



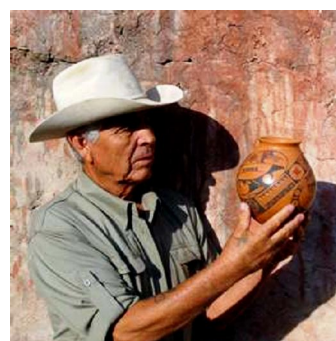
Baja Bits & Bytes

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM DISCOVER BAJA TRAVEL CLUB

AUGUST 2012

Take your Mark...Get set...Go...to Mata Ortiz October 2012

Join **DISCOVER BAJA** and **BAJA CUSTOM TOURS** for an unforgettable trip to the charming village of Mata Ortiz in Chihuahua, Mexico. The village is home to Juan Quezada the famed potter who rediscovered the art of making pots or *ollas* in the ancient Mesoamerican pottery tradition. Do some holiday shopping or start your own collection of these one-of-a-kind pieces of art. We'll visit homes of gifted potters, whose crafts have appeared in museums worldwide, and have the opportunity to purchase their magnificent art.



This 6-day 5-night trip will include a night in Bisbee, Arizona with an optional tour of the Lavender copper mine. Once in Mexico we'll tour Paquimé, the site of magnificent ruins dating back to the 1200s.

We'll stay in Mata Ortiz for three nights with plenty of shopping as well as excursions to petroglyphs and local sights.



Back into Arizona, our last day we'll explore Kartchner Caverns State Park, the dramatic caves which were opened to the public in the last 13 years.

We will travel in a comfortable 15-passenger van.

Substantial room will be needed to carry our precious pots home, so seating space is limited. Price is \$850 for DB members and \$900 for non-members.

There is a \$220 supplement for single occupancy. This price includes all transportation, lodging, meals and tours. All the planning and work is handled for you.

Don't miss the fun and adventure. For more information or an application packet, please call Carol at **DISCOVER BAJA** 800 727-2252

Baja Blues Festival Aug 25

The Rosarito Beach Hotel will be hosting the first Baja Blues Festival on August 25. The festival will include an impressive lineup of blues artists as well as festive food and drink, all to benefit six different children's charities in the Rosarito area. Tickets, by advance purchase only, are available at www.bajabluesfest.com

New El Chaparral Port Of Entry

The *San Diego Union-Tribune* reports that the Mexican government is firm in its plan to open its new state-of-the-art El Chaparral port of entry at the San Ysidro border crossing this November, even though the new access roads on the US side are not built, nor even funded.



Sources: Miller Hull Partnership; GobbBC

Illustration courtesy of the San Diego Union-Tribune

With the new US access lanes pictured above still on the drawing board, both the US and Mexico are scrambling to provide a temporary roadway the short distance west from I-5 to the new border crossing. We'll keep you posted.

Rancho Sordo Mudo RV Park Needs Campground Host(s)

Rancho Sordo Mudo (ranchosordomudo.org), a free Christian home and school for deaf children in Baja California, 24 miles northeast of Ensenada on Mex 3 in the Guadalupe Valley, is looking for a Campground Host or Hosts.



The RV Park is fundamentally intact and in reasonably good shape. The campground has several back-in spaces and 20 pull-thru sites that will accommodate rigs of all sizes. They have a large covered picnic area with several picnic tables, washrooms with showers (unfortunately not open), electric outlets and water at each site (also not working). The fee is currently by donation.

For information about Campground Host Duties, please call Janet at 805-341-6919 or email janet@deafdisciples.com.

Avenida Revolución's Revolution

Perhaps no street in Tijuana has been better known to American tourists over the past half century than Avenida Revolución. Whether it was shopping for clothing, jewelry or leather goods, being photographed with the zebra-striped burro, enjoying some tasty *comida Mexicana*, or taking in some rowdy bar action, Revolución was the place to go.

That's all changed during the past decade. With the dwindling numbers of Americans, many afraid to cross the border, most of the small shops and many of the restaurants catering to tourists have closed their doors.

But Revolución has been undergoing its own revolution. A new Avenida Revolucion is evolving filled with new art galleries, bookstores, restaurants, cafes and bars.

And not catering to the American tourists, but to Tijuana's residents—the young and the hip as well as the older and more affluent.



Three new arts passages have opened in the past few years and festivals to attract the locals are well attended. Even Caesar's Restaurant (home of the famous salad), taken

over by Tijuana's Plascencia family (owners of several of Tijuana's top restaurants) has re-emerged as an ~~to~~ dining venue.

So the next time you're in Tijuana, check out the revolution on Revolución.

New Wine Museum In Guadalupe Valley

Mexican President Felipe Calderón attended the early August opening of the new Guadalupe Valley Wine Museum built by \$5.3 million from both state and federal funds. The museum features interactive displays and an outdoor amphitheater. Intended to highlight the history and tradition of wine-making in the valley, the museum is located at kilometer marker 81 on highway Mex 3 which connects Ensenada with Tecate.



Bodegas de Santo Tomas



South of Ensenada in the Santo Tomas Valley, you've no doubt noticed and wondered about a modern, circular building (pictured) built a number of years ago. Surrounded by vineyards and on the east side of Mex 1 at kilometer 49, it is part of the Bodegas de Santo Tomas operation. Discover Baja members who have visited recently, tell us that it is open from 11:00am to 3:00pm, and if you call ahead to their Ensenada office [646 178-3333] tours can be arranged.

Expedited Passport Processing

Passport processing can be expedited by scheduling an appointment at the downtown San Diego Passport Agency at the Columbia Center, 401 West A St. 10th Floor, San Diego, Ca 92101

Appointments can be scheduled 24 hours a day, 7 days a week using their automated appointment system at 1-877-487-2778. When calling the automated appointment system, you will hear that travel plans are required; however this requirement does not apply to this agency. You must, though, pay the \$60 ~~to~~ expedite fee+. Passports will be issued within five business days of applying at the agency. During your



appointment, the agency will advise how the passport will be sent to you. This agency can issue both the U.S. passport book and the U.S. passport card on-site.

Appointments are available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and Fridays; as well as 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Thursdays (excluding Federal Holidays).

See http://travel.state.gov/passport/npic/agencies/agencies_5393.html or call 866-781-7045 for general passport information.

Baja Amigos Looking For Caravan WagonMasters

Dan and Lisa Goy of Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours are looking for anyone interested in becoming WagonMasters on their upcoming tours of the peninsula.

This is exceptionally rewarding work in Baja California from November thru April each season. Contact Dan or Lisa at Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours. www.BajaAmigos.net or 1-866-999-BAJA (2252)



Gas Prices In Baja



PEMEX prices have held pretty steady over the past month: Magna (regular) \$2.86; Premium \$3.02 and Diesel \$2.96.

Peso Exchange

As of 8/14/12, the Mexican Peso is exchanging at 13.14 to the US dollar.

FROM OUR MEMBERS:

COMMENTS, INFORMATION AND FIELD NOTES+FROM OUR DISCOVER BAJA MEMBERS

Boat Registration

DB member Ben Provence reminds members that Mexican border officials will not let you bring a boat into Mexico without current registration. Thanks, Ben

Tecate Crossing With A Big Motor Home

One of our DB members who takes a large motor home across the border at Tecate, recommends parking the motor home on the U.S. side of the border, walking over to get your tourist visas stamped, then returning to drive the motor home across the border. Sounds like good advice since finding parking (in order to get visas stamped) for a motor home once you cross the border can be a challenge.

Baja Hunting

Member Gordon Maddock writes that although much of DBTC's focus is on other parts of the Baja peninsula, many of my friends and I have homes and trailers on the Colorado River where we hunt waterfowl, as well as in the Mexicali Valley and the Valley of Trinidad where we hunt dove, quail and pheasant. Some of us have homes in San Felipe, and once a year hunt Brant (geese) in San Quintin.

Those of us who hunt, use Arturo Malo at Baja Hunting and UMA K57 to obtain licenses and arrange hunts as we have for many years. There are other outfitters but these guys are the best.

I have attached a letter from Arturo Malo describing the hunting prospects for the coming season and the dates. +CLICK here to read- [Baja Hunting's Arturo Malo](#)

Gordon has some openings for a two-day pheasant/dove hunt the first weekend in November and can be contacted at Gordon@baldwinrealestatemanagement.com regarding any of these hunting matters.



Knives In Baja

Another member sent a reminder that it is illegal to carry a knife on your person in Mexico, even a pocketknife. You could be arrested and charged with possession of a deadly weapon, spending weeks in jail waiting for trial, and tens of thousands of dollars in attorney's fees, court costs, and fines. If convicted, you may be sentenced to up to five years in a Mexican prison. Keep those knives in your fishing tackle box or tool kit.

Registering Travel In Mexico

Yet another member writes about registering with the US State Department when traveling in Mexico. (Not critical for most trips, but perhaps for extended trips to remote areas of the country.)

SD Drop-off for Clothing and Goods for the Needy in Baja

DB Member Ed Leon writes that we are glad to note your kindness in offering clothing etc



for the needy in Baja. Are you familiar with the American order of nuns called Trinitarians of Mary? They have an orphanage for girls at their Mt. Tabor monastery just south of Tecate. They also have a small convent in San Diego at 6702 Del Cerro Blvd, and some of them travel back and forth to the orphanage on a regular basis.

If any DB members are so inclined, they may drop off items at the Del Cerro Blvd address for the needy in Baja. This includes any extra fruit or vegetables that members may have from their gardens. The nuns and children are always so appreciative of such gifts.

Please call ahead at 619-667-3942 or email: trinitariansofmary@gmail.com

Editor's note: Several years ago, Carol and Hugh were invited to participate in a Christmas festival for the poor at the Trinitarians' Mt Tabor monastery and orphanage in Tecate. Over 3,000 needy men, women and children from the area were provided a tasty meal, as well as clothing, blankets, baskets of food, toys for the kids and toiletry items by these amazingly selfless and loving nuns. It was an inspiring and unforgettable experience.



Baja Bits & Bytes is a monthly online publication of
DISCOVER BAJA Travel Club.

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