



# Oaxaca Times

## Free

Oaxaca's English Tourist Newspaper

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## Independence Day



**VIVA MEXICO!!!** This will be the cry heard all over México on the night of September 15th commemorating Mexican Independence Day on September 16th. In Oaxaca, the Zocalo will be illuminated, many bands will be playing and the food and drink stands will be doing a land office business. At about 10:00 p.m. "La América", the young lady chosen to sing the National Anthem, will cruise the downtown area in a decorated float. At about 11:00 p.m. the Governor will appear on the balcony of the Municipal Palace, make a short speech, cry "VIVA MEXICO" and ring the bell of freedom. The State Philharmonic Orchestra will play the National Anthem and a brilliant display of fireworks will mark the end of the official festivities. **NOW THE PARTY WILL BEGIN!!!**

## ETHNIC GROUPS PART VI POPOLOCAS



These people live in small towns in the mountains not far from Huajuapán in the northwest part of the state near the Puebla Stateline. They come to town on Sundays to sell fruit, chickens, pigs, shingles, wooden beams and other things transported on donkeys or carried on their shoulders or heads. They also sell palm leaf hats which they weave skillfully and rapidly, even while walking. These are sold at exceedingly low prices. They are a very poor people and excessive consumption of alcohol has become a problem. The men wear cotton drawers and shirt, the women blouse and skirt also of cotton with a shawl and palm leaf hat. The majority tend to be short and thin.

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# ON THE ROAD AGAIN TUXTEPEC

Sprawled along the Papaloapan River, Tuxtepec is closer to the port city of Veracruz than to Oaxaca's capital, both in mileage and temperament. The states 2nd largest city, it is a big, dusty, bustling tropical town with a pulsating vitality which Oaxaca seems to lack. It is an important road hub with highways leading North to Veracruz and México City, East to Villahermosa and the Yucatan, and South to Oaxaca and the Gulf. As a result hotel rooms are at a premium.

I was lucky enough to get a ride with a friend who was returning to his job in that area. We left Oaxaca at 10:30 pm and travelling up and over the mountains on a two lane road in the pitch dark arrived in Tuxtepec at about 4 am. Unfortunately all the best hotels were full and I had to settle for a dingy, unairconditioned room at the Maria de Lourdes, which sounds like a religious shrine, but is a hotel who has seen better days. I even had to pay a 5000 pesos deposit on my towel! Later in the morning I managed to get a room at the Hotel Tuxtepec, which is downtown, clean and has airconditioning and color TV.

Tuxtepec is HOT and the humidity very high. Since it's inland there are no coastal breezes at night to cool things down. The main street is Independencia which is about 25 blocks long and lined with shops of all kind, most shaded with makeshift canopies. There is no central market here, nor a market day. Most of the goods offered are of the manufactured kind and there is very little in the way of handicrafts. There is some light industry including a huge Corona beer brewery.

The Zocalo with its adjoining church and city hall is very pretty and well kept with lots of flowering plants. The surrounding agricultural area produces a huge bounty of pineapples, sugarcane, bananas and the famous and delicious Manila mango, prized all over México.

I returned to Oaxaca on a 2nd class bus of the Cuenca Line which takes about 7 hours, as opposed to the 1st class ADO bus which takes twice as long as it follows longer route via Tehuacan. The return trip was an experience to remember. The seats all filled up as did the aisles with standees, boxes, parrots and mangos. The Tuxtepec side of the mountains are lush and green with occasional waterfalls and lots of tree ferns. The top of the mountains are cool and foggy with frequent rain. Descending into the Oaxaca valley the vegetation changes from

## TRAVEL INFO

### TRANSPORTATION:

The Cuenca Line bus leaves from the 1st class bus station, as does the A.D.O. line. One way fare is 7,000 pesos on Cuenca and about double that on A.D.O. Check for schedules as there are several departures daily.

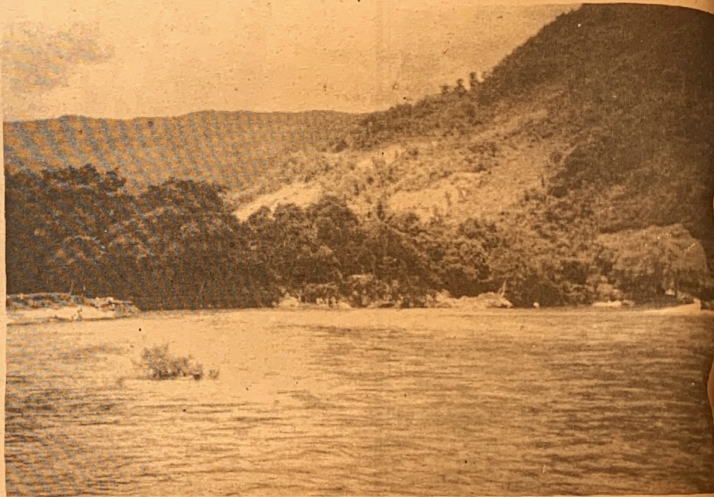
tropical to thick pine forests, all very beautiful. This two lane road is not popular with motorists due to it's twisting curves and altitude and there is hardly any traffic. The whole area is very sparsely populated and towns are few. It was an interesting trip, especially because of the spectacular scenery and the dramatic climate changes.

## HOTELS:

Hotel Tuxtepec - 24,000 pesos daily, single. The hotels El Rancho and Hacienda are big, and modern with pools and discoteque but are on the outskirts of town and popular with travellers and usually full.

## RESTAURANTS:

The restaurant is the Hotel Tuxtepec is semi-airconditioned with a varied menu. Restaurant La Casona, Av. 5 de Mayo #450, is charming old colonial house with an excellent comida at about 11,000 pesos and a good a la carte menu. Very professional service. Not airconditioned. The Manhattan Restaurant & Grill is fully air conditioned and located on Independencia ST. A la Carté menu only. View of river.



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# True artisans

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For more than 50 years the Velasco Family has been doing just this. In the late 40's and 50's they made mostly charcoal braziers and other functional everyday utensils out of soldered tin. Then slowly they began experimenting with paint and copper and brass and today they produce, all by hand, a varied line of delicate, handcrafted gift items.

Beautifully framed mirrors of sizes, picture frames, wall sculptures, shadow boxes, framed virgins, Christmas ornaments and even earrings

are all produced by the family, from Grandmother down to Granddaughter. Some of the larger framed mirrors take 3 weeks of continual work to complete and sell for \$US 80-100. The Christmas ornaments include figures of angels, snowflakes, stars, bells, clowns, tiny mirrors, animals, fruits and birds, etc. All the designs are original and everything is handpainted a long tedious process. The ornaments sell for under US\$0.50 each. The Velasco Family have won many prizes in exhibits in México and in collective shows in the U.S. and Great Britain. Some of their products are for sale at Productos Tipicos de Oaxaca, or stop by their house/workshop at 312 Heroes de Chapultepec. Custom work and special orders are also gladly accepted.



## MOVIES

There are 8 or 9 movie houses in Oaxaca, mostly in the downtown area. The films shown are usually American, or Mexican with an occasional Spanish, English or French feature. Most all of the American films are shown with sub-titles (as opposed to being dubbed into Spanish as are most U.S. T.V. shows). You will see a lot of American films featuring unknown stars which are so bad they have never been released in the U.S. All theatres change the same price; 2,000.00 pesos, which is extremely inexpensive. Films change every few days & some houses have double features.

## POSADA LOS REYES

The new luxury Posada Los Reyes situated in a historic neighborhood of Oaxaca, is just blocks from the Zocalo with all it's charm. It offers you tastefully decorated rooms that can be reserved on a daily,

weekly, bi-monthly or monthly basis. There is a substantial saving on the long term. Morelos #101, Esq. Callejon de los Reyes, C.P. 68000 Centro, Oaxaca, Oax. Reservations: 6-04-81 6-56-68

## WEATHER

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IN SEPTEMBER: 70.20°; OCTOBER: 68.58°, NOVEMBER: 67.68°, DECEMBER: 65.70°, (° FAHRENHEIT)  
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# LET'S EAT

The Ni-Hao, the only Chinese restaurant in Oaxaca, is in a charming house set back from the street.

The peach colored walls are trimmed in black and the chairs are black lacquered bamboo. Oriental paintings, figurines and lamps add to the decor. Now the food. Perhaps because it's the only Chinese restaurant, there is nothing to compare it to, locally. By Oaxacan standards the prices are high, both for food and drink. For example; sweet and sour redsnapper costs 25,000 pesos, 5-spice chicken is 28,000. A gin & tonic is 4,500 pesos.

The menu is quite ambitious with set combination dishes at 11-18,000 pesos, soups, chowmeins, seafood, meat

dishes, etc., and special advance order items such as Peking duck at 65,000 pesos. The egg rolls are unusually small and the predominant flavor is that of cabbage. A bottle of thin soy sauce is on each table and flour tortillas are served with many of the orders. All the items. I have sampled were well prepared and tasty, if not inspired. I would have to describe the food as Chinese a la Mexicana. It's worth a visit if you crave something out of the ordinary.

NI-HAO

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