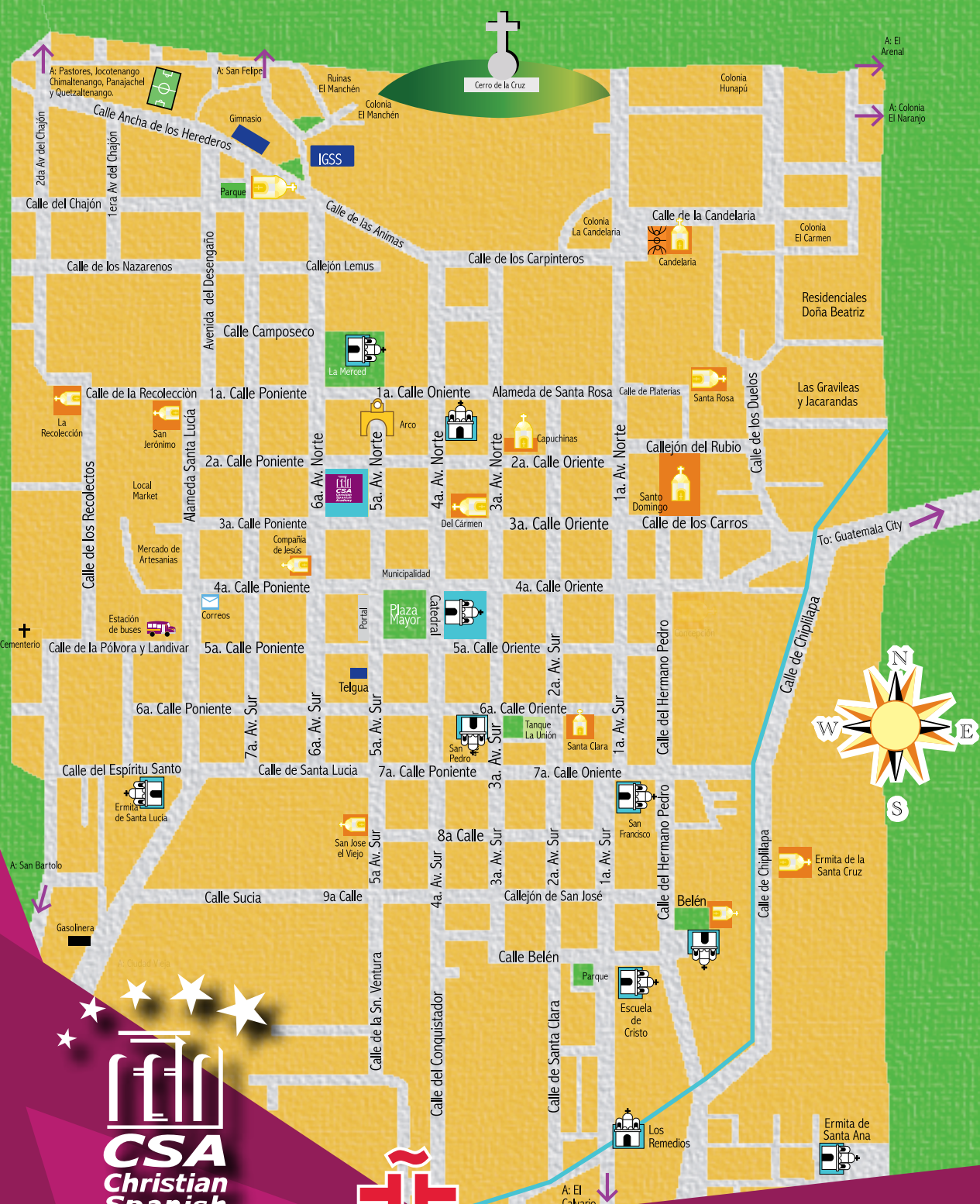
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An amateur artist is someone who supports himself with outside jobs which enable him to paint. A professional is someone whose wife works to enable him to paint.  
 —Ben Shahn

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## The Collapse of the Ancient Mayan World cont. from page 13

dence found throughout history in other large and complex civilizations such as the Greeks and the Romans, is one of an apogee period marking the start of a collapse.

Typically with an apogee we see a flourish of art, great buildings and a major surge of infrastructure and population growth. However, the surge that pushes an apogee is commonly one of rivalry among large and powerful dynasties with constant war and conflict—exactly what was hap-



pening in the late classic period with the Maya. Today we see the relics of this golden age with the impressive complexes in Tikal and Yaxha. Such growth, however, was unsustainable. As power and wealth grew, an overpopulation of the non-elite classes was needed to serve as construction workers and warriors. This led to pressure on the environment and was followed by a slow collapse.

I couldn't help but think of the parallels to our own society while listening to this talk of apogees. Are we in our own apogee right now? Will we look back at this period and marvel at the rapid rate of growth, the impressive technological advances, and innovation that came out of this period? Is our growth sustainable? Or might we fall into a slow collapse, one barely noticeable on a day-to-day basis?

This is what happened to the Maya, slowly over a period of 100 or more years. But take heart, the Maya civilization didn't die out or disappear altogether. It still lives on today, evolving and changing just like any other society. The Mayan culture changes as it adapts to new technology, new fashions and new politics. 📺



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Providing food and shelter is not proving love for your pet. Those too, but proper care and protection from harm make the truest sense of responsible pet ownership. —John D. Carraway, DVM

## Spitters, Scratchers, & Snappers



### Question:

*Our 10-year-old Great Dane Teddy had to be put to sleep because he developed “megaesophagus” and was unable to eat. The veterinarian said that this was generally a young dog disease.*

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

A megaesophagus is a term to describe an esophagus that is dilated and lacks motility. There are several different causes. It is usually congenital and recognized by the time the pup is 10 weeks old. It can also be acquired from injury, disease or neuromuscular complications. In almost all cases, the prognosis is very guarded to poor, even with medications and/or surgery. Most dogs with megaesophagus have a history of regurgitation of undigested food and water within half an hour of eating. Some dogs develop respiratory problems from aspiration of some of the food into the airways. Other show weight loss and gradual decline in overall health.

The diagnosis is made on history and radiographic examination. Treatment is generally limited to special feeding practices of placing the food (usually in gruel form) on a stool high enough that the dog eats with his head elevated, allowing the food to flow into the stomach.

Considering Teddy's age, he may have developed this condition as his neurological system started to fail, especially if he exhibited no signs of this problem until recently.



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text and photos by  
Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth



# Pimienta Gorda, Allspice

**P**imienta gorda (allspice) is the aromatic seed of a beautiful, medium-size tree native to Tikal, Uaxactún, Yaxhá and Alta Verapaz areas of Guatemala. For thousands of years the leaves and fruits of this tree have provided many utilitarian uses for the Maya people. Today you can buy allspice in any supermarket in the U.S. or Europe, and you can find the dried seed pods in Mayan markets in many parts of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and El Salvador.

The botanical name is *Pimenta dioica*. Allspice is not a can of lots of different spices, but one spice that has multiple flavors. While we worked in the Lake Yaxhá area our cook frequently prepared tea of allspice leaves, which is served throughout the Petén.

*“Allspice is not a can of lots of different spices, but one spice that has multiple flavors.”*

Pimienta gorda was also used as an air freshener pending the burials of Maya elite. Although some royal Mayan burial chambers may have been prepared before the death of a ruler, it is likely that most tomb architecture was not initiated until the ruler had died. In the Tomb of the Jade Jaguar I felt that the entire chamber had been hastily built; in other words while the king was lying in state (decaying).

Today there are more sophisticated

tests available, and archaeologists at Copán and several other ruins have found evidence suggesting that fragrant flowers were associated with some burials. If the body of a king was rotting, a layer of flor de nardo would definitely help. And several other aromatic plant parts were also available. Pimienta gorda has multiple potential uses for a deceased ruler's body: as a potential preservative (short term at least) and as an aromatic cover to mask the odor of the slowly rotting corpse.

Pimienta gorda is also used for tanning leather and for treating meat, and some of the chemical components are a useful insecticide. Too, there are many suggested medical uses; FLAAR Reports offers more on this subject at [www.maya-art-books.org](http://www.maya-art-books.org).

...continued page 94







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# Refacción Time

**A** *refacción* in Guatemala is a light meal or snack eaten at mid-morning, afternoon or late in the evening. Refaccionar is the act of having a refacción. In other Spanish-speaking countries, refacción means restoration, refurbishment and repair and can even refer to spare parts. Interestingly, the nuances of language and culture can cause funny or embarrassing moments for the unaware.

“*Vamos a refaccionar*” among family and friends can be a cozy term. This phrase can be extrapolated to mean, “Let’s have a light snack,” or

“Let’s have a light meal and a *cafecito* (little coffee) while we take it easy and catch up on things.” Guatemalans and other Latin Americans like to add *-ito* or *-ita* at the end of things—food, people and proper names—to denote closeness, friendliness and endearment. For instance, my family calls me Amalita and *limón* (lime) in a restaurant setting becomes *limóncito*.

**“*Vamos a refaccionar*”  
among family  
and friends can be  
a cozy term.**



Some of the best refacciones are readily available at street vendor stalls and at the *mercados* (large municipal markets), although you eat at your own risk. Some common and delicious snacks are *tostadas*—crispy corn tortillas topped with guacamole, sauce or bean puree and garnished with dried crumbled cheese, onions and parsley. *Chuchitos*, meaning little doggies, are small tamales topped with sauce and cheese. Delicious grilled corn rubbed with lime and salt is a popular fare at parks, plazas, festivals and fairs. Guatemalan-artisan hot chocolate with *champurradas* (cookies) is yet another quick and scrumptious snack.

When friends and family get together to visit in the afternoons they may have a refacción consisting of pan *francés* sandwiches made with Guatemalan French-style bread, filled with black beans and *queso de capas* (a mozzarella-like cheese wrapped in banana leaves). Alternatively, *panes con chile* is made with fresh *guaque* chilies filled with beef, chicken or pork *picadillo* (hash or stuffing) in a *pirujo* bun and garnished with lettuce and fresh onion rings.

Accompanying beverages can include *cafecito con leche* (coffee with steamed milk), chocolate *caliente* (hot Guatemalan-artisan chocolate made with water), *té de manzanilla*

*Amalia Moreno-Damgaard is a Chef and award-winning author of Amalia's Guatemalan Kitchen: Gourmet Cuisine with a Cultural Flair (AmaliaLLC.com)*





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(chamomile tea), or *fresco* (a refreshing drink made with fresh fruit or other flavorings).

*Atol* is a popular school beverage (nutritious and energizing thick, hot drinks made with fruits, legumes, grains and more). Atoles (plural) are also ways moms and grandmas nurture their kids or grandchildren and even the sick. My grandmother used to prepare *manjar blanco* (a drinkable custard) for me, made from scratch and delivered a lunch box containing the drink and a small piece of *pan de manteca* (sweet artisan bread) during the morning recess. Door-to-door food vendors passed by the school in the afternoon selling *empanadas de loroco y requesón* (turnovers filled with flower buds native to the region and a ricotta-like cheese), or *yuca con chicharrón* (freshly steamed yuca chunks topped with limey cabbage, chilies and pork cracklings).

My sister and I loved to visit the food stands selling cut-up fruit and the street carts with hot dogs and *mixtas* (Guatemalan hot dogs consisting of either a pirujo bun or a soft corn tortilla filled with guacamole, a grilled or boiled sausage topped with spiced cabbage slaw, condiments and spicy sauces). On weekends we went to the movies and afterward we hung out with friends at our favorite *cafeterías* (cafés) and *pastelerías* (pastry houses) and ate a sandwich *de pollo* (chicken sandwich with mayo, onion, lettuce and tomato) or a piece of

custard and fig pie. Guatemalan cafés and pastry restaurants offer high quality breads, cakes and pies.

Refacciones come in all shapes, sizes, settings and tastes. I have my favorites, which I make at home to enjoy with friends and family. Sometimes we even make a meal out of them. Here is a recipe for a quick snack that you can make at home easily to enjoy with your loved ones.

*¡Buen provecho!*



## *Panes con Chile*

**Sandwiches with fire-roasted chilies, stuffed with chicken picadillo**

Relleno (also called picadillo) means “filling,” “stuffing,” or “hash” in Latin America. This delicious dish can be used for stuffing chicken or turkey or as a stuffing for empanadas, rolled crispy tacos, chilies rellenos or sandwiches. Or eat it as a side dish with corn tortillas, rice and beans. Relleno can be made with beef or pork and with varying vegetables. Substitute the meat with cooked garbanzo beans or lentils or a combination of these for a tasty vegetarian dish.

**Makes about 6 cups**


1 cup finely diced yellow onions  
2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme leaves (or 1 teaspoon dry thyme)  
2 fresh bay leaves  
2 tablespoons canola oil

3/4 cup of each: julienned green beans, julienned carrots and finely diced potatoes

...continued on following page







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## Refacción Time cont. from previous page

2 teaspoons minced fresh garlic  
1 cup canned crushed tomatoes  
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons champagne vinegar or  
white wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
4 cups chopped skinless store-bought rotisserie chicken  
4-6 fresh guaque or poblano chili peppers\*  
4-6 pirujo buns

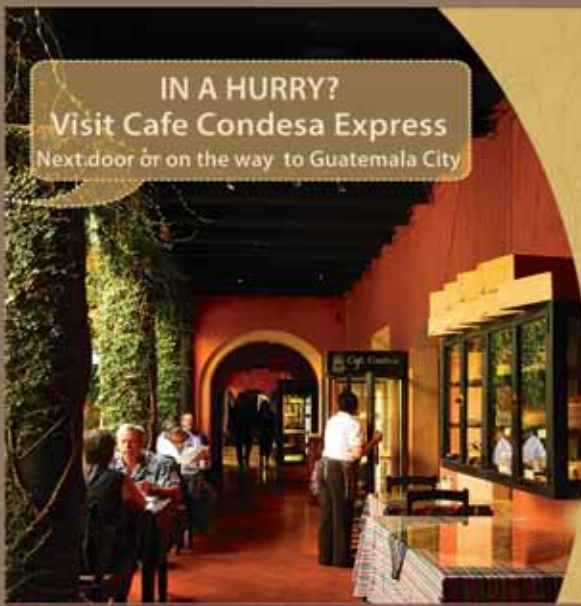
In a large skillet over medium heat, sauté the onions, thyme and bay leaves in the oil for about 2 minutes. Add the green beans, carrots and potatoes and sauté until aromatic, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, tomatoes and vinegar and sauté 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add the chicken, stir well to combine all ingredients and sauté 3 minutes. Adjust the heat to low and continue to cook the chicken and vegetable mixture uncovered, stirring from time to time until the vegetables are tender and all liquid has evaporated (10 to 15 minutes). Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed.

Serve immediately with warm corn tortillas. If you're using the mixture for stuffing, let it cool completely. Stuff fire-roasted guaque or poblano chilies and make sandwiches using olive oil, light mayonnaise or other condiments of choice.

### \*Fire-roasted fresh chilies

Fire roast fresh chilies in open flames on a grill or stove top. Allow them to char on all sides turning with tongs often. Wrap in plastic to "sweat" for 10 minutes and peel using damp paper towels to ease peeling. Do not rinse chilies. Carefully cut open one side and remove seeds and veins with scissors. Brush inside and out with white vinegar and season lightly with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. 🍴





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—James Surowiecki




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—Scott Adams



Utila Lodge manager Joe Christopher with two lionfish on his spear

“They grew quickly, they consumed all those other expensive reef fish that people were also keeping in their aquarium, and in a number of cases people got stung while cleaning the aquarium,” said Lad Akins, director of special projects at the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) in Key Largo, Florida.

“Some people were relocating and just didn’t want to take the aquarium with them—all those things combined provided incentive to release the fish.”

Unlike in their original habitat, lionfish have few natural enemies and reproduce quickly in the Caribbean. Voracious eaters, they prey upon over 70 native species of fish and crustaceans and outcompete

the native fish for food and territory. In heavily infested locations, lionfish have reduced native species by up to 90 percent.

To humans, however, lionfish make for a tasty meal, so much so that in 2011 the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration launched its Eat Lionfish campaign, urging chefs, wholesalers and fishing communities to promote the savory menace as a food choice. Bermuda calls its ocean-to-plate campaign “Eat ‘em to Beat ‘em!” In the Dominican Republic shoppers at Nacional supermarket in Santo Domingo can find fresh lionfish (about \$2.80 USD per pound) alongside other favorites at the seafood counter.

Like any many other catches, lionfish can be served whole fried, pan seared, breaded, grilled, blackened—even as gazpacho and ceviche.

In addition to its Reef Saver sand-

wich and lionfish chowder, Utila Lodge serves a breaded lionfish in a tomato basil cream sauce. Reid, at Pirate’s Treasure, won a local cook-off for her piña colada lionfish in 2011. “The more unique flavors we add to lionfish, the more exotic-tasting lionfish becomes,” she said.

The Reef Foundation website ([reef.org](http://reef.org)) lists nearly 50 restaurants in the U.S., Mexico and Caribbean, including 15 in Belize and Honduras, that serve lionfish regularly. Many other spots, such as Barrier Reef Sports Bar on Caye Caulker, offer it occasionally as a special. The “Lionfish Cookbook: The Caribbean’s New Delicacy” is also available on the Reef Foundation website. (us\$16.95, proceeds support research and the lionfish program.)

With millions of lionfish out there, it’s a matter of making a dent where it counts, not wiping them out, Akins said.

“It’s local removal. Nobody thinks we’re going to remove every last lionfish,” he said. “It’s a problem that’s going to be here for the long run. ... It’s like weeding the garden—you’re never going to get every last weed, but there are some things you can do that are more effective than others.”

...continued on following page

*“The more unique flavors we add to lionfish, the more exotic-tasting lionfish becomes...”*

For information visit [www.reef.org](http://www.reef.org) and click Lionfish Project.





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### Spicy Lionfish with Dill Sauce

- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 8 lionfish files
- 1 tablespoon Creole seasoning
- 2 tablespoons butter

In a small bowl, squeeze juice from 1 lemon. In a medium bowl, combine 2 teaspoons of the lemon juice, the sour cream, mayonnaise, fresh dill, fresh chives and capers. Blend until well combined.

Sprinkle Creole seasoning on filets. Heat butter in a skillet. Pan fry filets 2 minutes each side until browned.

Place cooked fillets on a plate and serve with dill sauce.

**Source:** REEF Lionfish Cookbook



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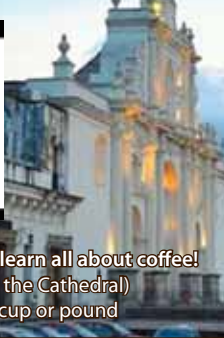
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## 5 Survival Tips cont. from page 40



reactions out of the side of my eye, not wanting to feed into it or rush to make things better.

Mrs. Visitor had her own drama going on and I found it mesmerizing. Apparently some of the syrup had leaked out at the top of the Coke bottle, causing a tiny dark sticky blob to appear.

She looked at her husband, then at me, then at the bottle, then at her husband, then at me, then again at the bottle. She disgustingly ran her finger at the top of the bottle and now she had that tiny sweet dollop on her finger. She again looked at her husband (who was obviously ignoring her by now), then at me, then at her finger, then at her husband, then at me, then again at her finger.

By now I am thinking, “She has no Kleenex in her purse? If she has been blown off course by this small and common occurrence, what is she doing traveling in this country?”

I couldn’t imagine how her meal would go.

I mean no disrespect.

Readers have contacted us with the dilemmas of having a spouse who

does not share their love of adventure, travel and trying new things. And Billy and I have often spoken and written about different traveling styles, and here I was watching this very scene play out in a three-dimensional movie called Life.

Since no one was rushing to her rescue to give her a hot, clean, wet, soapy cloth or whisk her away to a five-star restaurant complete with apologies, eventually Mrs. Visitor looked to her left, then to her right, and rather guiltily, wiped the syrup off on the table cloth. I don’t imagine it ever occurred to her to ask the waiter for a napkin.

A part of me felt guilty for not coming to her deliverance. I know she was simply afraid and out of her element, and I “got it” that there was frustration or anger from her at her husband for taking her to Guatemala to begin with. And here she was, in desperation, and her husband wasn’t helping her one bit. It was very obvious that this well-groomed, slender woman was face-to-face with the edge of her comfort zone ... and it was not pretty.

In my defense, I think I was just stunned and completely transfixed. I wanted to know what was going to happen next in this mini-emotional episode. I had forgotten that my 24 years of world travel had trained me to put a tissue in my purse for unexpected events such as this one.

Another side of me thought, “I should offer a few quick survival tips, they might find it useful when they are traveling.”

### SO HERE THEY ARE:

**1. Bring baby wipes.** No matter where you are, if you are in a location that has some semblance of civilization, you will find baby wipes in the grocery stores. Buy them, put them in your purse. Then when you travel on buses, get into a taxi, find a chair that has strawberry syrup on it or find that you need toilet paper in the bathroom, you’re prepared.

**2. Wrap a napkin or wipe around soda bottle necks.** If you are eating outside in warm weather and are having a soda, often flies or bees will gather for the sugary syrup. Place napkins or wipes down the bottle neck between pouring liquid into your glass and you can avoid a nasty creature falling into your pop. When traveling overseas, it is commonplace to wipe off the mouth of beer and soda bottles or cans, even in upscale locations.

**3. Use sliced limes to clean your fingers.** Eating a platter of fish or shrimp (which are often served whole) at the beach or lake-side can leave your fingers messy. Wiping them on a thin napkin at your table can sometimes leave you unsatisfied. Clean your fingers with the lime slices and then use your napkin. This way you won’t have tiny bits of paper stuck to your fingers to annoy you further. ...continued page 80



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Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of my administration has been minding my own business.  
—Calvin Coolidge

I never ask a man what his business is, for it never interests me. What I ask him about are his thoughts and dreams.  
—H. P. Lovecraft



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Palace “before” the restoration, 1950s!

Marroquín moved from the Bishop’s Palace on the Central Park in Santiago (La Antigua) to San Juan del Obispo where he enjoyed a magnificent view of the city. The current palace post-dates Marroquín’s life and was restored by Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arellano in the 1950s and has been administered by the Bethania nuns since 1972. A museum within the palace was created by the G&T Foundation in 2006 and is well worth a visit. The church alongside the palace is one of the best examples of colonial architecture in Guatemala and the colonial art inside is fabulous—a must for all colonial art studies.

Bishop Marroquín also left his inheritance to found the Colegio de Santo Tomás in 1620 (located next to the Santo Domingo Church), which later became the University of San Carlos de Guatemala in the new capital. The university is now a thriving institution in Guatemala City.

It is believed that the remains of our famous bishop were buried under the main altar at the cathedral in La Antigua. Excavations carried out in 1944 could not confirm this. The remains—with other famous historical figures—were deposited in a box at the local courthouse and then tampered with over a 40-year period.

While working at the Consejo Nacional para la Protección de Antigua Guatemala in the early 1980s, we rediscovered the box and were fortunate to have the three Guatemalan gentlemen who carried out the excavations



Palace “after” the restoration (PHOTO: CESÁR TIÁN)

still alive at that time. We ceremoniously opened the box, and they all immediately said, “Oh, no. These are not the human remains we put in the box in the 1940s.” It appears that the remains had been substituted for animal bones over the years! While the plaque at the cathedral still bears Marroquín’s name, his remains are lost to the ages. 📌



Colonial art inside the Palace PHOTO: HADAZUL CRUZ





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**THE TAX CORNER** by John Ohe



# Q & A



## The IRS Streamlined Disclosure Program

**I**n this month's issue, we discuss major changes to the IRS Streamlined Disclosure Program, which allows U.S. expats to catch up on delinquent tax filings (without penalty).

The IRS recognizes that many U.S. expats are not aware of their filing obligations and have not submitted their tax returns or FBARs (Foreign Bank Account Reports) for many years. The Streamlined Program is an attractive opportunity to get caught up with the IRS and avoid penalties.

**To be eligible, you must:**


Have resided outside the U.S. since Jan. 1, 2009;

Have not filed a U.S. tax return over the same period; and

Certify that previous failures to file tax returns were due to non-willful conduct.

The IRS has eliminated certain criteria that prevented thousands of expats from qualifying for the Streamlined Program. Previously, if an individual had more than \$1,500 in tax liability per year, he/she did not qualify for this program. Also

disqualified were expats with a foreign bank account or business interest outside of their country of residence (e.g., El Salvador for an expat living in Guatemala).

At the same time, the IRS has made more stringent the Offshore Voluntary Disclosure Program, which also allows U.S. expats to catch up on delinquent tax filings (but with penalties). Generally speaking, this program is targeted at individuals who have substantial assets abroad and have hidden their assets in a willful manner. 

If you would like to submit a tax-related question, please email: [info@holaexpat.com](mailto:info@holaexpat.com).

Responses are provided by John Ohe (IRS-authorized enrolled agent), who resides in Antigua.

Disclaimer: The answers provided in this article are for general information, and should not be construed as personal tax advice. Tax laws and regulations change frequently, and their application can vary widely based on the specific facts and circumstances.



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Nobody in life gets exactly what they thought they were going to get. But if you work really hard and you're kind, amazing things will happen.  
 —Conan O'Brien



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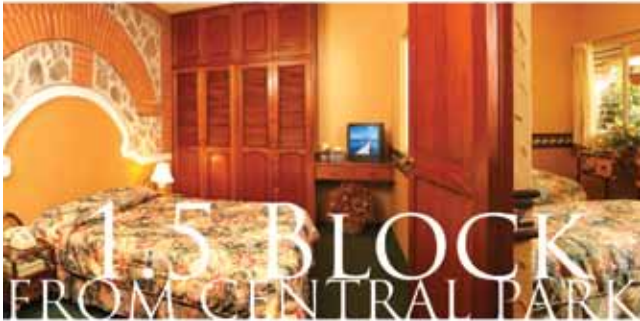
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**Ramón Ávila** cont. from page 15

expansive workshop beside his painting studio in San Lucas. But above all, painting and drawing remain his passion. After more than 60 years of painting, he still feels that he’s “practicing.”

“It’s very difficult, but I paint every day. Something, a little, a lot, at times all night long, painting. I don’t have a specific time or specific way, because you don’t know when the spark—the feeling—will happen,” he says. “To me, it’s important to have a ‘trade.’ In a trade, you must practice it, you must improve it, and above all, you must exercise it. And every now and then, something good results.”

In Ávila’s case, “something good” is always extraordinary. 







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Hell, there are no rules here - we're trying to accomplish something. —Thomas A. Edison

It's amazing how much trouble you can get in when you don't have anything else to do. —Quincy Jones

Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It is best to admit them quickly, and get on with improving your other innovations. —Steve Jobs

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. —Adam Smith



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Raising children is an incredibly hard and risky business in which no cumulative wisdom is gained: each generation repeats the mistakes the previous one made.  
 —Bill Cosby

## 5 Survival tips for travel cont. from page 72

**4. When entering or leaving a restaurant in Latin America and your eyes meet another diner enjoying his or her meal, offer a *buen provecho!*** This basically means “enjoy your meal” and is a polite and social thing to say. It shows that this is not your first picnic and that you are an all-around nice person.

**5. Don't let your comfort zone limit you.** Life is for living. Grab a bite and relish it. Situations are not always the same as they are “back home,” and that does not mean it's a bad thing. Who cares if you make a mistake? So what if one lunch wasn't your favorite? A smile goes a long way—not only for those around you, but give one for yourself. You deserve it for being brave enough to take a chance. 📌





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## SANTIZO cont. from page 17

with his father's 10-year-old camera in hand, "I realized that this is all I need to feel freedom, serenity and peace."

He soon purchased a new Canon digital camera, complete with a variety of lenses and a tripod. He's put his new equipment to good use, taking some 50,000 photographs of Guatemalan landscapes. He sets his camera at a high resolution or uses the star trail technique, taking multiple photographs then later stitching them together. "The starry night photo taken at Lake Atitlán consists of 350 separate shots," explains Santizo. "For similar photographs I've taken as many as 800 shots. This technique highlights the rotation of the stars and you can follow the trails."

This process often requires an entire night, but first a check of the weather. Then there is the attention to detail, camera settings, the use of a tripod, precision shooting and of course patience and passion.

Some years ago Santizo was living a fast-paced life in Guatemala City, but the appeal faded. "The good life meant material success, and of course there is never enough of that," he says. His life changed dramatically when he realized that it wasn't the kind of car he owned, or running a thriving business, nor the drive to "be someone ... With this insight came the freedom to give my life value, to create something that speaks to my soul."

Today Santizo lives in Antigua with his two beloved

dogs. He continues his studies in astronomy, history, quantum mechanics, holistic healing and Buddhism. "When you really want to explore who you are you don't need the wisdom of other people. You're the only one who's responsible for your life. You just have to listen to your inner voice."

During meditation periods he began to realize that he is a part of the universe, not standing "apart" from it. "This is another reason why I started to take photographs. The camera helps me to fix my new perception of the world and the magic all around us. I love to explore nature and I can't do this thinking about it. I need to go out and be one with it."

When talking about his approach to photography Santizo explains that he learns the most by playing with the camera, by just something trying out. "I don't have any rules," he says. "That's why I'm not afraid to break any." Setting up and capturing scenes with his camera is an adventure for him, a new experience. "But I never do it for gaining money or reputation." To the contrary, he simply loves to share his passion and to communicate through his work with other people who are also looking out for the wonders of the world. "We just have to open our eyes," he believes. "The beauty is right in front of us."

*You can enjoy many of Santizo's framed photographs at his newly opened Café Samsara, 6a calle poniente #33, La Antigua.*



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The older generation thought nothing of getting up at five every morning, and the younger generation doesn't think much of it either. —John J. Welsh

## REVUE's Property Conversion Chart

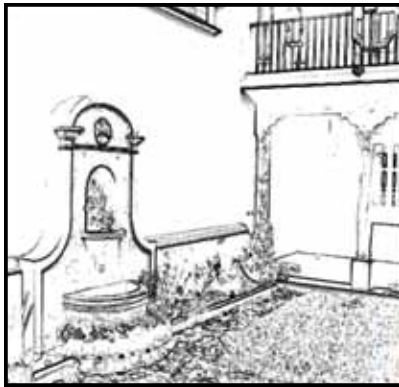


1 Caballería = 45.12 hectares	1 Manzana = 10,000 vr <sup>2</sup>
1 Caballería = 64 manzanas	1 Manzana = 6,988 mt <sup>2</sup>
.....	1 Manzana = 1.7 acres
1 Hectare = 10,000 mt <sup>2</sup>	.....
1 Hectare = 2.471 acres	1 mt <sup>2</sup> = 10.764 ft <sup>2</sup>
1 Hectare = 1.43 manzanas	1 mt <sup>2</sup> = 1.431 vr <sup>2</sup>
.....	.....
1 Acre = 43,560 ft <sup>2</sup>	1 Vara = 32.9 inches
1 Acre = .4047 hectare	1 Yard = 36 inches (3ft)
1 Acre = 4047 mt <sup>2</sup>	1 Meter = 39.37 inches
1 Acre = 5645.4 varas <sup>2</sup>	

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

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Entry in the Revue Photo Contest, August: "Smiles" "Ellas..." by Annaly Castillo de Villatoro



## Bodacious Buses! cont. from page 19



but the women only had their luggage checked; they were never subjected to a pat down. I often wondered how many ladies were smuggling a pistol or some other forbidden item under their voluminous skirts.

One morning an oncoming bus flashed its lights incessantly. Our driver slowed and steered up close so he could shout to the other driver. I noticed something queer about the other bus. It had big brooms tied onto the front bumper as if they were there to sweep the highway. Up ahead someone—you never knew who was doing what—had dumped thousands of big tacks (designed to puncture tires) all along the road. Our driver was already prepared for such an eventuality because he pulled the bus over and rigged up his own brooms. That being done, we continued on slowly, making our way through the low-tech mine field.

Another event is indelibly burned into my memory. One night we were zooming through the endless curves between Tecpán and the crossroads at Los Encuentros when, as we came around one particularly precipitous bend, everyone gasped! We looked down into the valley and saw an entire village on fire. You can be sure that everyone was saying a prayer that night. When the bus finally made it to Panajachel, my companions and I stopped at Chalo's tienda for a cold beer or two. Everyone listened with rapt attention as we related what we had just witnessed.

Unless you drive a heavy-duty, four-wheel drive vehicle, the chicken bus continues to be the best way to get to remote destinations, as most rural highways are still

unpaved. And in more remote areas, such as the stretch between the frontier town of Barillas, Huehuetenango and Playa Grande in Alta Verapaz (an area bordering Chiapas, Mexico) the roads are so bad that buses must go very slowly, thus precluding the daredevil antics of drivers transiting paved routes. Passenger vans and mini-buses have become ubiquitous in recent years, and this is probably a more acceptable form of transport for the less adventurous.

Speaking for myself, after taking thousands of trips aboard Guatemala's famous and infamous chicken buses, I would still recommend riding a chicken bus. There is no better way to get to know the locals and experience something of their way of life. If you are adventurous and open minded, you will find this kind of trip utterly charming and unforgettable. And it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Maya are exceptionally friendly, courteous and inviting. 🍷



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Art is the beautiful way of doing things. Science is the effective way of doing things. Business is the economic way of doing things. —Elbert Hubbard



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# Cardinal

Finding vivid cardinal red among the vibrant colors of Guatemala isn't as easy as you may think. There are no cardinals in local cathedrals right now, with their distinctive miters and red caps. Cardinal butterflies visit the Highlands on their way south in the fall, and back north in the spring, but don't stay here very long. Bright cardinal stripes flash on some freshwater fish in Lake Izabal and along the Río Dulce, and on some ocean trophies, if you're fortunate enough to swim in the right places or to make the big catch at sea.

Sure, there are plenty—too many—cardinal advertising signs for soft drinks, phone services and a few political candidates and parties, but they don't count as attractive sights around our colorful country.

Cardinals, the kind that are the official birds of seven of those United States up north, have a range that extends into our Western Highlands, cardinal males sporting their bright red crests while their mates for life are nothing but a dull red-brown. A few times a year a cocky cardinal male splashes in our La Antigua Guatemala birdbath, showing off against the neighbors' white walls and green shrubs, then fluttering away into the deep blue sky, not hanging around at all.

Cardinal red does show off in several indigenous weavings, especially the red-and-white *huipil* blouse of Patzún, and the brighter red huipil of neighboring Patzicía, in Chimaltenango. Several men's costumes have cardinal and white stripes, in Chili Verde, Quetzaltenango, and near the Mexican border in Huehuetenango villages. Cochineal insects and *tuna* cactus fruit provided the cardinal dyes that were big export items from colonial Guatemala, natural dyes that are still used by traditional weavers.

Birds, fish, butterflies, weavings, cardinal red is around, but not easy to find until you go into the cut-flower sections of town markets. Sometimes cardinal carnations are on sale, and occasionally bundles of cardinal-red poppies gathered by kids along stream banks.

Cardinal fuchsia and bougainvillea plants are available in the months when cardinal *nochebuena*, poinsettias, are not. But the best cardinal comes in a dozen long-stemmed red roses, cut for export and for sale year-around from the many rose *fincas* outside La Antigua. Go buy a dozen or two beautiful beauties to really enjoy cardinal red in our sensuous country. 🌹



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*"Me refresco divirtiendome"*  
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