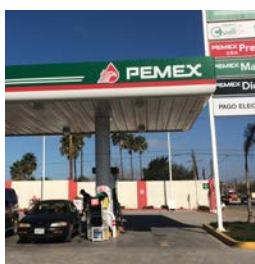




May 2016 Newsletter

BAJA NEWS

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



Mexico's Deregulated Gas Prices

With the deregulation of Mexico's fuel industry, the price of gas now varies from station to station. Gas stations other than Pemex are now allowed to enter the field and will start opening on the peninsula. We will no longer be reporting the gas prices as the costs vary too greatly to report an accurate price.

Hospitals & Emergency Medical Services

We've put together a list of medical services and hospitals throughout the Baja California peninsula for you to have as a resource when traveling. It's always a good idea to have extra travel insurance that can cover medical and emergency evacuation services.
www.discoverbaja.com/baja-california-information/emergency-and-medical-services/



Tecate SOUTHBOUND Driving Directions

After we gave you the northbound directions for the Tecate border, we had a number of requests for the south bound directions as well. You can find them at the link below:

www.discoverbaja.com/go/driving-directions/tecate-border-southbound/

From the DBTC Office

We're getting ready to kick off summer and we'll be bringing you plenty of ideas for enjoying the season in Baja. Check out our "Family Fun on the East Cape" story on page 4 and don't forget the Fiestas de la Vendimia wine harvest will be August 5-21 in the Valle de Guadalupe. Time to make hotel reservations now if you plan on attending.

Memorial Day is coming and is always a busy long weekend in Baja. Don't forget to get your Mexican auto insurance and prepaid FMMs before heading south. The DBTC offices will be closed Saturday, May 28th and Monday, May 30th in observance of the holiday.

*See you in Baja!
Hugh, Carol, Jen, Maythé & Monica*

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

PESO EXCHANGE RATE: \$17.8 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

PREPAID FMMs: \$30 DBTC members only. Advance seven-day FMMs now available for \$5 each.
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/person fee for DBTC to process. Service for DBTC members only.
www.discoverbaja.com/go/nautical-sportfishing-fmm

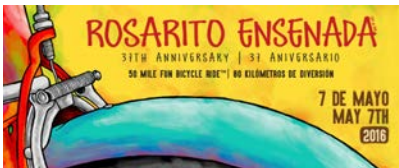
MEXICAN AUTO INSURANCE: Special yearly rates for members. www.discoverbajaonline.com

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

MAY 7

Rosarito Ensenada Bike Ride



The biannual 50-mile fun bike ride begins in Rosarito and ends with a fiesta in Ensenada.
www.rosaritoensenada.com

MAY 8

Mother's Day (U.S.)



The U.S. celebrates Mother's Day on Sunday, May 8th. Why not treat mom to a special weekend in Baja?

MAY 10

Día de la Madre (Mexico)



Mexico celebrates Mother's Day on May 10th every year (regardless of the day of the week).

MAY 13-14

Pesca la Baja San Felipe



The first fishing tournament in the Pesca La Baja 2016 series will take place in San Felipe.
www.pescalabaja.com

MAY 14

Viñedos en Flor



More than 40 wineries will come together at Bibayoff Winery to show off the best products from the Valle de Guadalupe.
www.provinoac.org

MAY 27-28

Tijuana Expo Cerveza Artesanal



This two night beer and music fest will take place in Tijuana outside Mercado Hidalgo.

MAY 28-29

Rosarito Art Fest



The Rosarito Art Fest will take place over Memorial Day Weekend featuring local artists, food, drinks, and entertainment.
www.rosaritoartfest.com

MAY 29

Tijuana Jazz & Blues Festival



This free festival will feature the best of Tijuana jazz and blues music.
www.tijuanajazzblues.com

MAY 30

Memorial Day



No better way to kick off the summer season than with a long weekend in Baja!

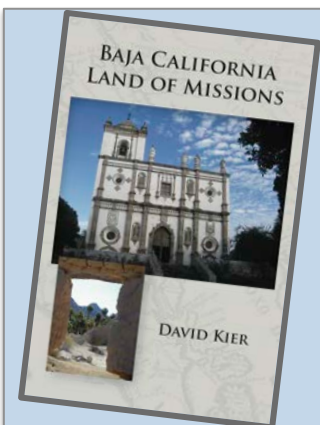
TRACKING DOWN THE SPANISH MISSIONS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA

By Jennifer Kramer

Of the many historical and cultural sites that Baja offers, perhaps the most interesting (and controversial) are the Spanish missions that were founded by the Jesuits, Dominicans, and Franciscans. There were 27 missions in total, starting with Loreto, the first mission founded in all of California (Alta or Baja) in 1697. Unlike the missions in Alta California that have been preserved, the Baja mission sites are in varying levels of condition. They range from beautifully preserved stone churches found in the center of colonial towns to stone foundations or adobe ruins in the middle of the desert. All of this makes it even more exciting to hunt for the missions along the peninsula.

On a few occasions, I've run into off-road enthusiasts traveling the peninsula who are in the process of hunting down every location on the peninsula where there was a mission or accompanying *visitas*. My own mission treasure hunt has taken a more cursory and casual approach, but I do go out of my way any time I'm near a site to find it and check it off of my list.

Mission hunters of every level should carry with them a copy of David Kier's *Baja California Land of Missions*. Not only does Kier give the detailed history of each of the missions, but, even more valuable, he gives the GPS coordinates for the location of the mission (or ruins). It's the only comprehensive guide of its kind for the Baja missions. Every Baja road tripper should carry this book in the car, as it will add an extra level of cultural interest to any trip south. Follow in the footsteps of the missionaries along *El Camino Real* and learn some of the history of the peninsula while tracking down the Spanish missions of Baja California. How many have you been to?



David Kier's book "Baja California Land of Missions" is a necessary tool for exploring the missions of Baja. To get your copy, call the office at 800-727-2252 or purchase online at: squareup.com/store/discover-baja/item/baja-california-land-of-missions

If you're just getting started in your own explorations of the missions of Baja California, here are some of the more impressive sites to visit:



San Borja (1762-1818)

The northern-most stone mission on the Baja peninsula is located just outside of Bahía de los Angeles. The caretaker is a fourth generation Cochimí and he and his family give free tours of the mission from 8a.m.-6 p.m. daily. There's a picnic area at the mission if you want to take food and enjoy the afternoon.

San Ignacio de Kadakaamán (1728-1840)

Located on the town plaza in the sleepy town of San Ignacio, this is one of the most beautiful and easy-to-visit missions on the peninsula. Many expeditions were launched from San Ignacio to find new mission sites. One of these expeditions in 1746 to the Colorado River Delta put an end to the misconception that California was an island.



Santa Rosalía de Mulegé (1705-1828)

The mission in Mulegé is a stunning stone church that also has some of the best views in town. The lookout point located just behind the mission, offers views of the Mulegé river, town, and the bountiful date palms.

San Francisco Javier de Biaundo (1699-1817)

Take a day trip from Loreto to visit this beautiful stone mission, located in the tiny village of San Javier, nestled into the Sierra de la Giganta mountain range. Don't miss the 300+ year-old olive tree behind the mission as well.



Nuestra Señora de Loreto Conchó (1697-1829)

The first mission in all of California (Baja and Alta) is located just off of Loreto's historic town plaza. Loreto was the capital and religious center of California for many years and the new missions were built out from here on a road network known as *El Camino Real*.

Family Fun on the East Cape



Summer is right around the corner, and while the snowbirds are packing up and heading north, it's prime time for families to head south. With the kids out of school, the East Cape is full of summer activities that travelers of all ages will love—from fishing and snorkeling to exploring waterfalls in the nearby Sierra de la Laguna.

Los Barriles is the large town in the region where there are restaurants, markets, and shops. We prefer to stay just south of Los Barriles in the community of Buena Vista, where you'll find beachfront hotels that bring a perfect mix of relaxation and access to activities. For families that are most interested in diving and snorkeling, Cabo Pulmo is the best place to stay to have full access to the coral reef teeming with marine life. The small towns of El Triunfo, Miraflores, and Santiago don't offer much in terms of accommodations, but make for interesting exploring with their colonial buildings and quaint attractions. The nearby lush Sierra de la Laguna mountains are full of hot springs, waterfalls, and natural pools.

HIGHLIGHTS

Cañon de la Zorra

Just outside of the town of Santiago is the striking Cañon de la Zorra. The focus of the canyon is an impressive 30-foot waterfall that cascades into natural pools below. It's a great spot for swimming in the pools and sun bathing on the rocks. Cañon de la Zorra is accessed through Rancho Ecológico Sol de Mayo, where there's a parking lot and you will pay the entrance fee. To get to the canyon and waterfall from the ranch it's a steep 10-minute hike. There are now steps that have been carved out of the rocks (visitors used to have to use a rope to scale the large rocks to get down to the pools), but it's a moderate hike and travelers should watch their step. For more information, see page 6.

Santa Rita Hot Springs

Near Cañon de la Zorra, the Santa Rita Hot Springs (open 8am-7pm daily, US\$3) are natural hot springs consisting of shallow sandy-bottom pools nestled in between large boulders in a lush canyon with palm trees. The pools are hot but there's a cold river below to cool off if needed. There's a nearby camping facility with bathrooms and a BBQ area. It's US\$6 to camp overnight or US\$50 for a cabin. No food or alcohol are allowed into the hot springs. Santa Rita can be reached either from Cañon de la Zorra or by taking the road in Santiago next to the old zoo. You'll head to the *ejido* of San Jorge and then follow signs to Santa Rita. Keep following the power lines. The road is rough and you'll need a four-wheel drive vehicle with high clearance.



Parque Acuático Wet Fun

Kids will love a trip to the impressive water park, Parque Acuático Wet Fun (Km. 65, tel. 011-52-624-188-0518, open 10am-6pm Tues.-Sun. late spring through early fall, kids ages 3-10 US\$8, adults US\$11), located just south of Miraflores in Caduaño. Beat the summer heat with huge waterslides, pirate ships and swimming pools. The grounds are well maintained and the pools are very clean. There are plenty of shaded areas with tables and chairs for relaxing. No food or beverages are allowed into the park but there's a grill and snack bar inside with affordable prices.

RECREATION

Fishing

The Sea of Cortez waters on the East Cape some of the best fishing in Baja. In shallow waters, the catch can include cabrilla, jack crevalle, roosterfish, pompano, triggerfish, snappers, sierra, ladyfish, and barred pargo. Marlin, sailfish, dorado and tuna can be found in deeper waters offshore. Many of the hotels in Los Barriles or Buena Vista can arrange for a day charter for fishing. Baja on the Fly (tel. US 760-522-3720, www.bajafly.com) is operated by fishing expert Gary Graham (who writes the Discover Baja monthly fishing report) and his wife Yvonne. They arrange complete East Cape fishing packages for single anglers or groups, taking care of hotel accommodations as well as guided beach, panga, or cruiser trips on private or hotel cruisers.

Snorkeling and Diving

Cabo Pulmo is one of the most popular destinations for diving on the peninsula and summer is considered peak season because of the warm waters and high visibility. One of only three coral reefs in North America, the Cabo Pulmo reef is 5,000 years old and the only living coral reef in the Sea of Cortez. The reef begins just a few meters off the shore, which makes this an extremely appealing dive and snorkel spot. The area is teeming with marine life and divers and snorkelers have the ability to see sea turtles, dolphin, grouper, sea bass, snapper, parrotfish, angelfish, damselfish, mobula rays and jack fish. Los Arbolitos and Los Frailes are the best beaches for snorkeling while dive trips leave from the beach access right in town.

Surfing

East of San José del Cabo, there are a number of breaks with great waves that are generally empty. You'll need a four-wheel drive vehicle to navigate the coastal East Cape Road. The waves here are not for beginners as the tropical storms of summer can bring large south-swell waves. Popular surf breaks in this area are Shipwreck (right reef break), Nine Palms (right point break), Punta Perfecta (right point break located near the crossroads) and Los Frailes (gets large on a south swell).



ACCOMMODATIONS

The best place to stay on the East Cape depends on the activities you're most interested in. For relaxation and fishing, Buena Vista is a great option. **Rancho Leonero** (www.rancholeonero.com) or **Hotel Buena Vista** (www.hotelbuenavista.com) are both excellent options here. The area also offers a central location for getting around to most of the East Cape.

If diving or snorkeling is your focus, stay directly in Cabo Pulmo. Try **Baja Bungalows** (www.bajabungalows.com) for a casual and fun family atmosphere. Be aware that living is off-the-grid here and the small town only has a handful of options for restaurants and no ATMs or gas stations. But you will get great access to the beaches and dive/snorkel spots.



Cañon de la Zorra

Just outside the town of Santiago on the East Cape, nestled into the foothills of the Sierra de la Laguna, is the striking Cañon de la Zorra. The lush canyon is full of large granite boulders, palm trees and cacti. The focus of the canyon an impressive 10-meter waterfall that cascades into natural pools below. It's a picturesque and relaxing spot for swimming in the pools and sun bathing on the rocks. Go in the morning to get the most light as the sun disappears behind the rocks and mountains putting the water into shade by early afternoon.

Because the canyon is located in the biosphere reserve of the Sierra de la Laguna, an entrance fee must be paid to visit. The only access to Cañon de la Zorra is through **Rancho Ecológico Sol de Mayo**. There's a parking lot at the

ranch where you'll pay the admission fee of \$90 pesos and will be shown the trail to get to the waterfall.

Ranch owner Prisciliano de la Peña Ruiz is fifth generation of a family that has lived on the ranch for decades. His family came to Baja California Sur from Spain in the 1700s and if you speak Spanish, he's a wealth of information about the region. Guests can camp at Sol de Mayo for \$115 pesos. There are also eight cabanas for rent (\$1,000-1,250 pesos/night) that can hold from two to six people.

To get to the canyon and waterfall from the ranch it's a steep 10-minute hike descending into the canyon. There are now steps that have been carved out of the rocks (visitors used to have to use a rope to scale the large rocks to get down to the pools), but it's

still a moderate hike and travelers should watch their step.

To get to Sol de Mayo and Cañon de la Zorra, enter the town of Santiago and turn right on Francisco J. Mujica (before you get to the plaza). Follow the road until the intersection where you'll follow signs for "Sol de Mayo" to make a soft left to go up a small hill. From here, the pavement will end, but the wide dirt road is in good condition. Continue to follow signs for "Cañon de la Zorra" and "Sol de Mayo" for another 10 Km until arriving at Rancho Sol de Mayo.

Rancho Ecológico Sol de Mayo

Tel. 011-52-624-130-2055

GPS: 23.498962, -109.790560

www.facebook.com/RanchoEcologicoSolDeMayo

Entrance fee: \$90 pesos (US \$6) per person

BAJA FISHING REPORT

with Gary Graham



John Wick scored a mini-cow bluefin tuna caught out of Ensenada

Despite choppy seas and wind howling in the riggers, John Wick scored this mini-cow bluefin tuna on his downrigger while trolling out toward the Airplane Bank out of Ensenada -- underscoring how unusual the 2016 season is!

In spite of the recent inconsistent weather, the fishing at the various Islands -- Coronado's, Todos Santos, San Martin and Cedros -- have all had their moments when the conditions permitted. Yellowtail dominated the catches at the Coastal Islands; at the Ribbon Kelp, most were smallish with the largest barely making the 8-pound mark, then the better grade of 20 pounder's popped up under the birds at Pukey Point.

Inside the Coronado's at Salsipuedes, the Ensenada fleet

has been finding yellows breezing from there south to Isla Todos Santos. Those throwing lures are coming up with the best scores.

At San Quintin, Captain Kelly Catian boasts that fish are showing on the surface and chewin' surface plugs!

When that action slows, there are always a few nice-sized lings to round out the day's catch.

Farther down at Cedros Island, the season is just getting underway as May rolls around. Initial reports suggest that calico bass are biting and the yellows should be soon.

At Bahía Asunción, Shari Bondi commented that a couple of eager anglers managed to score several nice-sized yellowtail to get the season started.

Highlighting the impending season was the recent white seabass catches at La Bocana.

The non-report from Magdalena Bay wrapped up the West Coast report. However, as April fades and May arrives, hopefully the Esteros will shake off the winter doldrums.

On the Sea of Cortez side, San Felipe sprang to life with a hot sierra bite at Consag Rock -- just in time for first leg of the "Pesca la Baja" (Fish Baja) tournament on May 13 - 14. ["Fish Baja" website](#) North Winds are finally subsiding at Bahía de Los Angeles -- a good sign that the annual spring yellowtail show should soon arrive.

Continued on next page



LEFT: San Quintin, MIDDLE TOP: Ling caught around San Quintin, MIDDLE BOTTOM: yellowtail caught near Bahía Asunción, RIGHT: white seabass caught at La Bocana.



LEFT: Pargo caught between "Mangle" and San Basilio, CENTER TOP: Cabrilla at Gonzaga Bay, CENTER BOTTOM: Roosterfish caught in La Paz, RIGHT TOP: Punta Lobo, RIGHT BOTTOM: billfish in the East Cape



Continued from previous page

At Gonzaga Bay the excellent cabrilla action has the steady procession of anglers smiling from ear-to-ear.

Santa Rosalia, Punta Chivato, and Mulegé are still quiet as the roosterfish action has suddenly sprung to life at Bahia Concepcion, according to Mark and Olivia's Playa Buenaventura.

Aboard his kayak at Loreto, Jim Callard cast toward feeding activity in only 6-feet of water and hooked a 30-pound yellowtail which he boated 20 minutes later, after being dragged half the distance to Coronado Island.

At Punta Lobo, Luis Orozco had some good catches with Captain "Tito". After a long ride and an empty fish box, the day was saved by one quick stop on the way home. When "perro" poops out, you should try a few of the rocks off Lobo.

There was some nice action on a large pargo up north between

"Mangle" and San Basilio.

On his first trip to La Paz, on his first day Mark Bevans, from Kenai, Alaska, scored three roosters. Other action included yellowtail, small dorado and wahoo for the fleets at Muertos and La Paz.

East Cape anglers recently enjoyed an early show of striped marlin and sailfish a few miles offshore.

Adding to the excitement was a wahoo snap for the few boats fishing. Matt Clifton landed their first wahoo of the season in front of Las Palmas.

Gordo Banks Pangas' client, Mark Spra, landed a larger yellowfin down deep, on a strip of squid with half the hook showing; then topped off the day with a few sierra while trolling for roosterfish on the way back to the Marina.

Los Cabos billfishing has been lagging so far this spring, causing most boats to resort to inshore action for roosterfish and jacks on

the surface. Fishing deeper, Dave, Sr. and Dave, Jr. from Pittsburg, Penn., scored seven grouper (5-10-25-30-35-pounds), and two ladyfish (1- and 2-pounds).

As noted at the beginning of my report, I suspect that it was because of the grumpy weather that Wick's tuna was caught on a downrigger while trolling. They probably were forced to slow their trolling speed. Regardless of the size of boat, an outrigger can be an important addition to your bag of tricks, so it might be worthwhile to do a little research on one.

So far the most exciting fishing news is toward the border on the Pacific side as the exotics make their appearance several months earlier than normal. However, Baja Sur finally seems to be heating up as spring settles in.

Good Luck and Tight Lines...

Questions or comments are welcome.
garyg@garycgraham.com

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