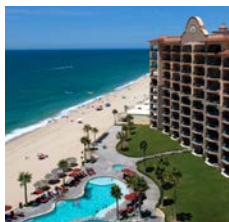




## BAJA NEWS

For more Baja news, see:  
[www.discoverbaja.com/baja-california-information/baja-news/](http://www.discoverbaja.com/baja-california-information/baja-news/)

### Direct Flights from Tijuana to Puerto Peñasco



Direct flights are now available from Tijuana to Puerto Peñasco on TAR airline on Thursdays and Sundays. With the new Cross Border Xpress pedestrian bridge connecting San Diego to the Tijuana airport, it's now even easier to get to Rocky Point. For tickets and more information: [www.tarmexico.com](http://www.tarmexico.com)

### FMM Tourist Permit Reminder

A reminder that FMM tourist permits are required for all travel in Baja. For stays of seven days or less, free FMMs are available. Stays over seven days require a paid FMM. You are responsible for knowing which permit you need and making sure you obtain it before heading into Baja. Be careful that if using the Cross Border Xpress to fly out of the Tijuana airport, they may try to pass you through with a seven-day free FMM, but if you are staying for more than seven days, you need to let them know so that you can purchase the paid FMM tourist permit. For more info: [www.discoverbaja.com/go/fmm-tourist-permits](http://www.discoverbaja.com/go/fmm-tourist-permits)



### From the DBTC Office

We hope you'll join us this Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup> for a special lecture by David Kier on the Spanish missions of Baja California at Liberty Station in San Diego. See page 4 for more information.

We're pleased to announce that we have tickets to the Valle de Guadalupe Vendimia Paella festival. See page 3 for more.

The Discover Baja offices remain open on Saturdays by appointment only. Please call 800-727-2252 by Friday 4pm in order to make an appointment for Saturday.

See you in Baja!

Hugh, Carol, Jen, Maythé, Monica, & Arlene

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

**PESO EXCHANGE RATE:** \$18.8 to \$1 U.S. dollar

**FISHING LICENSES:** Day: \$12.25, Week: \$31.20, Month: \$42.80, Year: \$54.40 for members.  
[www.discoverbaja.com/go/fishing-licenses](http://www.discoverbaja.com/go/fishing-licenses)

**PREPAID FMMs:** \$30 DBTC members only. Advance seven-day FMMs now available for \$5 each.  
[www.discoverbaja.com/go/fmm-tourist-permits](http://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/](http://www.discoverbaja.com/go/temporary-boat-importation/)

**NAUTICAL FMMs:** \$10/person fee for DBTC to process. Service for DBTC members only.  
[www.discoverbaja.com/go/nautical-sportfishing-fmm](http://www.discoverbaja.com/go/nautical-sportfishing-fmm)

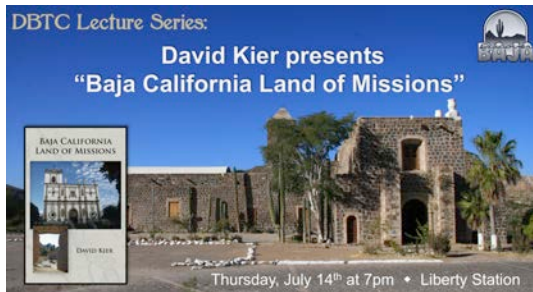
**MEXICAN AUTO INSURANCE:** Special yearly rates for members. [www.discoverbajaonline.com](http://www.discoverbajaonline.com)

# ON OUR RADAR FOR JULY

For more information about the events below and to keep up on all of the latest Baja events, see [www.discoverbaja.com/events](http://www.discoverbaja.com/events)

**JULY 14**

## Discover Baja Lecture: David Kier "Baja California Land of Missions"



Join us at Liberty Station, San Diego, for a lecture by David Kier on the Baja Missions. See page 4.

**JULY 15-16**

## Pesca la Baja: Bahía de los Ángeles



The second fishing tournament in the Pesca La Baja 2016 series will take place in LA Bay.

[www.pescalabaja.com](http://www.pescalabaja.com)

**JULY 16**

## Tecate Beer Fest



Tecate's first Beer Fest will take place at Parque los Encinos with over 30 breweries in attendance.

[www.tecatebeerfest.com](http://www.tecatebeerfest.com)

**JULY 23**

## Ruta del Vino Bicycle Ride and Wine Festival



The second annual Valle de Guadalupe bike ride and wine festival.

[www.rutadelvinobikeride.net](http://www.rutadelvinobikeride.net)



**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**Valle de**  
**Guadalupe Fiestas**  
**de la Vendimia**  
**August 5-21, 2016**

Full Vendimia schedule  
in English now  
available at:  
[bit.ly/DBVendimia](http://bit.ly/DBVendimia)





This year, we wanted to bring our members the opportunity to experience the Valle de Guadalupe Vendimia wine harvest festival. We're selling tickets to the Concurso de Paella, the best event of the festival. The event will take place this year on Sunday, August 21 under the oak trees at Liceaga winery. Nearly every Valle de Guadalupe winery will be in attendance serving wine, and over 50 dishes of paella will be served. Wine and paella are included in ticket price.

You can read more about the event at our link below: <http://bit.ly/DBTCpaella>

Tickets are available on a first-come, first-serve basis by emailing [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com) or calling 800-727-2252. US\$60 for DBTC members. US\$70 for nonmembers.

Please note that hotels in the Valle de Guadalupe book up far in advance for this weekend. We recommend booking a hotel ASAP in Ensenada or Rosarito if there are no available accommodations in the Valle de Guadalupe.



## Baja Test Kitchen's Group Tour to Valle de Guadalupe

Artisan Wine + Craft Beer + Gourmet Food

Sunday, July 31st | \$155 per person | Space is limited | [Book Now!](#)

**Sit back and enjoy the ride** as we guide you and your taste buds through a mouthwatering exploration of Baja California's Valle de Guadalupe, Mexico's wine country. This same-day group tour will feature handcrafted artisan wine, locally made craft beer, and farm-to-table regional cuisine. Baja Test Kitchen tasting tours are designed for wine, craft beer, and culinary enthusiasts, and we've done all the planning and logistics work for you!

### What's Included?

All food and beverage as described in the [tour itinerary](#) | Round-trip transportation in our air-conditioned tour vehicle from our designated border meeting point at [Tecate, California](#) | Your bilingual culinary guide is a knowledgeable ambassador of Northern Baja California's culinary scene | Optional tour guide gratuity is not included | Baja Test Kitchen is a sister company of Discover Baja Travel Club

[BOOK THIS TOUR](#) | [VIEW PAST TOUR PHOTOS](#) | [TASTING TOUR FAQ](#) | [READ CUSTOMER REVIEWS](#)

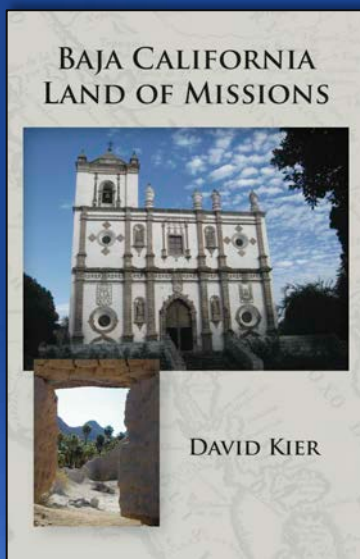
# DBTC Lecture Series:



## David Kier presents “Baja California Land of Missions”

Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm ♦ Liberty Station

Join us for an evening with David Kier, author of the new book, “Baja California Land of Missions.” Kier will discuss the colorful history of the 27 Spanish missions of Baja California. This will be a treat for history buffs, adventure seekers, and Baja lovers.



*Copies of “Baja California Land of Missions” will be available for sale and signing*

*Lecture fee: \$3 for Discover Baja members. \$5 for nonmembers.*

*For more information: [www.discoverbaja.com/event/david-kier-lecture](http://www.discoverbaja.com/event/david-kier-lecture)*

***Please RSVP to [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com) or 800-727-2252.***







## Rancho de los Niños Dorm Update

We want to thank those of you who donated to help construct a new girls' dorm at Rancho de Los Niños orphanage. Carol and Jen recently took a trip with Corazón de Vida to check out the status of the new dorm and are pleased to announce that the building is beautiful and almost ready for the girls to move in! The last step is furnishing the dorm and getting it equipped with bedding, linens, etc. to create a welcoming home for the girls. You can help by visiting the link below where you'll find an Amazon registry of items that are needed:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/1Q1UNFXSTWZM0/ref=cm\\_wl\\_list\\_o\\_2](http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/1Q1UNFXSTWZM0/ref=cm_wl_list_o_2)

You can also find the link and more information at [www.discoverbaja.com/rancho-de-los-ninos/](http://www.discoverbaja.com/rancho-de-los-ninos/)

All purchases can be made directly through this link on Amazon and will be sent straight to Corazón de Vida so that they can get the items down to the orphanage.

We'll be arranging a group DBTC visit to Valle de Guadalupe to see the children and the new dorm in the next couple of months, so stay tuned for more details!



corazón de vida

### About Corazon de Vida:

Corazon de Vida (CDV) is a 20+ year U.S. 501c3 non-profit organization providing life-changing support for orphaned and abandoned children in Baja, Mexico by funding local orphanages, providing quality of life improvement services and investing in the children's future by funding higher education. Through their life-sustaining program they provide monthly funding for the orphanages under their care. These orphanages give abandoned children security, nutrition, shelter and access to a reliable education.

# THREE-DAY GETAWAY:

## Ensenada



By Jennifer Kramer

As temperatures heat up on the rest of the peninsula, Ensenada stays nice and cool with its mild climate and Pacific breezes, making it the perfect summer escape. Just two hours from San Diego, Ensenada is an easy getaway with a little something for everyone. There's the world surf reserve, beautiful beaches, artisanal shopping, world-class restaurants and street carts, and a burgeoning craft beer scene. Being located 30 minutes away from the Valle de Guadalupe wine country doesn't hurt either.

## DAY 1

### Morning:

Start your trip to Ensenada by getting an overview—literally—of the city and the harbor. **Chapultepec Hill** (GPS: 31.862557, -116.633984) is the best spot in Ensenada for taking in views of the city, the bay, and the Todos Santos islands. You can drive or hike up to the *mirador* lookout. After you've taken in the views, head back down the hill to have breakfast at **Casa Marcelo Restaurante** ([www.casamarcelorestaurante.com](http://www.casamarcelorestaurante.com)). The artisanal breakfasts feature savory eggs dishes embellished with fresh cheeses and butters that are made at their nearby ranch in Ojos Negros.



### Afternoon:

Spend the afternoon enjoying Ensenada's downtown area along **Av. López Mateos** (Calle Primera). The lively street is lined with artisanal shops selling everything from local leather goods, to silver jewelry from Taxco, and artisan pieces from Oaxaca. For lunch, stop at **La Guerrerense** ([www.laguerrerense.com](http://www.laguerrerense.com)), a *mariscos* seafood stand that Anthony Bourdain called "the best street cart in the world." Try the famous *erizo* (sea urchin) and *almeja* (clam) tostada. Afterwards, pop into the famous **Hussong's Cantina** ([www.cantinahussongs.com](http://www.cantinahussongs.com)), Ensenada's oldest bar (est. 1892) for a margarita or beer.

### Evening:

Enjoy outdoor dining under strung Italian lights at **Boules**. Don't miss the *tuetano* (bone marrow), served in a large tyrannosaurus rex-sized bone with tortillas on the side. Other delicious dishes include the crab ravioli and queso fundido de mar. After dinner, head to **Wendlandt** ([www.wendlandt.com.mx](http://www.wendlandt.com.mx)), one of Ensenada's craft breweries that was recently named the "2015 Best Brewery in Mexico." Enjoy artisanal beers like the Perro del Mar IPA or Hann Zomer Saison in the intimate and chic gastropub environment.

Continued on next page 6



## DAY 2

### Morning:

Drive south of town for an excursion to **La Bufadora**, a natural geyser that shoots water up to 100 feet in the air. Admission is free, but be prepared to pay about US\$1 for parking. Food and souvenir stalls line the walkway down to La Bufadora. Don't miss the *almejas gratinadas*, au gratin clams, grilled with cheese and topped with tomatoes and salsa.

### Afternoon:

Return back to town and spend the afternoon walking around Ensenada's harbor area. The **Mercado de Mariscos** fish market (once called the Mercado Negro, black market) is open for those who want to peruse the stands filled with shrimp, fish, octopus, and the unique geoduck clams. There are over a dozen fish taco stands around the market (Ensenada and San Felipe both claim to be the home of the fish taco), or for more refined dining, head to **Muelle 3**. Here, Chef David Martinez makes incredibly sophisticated *ceviches* (don't miss the ceviche de la casa) and fresh seafood dishes.

After lunch, walk down the *malecón* along the harbor to take in the buzz of the city. Underneath the large Mexican flag is a large plaza the city recently remodeled with a water fountain feature, a new outdoor stage and pavilion, and some stalls selling souvenirs and snacks. Ensenada's landmark **Plaza Civica** is just around the corner with the famous three large gold heads of Benito Juárez (the first president of Mexico), Padre Miguel Hidalgo (who began the Mexican Revolution), and Venustiano Carranza (the first president after the revolution).

### Evening:

Spend the evening getting familiar with Baja's craft beer scene. Located north of town on Mexico 1 are both **Agua Mala** ([www.aguamala.com.mx](http://www.aguamala.com.mx)), one of Ensenada's premier breweries, and **Baja Brews Colectivo y Jardin Cervecerero**, a new collection of craft beer and food stalls that has become the new "it spot" in town. You can enjoy really good food for dinner at both Agua Mala and Baja Brews (where they serve not only Ochentos pizza but where Les Pinche Frances has finally reopened). If you're in the need for a late-night taco fix, don't miss **El Trailero** across the highway. They're open 24 hours a day and serve a variety of great tacos from fish to carne asada to adobada (al pastor) and more.





## DAY 3

### Morning:

Start your day the way the locals do, with a fish taco for breakfast at **Tacos el Fenix**. This little street taco stand has been serving up fish tacos since 1970 and is a favorite for most Ensenada locals. Then, get out to enjoy a day relaxing or surfing at one of Ensenada's beaches. Experienced surfers will want to head up to San Miguel, part of the world surf reserve, north of town. Beginner surfers of any age will have a great time taking a lesson with **Surf Ensenada** ([www.surfensenada.com](http://www.surfensenada.com)). They provide the surfboards, wetsuits, and fun and knowledgeable instructors. If you prefer more relaxing day of just soaking up rays at the beach, head to Playa Hermosa, one of the largest and most beautiful beaches in the area.

### Afternoon:

Walk up from Playa Hermosa to have lunch at one of Ensenada's food *colectivos* **El Callejón** or **Región Gastronómica**. With a collection of food stalls, either of these options (they're right across the street from one another) offer a variety of cuisines and artisanal dishes. For delicious Baja-Asian fusion seafood don't miss Peninsula in Región Gastronómica. After lunch, head down the street to **Arcobaleno 33**, an Italian-style gelato spot with delicious artisan flavors like cucumber with chia.

### Evening:

Finish up your stay in Ensenada with a meal by one of Mexico's top chefs. Benito Molina and his wife, Solange Muris, have restaurant **Manzanilla** ([www.rmanzanilla.com](http://www.rmanzanilla.com)), which has been voted one of Latin America's best 50 restaurants. Housed in an old warehouse with eclectic décor, guests enjoy dishes like steak or quail carnitas ravioli.

## SIDE TRIPS

While Ensenada itself has enough to keep you fully occupied for a full three days, these nearby excursions are worth adding on an extra day or so to your trip:

### Valle de Guadalupe

Mexico's famous wine region is now home to over 100 wineries as well as *campestre* restaurants. Spend a day wine tasting with Baja Test Kitchen ([www.bajatestkitchen.com](http://www.bajatestkitchen.com)), who can pick you up directly from your hotel in Ensenada.

### Ojos Negros

For a unique excursion, head east on Mexico 3 (toward San Felipe, not Tecate) to the Valle de Ojos Negros. Here, you'll find one of Baja's top cheese producers, Rancho La Campana and their cheese cave, La Cava de Marcelo ([www.lacavademarcelo](http://www.lacavademarcelo)). It's worth it to take a tour, which will take you through the dairy farm and the cheese cave, where you'll enjoy a cheese and wine tasting. They also serve food, which can be enjoyed in a picturesque setting at the picnic tables underneath the trees.

### Las Cañadas

Families will want to spend a day at **Las Cañadas** ([www.lascañadas.com](http://www.lascañadas.com)), a water park extravaganza with zip lines, waterslides, pools, paddle boats, horseback riding, and ATV riding. Overnight camping is available.

## WHERE TO STAY

### Estero Beach ([www.hotelesterobeach.com](http://www.hotelesterobeach.com))

Located south of town on a lovely beach, this property has nice hotel rooms, pool area, as well as a camping and RV park. *DBTC members receive a 10% on RV Park and Camping.*

### Posada El Rey Sol ([www.posadaelreysol.com](http://www.posadaelreysol.com))

Located in the heart of the action in town, this property is associated with the famous French restaurant El Rey Sol (stop in for the pastries even if you don't make it for a full meal). *DBTC members receive a 15% discount.*

### San Nicolas ([www.snhotelcasino.com](http://www.snhotelcasino.com))

With a great location in town, you'll be able to walk to nearly everything in downtown Ensenada. There's a lovely pool area that kids and adults will enjoy. *DBTC members receive a 15% discount.*

### Las Rosas ([www.lasrosas.com](http://www.lasrosas.com))

The stunning ocean views at Las Rosas are best enjoyed from the Jacuzzi or infinity-edge pool. There's a spa and restaurant on the property.

### Hotel Coral & Marina ([www.hotelcoral.com](http://www.hotelcoral.com))

This swanky property has nice rooms, a great pool area, on-site restaurant and bar, as well as its own marina.



# BAJA FISHING REPORT

with Gary Graham



Jeff Mariani with possible IGFA world record broomtail grouper.

For those looking for an old Baja experience or an introduction to the Sea of Cortez, a trip that is often overlooked is a Midriff Island trip with the Tony Reyes group; this unique spring and summer time option is a mother ship operation where anglers fish from pangas -- ideal for a father-son, a couple of buddies or a larger group to enjoy; the trips are priced at a reasonable rate.

On the Pacific side, just below the border, the Coronado Islands are taking a back seat to the offshore action for the bluefin tuna bite. There are small numbers of yellowtail along the weather side of North Island from Pukey Point along with a few barracuda at Ribbon Kelp and at South Kelp

caught by trolling sardines.

## San Salvador Knoll / Out West of the 226/302

Most of the fish seem to be moving into U.S. waters, although there are still some kelp-paddy yellowtail and some mixed bluefin and yellowfin around.

Jake Lanier, Carlsbad, Calif., landed a 113-pound striped marlin on a cedar plug trolled on 50-pound mono at the 425 after approximately one hour of combat. Jake was a guest aboard *Trollin' Dirty* of the Freedom Boat Club of San Diego.

While few boats seem to be venturing beyond Isla Todos Santos at Ensenada, there are limits of yellows and barracuda to

be had.

In addition to yellows and barracuda, there was the annual Sue & Carl's Surf Perch Derby in San Quintin that always has a great turnout!

Down at Cedros Island, the small fishing community was abuzz with Jeff Mariani's pending IGFA World record (if line tests). Mariani, owner of Cedros Tackle Kayak Tours, while fishing with the Hobie fishing team, tied into the 108.6-pound, 64-inch broomtail grouper after making a routine cast. He let his surface iron flutter down about 40 feet before starting the retrieve and was slammed. After a 20-minute fight managing to keep the fish out of the rocks, he landed his catch of a lifetime.

From Bahia de Los Angeles to Gonzaga Bay, the yellowtail have begun their summer run with some nice-sized models; adding variety to catches are some equally impressive grouper and cabrilla.

At Punta Chivato the "Bulls Only Dorado Tournament" drew 18 boats and 51 anglers and brought 10 dorado to the scale, the largest being 21.3 pounds taken by Theresa Cove, Lake Elsinore, Calif., aboard their *Dos Luz*, a 21-foot Covecraft panga they built themselves.



LEFT: Tony Reyes trip. CENTER: Louie Prieto in Todos Santos. RIGHT: Theresa Cove at the Bulls Only Dorado Tournament in Punta Chivato.





**TOP LEFT:** Yellowfin tuna caught on the *Jen Wren*. **TOP MIDDLE:** James Callard in Loreto. **TOP RIGHT:** Dave Schroeder with a dorado in Mulegé. **BOTTOM LEFT:** John Hanning with a roosterfish. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Vicki Mitchell with a roosterfish at Las Arenas

*Continued from previous page*

Earlier in June in Mulegé, Dave Schroeder won Largest Dorado with a 34.8-pounder. Charlie and Linda won the Calcutta with a 31.9-pounder and a 22.5-pounder. Steve Ochs won Biggest Other with a 22.2-pound yellowtail.

While farther down the coast, Loreto prepares for three different dorado events:

- Villa del Palmar at the Islands of Loreto's First Annual Fishing Tournament June 29 - July 2
- Tripu Sports Fishing Tournament June 29 through July 2
- "Fishin' for the Mission" Tournament - July 7 through 9

A note from James Callard confirmed there have been no dorado in Loreto yet but the yellowtail have been feeding in shallow water.

"Team work with guide, Ramon Davis, got the 45 pounder (above center) out of the rocks after multiple runs -- Avet reel needs work, back is sore, but what a blast! Glad this one was **not** caught on a Hobie!"...James

Callard

Plenty of variety at Los Arenas with "bucket list" fish not uncommon. Vicki Mitchell from Carmel, Calif., was fishing with Captain Adolfo when she hooked and released a big rooster. (above right)

An unprecedented sword fish float at East Cape had everyone in a tizzy as some boats scored two in one day!

Further fueling the fishing flame was the arrival of some Volkswagen-sized yellowfin tuna like the one top left, landed aboard the *Jen Wren* weighing in at 313-pounds. Add in some trophy-sized roosterfish and the ongoing wahoo bite and some would say June was very good for the area.

While San Jose and Cabo have had some good fishing recently it's been sporadic. The billfish scene has been dominated by striped marlin and sailfish with a few blacks and blues plus a swordfish or two in the mix.

For quantity and quality, yellowfin tuna was the big news. A higher number of 100+ pounders hit the dock with a few breaking the two

hundred mark!

The most success on tuna has been by using a kite while fishing the porpoise schools and one of the most effective lures has been the rubber Yummee lure. <http://carolinalures.com/products/yummee-flying-fish-9inch>

Lastly, while there have been fewer than normal smaller roosters, the grandes have been prowling the beaches and out a few miles.

John Hanning hooked this monster (above left) on the fly from the beach guided by my friend Grant Hartman, of Baja Anglers (who shared this photo). This is the largest roosterfish I personally have ever seen caught from the beach on any tackle!

I think it's safe to say that June in Baja has lived up to its promise. Prospects for a memorable Baja summer seem likely, but we will compare notes next month.

Good Luck and Tight Lines...

Questions or comments are welcome.

[garyg@garycgraham.com](mailto:garyg@garycgraham.com)



[By Carla King](#)

As an adventure motorcyclist, I am often asked how I make sure I'm found, transported to medical services and eventually back home to the US if needed. Whether you're staying on the well-traveled routes or wandering off onto the dirt tracks to fishing camps, missions, and oasis, here's what you need to know. This post is for anybody on two or four wheels, boating, hiking, diving or flying in Baja.

But first, an observation. Mostly, I've seen people get hurt when they're following friends where they shouldn't, like the three guys I wrote about in an earlier post, one of whom had the wrong kind of bike for dirt track but followed his friends on big dual-sport bikes, anyway. He would have been smarter to meet them on the highway further south where the trail meets the road. He barely managed to limp out with broken bones and a broken bike. His trip was over.

Accidents can happen anywhere, but that doesn't mean they're common. Baja is generally safe with friendly people, spectacular nature, and considerable opportunity for exploration.

Read on for information about personal satellite messengers, emergency medical, travel insurance, search and rescue, and getting back home.

## **Satellite Messengers**

I own an old SPOT satellite messenger which I've used as an emergency device (never had to push that SOS button) and a tracker so that readers could follow my trips on my website. I was considering an upgrade to the \$150 [SPOT Gen3](#) until I read a friend's blog post on his backcountry rescue experiences.

Pete Day, founder of [Mosko Moto](#) (who makes the soft luggage I carry on my KTM dual-sport) is a crazy adventurous traveler. A couple of years ago he was riding



alone deep in the jungle in Honduras and severely broke his ankle. The SPOT has no two-way communication (still doesn't) so he had to hit the SOS button and trust that help was on its way. But he didn't trust, because he knew that the Honduras authorities were only reliably motivated by bribery. (Thankfully not true for Baja.) As he waited, he wished for a two-way device so that he could text his parents the location of the Peace Corps guy he met in the last town who would have been able to negotiate a rescue. That evening, an Army patrol making their weekly pass through got him out. He was lucky!

When Pete got home he did a lot of research and bought the [DeLorme InReach](#), and carries it everywhere from Africa to Indonesia to the American backcountry. Last month he and his friend Ashley were motorcycling in Eastern Oregon. Ashley squeezed her ankle between the motor and a rock, breaking some bones and losing some bike parts. She rode part way out but neither she or the bike were up to it.

Pete pushed the SOS button and got a message back that help was on its way. The BLM Rangers and Search & Rescue personnel who responded were also carrying the InReach, which they highly r e c o m m e n d e d .

[\(Two models cost \\$240 and \\$340 on Amazon.\)](#) You can use the device to text, or pair it with your mobile to communicate with family and friends, and to access topo maps and NOAA charts. Other features include a digital compass, built-in navigation, and an Automatic Flight Following/Ping-Me Locating feature for pilots.

Clip it to your person and not to your vehicle, just in case you get separated. It's been known to happen!

Here's more information on satellite messengers and personal locator beacons.

[Pete's story](#) about the InReach and Ashley's backcountry search and rescue (Mosko Moto)

[What happens when you press the SOS button](#) (Expedition Portal)  
[Review of locator beacons and satellite messengers](#) (Expedition Portal)

## **Search and rescue**

I didn't realize until recently that evacuation service insurance only covers transport from facility to facility. So whether you're motorcycling in the desert, hiking a canyon, or on a boat in the Sea of Cortez, you're going to need to fill this gap. This is the motivation behind Celia Diaz's Binational Emergency service.

*Continued on next page* 11

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## Celia Diaz's Binational Emergency Service

<http://binationalemergency.org>

1-619-425-5080

Binational Emergency is a nonprofit organization with local knowledge and relationships with people who can help. Their \$45 annual fee is well worth it (Discover Baja members can sign up for Binational through Discover Baja for a discounted rate), over and above your medical and emergency evacuation service. Because if you can't get the word out, you're just stuck in the woods, so to speak.

Binational has contacts on both sides of the border with experts in the medical field, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, social workers, consular officials and hospital personnel. They have contacts with local pilots, ranchers and boaters. Some of these people and organizations will need reimbursement for charges from efforts made on your behalf. However if you do not have insurance or the money to pay for the evacuation, Binational will look for a volunteer pilot, which can take some time.

I know that pilots in Mulegé parked at Serenidad airstrip have done their share of search and rescue. They don't need to be paid for their time, but do appreciate being reimbursed for fuel. If your emergency is extreme, Binational will enlist the US coast guard but they are not always able to respond.

This is a fantastic addition to your travel and evacuation insurance. So do join this great nonprofit service before your trip. Give Binational's information to your friends, family, and people you meet on the road so that they can easily locate you and get help. (Note that you'll need to have phone service in order to call Binational for help).

## Just dial 066 – Baja's 911

But don't count on getting a signal. I have TMobile's 3 Country plan but cell coverage is spotty or nonexistent in most of the areas where it's really fun to ride, hike and explore the missions, canyons and nature. You won't find a signal in Cataviña, Bahía de los Ángeles, or in the beautiful terrain inland of Mulegé, Loreto, and San Juanico.

If you do get a signal, just dial 066. I've been told that you don't need to punch in country code, even if you're using a foreign phone.

## Ranchers, fishermen, and radios

If you don't use a satellite tracker, or even if you do, one of your traveling companions may go for help. Or you may enlist a local rancher on horseback—more common than you might think—to radio in your location. In the absence of cell service the *rancheros* communicate by radio and can notify local emergency services like an ambulance or the *bomberos* (fire department). You may need to ride in a truck bed to an access point: road, airstrip, or boat. Some of the more permanent fish camps may have radios, or they may motor out to a yacht if they've seen one and have the gas to spare. (Offer to pay them.) Again, Binational's bilingual staff are a great help as they're available 24/7. Even so, things will happen slowly, so try to relax.

## About those emergency vehicles...

The emergency vehicle nearest me is parked on empty due to lack of funds. They don't fill up the tank because somebody might "borrow" the gas for their own vehicle. So before they can respond the driver will need money for gas and time to go to the gas station. And they may not be as prepared as you expect them to be. No to mention that nothing happens as quickly as it does in *America del Norte*.

For example, when a neighbor needed medical transport to La Paz the ambulance was not equipped with the oxygen necessary for the trip. A friend—a local fisherman and diver—drove to Loreto to get his dive tank filled. (There's no compressor in Mulegé, since the dive shop closed two years ago.) Four hours later he returned and rode along in the ambulance (back past Loreto), to Hospital Generalaria Juan María de Salva Tierra in La Paz (considered the best in the state). Then the hospital required 10,000 pesos (\$500) before they would admit her. He would not normally had that much cash in his pocket, but in a crazy coincidence, that morning I had paid him exactly 10,000 pesos to fix our boat. I wish this story had a happy ending. But she had led a long and happy life retired in Posada, and we celebrated it a few days later with her family.

*Continued on next page*



**Help on the hoof!**

*A couple of years ago some kayakers did not make their destination in the often unpredictable waters of the Sea of Cortez, causing their family to spring into action. A neighbor with a plane at Serenidad airstrip volunteered to sweep Bahía Concepción and the Mexican Navy went out to look, too. With sadness, everyone abandoned hope, but it turned out that the kayakers had just changed their plan and were enjoying some time at a remote island. Please don't be those people.*



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NOTE: If you're in a tourist area like Cabo San Lucas you may be diverted to a "Doc in a Box" facility with predatory pricing. [Here's a thoughtful article](#) on how to avoid these gougers and other great information about emergency care in Baja. (Baja Insider)

## **Getting Care**

The level of medical care in Baja is generally not as good as it is in the US, which is why you want to be evacuated in the first place, right? Sometimes you can make a decision about your destination hospital. As a rule of thumb, try to steer your rescuers to a hospital that serves a lot of gringos, such as La Paz. I know not to go to Santa Rosalía if I can help it. Loreto is only another half hour away (though in the other direction). La Paz is another four hours south. Ensenada has the advantage of being closer to the border. There are little clinics everywhere. Retired doctors, nurses, EMTs, paramedics, you take what you can get.

## **Getting Evac'd**

So help has arrived and you're being cared for in a facility in Baja. If you can be moved, your evacuation north of the border will be coordinated by your insurance provider. Your destination may be your own hospital but you may end up in San Diego at a Sharp HealthCare facility.

## **Sharp HealthCare**

<https://www.sharp.com/services/global-patient-services/>  
1-888-265-1513

It turns out that finding a facility to accept a medical evacuation is not all that easy. Sharp HealthCare handles this. They run four acute care hospitals in San Diego. They create a [Global Patient Services \(GPS\) program](#) to handle incoming international emergencies.

Most patients are admitted through the ER. They are equipped to accept patients, get them stabilized and get them transferred to your own hospital, or if your insurance company approves, you can stay there and recover.

Their GPS program in San Diego consists of a bilingual team who has close working relationships with medical professionals in Mexico. They can coordinate your transfers and evacuations.

This is not a membership program but a hospital company with a unique service, and anyone can use them. Eventually, they will be paid by your insurance company.

If Binational or your insurance provider has not already contacted GPS on your behalf, you or your family can contact them directly.

## **Travel, accident and evacuation insurance choices**

Here are a few options for accident and evacuation insurance above and beyond your required in-country health insurance. Divers Alert Network (DAN)

Dive and non-dive accident plus travel insurance

Best option for frequent Baja travel  
<http://diversalertnetwork.org>  
1-800-446-2671

When I started scuba diving I found out about Diver's Alert Network. I use their premium (Guardian) plan, which also covers overland accidents with medical transportation coverage, evacuation, search and rescue. DAN costs me \$125 annually (plus a \$35 membership fee), which is less expensive than other accident and evacuation plans that I can find. They also provide one-time or multi-trip insurance.

This pricing is for their annual plan. DAN's short-term dive insurance does not include the non-dive accident coverage and medical transportation costs. Unlike MedJet assist, it does put a cap on the cost to get you home at \$100,000. The search and rescue benefit is for diving accidents only, so you'll still need Binational to cover that.

## **World Nomads**

Travel and medical evacuation insurance

Best Option for Vacations

<http://worldnomads.com>

My friend Jason Moore (host of the Zero to Travel podcast), just wrote a detailed [article about travel insurance](#) that is interesting reading. He's a longtime world traveler so he should know! He uses World Nomads and you can get a quote for it at the end of the article. (Scroll all the way down.) I think it's the best option for you if you are vacationing in Baja (or anywhere).

*Continued on next page*



Do pack a first aid kit, but not one of those [miniature survival kits](#), please! Start with something better and customize it to make it your own. Here's an [ultralight done-it-for-you kit](#), but you can also [build your own](#).

*Continued from previous page*

My cost for a four-week trip would be \$110 for their standard coverage (for activities like motorcycling and scuba diving) and \$161 for their Explorer insurance in case you want to do something silly like shark cage diving. For a two-week trip the cost would be \$74 and \$102. To cover myself for the entire winter season in Baja (Oct 1-May31) my cost would be \$564 and \$812. So for me the DAN service, at \$125 annually, makes the most sense. But I think if you're going for a couple weeks, flying in, renting a car or riding bikes from the US, World Nomads is your best bet.

World Nomads includes evacuation insurance but I'd still tack on the Binational service since they're in-country experts and I just wouldn't trust a person on an 800 number to be able to coordinate my transport to a medical facility for evac.

What they do cover that DAN doesn't is standard trip insurance stuff like trip cancellation, interruption, delay, plus baggage and personal effects—and that can be important if this is your one vacation of the year, or you're bringing expensive camera gear.

## MEDEX

Travel and medical evacuation  
<https://www.medexassist.com/>  
800-732-5309

I looked at MEDEX insurance, which offers travel insurance (90 days max) and perks like passport replacement, lost luggage, and translation services. TravMedChoice is their top plan, and offers hazardous sports coverage for an extra \$5.50 per day.

Motorcycling is not considered a hazardous sport (unless you're racing the Baja) but scuba diving is. I want to scuba dive, so my quote for \$500,000 in coverage with \$250 deductible turned out to be about \$170 for 30 days. I would receive \$1000 of dental (\$200 per

tooth), emergency reunion (family member travels to me), trip interruption (\$5000) and lost baggage (\$250).

It's good coverage, but search and rescue isn't handled, so as a frequent Baja traveler I am still sold on DAN and Celia Diaz's Binational service. (Or World Nomads and Binational.)

## Medjet Assist

Medical transport only  
<https://medjetassist.com/>  
800-527-7478

I am including Medjet Assist here because so many people use them, but I was shocked at what they do not cover.

**What they cover:** Medjet Assist covers long and short-term air medical transport evacuation insurance if you're hospitalized over 150 miles from home. For an extra \$25 they will get your motorcycle home, too (in Mexico, Canada, and USA only). There is no dollar limit on the cost to get you home. Because there is no cap they may be an excellent choice if you're headed to a place where it may cost over \$50,000 to get you home, but that's not Baja.

**What they do not cover:** Medjet Assist does not cover search and rescue or in-country medical costs, accidental death and dismemberment, disability, or accommodation. You must get to a clinic or hospital that they serve, first. To do that may require the assistance of a rancher, farmer, another tourist, pilot, or boater. Again, this is where Celia Diaz's Binational Emergency service comes in handy.

No health questions, deductibles or claim forms are required. Air medical transport services only require that you be hospitalized as an inpatient and need hospitalization upon reaching your destination.

So if you use Medjet assist, get Binational for search and rescue and make sure your regular health

insurance and your travel insurance covers you for death & dismemberment, disability, and accommodation, if that's important to you. You'll also need travel insurance if you want trip interruption and gear replacement.

## Motorcycle (and vehicle) Insurance

If you're reading this you probably already have Discover Baja vehicle insurance for your car, 4x4, RV, motorhome, motorcycle, or boat. If you don't, you can [find out about it, here](#). And don't forget, you need a passport, a passport card, and a [tourist visa](#), too!

## What does all this cost?

What do you really need? I'm an adventure motorcyclist and scuba diver who spends months at a time in Baja. As you see, there are a lot of good options. Note that in this summary I don't include baggage or equipment loss as my renters insurance in the US covers that—and I have used it! And I don't need trip cancellation insurance since I'm riding, not flying to San Diego or Baja. Also note that you may prefer World Nomad over DAN if you're not a diver and are taking a short vacation. The cost is about the same.

\$ 340 [DeLorme inReach](#) on [Amazon](#)  
\$ 15 30 day inReach  
"freedom" [service plan](#)  
\$ 160 [Divers Alert Network](#)  
insurance  
\$ 45 [Binational Emergency](#) service  
-----  
\$ 560

And I'm worth it! ☺

I hope this post helps you to prepare, ride your own ride, and have a fun and safe journey!

## Got recommendations? A story to tell?

Have you used any of these services? Have I missed a great service? Do you have a rescue scenario you'd like to share? [Please email me!](#)





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