



# Oaxaca Times

Oaxaca's English Tourist Newspaper **FREE**

VOL. 3 No. 28

OAXACA, OAX

April 1991

## CHILDREN'S DAY

by YOLANDA GARCIA C.

Everyone has hard times at one time or another, but for some Mexican children childhood is especially difficult, yet for those in even worst poverty, Mexican life offers strengths that help them cope and survive.

In Mexico, 15 million children are extremely poor and 8 million of them work without any legal protection. You might have seen working children around the Zócalo and may have wondered many about them. Here in Mexico children can be kept out of school because there is no law that requires children to be in school.

We've talked to some of them to learn about their lives. First we interviewed an 8 year old girl who came from San Juan Copala (a Trique girl) who speaks her native language and very little Spanish. She is not attending school because she and her grandmother come to Oaxaca every two weeks to sell their hand made crafts from their home town. She told us: "When we are here in Oaxaca my grandmother goes to the crafts market and I sell my products around the Zócalo. My grandmother does not speak Spanish so I help her to move around".



Fotografía by Basilio Pérez Independencia 508

A little child from Monte Alban that is also living with his grandmother told us: "My grandmother washed clothes for different people, I sell chiclets and when I get hungry I go to the market for a taco, but I don't usually get hungry. I drink alot of water and chew gum and at night if I feel hungry I eat beans with my grandmother. I don't have any other relatives."

A 9 year old girl from Santo Tomas Jalietza said: "I speak Zapotec and I live in Oaxaca with my parents. They don't have any money. We are 4 children and I am the oldest. One sells chiclets, another sells Onix figures (Onyx is a semiprecious variety of quartz with layers of different colors and shades. Its used by the

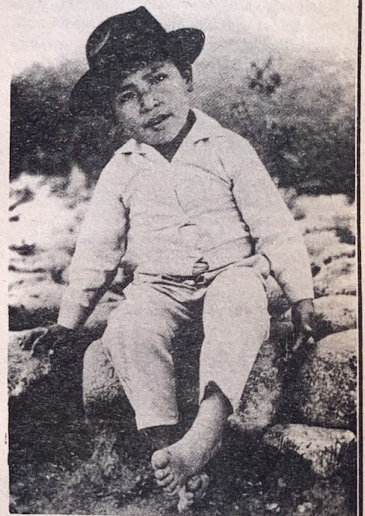
Oaxacan artesans to make ashtrays, desk ornaments, etc.). The youngest of all sells bracelets from Jalietza. I'm attending the school of San Felipe, but I'm not doing so well because I sell flowers in the Zócalo at night until 11 p.m, and when I'm at school I fall asleep. I eat in the market, my mother washes clothes and my father is a mason."

The stories these children tell gives us some idea how they survive on the street, but don't tell us how they are sometimes able to keep smiling. For that we have to understand the values of the ethnic communities from which they come. In the Mixe language the advice, warnings, scoldings and other lectures that adults impart to their children is known as Ayuuk jinma'añ which in English means "the way life must be understood". The informal teaching of the Ayuuk Jinma'añ play a significant role in boys and girls formation.



Giving a piece of advice to the young.

In the Mexican society a respect for one's family, the elderly and generally people older than oneself, plays a significant role in molding of children. One of the warnings to the Aztec children was: "Live cautiously and put yourself in the hands of the God who created you because he is your father who loves



Fotograph by Joel Zárate Machuca Fiallo 505-A

you...love and honor everyone and you should live in peace and happiness. Do not follow the wild fools who neither obey their father nor respect their mother but, like animals, stray from the straight path...Do not enter or exit before your elders; whether sitting or standing, wherever they are, always give them priority."

April 30th is children's day in Mexico. The Oaxaca Times congratulates all the children of the world wishing them a better future and lots of respect from us adults to their right to be heard, understood and loved.

We also respect

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4 BLOCKS FROM ZOCALO

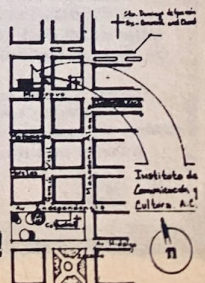
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# OAXACA A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

By: Edward and Diana Opton

We came to visit Oaxaca for a month. Because there is so much that the tourist may want to see in the city and in the surrounding areas and small towns, it may have seemed like a stange commitment to devote our mornings to the study of the Spanish Language. Yet, it was a good decision.

It was mainly the need to understand and to be able to communicate with others that impelled us to take the plunge and enroll in the ICC program.

The day flew by - each three hour session spent in learning and applying some grammar, in practical conversation about ourselves and people in the area, and some discussions about the history and customs of Mexico and Oaxaca in particular.

Mostly in Spanish, por supuesto. It wasn't easy, it was a challenge but with help from teachers we gradually began to understand our surroundings. It was not culture shock - more like slipping in to another world that in human terms was not profoundly different from our own.

By preference, we did not travel much, wanting to stay in the city of Oaxaca and to live as residents in this interesting and charming place. We rented an apartment and became involved with the daily routine of shopping, cooking, exploring the neighborhood etc. Oaxaca referred to wistfully by people who have been here, as the "City of flowers" has been a pleasure to live in. Walking in the city, we have met many friendly people who were either helpful to us with our poor language skills or were glad

to try their own knowledge of English on us! there seems to be a basic courtesy that Oaxaqueños have in common with each other. It is sociable city that has its own private life independent of the tourism that is a main source of income.

Even la policia and security guards with wives would smile a buenos dias and would seem glad to give directions or information. We were obviously foreigners but felt very comfortable in Oaxaca.

The mercado is "Something else" with a distinct socio-economic style. After a while we became familiar with its general layout, and here too we developed relationships with individual dealers. Still, it is a "buyer beware" place and it is fun to try to get the better of a seller who is sure to get the better of us. How different from the impersonal supermarkets we are familiar with at home.

We really enjoyed the weeks in Oaxaca. We've learned some spanish to get along. We would like to return to refresh our language skills and renew the relationships that we have already developed.



## "OAXAQUEN DAYS"

If you are looking for a small paradise, where the air is clear, the climate is perfect, the food delicious, and the faces of the children a delight, then Oaxaca is the place. Here in this southern Mexican city, life is peaceful and agreeable, a respite to the soul and a hiatus from the rush and pressure of material pursuits of large, commercialized cities.

I love to look at the children of Oaxaca - their beautiful innocent faces with large, dark eyes, their delightful expressions for the simplest pleasures - an ice cream, a small toy, or even a shoeshine to make their shoes brilliant. The children of Oaxaca are a parent's most precious possession. No matter that a family is of the poor working class, the children are nicely dressed and well groomed, and all the little girls wear small earrings if not some other piece of little jewelry. The older children

walk in groups of three or four around the Zócalo where at evening time the soft and pleasant sounds of strolling musicians drift out over the plaza with its trees and white park benches.

Here you will see country women suckling their small babies without any sense of shame and looking down into their little faces with an expression of deep contentment and delight in their role as mothers. Life is much simpler here in Oaxaca. Patience and contentment with life are evident. Of course, while sitting here on a park bench reading or observing, your tranquility might be momentarily interrupted by the errant droppings from a pigeon high up in a tree or the ledge of a building overlooking a sidewalk cafe. There is a price for everything, it seems.

But the parade of little faces of the little people (the children) and of the pretty young girls is what gives one the most pleasure. Once I saw a little boy of five or six getting his shoes shined. He looked so happy and proud while he sat there sipping from his clear plastic bag of cherry flavored drink. Another time I saw a little girl of the same age getting her shoes shined, too, and with the same look of pleasure on her face. And another time I saw a teen-age girl getting her shoes shined while she laughed and joked with her girl friend standing next to her and the shoeshine man. These are the simple pleasures of my

Oaxaca's Only tourist publication published monthly as cultural extension of  
**INSTITUTO DE COMUNICACION Y CULTURA A. C.**  
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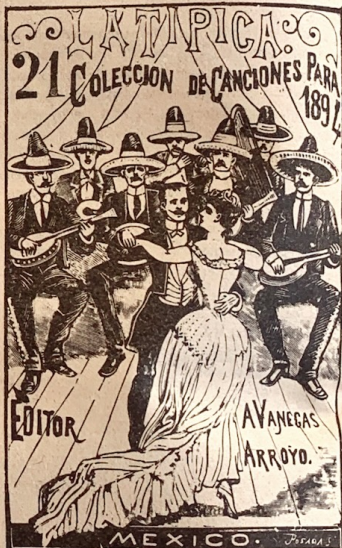
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A huge celebration in honor of one of the most talented Mexican Graphic Artists JOSE GUADALUPE POSADA will be given by the I.G.A. and for such a special event, more than 30 Mexican artist will get together the 12th of April at 7-p.m. at 507 Alcalá Street.

More than 300 master pieces of Posada will be exhibit at the I.G.A. from the 12 of April until June.

The residents and visitors of our city are having the opportunity to enjoy such a fine exhibition of Art in which you can admire from illustrations of different literature to its world famous skulls.



José Guadalupe Posada. La típica, portada con grabado a buril en plomo.

Oaxaca days. The handsome faces of the young people with their thick black hair, their quiet conversations, their soft laughter amidst the soft climate. These are the things that bring a person back to Oaxaca again and again. Before leaving, I am already wishing I could stay longer and I am thinking about my next trip when I can resume these simple pleasures.

Enjoy  
**Coca-Cola**

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# OAXACA A WALKERS WONDERLAND

# TAMAYO'S GIFT TO OAXACA

by: Judith Morgan

At first there was only the snap of cloth from a shoeshine boy working on black leather boots in the plaza of Oaxaca. His customer had taken a seat with a smile and a nod, before opening a newspaper and disappearing behind it.

Then Mexican schoolchildren - spiffy in blue-and-white uniforms - began to stream around a corner of the cathedral, chattering like small birds. Vendors of silvery balloons and woven rugs and serapes drifted out from the shadows of Spanish colonial archways. In a sing-song they offered their wares.

It was another quiet morning in this historic town, only a 45-minute flight south and east of Mexico City.

I had arrived before 7 a.m., catching the earliest jet from the capital. After settling into a 16th century convent that is now the Hotel El Presidente, I set out to explore the neighborhood. It was my first visit.

Oaxaca is a walker's dream. Narrow streets are squared off in a simple grid, and the opulent churches, distinctive museums and lively Indian markets are all within easy reach. A cobbled crossroad called Macedonio Alcalá has become a pedestrian mall, strewn with sculptures of the pale green native stone.

My first destination on that springlike December morning was the central plaza, or zócalo. I wanted to wake up with the city.

More shoeshine boys arrived to set up shop. Two nuns perched on a white wrought-iron park bench and traded parcels of books.

I stared at the giant umbrellas of laurel trees, heavy with glossy green leaves, and the shimmering purple lace of jacarandas. Crews with push brooms began sweeping up fallen blossoms and crumpled candy wrappers. One of the workmen hummed the folk tune "La Paloma," another was whistling the "Ode to Joy" from Beethoven's Ninth.

Music is a constant in Oaxaca, as ever-present as the soft breeze that fans the mountain-ringed valley. Guitars play in cafes and churches. Each evening the zócalo rings with band concerts or marimbas.

As I sat near a plaza fountain, my foot was suddenly bumped by a rubber ball. I picked it up and looked into the wide, dark eyes of a toddler with outstretched arms. She had been chasing the ball, but now seemed too shy to reclaim it.

"Buenos Días," I said, and rolled it toward her. "Gracias," called her mother.

For five days in Oaxaca I felt wrapped in such kindness, gently welcomed to an unhurried world where there was time to get along.

When I paused on a corner, scanning a map for the location of the Rufino Tamayo museum, an Indian woman appeared at my elbow. "Tamayo?" she asked. "Si," I replied. She smiled and pointed the way. It was within a block, but set back around a courtyard of scarlet roses.

When I stepped into a small grocery to buy a Coke, the gray haired proprietress counted out the change and urged me to come back and try her specialty: fresh squeezed orange juice.

On the streets of Oaxaca, hawkers will tell you "No" for an answer. I reluctantly turned down handsome - but very large - baskets, as well as waist-high pottery of the region's famed unglazed black pottery. There was no plea nor haggle.

I did not turn down food. The cuisine of Oaxaca is earthy - a mix of Spanish and Indian tastes.

Tamales are wrapped in banana leaves. Chicken is served in a lusty mole sauce, a blend of roast chili peppers, dark chocolate, cinnamon and garlic. For breakfast I had the tortilla-and-cheese concoction called chilaquiles, and cooled it with sliced papaya and mango.

I had gone to Oaxaca because I was curious about its ancient archaeological ruins, its villages of craftsmen, its historic colonial heart.

I found all that and more. In Oaxaca, I found Mexico.

Very soon, in our city of Oaxaca, a rest home for senior citizens called "Los Tamayo" will be inaugurated. This rest home was donated by the famous Oaxacan painter Rufino Tamayo and his wife Olga and constructed on an irregular but beautifully flowered piece of land by the architect Abraham Zabłudowsky.

The Tamayos have donated to Mexico the International Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Prehispanic Art here in Oaxaca, the "Casa Hogar" Olga Tamayo in Cuernavaca and now this place of rest for the folks of the third age here in their native city.

This work of art of Abraham Zabłudowsky has extraordinary originality, rising in various levels and striking in its beauty and functionalism.

Here in Oaxaca, always known for its own native character of architecture, this home was planned to accommodate 60 persons in 30 rooms of double-occupancy. The plan has come to fruition thanks to a foundation financed by the painter Rufino Tamayo and his wife Olga.

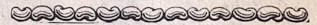
The edifice occupies an irregular piece of land in a flowered section of the city, with a wide view of the surroundings and of the city.

The unit is organized basically in two sections. In the first, surrounding the patio, are located the social areas and the administration and services. In the second is found the bedroom area, divided into two wings of 15 rooms each, which opens to gardens through a semi-private terrace. The two sections of the building communicate by covered walkways.

The characteristics of local architecture were respected by planning a building not too high, utilizing predominantly rock from this section of the country, with concrete in some parts.

The Oaxaqueños again truly appreciate the Tamayo's gift to our needy elderly people. Finally they are going to enjoy their final years with the love and care that they deserve.

Thank you Olga & Rufino.



average monthly temperature chart (° Fahrenheit)

Cities	Apr.	May	Jun	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Acapulco	82.08	83.52	83.52	83.52	84.42	82.62	82.98	82.08	80.82
Cancun	82.08	83.34	84.21	84.60	84.96	84.24	82.26	80.10	78.48
Carayes	82.44	82.44	84.24	84.24	84.24	83.34	80.64	78.84	77.94
Coahuila	77.64	78.02	79.62	77.44	77.44	77.09	77.94	75.96	72.90
Cuernavaca	74.34	74.16	72.12	70.20	70.56	68.40	68.60	68.76	66.60
Guadaluajara	70.74	73.08	72.54	68.76	68.94	68.40	66.60	63.54	58.94
Mazatlan	72.18	76.50	81.54	82.80	83.16	82.44	81.18	76.14	71.10
Merida	81.18	82.44	81.90	81.00	81.72	78.66	78.66	76.14	73.80
Mexico, D.F.	69.26	63.72	63.36	60.66	61.38	60.12	59.04	57.42	54.72
Monterrey	74.70	79.02	82.62	83.16	82.98	78.66	72.36	63.90	60.12
Oaxaca	74.34	74.52	72.18	71.22	71.10	70.20	68.58	67.68	65.70
Puebla	66.96	66.60	65.34	63.36	64.80	63.00	62.46	60.84	57.96
Puerto Vallarta	75.24	78.84	84.24	82.44	86.04	85.14	86.04	82.44	77.94
Taxco	77.04	74.70	73.08	69.12	68.94	68.94	68.94	68.76	68.04
Tehuacan	63.52	64.96	62.62	64.72	65.32	63.16	62.60	62.08	59.74
Villahermosa	83.16	84.74	85.12	82.98	83.88	83.34	81.00	79.56	75.24
Veracruz	78.48	82.08	82.62	82.62	82.80	81.90	80.10	76.14	73.44

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