



Oaxaca Times

Oaxaca's English Tourist Newspaper **FREE**

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OAXACA OAXACA

January-February 1992

Oaxaca Beaches

Wild, open beaches and dreamy bays sprinkle the coast all the way down to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the narrowest part of mainland Mexico.

Puerto Escondido, once a sleepy fishing village, then hippie hangout, is now becoming a slick tropical resort. There's been a large increase in the number and quality of hotels and restaurants. The beaches and coves are as gorgeous as ever.

True escapists have fled that scene for the endless siesta at Puerto Ángel, just 50 miles east. Another fishing village, Puerto Ángel lounges on a pretty bay. Long stretches of pristine beach are within walking distance.

About 30 miles away lies Santa Cruz Huatulco, focal point of the new Bahías de Huatulco tourist resort area, which includes nine adjoining bays and 20 unspoiled covers. An airport, road system, modern village with marina, several luxury hotels and 600-room Club Med are now in service.

Big industrial Salina Cruz, about 85 miles east of Huatulco, is a booming port rimmed in craggy, desolate hills. Windy dunes stack up along some beautiful, seldom-visited beaches west of town.

TRANSPORTATION

BY CAR: The road, Mexico 200, follows the southwest coast from Acapulco all the way south to Tapachula. It connects all the towns listed above, some via paved side roads.

BY AIR: Three commercial airports serve the area. Puerto Escondido Airport, Salina Cruz Airport and Tapachula Airport.

BY BUS: Bus lines connect all major towns along the coast and offer frequent daily departures. Some of the bigger companies include: Estrella del Valle, Oaxaca Pacífico and Ómnibus Cristóbal Colón. Stations and information numbers are as follows:

Puerto Escondido: Terminal Estrella del Valle/Oaxaca Pacífico (Avenida Miguel Hidalgo; Tel. 2-00-50).

Pochutla (near Puerto Ángel): Estrella del Valle/Oaxaca Pacífico/Líneas Unidas (Avenida Lázaro Cárdenas; Tel. 4-01-38).

Salina Cruz: Ómnibus Cristóbal Colón (Avenida Cinco de Mayo #412; Tel. 4-00-49).

BY TRAIN: Passenger trains pass through Salina Cruz and Tapachula.

In Salina Cruz, the Ferrocarril Trans-Istmo (Avenida Ávila Camacho and Calle Tuxpan; Tel. 4-09-68) carries people aboard second-class cars across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to and from Coatzacoalcos.

Puerto Escondido Beaches:

PLAYA BACOCOHO

At the northwestern end of Puerto Escondido, this long beautiful beach sweeps west for miles along the open sea. Its silent white sands weave among eroded, primal rock formations, with one cove-like area sequestered between vegetated hills. Scattered driftwood, roaring surf and tree-covered cliffs give this beach a wild air.

Facilities: Beach club with pool; bathrooms; restaurant.



Swimming: Not recommended. Rough waves and undertow.

Fishing/boating: Check at municipal beach for skiff tours and fishing boat rentals.

Getting there: Take Mexico 200 northwest toward the airport and follow signs for the Restaurante La Sardina de Plata. Proceed through a new *fraccionamiento* (neighborhood) to a road that winds down to the restaurant, beach club and beach.

PLAYA ANGELITO

This popular, crystalline inlet almost lives up to its "port" title on those afternoons when the tourist boats come bobbing in from the main strand. Here, the beach consists of a series of little coves shaped by crescents of rocks - all lovely snippets of sand lapped by calm, bright waves. The main cove often brims with splashing children, families picnicking under the shade trees and snorkelers snooping offshore among the rocks.

Facilities: Restaurant with bathrooms.

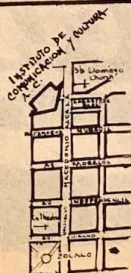
Swimming: Excellent, bathtub-calm, perfect for kids.

Snorkeling: Very good, with fine visibility. Good oyster diving off southeastern rocks.

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Oaxaca...

From page 1

Fishing/boating: Tour boats come and go all day from Playa Principal, where fishing boats are for rent.

Getting there: Take Mexico 200 northwest of town about half a mile to Calle Miguel Hidalgo at the old airport, turn left and continue to the billboard, turn left again and continue down the dirt road to the beach. It's about a 15-minute walk from town.

PLAYA PRINCIPAL

This lovely palm-fringed beach, the center of village action, runs parallel to the town's main drag and wraps itself around a calm blue bay. To the northwest a lighthouse balances on a point, around which the beach continues to smaller coves. To the southeast, the beach rolls past a brackish lagoon to wilder shores. Vendors, beachcombers and surfers shuffle through the sands, and skiffs line the shore.

Facilities: Restaurants, groceries.

Swimming: Lovely, calm with nice waves.

Snorkeling: Try around rocks near Playa Marinero.

Fishing/boating: Skiffs for rent.

Getting there: Located off Avenida Alfonso Pérez Gasga in Puerto Escondido.

PLAYA MARINERO

A continuation of Playa Principal, this ample white beach begins just southeast of the lagoon. Treeless, broad and less heavily trafficked, it begs you to sunbathe on it. The surf picks up around a clump of rocks, gaining momentum beyond the hefty point that marks the start of Playa Zicatela.



Facilities: Restaurants.
Swimming: Good, but watch for currents toward the southern end.

Snorkeling: Try around the rock formation (Punta Marinero).

Surfing: Kid's stuff here. **Getting there:** Walk from Playa Principal or off the east end of Avenida Alfonso Pérez Gasga.

PLAYA ZICATELA

Said to be one of the best surfing beaches in the world by devotees, this ten-mile shag carpet of sand disappears to the south along the open sea, pausing at a rocky point called Punta Zicatela. With so little out here besides boards and waves, the empty beach seems totally untouched. A sandy road traces some residential developments along the beach for a short distance, then faces, leaving just low dunes and big breakers.

Facilities: Restaurant.
Swimming: NO! Signs warn of the danger of riptides here.
Surfing: This is the kingdom come of West Coast beaches,
TO PAGE 4

known for its long, 20-foot beach breakers ("the Mexican Pipeline"), especially good in July, August and September.

Getting there: Take Mexico 200 just southeast of the center of town and turn right onto Calle del Morro. This dirt road leading to Hotel Santa Fé continues south along the beach. It's also a ten-minute walk southeast from Playa Principal.

Puerto Ángel Beaches:

PLAYA ZIPOLITE

A couple of miles west of town, this long white beach is the toast of offbeat travelers from all over the world. It slumbers in its innocence along the open sea, lined with sagging thatch-roofed restaurants and a crude guest house or two, backed by humble green hills and spotty palms. Toward the western end of the beach, a couple of peace-and-love restaurants bring back the 1960s.

Facilities: Restaurants; nearby picnic spot. Toilets.

Camping: Anywhere, except in front of the navy outpost at the eastern end.

Swimming: Not advised along the main stretch, which is slashed by rough surf. Try instead the coves or the sheltered areas at the west end of the beach near Casa Florida.

Surfing: Strong waves, wrong breaks - head west to Puerto Escondido.

Village market-days and specialties

MONDAY: Miahuatlan, Mezcal, bread and leather

WEDNESDAY: Etla, meat, cheese and flowers

THURSDAY: Zaachila, meat and nuts
Ejutla, Mezcal and embroidered blouses

FRIDAY: Ocotlan, flowers, vegetables and meat

SATURDAY: Oaxaca, the Mercado de Abastos largest of the markets

SUNDAY: Tlacolula, ceramics
Tlaxiaco, leather jackets, blankets and "aguas ardiente"

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Enjoy
Coca-Cola
 M.R.

CULTURAL EVENTS

- 19 Cultural activities-at noon-Labastida Garden.
 - 20 Speech- "how the wool blankets are made in Santa Ana del Valle"-7.p.m-Casa de la Cultura-Gonzalez Ortega # 403.
 - 21 Art exhibition-9pm.Same place as above.
 - 23 Speech-"The ethnic Zapotec group"-6pm-C.de la C.
 - 26 Cultural Activities-at noon-Labastida Garden.
 - 28 Theater-of the Casa de la cultura-Play about politics in Mexico-6pm-403 Gonzalez Ortega St.
 - Feb.2 Blessing of the Child Jesus in all the local churches of our city.
- permanent art exhibitions
I.C.C.307 Alcala St.2nd floor.
Graphic Arts Institute-507 Alcala St.

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, or come by our office with your tips and recommendations about Oaxaca. The Oaxaca Times' office is in the Institute de Comunicacion y Cultura, located 4 blocks north of the zocalo at M. Alcala #307- 12. Our telephone is 6-34-43, and our FAX number is 6-32-65. Come by and get acquainted. But, above all, enjoy our beautiful Oaxaca.

Yolanda Garcia C.
Publisher



FROM PAGE 2

PLAYA PANTEON

This pretty little beach luxuriates in the clear, calm waters of Bahía de Puerto Ángel, protected by a rocky bluff to the south and enlivened by friendly neighborhood seafood restaurants that march their tables and chairs out onto the buff-colored sand. To the east, an arroyo and a navy base separate Panteón from the main beach in town.

- Facilities: Restaurants.
- Camping: Much too public and cramped.
- Swimming: Delightful, but watch out for prickly sea urchins that roll up in the tide.
- Snorkeling: Good around southern rocks and the small offshore island.
- Fishing/boating: You can rent skiffs here or on the main beach next door to haul up snapper, bonito, grouper and mero.

PLAYA PRINCIPAL

Right in town, this lazy beach mosies along placid Bahía de Puerto Ángel with the dusty village rooftops rising behind it. A long cement pier pokes into the water, trimmed in colorful bobbing skiffs, which bake to bleached skeletons on the shore.

- Facilities: Restaurants.
- Camping: Not recommended.
- Swimming: A little greasy from boat traffic - better at Playa Panteón.
- Snorkeling: Better at Playa Panteón.
- Fishing/boating: Good off the pier. You can also rent skiffs on the beach.

Getting there: Right off main street in Puerto Ángel.

PLAYA DE ESTACAHUITE

This hidden cluster of beaches just southeast of town offers privacy and many extras; bejeweled waters, pebbly white sand and craggy rocks impervious to the pummeling of waves. The spot also has big, hungry horseflies that bite like tiger sharks and take the icing off an otherwise very nice cake. But once you're in the water, nothing will bother you.

- Facilities: Restaurants; palapa shelter.
- Camping: Not recommended.
- Swimming: Excellent - calm and perfect for kids.
- Snorkeling: Good, especially around the rocks.
- Fishing/boating: Better in town off the main beach.
- Getting there: Follow Mexico 175 out of town toward Pochutla for about a quarter of a mile to sign reading "Club de Playa." Turn right and descend the rocky road to the beach.

Do you need to exchange?
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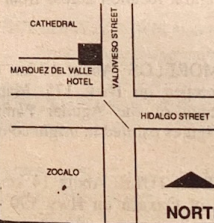


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CLOSED TUESDAY




helpful hints

 Money by wire: For sending and receiving money, telegrafos de Mexico works directly with Western Union of the United States location: Independencia ave. corner with 20 de Noviembre St. Transfers take one day, since they have to go through Mexico's International service known as Money Gramm. Adress: Valdivieso St. # 2.

 Taxes and tips: All services and products in Mexico include the IVA (ad valorem) tax. Tips to waiters for a good service are 15% percent of the bill. Check your bill to see if the tip has been included. Bellhops at the hotels and skycaps at the airport are generally tipped 1 to 3 dollars.


Change is usually given in pesos.


 24-hour Bank Machines: Visa and Mastercard Ave. Hidalgo # 821 or around the corner on the firts street of Armenta y Lopez.


Bancomer: their machine is located on Independencia Ave. 801 (Carnet cards only)


Banamex open from 9 to 1:30 and 4 to 6 pm. Dollar exch. 9-11:30 and 4-5 pm.


Most banks open only in the morning from 9-1. Dollar exchange from 9-11:30. Their service is slow so if you want to take advantage of your time go to any of the money exchange agencies that advertise with us.

 Speed limits: 60 kilometers or 37 miles in the school zone; 40 kilometers or 24 miles downtown; 90 kilometers or 55 miles on highways.

 Long distance: Dial 98 for international calls and 95 for the United States and Canada, then dial code and area. The number of 100-peso coins you will need will immediatly appear on the screen of the telephone. Then dial the complete number you wish to call. For collect calls dial 09.

 EVERY SUNDAY MASS IN ENGLISH AT 10:00 A.M. IN THE CATHEDRAL.

 Electric current: All personal appliances use 120 volts 60 cycle current.

 Most hotels have bottled or purified water, most restaurants serve purified water to their customers.

Tourist information: located at Cinco de Mayo and Morelos St.

Phone: 6-48-28

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS



To: the Oaxaca Times

Dear Yolanda,
 from the language school, says "Hi". We met her at El Presidente Hotel. She was gracious and fluent. Also, Luz Maria, out hostess, is very kind and generous. Her home is beautiful, quiet and elegant. The food she prepares is very delicious. Thank you so much for what you are doing.
 Mary Jo and Tom Tempas

THE LENT SEASON

Oaxaca is famous over Mexico for it's religious pagentry. Many of the events which occur here during the lenten season are unique to this area which takes pride in preserving it's heritage.

On Friday, March 6th, between 7-9:00a.m., university students from all over the city will converge on Benito Juarez Park, commonly known as "El Llano". The girls stroll (this is called a paseo) in groups around the large park and the boys bring flowers to give to the girls whom they consider the prettiest. This is the perfect time for flirtation. Finally after a competition, one of the girls is chosen and awarded the title of "Madrina de Viernes". This is repeated for seven consecutive Fridays. Various bands play during the festivities including the State Marimba Band.

The celebration of Samaritan Day is held on the fourth Friday, March 27, at 12 noon. This is in honor of "La Samaritana" who, according to the Bible, was able to give Jesus some water in defiance of the Roman guards. Alters decorated with bouganvilla and other flowers are erected at the front entrances to all churches and flavored waters (fruit drinks) are dispensed free of charge from huge earthenware jars to the public who arrive with their own containers.

Some of the flavors offered are: horchata (cinnamon and almond), chilacayota (pumpkin with brown sugar and lemon rind), tamarind, melon, pineapple, jamaica (a dried flower), etc. The same afternoon dances are held at schools and government offices with marimba music for dancing.

On the seventh Friday, April 17, at 7a.m. another peso is held in the Alameda (like the earlier ones held at El Llano) and it's worth a visit to go to the nearby Juarez Market to try the tamales made with vegetables.

At the beginning of Holy Week all churches will have daily religious services. Check the Oaxaca Times for special ceremonies.

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