



# May 2015 Newsletter

## BAJA NEWS

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



### Cross-border Airport Bridge Construction

The skybridge connecting San Diego with Tijuana's Rodríguez airport has been installed. The project is expected to be opened by late this year and will allow ticketed passengers to park in the U.S. and cross the pedestrian bridge to get to the airport.

### Save the Vaquitas

Mexican's federal government is launching an unprecedented movement to save the vaquita porpoise of the Sea of Cortez. Measures to save the species, including a ban on gill net fishing in the Upper Sea of Cortez, will continue for the next two years. There are currently fewer than 100 vaquitas thought to be alive.



## From the DBTC Office

For all of May, we're giving you extra rewards for referring your friends to Discover Baja. They get \$10 off of their new membership and you get \$10 to use toward your next membership renewal, insurance, books, maps, t-shirts, and more!

Memorial day is coming up and is always a busy time in Baja. Make sure to get your insurance and FMMs before the rush. The Discover Baja offices will be closed Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> in observance of the holiday.

June through August the Discover Baja offices will be open on Saturdays by appointment only. Please call 800-727-2252 or email [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com) if you need assistance on a Saturday and we will gladly accommodate you.

Let's Baja!  
Hugh, Carol, Jen, Maythé & Monica

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

**PESO EXCHANGE RATE:** \$14.9 to \$1 U.S. dollar

**PEMEX PRICES: Northern Baja:** Magna: \$3.50/gal, Premium: \$3.72/gal, Diesel: \$3.75/gal

**Southern Baja:** Magna: \$3.49/gal, Premium: \$3.59/gal, Diesel: \$3.65/gal

**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:** \$37 DBTC members only. [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:** [www.discoverbajaonline.com](http://www.discoverbajaonline.com)

# ON OUR RADAR FOR MAY

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)

## MAY 5 Cinco de Mayo



Ok, ok, it's not a real holiday in Mexico, but we're always happy to have any excuse to celebrate Mexico. The best way to celebrate? Head down to Baja for some authentic fiestas.

## MAY 10 Mother's Day (U.S. and Mexico)



It's Mother's Day in both the U.S. and Mexico. Treat Mom to a special day wine tasting in the Valle de Guadalupe or a weekend at the spa at Las Rosas in Ensenada.

## MAY 14-16 Cabo Marine Show



This three-day expo is back for the sixth year at the Cabo San Lucas Marina. Some of the biggest names in boat and water-based recreation will be showcasing their wares along with other exhibitors and live entertainment. Free admission [www.facebook.com/cabomarineshow](http://www.facebook.com/cabomarineshow)

## MAY 16 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rosarito Beach Hotel



The iconic Rosarito Beach Hotel is turning 90 and celebrating with a deluxe dinner buffet and a gala dance. [www.rosaritobeachhotel.com](http://www.rosaritobeachhotel.com)

## MAY 23-24 Rosarito Art Fest



The Rosarito Art Fest will once again take over the streets of Rosarito over Memorial Day weekend with artists exhibiting and selling their work, food, drinks and live entertainment. Free admission. For more information, see page 13. [www.facebook.com/rosaritoartfest](http://www.facebook.com/rosaritoartfest)

## MAY 25 Memorial Day



Memorial Day is always a busy and fun time in Baja. Make sure to get your Mexican auto insurance, FMM tourist permits, and fishing licenses in advance!



# Valle de Guadalupe Wine Trip!

Spend the day wine tasting and dining in Baja's Napa Valley  
Saturday, June 13th



Come spend a day experiencing Mexico's Napa Valley with Discover Baja and Baja Custom Tours!

Enjoy a day with us in Baja's Valle de Guadalupe as we explore some of the best wineries and eateries that the region has to offer. This trip was designed with serious wine tasters and foodies in mind and will be a great experience for someone who has never been to the valley before, or someone looking to explore some new wineries and restaurants. Price includes round-trip transportation to and from San Diego, wine tasting at three wineries as well as lunch and dinner in the Valle de Guadalupe. We'll handle all the driving, planning and logistics – all you have to do is show up to enjoy!

## **Saturday, June 13, 2015 Trip Schedule (subject to change):**

8:00 AM: Meet at Discover Baja offices in San Diego

11:00 AM: Las Nubes winery for wine tasting

1:00 PM: Lunch at TROIKA and wine tasting from Vena Cava winery

3:00 PM: Monte Xanic winery for behind-the-scenes tour and wine tasting

5:00 PM: Dinner al fresco lakeside at Monte Xanic

9:00 PM: Arrive back at Discover Baja offices

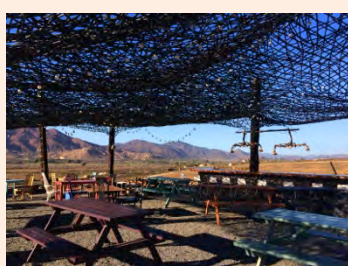


*A passport or passport card is required to re-enter the U.S. Must be 21+ years of age to take trip.*

*Please note that US citizens can only bring across one liter of alcohol from Mexico into the U.S.*

COST: \$175 for Discover Baja members and \$185 for non-members.

**Email [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com) or call 800.727.2252 to book your space!**







The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), in partnership with other organizations, has launched a campaign called Dignity Crossing to provide a platform for complaints from anyone who feels they've been mistreated by a border agent.

According to the campaign, "when citizens and non-citizens alike feel discriminated against, humiliated, treated with suspicion, or are physically and verbally abused by poorly trained and unprofessional CBP officers, their first impression is completely contrary to our values of fairness, equality and justice."

If you feel like you've been mistreated by a border patrol officer, you can file a complaint by calling 619-233-4114.

[www.revitalizenotmilitarize.org/dignity-crossing/](http://www.revitalizenotmilitarize.org/dignity-crossing/)

We have some **sea life blown glass pieces** in the office for sale from artist Paul Curtis. Paul was formerly the glass blower at Sea World and now lives on Coyote Bay south of Mulegé. Call 800-727-2252 or email [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com) to purchase.



Whales on wood: \$18, Necklaces: \$15, Ornaments: \$20



*Do you like free money? We thought so! For the month of May, we're running a special Discover Baja refer-a-friend promotion. Here's how it works:*

1. Refer a friend to become a new member of Discover Baja. They'll get \$10 off of their membership fee (this is a great deal for them too!).

2. They can email [ask@discoverbaja.com](mailto:ask@discoverbaja.com), call 800-727-2252 or come into the office to sign up as a new member. Make sure they give us your name so that you get the credit (and the money)!

3. You'll get \$10 worth of "Amigo Bucks" in the mail that can be used for your next DBTC membership renewal, toward your insurance or for any books, maps, t-shirts, etc that we have in the office.



## Where do you Discover Baja?

Send us a photo of yourself in a Discover Baja t-shirt or with your Discover Baja bumper sticker and we'll feature you in the DBTC newsletter! Please send photo and caption to [jen@discoverbaja.com](mailto:jen@discoverbaja.com).

Don't have a Discover Baja t-shirt? You can get yours at <https://squareup.com/market/discover-baja>



*Chris Mejia in Bahia de los Angeles with his DBTC sticker*



# Valles de Guadalupe Vendimia

August 7-23 2015

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vendimia and festivities are sure to be as grand as ever. In the next three pages we're bringing you the best of Vendimia events as well as where to stay, drink and eat during your time in the Valle de Guadalupe.

The Vendimia (wine harvest festival) takes place every year over two weeks in August and is a celebration around the harvesting of grapes. It's a series of elite parties and events held mostly at individual wineries. There are a few large events hosted by the Provino (the organization that puts on the festival) where many of the wineries are present and thousands of people join together to drink wine, eat local cuisine and enjoy life. Those events include the *Muestra del Vino* (wine tasting event) that kicks off the Vendimia, and the *Concurso de Paella* (Paella contest) that closes the Vendimia (see the next page for our experience at the Concurso de Paella last year). More information on both of those events as well as some of the other Vendimia events below. Tickets for all Vendimia events must be purchased in advance and should be purchased as soon as possible as the most popular events sell out quickly. Tickets for most events tend to be very expensive, but there are a few free events and some cheaper ones as well.

The preliminary schedule of events for the Vendimia has been released, but many of the specific details have not been. You can see the full Vendimia schedule in English online on our website at <http://bit.ly/1dNd2Mt>. Check in with the individual winery if you're interested in finding out about more details or purchasing tickets.



## HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

### **Friday August 7, 2015: Muestra del Vino 2015**

The kickoff to the Vendimia takes place at one of the most iconic buildings in Ensenada, the Riviera del Pacifico. This event has wine from over 50 wineries and food from around the region accompanied by music. This year will celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Vendimia celebration.

### **Sunday, August 16: Party at the Riviera**

Wine tastings, music, culture and dance at the Riviera del Pacifico in Ensenada. Enjoy a wonderful time with family at this free event.

### **Thursday, August 20: Party in the Valley**

This free event offers wine tastings, food and artisanal crafts from the Valle de Guadalupe in the Parque el Porvenir.

### **Sunday, August 23: Paella Contest 2015**

This huge event concludes the Vendimia festival. A magical event with more than 50 winemakers and 80 teams competing to offer the best paella, this is always a favorite. (See our experience last year on the next page)

See the full schedule at: <http://bit.ly/1dNd2Mt>





# Valles de Guadalupe Vendimia

## August 7-23 2015

### Vendimia Concurso de Paella



As the last event on the calendar for Vendimia in the Valle de Guadalupe, the Paella Contest makes sure that the wine harvest festival goes out in style. Held at Liceaga winery outside under the oak trees in the dog days of summer, it's a beautiful and quixotic event. Everyone who's anyone in Ensenada is in attendance as this is very much a high-society outing for locals. Attendees are dressed to the nines, including fancy high heels for women, even though the event is held outside in the dirt. In true Mexican style, the party starts early in the afternoon and goes until the late hours of night with wine, food and live entertainment.

Every winery in northern Baja (that's over 50 wineries) is in attendance, serving up free samples of wine to partygoers. And when you need some food to soak up the abundance of wine, you don't need to go far to find the paella. There are about 80 paella booths set up, all making huge pans of paella, competing for the judges and feeding the hungry masses.

There's no better way to say goodbye to the Vendimia or the last days of summer than by drinking wine and feasting on paella under oak trees in the Valle de Guadalupe.

#### *Tips:*

*-This is a hugely popular event and tickets sell out fast. Get them as soon as they go on sale.*

*-Arrive early. There are literally thousands of people who attend the event. They all have big groups of family and friends who get there early and reserve all of the tables. If you want to be able to sit down (and believe me, you do), you should plan on arriving early or sending someone in your party to arrive early and reserve a table for your group.*

*-Wine tastings are free but if you don't bring your own wine glass, you'll need to buy one. Memorabilia wine glasses cost 70 pesos (just over \$5 USD).*

*-You can bring in ice chests with drinks and food. While there's plenty of paella and wine to go around, you may want to bring other food, beer, waters, etc. There was water and soda available for sale as well as some paletas.*

*-The entire event is outside in the dirt under the trees. Wear appropriate footwear. August is also the hottest month in the Valley with temperatures reaching into triple digits so make sure you're staying hydrated. While temperatures remain relatively cool under the shade of the trees, you may want to consider bringing a sun hat and make sure you wear clothing to help you stay cool.*





# Valles de Guadalupe Vendimia

August 7-23 2015

## Your guide to eating, drinking and staying your way through the Valle de Guadalupe Vendimia

### WINERIES

Winery **Monte Xanic** has been around for decades, but they just opened a beautiful new tasting room with sweeping views. **Adobe Guadalupe** also just opened a new public wine tasting room.



Boutique wineries **Las Nubes** and **Viñas de Garza** are DBTC favorites with great wines and lovely atmospheres. **Alximia** (with restaurant La Terrasse) and **Clos de Tres** are some relative newcomers gaining lots of popularity. Just outside the valley, **CuatroCuatros** winery has a bar with breathtaking views of the pacific from a ridge overlooking the ocean.

### RESTAURANTS

If you're looking for a typical *campestre* with outdoor seating and well-crafted food, check out Javier Plascencia's **Finca Altozano**, the highly-acclaimed **Malva**, or dine under the trees at **Deckman's en el Mogor**. Don't forget popular farm-to-table restaurant **Corazón de Tierra** and newcomer **La Esperanza Baja Med** (at L.A. Cetto) - both have beautiful views and excellent food.



Food trucks **Troika** (at Vena Cava winery) and **Adobe Food Truck** (at Adobe Guadalupe) are great for an informal, but still gourmet, meal. If you're looking for a more casual and local experience, check out **La Cocina de Doña Esthela** or the very popular **Ochentos** pizzeria.

### HOTELS

Don't delay in arranging accommodations if you think you'll make it to this year's Vendimia. Hotels book up fast and the prices escalate during the festival. Book now!

Favorites like **La Villa del Valle**, **Adobe Guadalupe** and **Encuentro Guadalupe** are lovely if you're looking for upscale accommodations in the valley. **CuatroCuatros** has luxurious tent cabins just outside of the valley. If you're looking for some slightly more affordable options in the Valle de Guadalupe then check out **Terra del Valle**, **Meson del Vino**, **Viñedos Malagón**, **Casa Encinares B&B**, or **Hacienda Guadalupe**. You may need to think outside the box and stay in a hotel in Ensenada (just 30 minutes away) or check Airbnb.com for house rentals in the area.

Even if you contact the hotel directly and they say they're booked, you may still be able to find a room at that hotel online (try kayak.com, booking.com, expedia.com, etc.). The hotels sell rooms to those sites ahead of time, so while they may be booked directly there's often still availability for that hotel on those sites.



# Puerto Peñasco:

Beaches, nature, activities and fun for the whole family!



We're pleased to bring you our guide to Puerto Peñasco (Rocky Point), Sonora, Mexico. We've got information on some of the best things to do, places to stay and restaurants to eat. We've also partnered with a number of Puerto Peñasco establishments to bring Discover Baja members new travel discounts. If you haven't yet experienced Puerto Peñasco with its beautiful Sea of Cortez beaches, waterfront hotels and a variety of fun activities, what are you waiting for? Just an hour over the border from Lukeville, AZ or a four-hour drive from Mexicali, it's an easy road trip and a fun time for the whole family.

## WHAT TO DO:

Puerto Peñasco is mostly known for its large beaches, water sports, fishing and Mexican charm. There are a plethora of beach activities such as horseback riding, kayaking, jet skiing, ultralight flights and beach volleyball tournaments. Quad rental places are available for easy access to the sand dunes outside of town near Cholla Bay. Don't miss a sunset cruise – there are a variety of options (including the popular Rey del Sol pirate ship).

Nature enthusiasts won't want to miss El Pinacate Biosphere reserve (and UNESCO World Heritage site) with its volcanic craters, peaks and cinder cones. The reserve is also home to hundreds of species of plants and animals. Or, take an eco tour to Morua estuary, (home to over 140 species of birds as well as organic oyster production) or a trip out to Bird Island.

If strolling and perusing is more your speed, meander along the water on the malecón in the Old Port part of town. It's full of restaurants, shops and street vendors and is a pleasant way to spend your day.

Or, grab a margarita, hit the pool and relax!

## WHERE TO STAY:

### Playa Bonita

If you are looking for a nice, clean comfortable stay without breaking the bank, this is the place to go. In addition to the resort, Playa Bonita has an RV park with 300 spaces a great restaurant called Puesta del Sol (see more below). They also have the best direct beach access and great customer service.  
**[www.playabonitaresort.com](http://www.playabonitaresort.com)**  
*10% discount for DBTC members*

### Best Western Laos Mar

Next door to Playa Bonita Resort is the Best Western Laos Mar, located about a block from the beach and Puesta del Sol Restaurant. It's a smaller hotel but still has a pool and jacuzzi. It's very clean and staff is great. They have El Tapeo Wine Bar with a large wine selection, live music, great atmosphere, good pizza and Spanish tapas (closed Mondays & Tuesdays).

**[bestwesternlaosmarsuites.h-rez.com](http://bestwesternlaosmarsuites.h-rez.com)**

*10% discount for DBTC members*

### Las Palomas Beach and Golf Resort

If you are looking for luxury and relaxation, then Las Palomas is the place to stay. This resort has well maintained grounds and security. Some pools are heated (some are not) and there's a popular swim-up bar.

### Hotel Peñasco del Sol

This beachfront hotel is also very close to nightlife and has renovated rooms, restaurants and a lobby bar. There are heated pools a Jacuzzi and a separate pool that has a swim-up bar.  
**[www.penascodelsolhotel.com](http://www.penascodelsolhotel.com)**

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## **WHERE TO EAT:**

### **La Casa de Capitan**

Located on Whale Hill, this restaurant has the best views in Puerto Peñasco. Enjoy the 180-degree views of the Sea of Cortez and the city from the outdoor terrace with a cold drink. It's a dirt and rock road to get up to the restaurant and it can be kind of tricky to find the street, but everyone knows how to get there so ask around.

### **The Point Restaurant**

This is a great Seafood restaurant with beautiful views of the Sea of Cortez. Located in the middle of the malecón, right on the water, The Point has friendly waiters and great service.

### **Puesta Del Sol (at Playa Bonita Resort).**

A DBTC favorite. The food is delicious and the restaurant overlooks the beautiful beach. Everything is fresh (even chicken nuggets for the kids) and the waiters are the best. Sit outside and enjoy the sunset with a nice cold beer or mixed drink. Don't miss the shrimp omelet with chipotle sauce or the shrimp cocktail. Happy hour is everyday from 4-6 pm with \$2 USD drinks.

*10% discount for DBTC members on regular prices*

## **PUERTO PEÑASCO TIPS:**

-Even though Puerto Peñasco is about 100 km from the border, it is considered to be within the special border "free zone" so you do not need a FMM tourist permit to go to Puerto Peñasco.

-Puerto Peñasco also has an exclusion from the Temporary Importation Permit for vehicles so you do not need a vehicle import (unlike the rest of Mainland Mexico).

-It's best to pay for things in pesos rather than dollars as you'll get the best exchange rate. There are a number of ATMs in town where you can use your U.S. bank card to withdraw pesos.

-Check out the Puerto Peñasco Tourism website at [www.cometorockypoint.com](http://www.cometorockypoint.com) for more information, or stop by the DBTC offices for brochures

*Discounts are on regular prices and are not valid on holidays.*





# BAJA FISHING REPORT

with Gary Graham



**Captain Jesus Robles captured the winning 33-pound yellowtail on a Rapala.**

After a practically non-existent winter, April seemed poised to fling open the swinging doors to a banner spring season. What can I say? Mother Nature pulled a gotcha!

Grumpy weather and falling sea temps influenced the bite along the West Coast of Baja. What had become a reliable yellowtail bite convinced the crews of 13 boats to join in an informal tournament hatched by Marine store owner Wes Price at Ensenada's Marina Coral.

Of course, the water rolled and sea temps plummeted, resulting in a scratchy bite. However, Mike Kraus and his Blackjack crew found a winner, earning them a \$1,300 payout.

In San Quintin, the surface action faded while bottom fishing

remained consistently good. Unfortunately, the on-going labor dispute discouraged the usual weekend fishing crowd.

As the weather improved, the local fishing co-op sponsored a tournament for yellowtail and calico in late April that was a huge success with 25 teams entered from both panga and shore at Bahia Ascensión according to Shari Bondy, La Bufadora Inn. Captain Jesus Robles captured the winning 33-pound yellowtail on a Rapala.

At La Bocana, Juanchy Aguilar posted, "Beautiful fishing today – seven broom tail and leopard grouper ... catch and release."

While many enjoy the more populated places in Baja, I often hear complaints about overcrowding, too many boats and

fewer fish. The Viscaíno Peninsula, from Turtle Bay to Estero Coyote below Punta Abreojos is some of the best, most fertile, uncrowded fishing area left in Baja. Regardless of your boat – inflatable or tin trailer this shoreline, with a few esteros thrown in, is an excellent place to perfect your Baja fishing skills during the summer and fall.

Moving on, Loreto hosted several yellowtail tournaments late in April and by all accounts they were worth the effort.

Several encouraging signs are the availability of a decent bait supply and also that a few patches of sargasso are beginning to appear. There are already a few reports of sails and striped marlin offshore signaling that the water is warming up.

*Continued on next page*



**LEFT AND CENTER: Juanchy Aguilar fishing aboard a 10-foot Zodiac a half-mile outside of La Bocana. RIGHT: Patches of sargasso.**





**LEFT: Gary Tsunoda scored on barred pargo. RIGHT: Small chrome lures for catching marauding ladyfish.**

*Continued from previous page*

Farther down the Sea of Cortez, La Paz and Los Arenas are definitely showing signs of an emerging spring.

At La Paz, Gary Tsunoda scored on barred pargo. There were also cabrilla, amberjack and chunky roosterfish around according to Jonathan Roldan, Tailhunter International.

Beyond La Paz at Los Arenas, the roosterfish action is *on fire* for both conventional and fly anglers.

The prolific action is evidenced by Randall Norris's spectacular rooster caught on a fly-fishing trip with Gary Bulla, who is spending most of May in the area.

Offshore at East Cape, fishing for billfish and thresher shark slowed significantly leaving dorado clearly the crowd pleaser as April came to a close.

From the beach there were schools of marauding ladyfish behaving like small tarpon leaping several feet into the air when hooked. Plenty of fun to catch on light tackle with small chrome lures.

Throw the lure out as far as you can cast and let it sink with a fluttering motion, then set the hook when you have a strike. No strike? Repeat the process as you retrieve the lure. If you are

looking for larger fish, pin that ladyfish you just caught onto a larger 8/0 circle hook on a heavier rig and cast it back out. Large roosterfish can't resist an injured ladyfish. Free spool with the clicker engaged until you have a bite, and then let the fish run for a slow 10 count; just come tight to set the hook.

Recent reports from San Jose indicate that winter is in the rear-view mirror. A mixed bag including billfish, school-sized tuna along with a growing dorado bite are in the offering according to Eric Brictson, Gordo Banks Pangas.

At the tip, the sorely missed striped marlin bite has finally begun in earnest and the fleet couldn't be happier. Still missing are the yellowfin tuna and so far the dorado action is less than normal. There are still some sierra and a few jacks and roosters for the anglers inclined to stay closer to shore. Lastly, there are the few wahoo around that seem pretty scrawny to me.

Regardless of your destination this month, there seems to be enough fishing opportunities to satisfy first timers to the hard core types that want to fish 'til they drop.

Questions or comments are welcome.  
[garyg@garycgraham.com](mailto:garyg@garycgraham.com)



**Randall Norris's spectacular rooster caught on a fly-fishing trip with Gary Bulla.**



# Villa Santa Cruz

A magical B&B on the beaches of Todos Santos

By Jennifer Kramer

There's no better way to describe a stay at Villa Santa Cruz other than magical. This B&B, located on the beaches of Todos Santos, is literally a little slice of heaven in Baja Sur. Everything from the picturesque guest villa to the relaxing pool to the stunning beach location makes for an enchanting experience.

Matt and Jessica Canepa, the owners of Villa Santa Cruz, are Americans who built the villa from the ground up. Now in their fifth season as hosts of the B&B, they do everything to make sure that your stay with them is unforgettable. When we first arrived at the villa, we were immediately greeted by Matt who made delicious welcome margaritas for us to enjoy while he showed us around.

The villa is exquisite with each room more beautiful than the next. Decorated with authentic wood and wrought iron Mexican furniture and colorful artisan pieces, the place looks like something out of a movie (check out the floating glass staircase that is absolutely superb). Every detail is in line with the aesthetic of the villa. Our room, Agave, also came complete with beautiful views of the pool and the beach.

The pool is perfectly heated to 87 degrees and comes complete with a large jacuzzi, lots of comfortable chaise lounges and a hammock. Over towards the beach, there's a large palapa (replete with a comfy sleeping loft), that sits up on the sand dunes overlooking the magnificent, and usually fairly empty, beach. They have beach towels, coolers, beach chairs and sunscreen all available for guest use. There's also a cask of Tequila (first shot is on the house) as well as wine and beer (all available on the honor system) in case you want to really relax and enjoy your time.



Adding to the magical experience of Villa Santa Cruz is the fact that it's located just five miles north of the quaint colonial town of Todos Santos (one of Mexico's "Pueblos Mágicos"). It's lovely to spend the afternoon walking around the small town and popping into art galleries or enjoying a stroll around the plaza. We went for dinner at *Cáfe Santa Fe*, a famously delicious Italian restaurant in town. Matt gave us a great suggestion to order the fish carpaccio and the lobster ravioli – the entire meal was divine.

After dinner we returned to the villa, which was all lit up with candles giving it an ethereal glow. We enjoyed the Jacuzzi under a blanket of stars with the sounds of the waves crashing in the background. Tiki torches light the outdoor areas at night. They have fire pits set up on the roof so you can also enjoy the stars and evening up there as well.

We slept with the French doors open in our room, listening to the

sounds of the waves crashing under the cover of our mosquito net. In the morning we awoke to find a basket of hot coffee and tea ready for us right outside the door. When we had finished enjoying our morning coffee on the balcony, looking out at the ocean, we went downstairs to have breakfast, which is served in the outdoor dining area. We took a walk on the beach, lounged in the shade of the palapa loft for a bit and then, sadly had to leave paradise.

It's truly a special treat to stay at Villa Santa Cruz. It's a great spot for couples, friends, families – anyone looking to enjoy Todos Santos, surf (the famous La Pastora surf break is just a 10-minute walk from the villa) or just relax and enjoy life.

**Villa Santa Cruz**  
**[www.villasantacruz baja.com](http://www.villasantacruz baja.com)**

*Rooms start at \$175*

*Pet friendly*

*Closed August 1-October 15*





# ROSARITO ART FEST 2015



For the sixth year in a row, the Rosarito Art Fest will again consume the streets of Rosarito over Memorial Day Weekend with a festive display of art, food, drinks and live entertainment.

The art fest is one of the largest annual events in Rosarito, and it's also one of the most beloved. Festival organizer (and godfather of the local Rosarito art scene), Benito Del Aguila, got the idea to start the festival six years ago when the local economy was struggling. Del Aguila, along with a group of artists and art enthusiasts, decided to create the festival to help bolster the economy and the positive image of Baja. "The idea was to give good news to everyone and to remind people that there were more good things than bad happening

down here," said Del Aguila, "including great art, great music, food and tons of creativity."

Today, the art fest has grown into the biggest art fair in northern Baja. Over one hundred booths will be filled with painters, sculptors and photographers exhibiting and selling their work. Live performances will represent a diverse range of disciplines including jazz, flamenco, tango, opera and classical music. More than 12,000 visitors are expected over the course of the two-day festival.

"This year in particular we are focusing our creativity on the 'experience' of Rosarito Art Fest," said Del Aguila alluding to some new surprises for everyone. "We're focused on the details that make everyone smile."

In addition to artists from northern Baja, San Diego and LA, the art fest has attracted artists from places as far as Singapore and Argentina over the years. This year, artists from Long Beach, Rosarito's soon-to-be Sister City, will also be exhibiting.

"My favorite part of the festival is to see thousands of happy people. There is joy in the air, that is very difficult to explain," said Del Aguila. But his main goal for the festival and the art scene in Rosarito? "We want artists to be able to make a living by doing what they love the most."

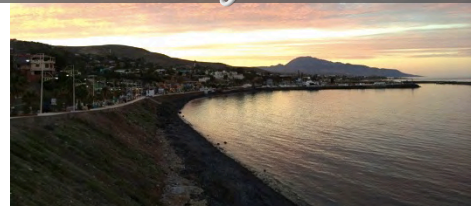
*Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 8pm each day.*

*Free admission.*

***[www.facebook.com/rosaritoartfest](http://www.facebook.com/rosaritoartfest)***



# Santa Rosalia: Baja's French Mining Town



While the mining town of Santa Rosalia doesn't always make the must-see list for many Baja travelers, the town has a distinct flavor unlike any other place in Baja. An old mining town built up by the French company El Boleo in the 1800s, most of the buildings in town are in the French style - with wooden siding and porches and balconies overlooking the streets. Walking the small streets of Santa Rosalia can sometimes feel like walking around parts of New Orleans. Many of the buildings have been restored but some of the old industrial mining structures stand in ruins, looking something like a dilapidated scene from Disneyland's frontier land. If you enjoy architecture and history, Santa Rosalia can be full of hidden gems.

One of the most famous sites in the city is the Iglesia Santa Barbara, a church made of galvanized iron that was designed by Alexander Gustave Eiffel (yes, *that* Eiffel, who also has a very famous eponymous tower in Paris). The town also

claims fame to Panadería El Boleo, that at one time was considered one of the best Bakeries in Mexico. The quality of the bakery has declined in recent years, but it's still open and visitors can stop in to pick up some boleos or baguettes. There's also a Mining Museum (Museo Histórico Minero de Santa Rosalía) up on the hill in a historic old building.

A few years ago, Baja Mining decided to work on reopening the old copper mine. Santa Rosalia has been abuzz with foreign investment and some prosperity once again. Copper production began at the beginning of 2015 and they are working on mining cobalt-zinc as well. Many Europeans and Koreans come to stay in Santa Rosalia to work on development and technology for the mines.

In addition to the mining, Santa Rosalia is also a port town. It's located on the Sea of Cortez and has a ferry that takes passengers over to Guaymas, Sonora in Mainland Mexico

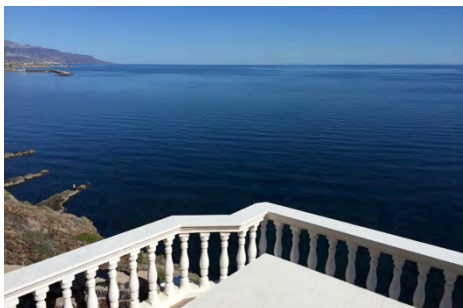
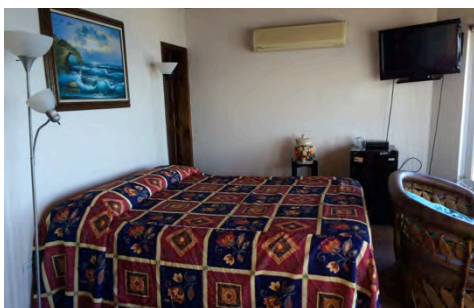
([www.ferrysantarosalia.com](http://www.ferrysantarosalia.com)). The beaches are not a big draw for Santa Rosalia as they tend to be gray and rocky, but there is a Malecón in Santa Rosalia and it's nice to walk along the water.

One of the most popular places to stay for travelers is Las Casitas, located on the water just south of town on Mex 1. It's worth the stay if you can get one of the large rooms overlooking the Sea of Cortez with a lovely patio. All of the rooms have wifi, sky TV, coffee makers and air conditioning. The views of the Sea of Cortez are beautiful and it's a quiet and comfortable place to stay.

Las Casitas has 16 rooms, but they're often booked (in part by many of the executives staying long-term who are working on development of the mine), so try to book as far in advance as possible.

## Hotel Las Casitas

Rooms range from 650 to 900 pesos (about \$45 to \$65 dollars)  
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**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.

