



Free

Oaxaca Times

Oaxaca's English Tourist Newspaper

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JULY 1990

GUELAGUETZA

THE LARGEST FOLKLORE DISPLAY IN THE AMERICAS



The Danza de la Pluma, which is performed several times a year in Teotitlan del Valle, is often simplified and uses only a few plumed dancers. When done in its entirety, it is a complicated dance-drama two or three hours long recounting the conquest of Mexico. The fifteen to twenty plumed dancers, of course, represent Moctezuma and his men. Small boys dressed in hideous blue uniforms and caps play the parts of the Spanish soldiers. Only Hernan Cortés and Pedro de Alvarado are permitted to wear fine plumed hats. One child represents Malinche, the Indian interpreter who helped Cortés. The dancing, interspersed with passages of narrative, depicts the arrival of Cortés, the alerting of Moctezuma and his men, several fierce battles, and the eventual submission of the Indians to the Cross.



From the beginning and up to our days, the people of Oaxaca assist every year to the majestic Guelagueta Auditorium at the Fortin Hill to admire the magic art and sensibility of the many representatives of our ethnic groups coming from the seven regions in which the state is divided: La Mixteca, La Cañada La Sierra, El Papaloápan, El Istmo, La Costa y los Valles Centrales; they offer in a festive way their music and songs, the beauty and colorful design of their vestments, the gallantry of their dances and the harmony of their ensemble well known as the Guelagueta, the biggest folklore display in America.

Since ancient times a fiesta of fantastic beauty has taken place on a hillside just outside the city of Oaxaca in southern Mexico. Originally its purpose was to sacrifice a beautiful maiden to one of the gods. People came from all over bearing gifts of flowers, fruits, silks, and embroidery, and groups of dancers performed graceful gyrations before the bloody altar. The ceremony was called Guelagueta, which in the Zapotecan language means an offering or gift. The Spanish priests permitted and encouraged the Guelagueta, forbidding only the human sacrifice, and the gifts and dances metamorphosed into acts of gratitude to the true God.

Today the ceremony, which is called Lunes del Cerro (Monday on the Hill), begins on the Monday after the day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

(July 16) and lasts for a week. Groups of dancers in breathtaking costumes come from nearly every village in the state of Oaxaca bearing gifts typical of the products and handicrafts of the region. Dancers from Huautla are distinguished by their beautifully embroidered blouses; those from along the coast sport blouses flashing with beadwork. Women from Yalalag are striking in full dresses of woven white wool with towering black turbans made from their own hair twined with black yarn. Tehuanas from Tehuantepec glide about in their exotic and unusual costumes. The most popular of all the dancers who perform during the week, however, are the Plume Dancers from Teotitlan del Valle in their monstrous feather headdresses dyed all colors of the rainbow and decorated with mirrors, colored stones, and tinsel.

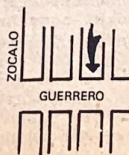
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TAKING THE SHOCK OUT OF CULTURE



"The goal of every journey..." once said the renowned explorer, Sir Richard Francis Burton, "is to experience oneself in new surroundings". The goal is not easy. Stepping off a plane or a ship, crossing a border, we collide head on with a way of life we are naturally inclined to suspect, for we have carried with us not only our passports and luggage, but a lot of cultural baggage as well. The normal reaction is to cling to what we know. Tourists play it safe by seeking out familiars like the language, customs, and comforts of their mother country. This kind of regressing black sheep; making him mistrusting and over judgemental, comparative and icky. He can become his own worst enemy if he wishes to gain any true sentiments and perspectives of the land he visits. In the journey vicissitudes every traveller is confronted by the same, introspective choice: withdraw or merge. The latter offers deep opportunity for education and enlightenment, but how is it best achieved?

To begin with, the traveller must recognize the cultural differences for what they are --- only differences. Things strange and unfamiliar can be misinterpreted as being inferior, a mistake may tourists make which only works against them. The traveller may remain too aloof to appreciate the intricacies of how the culture works as a whole, finding ah he ravel on only more shocking differences. When the unfamiliar threarences to throw us back we must stand our ground and not pass judgement. Instead, we must look inside and question

our own beliefs. That which we do not understand may make perfect sense to those who are accustomed. Laying side our judgements is the hardest step to take, but once taken the real opportunity begins-- the chance to interact on a new level, up close.

At this point there come to mind one of the oldest and perhaps most useful cliches. It begins, "When in Rome..." We all know the rest. By putting the old saying into action the traveller gains access to a world of learning and enjoyment previously unavailable to him in his homeland. Only by behaving like a member of the country he visits can the tourist hope to achieve an intimate and personal understand of its ways. Any business person who has travelled can appreciate this practice. In social situations as well as commercial ones it is essential that the traveller react as any native would. The self-discovery comes when the traveller is able

to unite his own philosophy and personality with the new culture, correctly expressing them through words and actions acceptable to the host country. Interact with the people. Sense and appreciate their pride when speaking about their country. Thoughtfully listen to their beliefs and when you find yourself in disagreement try to understand their point of view, the most wonderful feeling any traveller can experience away from home is the feeling of actually being at home, being naturally accepted.

The curious traveller, like a child, can learn a lot in a short time by constantly testing and observing his environment. Forgetting negative predispositions and inherent judgements we gain the possibility of new understanding and experience. By discarding all those doubtful feelings we have when out of our elements we can find

our own truth; and also the truth that all countries and cultures are linked together, in the one, transcending design of human nature and expression no matter how award the unions may sometimes be. This knowledge is the most valuable token of the journey we can bring back home.

BY JASON KERSTEN

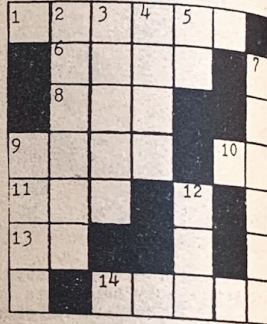
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HORIZONTALES:

1. To speak
6. To fall
8. He may use (subj.)
9. To roast
10. To go
11. To give
13. To go
14. To open

VERTICALES:

2. To accuse
3. To base
4. To read
5. Infinitive ending
7. To enclose
9. To inherit
12. To hear

HORIZONTALES:
1.- HABLAR
2.- ACUSAR
3.- BASEAR
4.- LEER
5.- AR
6.- CAER
7.- CERRAR
8.- USAR
9.- ASAR
10.- IR
11.- DAR
13.- IR
14.- ABRIR

VERTICALES:
2.- OIR
3.- HEREDAR
4.- AR
5.- AR
6.- AR
7.- CERRAR
8.- LEER
9.- BASEAR
10.- IR
11.- DAR
12.- OIR
13.- IR
14.- ABRIR

CULTURAL EVENTS

- 6-21 Art Show (Black pottery) Centro Cultural, Corner Cliza, Madero and Ave. Tecnológico.
- 10 Art show (Sculptures Black clay) by Carlo Magno Centro Cultural
- 12 Concert by The Primavera Orchestra. 7 pm. Lions Club.
- 13-14 Latin American Music by "Canto Nuevo" 8:00 pm. Centro Cultural "Ricardo Flores Magon" 302 Alcalá ST.
- 15 Cultural Events at the Villa of Etla, 15 minutes from the City at 5pm.
- 15 Guelaguetza. Oaxacan folk Dances at 7 pm. 302 Alcalá Street.
- 17-31 Arts & Crafts show from the following ethnic groups: istmo, mixes, zoques, zapotecas, chontales y huaves. 302 Alcalá St. 9-2 & 4-8 pm.
- 20 Traditional Mexican Music. ancient songs "Dueto Quetzalli"
- 21 CALENDIA (parade) with all the ethnic groups from the state. Start at 6 pm. at Garcia Vigil #602
- 23 FIRST MONDAY OF THE HILL. 10 am. at the fortin auditorium. Entrance \$90,000. (32 U.S.) Seccion A \$60,000. (22 U.S) Seccion B
- 23 Romantic Music. "NOSTALGIA RONDALLA" 8 pm. Alcalá 302 \$5000.00.
- 24 Cultural Activities.- 7 pm. in front of the Cathedral church.
- 24-25 Play.- Faces & Hearts.- Teatro fluido group. 8 pm. Alcalá 302 \$10,000.00 Gen. Ent.
- 24 V BIENAL RUFINO TAMAYO.- with the presence of the world famous oaxacan artist Rufino Tamayo 8 pm. At the "museo de oaxaca" on Alcalá St.
- 25 Cultural Activities. with ethnic groups. in front of the cathedral Church. 5 p.m.
- 27 Cultural activities. EJUTLA.- Same place & hour as above.
- 27-28 Oaxacan Songs Silvia Maria. 8p.m. 302 Alcalá Street.
- 29 Special Concert- Mexican Waltzes- Santa Cecilia Band 12 Noon Zocalo.
- 30 The "ISTMUS FLOWER"- Cultural activities. 302 Alcalá St.
- 30 GUELAGUETZA II at the Fortin Hill. 10 am.

HOW MUCH FOR TAXI?

WHERE ARE THEY?

As a ballpark figure, a trip by taxi of 10-12 blocks should cost 5,000.00 -8,000.00 pesos. You can hire a taxi to take you to Yagul, Mitla, or the village markets for a flat hourly rate of 25,000.00 pesos (9 U.S.) per hour which is quite reasonable. Always set a price before getting into a taxi. Simply ask "Cuanto a" (kwan-toe ah) then name your destination. Even the Mexicans set a fare before getting in and skip a driver who asks too much. Taxi drivers don't expect tips but 1000 pesos may be offered for a courteous driver. They seldom have change so make sure you have some small pesos notes before boarding.

The major taxi stand in the Centro area is on the northwest side of the cathedral. Elsewhere, to get a taxi, stand on the shoulder of the street with your arm outstretched when you see one coming and wave your open palm up and down like you are waving good-bye. Often, an available taxi will have its roof light flashing. If you have any trouble with a taxi driver, be sure to get his license number and report the incident to the Tourism Office.

Bienvenidos amigos

Welcome, reader, to the OAXACA, TIMES.

Oaxaca, is a beautiful, clean, colonial city with friendly people and a nearly perfect climate. OAXACA TIMES aims to provide you, the English-speaking visitor, with valuable information which will enhance and enrich your stay. Write, call (6-34-43), or come by our office (Guerrero 311) with your tips and recommendations about Oaxaca. Our office is 2 1/2 blocks east of the Zocalo at the Institute of Communication and culture, A.C. Come by and get acquainted. But, above all, enjoy our beautiful Oaxaca.

Yolanda Garcia C.
Publisher

LEARN SPANISH NOW!

To get maximum enjoyment out of your stay in México, you should learn Spanish. Forget any bad memories of high school language classes; it is easier and much more fun to learn a language in an environment where you have countless opportunities to practice it everyday. Plus, your efforts will be instantly rewarded.

Oaxaca offers many language schools. The Institute of Communication and Culture at Guerrero 311 is highly recommended for 2 1/2 blocks from the Zocalo. Private classes may be arranged to meet your time requirements. All instructors are university trained and have broad experience.

Yolanda Garcia C., Director and Founder of the Institute, lived in the U.S., and has been on the Faculty of Languages at the Benito Juarez University in Oaxaca for many years. Under her able direction, the Institute has expanded to offer English Tourism classes for Mexicans working in the industry and publication of Oaxaca Times to assist Oaxaca's visitors.

NIGHTLIFE

Whether you like disco, jazz, Mexican music, romantic ballads, or what-have-you, Oaxaca has something for you: LOS GUAJIROS: -303 Alcalá, open 7 p.m.- 1 a.m. nightly; 5,000 pesos cover during performances by Guajiro and Evelyn (Cuban/Romantic), Sunday and Monday, and by Cero en Conducta (salsa group), tuesday through Saturday.

TEATRO JUAN RULFO. 300 Independencia (corner of La Soledad), 8 p.m. show Saturday and Sunday featuring Canto Nuevo specializing in folkloric music of Latin America, 5,000.00 cover.

HOTEL MONTE ALBAN.- Alameda de Leon, right in front of the Cathedral, offers a Folkloric show every night 8:30-10 p.m. 8,000.00 cover charge.

RESTAURANT REGIO DE OAXACA.- corner of E. Carranza and Palmeras in Colonia Reforma, Lina Medina sings romantic music on Friday and Saturdays, 9-Midnight

KAPTANS.- Calzada Porfirio Diaz, in Hotel Mision de los Angeles, disco music nightly 9:30 p.m.-3 a.m. 15,000 cover charge.

YONKEE.- Jalisco 15 in Hotel San Felipe Mision, video disco, from 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Friday and Sat. Sunday 5-11 p.m. Disco with cover charge during weekend (15,000.00 pesos). Tue.- Thurs. video bar, no cover.

VICTORIA DISCO - Cerro del Fortin in Hotel Victoria, disco Mon. thru Sat. from 9:30 p.m. 15,000 cover charge and 20,000.00 pesos drink minimum.

PASHA.- Corner of Calzada Porfirio Diaz and Belisario Dominguez in Colonia Reforma, disco nightly from 9:30, 15,000.00 cover charge.

ECLIPSE.- Corner Porfirio Diaz street and Matamoros, disco nightly from 9:30 pm 25,000.00 pesos cover charge.

EL SOL Y LA LUNA.- Murguía 105, open 9-12 p.m. nightly. 5,000.00 cover during performance. Featuring folkloric music.

WEATHER

July and August is the raining season, which usually just means thunder showers in the late afternoon. (70s & 80s) visit us next autumn when its rains have turned the landscape as green as Ireland.

OAXACA IS MEXICO'S HANDICRAFT HAVEN

Oaxaca is considered to be Mexico's center for native handicrafts, owing to its large Indian population. Amazingly, prices in Oaxaca are often lower than in the villages where the goods are made. Zocalo vendors (see story on page 8) offer a sampling of goods, but shops and markets offer a wider selection.

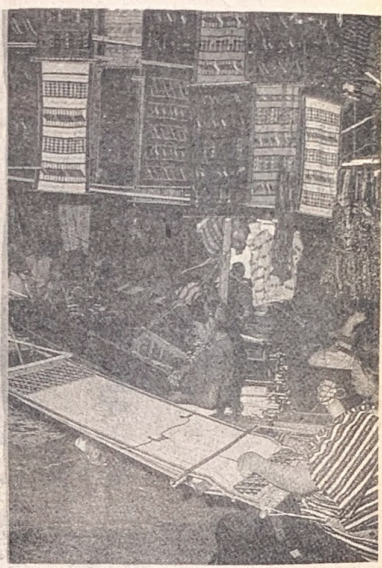
SHOPS.- You may pay higher prices here but you can often find collector-quality work plus have the advantages of using your credit cards and having your purchases packed and/or shipped. For many gringos, the major advantage of shopping at the shops will be the fixed prices. Bargaining can give ulcers to the untrained. But, whether you plan to make your purchases on the Zocalo, in the shops or in the market, take a look over the merchandise at the shops to get an idea of quality and price ranges. Here are some of the best shops in Oaxaca:

ARIPO.- Garcia Vigil 809 (Mon. thru Sat 9-1 & 4-7:30) and Sun. 9-1) Large selection of woven goods, Xmas ornaments, pottery, cutlery and colorful crafts.

YLALAG.- Alcala 104 (Mon. thru Sat. 9-1:30 & 4:30-6) Extensive collection of quality handicrafts attractively displayed in a colonial setting.

FONART.- M. Bravo 116 (Mon thru Sat. 9-2 & 4-7). Government owned shop with arts and crafts from throughout Mexico' pottery, woven goods, carvings, dishes and clothing.

CASA BRENA.- Pino Suarez 58 (Mon. thru Fri 9-2 & 4-7:30 and 8-4:30 On Sat.) Mainly a textile shop with some pottery and dishes. Low prices and high quality; opportunity to see weavers in action.



MARKETS.- The markets are more packed with goods and occasionally you'll find a real steal but it takes bargaining and a good eye. Here are the markets to check out:

BENITO JUAREZ MARKET.- Located just a block south of the Zocalo at the corner of F. Magon & Colon. You can find anything here. The selling price is usually 20-50% below the first asking price. Watch your wallet and valuables due to the crowded aisles but enjoy one of Mexico's most colorful, vibrant markets. Don't miss the shops along the outside too. Open daily from 9 to 8.

MERCADO DE ARTESANIAS.- Located two blocks south and two blocks west of the Juarez Market at the corner of Garcia and Zaragoza. Especially noted for rugs, sarapes, sweaters, and woven goods; see Indian women weaving on looms. Bargaining expected.

MERCADO DEL CARMEN ALTO.- Located on the left, half a block north of Santo Domingo Church between Alcala and Garcia Vigil. See Indians weaving and shop in colorful, outdoor market of clothing, rugs, woven purses, and sweaters. Open 10 to 6 except rainy days.

WHY THE I.C.C.?

The Institute of Communication and culture is staffed by an excellent group of dedicated faculty and staff. They are experienced professionals especially prepared to teach our innovative and dynamic language program. You will find no better conditions where you can absorb the Mexican Culture and the Spanish language more successfully than when you come and live with a Oaxacan family that has been carefully screened. The Institute starts a new course every monday year-round.



Application for Admission Date _____
(month day year)

Name _____ Permanent address _____
(family) (first) (middle) (city)

(state) (zip) (country) (telephone) Sex: Male () Female ()

Marital Status: Married () Single () Occupation _____

Date of birth _____ Native Language _____ Have you ever
studied Spanish? _____ How long? _____ Where _____

Present knowledge of Spanish: () none () po- () fair () good

When do you plan to begin? _____ How long do you plan to study? _____

How did you find out about C.L.S.? _____

Would you like to live with a Mexican family? _____ Please send a current snapshot

Please sign here _____