



BAJA NEWS

For more Baja news, see:
www.discoverbaja.com/baja-california-information/baja-news/

Toll Road to Ensenada Reopened!

The toll road to Ensenada officially reopened on December 16, 2014. The road is now open to through traffic in both directions. The toll road was previously closed for nearly a year after part of the road between Rosarito and Ensenada collapsed in a landslide in December 2013. For most of 2014, the toll road was closed between La Misión and San Miguel (traffic was being rerouted inland via the free road) while the toll road was being rebuilt.



For more information see www.discoverbaja.com/2014/12/17/toll-road-ensenada-reopened/



Price of FMMs Increased

The price of FMM tourist permits increased January 1, 2015 to 332 pesos. The cost for Discover Baja members to get a prepaid FMM has therefore increased to \$37 dollars. For more information about FMM tourist permits see www.discoverbaja.com/go/fmm-tourist-permits/

From the DBTC Office

Happy 2015! The toll road to Ensenada has reopened, Baja Sur has recovered after Hurricane Odile and the gray whales are about to arrive along the peninsula. It's a great time to get down to Baja.

Don't forget that the Back to Baja campaign is still bringing you discounts at hotels, restaurants and activities in BCS through the end of February (see page 6). There are still spots open on the gray whales/Graham Mackintosh trip in February (see page 9)

Contact us for your Mexican auto insurance, prepaid FMM tourist permits, fishing licenses, or help with making reservations.

We wish you a prosperous new year filled with travel and adventure.

Let's Baja!

Hugh, Carol, Jen, Maythé & Monica

DBTC BAJA CAJA *All of the Baja info you need in one box!*

PESO EXCHANGE RATE: \$14.6 to \$1 U.S. dollar

PEMEX PRICES: Northern Baja: Magna: \$3.83/gal, Premium: \$4.04/gal, Diesel: \$3.93/gal

Southern Baja: Magna: \$3.90/gal, Premium: \$3.98/gal, Diesel: \$3.93/gal

FISHING LICENSES: Day: \$12.25, Week: \$31.20, Month: \$42.80, Year: \$54.40 for members.

www.discoverbaja.com/go/fishing-licenses

PREPAID FMMs: \$37 DBTC members only. www.discoverbaja.com/go/fmm-tourist-permits

BOAT TEMPORARY IMPORT PERMITS (TIPs): \$45 fee for DBTC to handle processing. Service for DBTC members only. www.discoverbaja.com/go/temporary-boat-importation/

NAUTICAL FMMs: \$10 fee for DBTC to process. Service for DBTC members only.

www.discoverbaja.com/go/nautical-sportfishing-fmm/

MEXICAN AUTO INSURANCE: www.discoverbajaonline.com

ON OUR RADAR FOR JANUARY

For more information about the events below and to keep up on all of the latest Baja events, see www.discoverbaja.com/events

Jan. 6 Día de Reyes



On January 6, most of Mexico celebrates El Dia De Reyes, the Epiphany, remembering the day when the Three Wise Men arrived in Bethlehem bearing their gifts for the Baby Jesus. Before going to bed the children place their old shoes under their bed or in the living room, where the Wise Men will leave them their presents. Bakeries offer the Rosca de Reyes, an oval sweetbread, decorated with candied fruit. Hidden inside the Rosca is a plastic figurine of the Baby Jesus. Whoever gets the baby figurine in their piece of Rosca hosts a celebration on February 2, Dia de la Candelaria or Candlemas day, where traditionally tamales are served.

Jan. 13-18 Lord of the Wind Kiteboarding Competition

www.lordofthewindbaja.com



The Lord of the Wind kiteboarding competition takes place in Los Barriles, Baja California Sur. The annual event, now in its fifth year, is sponsored by the local Rotary Club and features four days of kiteboarding as well as affiliated parties.

Jan. 15-17, 21-24 Todos Santos Music Festival

www.todossantosmusicfestival.com



The Todos Santos Music Festival features a series of concerts over the course of two weekends in Todos Santos. Now in its fourth year, the event is also a fundraiser with proceeds and tax-deductible donations for the 2015 event going to benefit the Palapa Society of Todos Santos, an A.C. aiding in recovery and construction following Hurricane Odile. Performers at this year's festival will include Buck, The Jayhawks, Old 97's, and Drive By Truckers, as well as regional acts participating in the local musical showcase.

Jan. 22-25 SCORE San Felipe 250

<http://score-international.com/2015-san-felipe-250/>



SCORE International's World Desert Champion Series kicks off in 2015 with the Bud Light San Felipe 250, scheduled for January 22-25, 2015. The off-road race has been moved up from its usual February/March start date to make room for the new Baja Sur 500, which will take place in April from Cabo to Loreto. The San Felipe 250 loop race starts and finishes in San Felipe, and is open to cars, trucks, motorcycles, ATVs and UTVs.



Baja Eats: El Lugar de Nos

Carol Kramer

The middle of December, Hugh and I were invited to help pass out blankets and food with the Trinitarians of Mary at Mount Tabor Monastery in Tecate. By noon, our work was finished and we went to find a place to eat. We had heard about El Lugar de Nos from DB members but had not had the opportunity to try it. Luckily, it was only a couple blocks from where we stopped to ask for directions: Avenida Benito Juarez #384 Colonia El Refugio. It looked closed; then we saw the sign with hours:

Wed. and Thur: 1pm to 11pm
Fri. and Sat.: 1pm to 1am
Sun.: 1pm to 5pm

Since it was only 12:15 pm on a Friday we had 45 minutes until the restaurant opened. No problema. It just so happened that only a few

miles down the street was El Mejor Pan de Tecate---truly THE BEST bakery in Tecate. We shared delicious pastries and coffee first and then returned to El Lugar...

It soon became clear that my dream of a chile relleno was not to be but what a wonderful surprise was in store.

This restaurant is unique, classy, casual and funky all at the same time. The taco list was special: Duck Tacos, 84 Hour Tacos---- slow-cooked meat and caramelized onions--- Lamb on toasted corn tortillas, Hibiscus and Goat Cheese Tacos.

Entrees included: Grilled Salmon, Rib Eye, Flank Steak, Spicy Caribbean Chicken, Octopus, Shrimp and for the very adventuresome Sliced Beef Tongue.

There were homemade pizzas baked in the inside "horno": BBQ, Grilled Veggie, Sautéed Hibiscus. There were also delicious salads and Paninis.

The list of desserts included homemade ice cream. Since we had done dessert first, we passed.

Food presentation was artistic ---my tortilla soup came in a heap of cheese, avocado, chipotle, mint and tortilla chips and then the flavorful broth with pasilla chili oil was poured on top. The wait staff was fun and attentive.

The décor ranged from homey to elegant. There were several patios. Since it was raining, we just looked outside and vowed to return in the warmer weather to sample other moods and delicacies.

Top Baja Destinations for 2015

How many will you make it to?



San Pedro Martir

This mountainous region of Baja is filled with beautiful scenes of pine trees, mountain ranges and is home to a national observatory and a population of California condors. **When to go:** *If you're looking to escape the heat of summer, the San Pedro Martir stays relatively cool in summers. On the other end of the spectrum, it's the only region of Baja where you'll find snow in the winter.*



Sierra de San Francisco

The rock paintings in the Sierra de San Francisco are one of the peninsula's best treasures. Accessible only by burro or an arduous hike, a trip to the rock art is a true Baja adventure, **When to go:** *Spring is a great time to see the cave paintings and to enjoy the beautiful wildflowers that bloom in this region.*



San Ignacio Lagoon

As the ultimate spot for encountering the friendly gray whales, the lagoon is a hot spot in the spring where you can join a group to experience the gentle giants. **When to go:** *Gray whale season goes from end of January to April*



Los Cabos

After being devastated by Hurricane Odile in September 2014, the area is ready for tourists with airports, roads and most hotels and restaurants reopened. Now is also a great time to get a good deal on travel there. See our Back to Baja campaign for special discounts for Discover Baja members. **When to go:** *Now! DB members get travel discounts of up to 40% off at hotels, restaurants and activities until the end of February. See page 6 for more information.*



Conception Bay

One of the most beautiful spots in Baja, this bay is a popular spot for kayakers, RVers, campers and anyone looking for beautiful beaches, gorgeous blue waters and serenity. **When to go:** *Winter, spring and fall. Summer temperatures can be scorching.*



Valle de Guadalupe

We've long been touting the wonder of the Valle de Guadalupe (along with the likes of the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and The New Yorker). If you haven't been down yet to experience the Tuscan-esque beauty of Mexico's wine region, maybe the plethora of new foodie restaurants or 60+ wineries will be able to entice you. **When to go:** *Seasonal restaurants and wineries are open from spring to late fall (although many places in the valley are now open year-round). The valley becomes a go-to spot in August for the annual Vendimia (wine harvest) festival.*



Loreto's Coronado Islands

The five desert islands just off of Loreto are home to gorgeous Sea of Cortez crystal-clear bays and an abundance of wildlife like tropical fish, sea lions, humpback whales and orcas, making for some of the best diving around. **When to go:** *February through April is great for diving and the temperatures are still cool and temperate.*



Cabo Pulmo

This National Marine Park is one of the best diving spots in the Sea of Cortez. Divers and snorkelers will be awed with all of the wildlife and natural beauty. **When to go:** Now. Large developments have been threatening Cabo Pulmo for years. Go now while it's still a small, rustic village.



Tijuana

The cultural revolution taking place right now in Tijuana makes it a great place to catch a gourmet meal right for a fraction of the price you would pay in the U.S. It's a great night out for San Diego locals. **When to go:** The weather is great year round and there are always festivals and things going on in this major city.



Todos Santos

This charming colonial town is one of three "Pueblos Magicos" of Baja (the other two being Tecate and Loreto). With colonial architecture, art galleries, and beautiful beaches nearby, it's not hard to see why it's been deemed one of Mexico's magical towns. **When to go:** The famous Todos Santos Music Festival is at the end of January (see page 2). Winter, spring and fall are all popular seasons.



TRAVELING WITH PETS IN BAJA

Pet-Friendly Hotels in Baja

We know that experiencing the wonders of the peninsula is only complete when you can bring your best friend along. We've put together an updated list of hotels in Baja that allow dogs. See www.discoverbaja.com/pet-friendly-hotels-baja/ for the full list of pet-friendly hotels and campsites and www.discoverbaja.com/go/traveling-pets for more information on traveling to Baja with your favorite companion.

Before you head to Mexico with your pet:

- Make sure your pet is up-to-date on vaccinations and has all of his/her tags and paperwork. You may be asked to show proof of ownership.
- Pets aged three months and younger are not permitted to travel with you to Mexico
- Mexico only considers cats and dogs to be pets. For regulations regarding other pets see www.senasica.gob.mx
- Keep in mind that most dogs in Mexico are not kept on a leash or in a fenced yard but wander the streets freely. If your dog doesn't get along well with other dogs, you should take care when in cities and neighborhoods.
- For more information and regulations on traveling with your pets in Mexico, see <http://www.discoverbaja.com/go/traveling-pets/> or call us at 800-727-2252



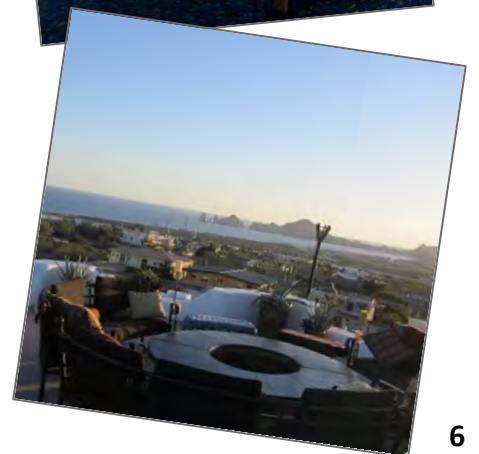
We're pleased to announce the launch of the Discover Baja "Back to Baja" program, bringing you discounts up to 40% off at hotels, resorts, campsites, restaurants and spas in Baja California Sur. Visit www.discoverbaja.com/backtobaja for more!

Hurricane Odile struck the Baja peninsula on September 14, 2014, as a category 3 hurricane bringing heavy rains, winds over 125 mph, and severe flooding that caused extensive damage to many areas of Baja California Sur. The Mexican government and relief aid groups were quick to respond making sure that power, water and internet were restored to areas as quickly as possible and that rebuilding was able to take place as soon as possible. The resilience of the area has been incredible.

The Cabo airport is reopened, the roads are drivable, restaurants, hotels and activities are open and ready for business. All that's missing is you! The economic impact from the loss of tourists was far more damaging to the area than the physical damage from Odile itself. Hotels had to close doors and cancel reservations while they were rebuilding, resort employees were laid off, and many locals still have homes that need repair from storm damages. We encourage you to return to Baja California Sur to help stimulate the economy so that the area can continue to rebuild and rebound. While relief aid from the Mexican government and other organizations was necessary in the immediate aftermath of the storm, what's needed now is support and business from the people who love Baja and want to help the area return to normal (that's you!).

In case you needed some extra encouragement, we've partnered with many establishments in Baja Sur to help invite you back to BCS with discounts of up to 40% off at hotels, restaurants, spas and RV parks in Baja. It's our way of welcoming you Back to Baja.

All you have to do to take advantage of these special deals is to show your Discover Baja membership card. Valid for travel now through end of February 2015. See www.discoverbaja.com/backtobaja for more information.



WHERE TO SURF WEST AND NORTHWEST SWELLS NEAR SCORPION BAY



By Scorpion Bay Hotel - www.scorpionbayhotel.com

The unique surf at Scorpion Bay is attributed to the way the points face extremely to the southeast. This allows for steady offshore winds to perfectly shape the waves and generate the famous rides that can last over a minute long. Scorpion Bay faces southeast so it only picks up south swells which, generally speaking, occur between March and November and more frequently during the summer and hurricane months. As winter is now upon us, south swells become less frequent as west and northwest swells dominate to leave Scorpion Bay with small, meager surf for the next few months, however a quick drive north or south of town will help you discover the numerous breaks nearby that will come to life from the west and northwest swells and will allow you to surf all year long during your stay at the Scorpion Bay Hotel. Here is a quick guide to some of these spots.



Scorpion Bay Hotel employee, Derek Benson, finds some lefts all to himself at 4th point during a south swell.

Surf Spots North of Scorpion Bay

Scorpion Bay consists of eight point breaks in total but it is the first four that it is most famous for. Once you get to 4th point (pictured left), the angle of the point shifts and allows for lefts to break, not the traditional rights Scorpion Bay is known for, even on south swells.

Continuing north to fifth point and beyond, only about 20 minutes away from the Scorpion Bay Hotel, the points start to face westerly and begin to pick up the northwest swells and the rights start to give way to lefts and fun connecting sections.

The beaches from fifth point and beyond are all private and secluded beaches. Surfers can enjoy a quick dip in the water, surf the unnamed waves, or just take a beach day away from other surfers at the first four points. The surf here is not as consistent as the other points, as these points are further exposed and receive onshore wind during the day.

Continued on the next page **7**

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Beyond the eight points of Scorpion, the empty beaches here face more west. From there, you have about four miles of beach breaks that lead up to Boca Cadaje/La Lagoon. This area offers lefts and rights on both sides of the lagoon that break on west and northwest swells. Further north is Punta Santo Domingo and The Finger. This point is well off the beaten path and most of this area has high, impassable cliffs. Although just north of these cliffs there is beach access at The Finger. This beach break offers lefts and rights that will break on west and northwest swells. This spot is very isolated and takes three hours to get to.

Surf Spots South of Scorpion Bay

Another option is to head south from the Hotel, where within a couple miles the beach faces more west. Take the beach route or follow the south road out of San Juanico and you will have access to miles of beach breaks and river mouths that break on west and northwest swells. Further south leads to Punta San Gregorio, a mix of fickle reef breaks, beach breaks and a large river mouth that will break on west swells.

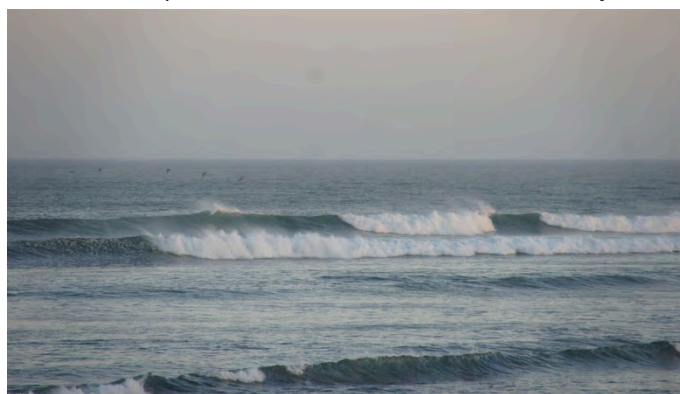
The last area of surf within reach is Las Barrancas, a two hour drive south from the Scorpion Bay Hotel. Here you can find reef breaks that offer lefts and rights that will break on west and northwest swells.

If the four points at Scorpion Bay don't have the right swell direction when you are staying at the Scorpion Bay Hotel, there are plenty of other options that will pick up the right swell direction just a quick drive north or south. If you want a little help finding these spots, a guide can be arranged for you at the Hotel to put you onto the surf.

Discover Baja Members receive a 15% discount at Scorpion Bay Hotel
www.scorpionbayhotel.com



Map: Parise, Mike. The Surfer's Guide to Baja. 2004.



The Scorpion Bay Cantina, restrooms, showers and camp are open. Juan Jo is there everyday. The surf breaks were altered after the hurricanes and sand shifted.



Explore the Peninsula with Baja Author Graham Mackintosh!

Almost all sold out! Act fast to get your spot on the February trip!



Join famous Baja author Graham Mackintosh ("Into a Desert Place," "Journey with a Baja Burro," "Marooned with Very Little Beer," "Nearer My Dog to Thee") on this special Baja Custom Tours trip to see the whales, the Sea of Cortez, and the mountains of San Pedro de Mártir. Share close encounters with the Gray Whales in Scammon's Lagoon, experience stories and locations in Graham's Baja books, and have a great time with friends in this all-inclusive seven day/six night tour.

There are three dates for this trip:

~~January 28 – February 3, 2015 SOLD OUT!~~

February 10 – February 16, 2015

~~March 18 – March 24, 2015 SOLD OUT!~~

7 days, 6 nights \$1,395 all-inclusive, double occupancy.

For questions, or to reserve your spot, contact Discover Baja at 800-727-2252 or ask@discoverbaja.com

For more info: bit.ly/WhRazN



TRIP ITINERARY:

Day 1: Departure from San Diego 6am, lunch at Desert Inn Cataviña, visit local cave paintings, dinner Cataviña

Day 2: 7am breakfast in Cataviña, depart 8am for Guerrero Negro, stop at Baja berrendo (prong horn antelope) sanctuary, check in at motel, visit light house and marshlands, dinner at Mario's Palapa

Day 3: 7am breakfast, drive to Ojo de Liebre lagoon for 2 hour whale tour – inner lagoon, lunch at Tony's Tacos, break, visit Guerrero Negro lagoon beach, special dinner at Mario's

Day 4: Check out of rooms, 7am breakfast, bus tour to outer lagoon with Mario's through salt plant, 3 hour whale tour outer lagoon with sack lunch, drive to Bahia de Los Angeles, check in Costa del Sol motel, visit Bahia Natural History Museo, Seafood extravaganza dinner!

Day 5: 8am breakfast, boat tour of bay and islands, lunch on beach, dinner at Casa Essary

Day 6: Depart Bahia de Los Angeles at 7am after breakfast, tacos in Vincente Guerrero, drive to Meling Ranch, tour to top of mountains, family style dinner

Day 7: Depart Meling Ranch at 8am after breakfast, torta lunch in El Sauzal, wine tasting in Valle de Guadalupe (Las Nubes), cross border in Tecate.

Socialize with us!

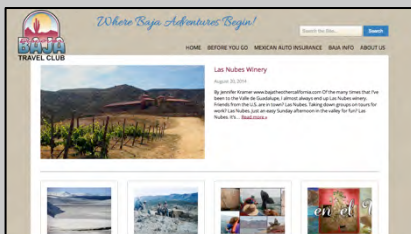
If hearing from us once a month just isn't enough, we're all Baja all the time on the following platforms. Follow along for all of the news, photos, information, adventure and inspiration you need for your next trip to Baja.



DBTC BLOG

www.discoverbaja.com/dbtc-blog

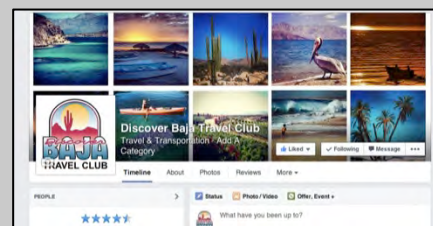
Filled with original and exclusive Baja content. Enter your email address to follow us and get updates whenever we post new content.



FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/discoverbaja

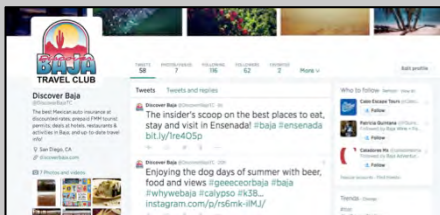
A great way to keep up to date with new content on our blog, news stories, the latest Baja events and more.



TWITTER

[@discoverbajattc](https://twitter.com/discoverbajattc)

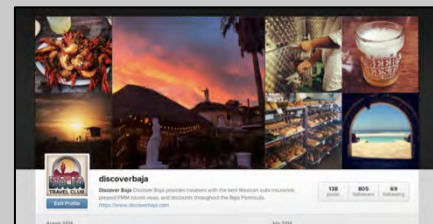
We bring you the latest Baja news, updates and stories all in under 140 characters.



INSTAGRAM

[@discoverbaja](https://www.instagram.com/discoverbaja)

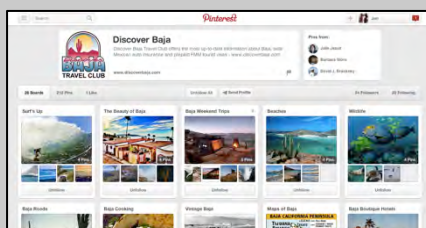
It doesn't get more picture-perfect than Baja. Follow along as we capture our favorite aspects of the peninsula in photos.



PINTEREST

[@discoverbajattc](https://www.pinterest.com/discoverbajattc)

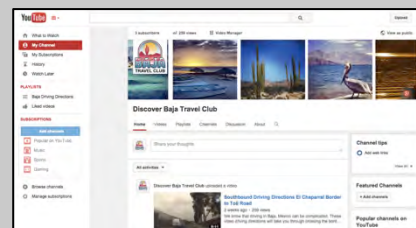
Inspiration boards for our favorite Baja beaches, restaurants, boutique hotels and wildlife.



YOUTUBE

www.youtube.com/user/discoverbaja

Videos of helpful Baja driving directions so that you know where you're going before you go.





Wanted: Campground Host – Rancho Sordo Mudo RV Park

- Located on Mex 3 north of Ensenada, Baja California 2 hrs south of San Diego
- Rancho Sordo Mudo is a Christian-based residential school for deaf children in Mexico
- Campground Host(s) are required to collect fees, assist in operating the campground, maintaining services directing repairs and must be prepared to stay a minimum of 1 month
- Campground Host will be provided with Power, Water and Sewer at no fee
- The RV Park, across the highway from the school entrance, was originally constructed for use of visitors helping out at the school.
- Campground has several back in spaces and 20 pull thru sites that will accommodate rigs of all sizes
- Great large covered eating area with lots of picnic tables, a fire pit, washrooms with showers, 15/30 & 50 amp outlets and water at each site and a common pull through dump station
- The RV Park itself has seen better days, although fundamentally intact and in reasonably good shape,
- Situated among 100 vineyards in the Valley of Guadalupe, and surrounded by palm and citrus trees

Please Contact: Edward Everett, mrneondemexico@hotmail.com W. (646) 155 2223 C. (646) 171 1770
<http://ranchosordomudo.org/index.php>



PARADISE FOR SALE IN MULEGE!

Paradise is for sale by owner located in Mulege on the Sea of Cortez at the mouth of Conception Bay, 8 miles south of Mulege. Approximately 1/3 of acre with a fedicomiso (ownership). Dwelling for camping, 3500 gallon pils for water, extra large propane tank, solar. Asking US \$185,000 or best offer. Contact 760-889-4888 or sherylkaonis@sbcglobal.net or slgordinier@sbcglobal.net

PROPERTY FOR SALE IN SAN MIGUEL DE COMONDÚ:

A lot with a producing avocado orchard, equipped with aseguías (irrigation channels), approximately 1700 square meters in size. San Miguel de Comondú is located two hours on paved road from the port of Loreto. It is a quiet little town for vacationing and relaxing. The listing price is \$65,000 U.S., the first payment being \$30,000 U.S. and the remainder in two payments. Call or text Alberto Cota Murillo, 011-52-613-114-7751.

