



Oaxaca Times

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FREE

Children's Day

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...

Every one has hard times at one time or another, but for some Mexican children childhood is especially difficult, yet for those in even worse 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 Zocalo 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



PICTURE BY MALERIE LANE

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 Zocalo. My grandmother does not speak Spanish so I help her to move around"

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 a lot of water 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 Zapo-

tec 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 Onyx figures (Onyx is a semiprecious variety of quartz with the layers of different colors and shades. Its used by the Oaxacan artisans 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 Zocalo 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 smil-

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A new place to discover

Hierva el Agua is simply one of the most enchanting places I have ever visited. After a two hour ride from Oaxaca through a pre-rainy season, Hierva el Agua at first appears at first as a true Oasis. Hustled in a spectacular mountain setting are two mineral water swimming pools crafted steeply into the edge of a mountain. The vast view is of magnificent mountains, valleys and calcified cascades that change color with the passage of the sun. The soothing sound of the bubbling water, and the sight of a few passing hummingbirds only add to the magic quality of the place.

"Boiling Water" is the meaning of "Hierva el Agua", although the waters in the natural pools are refreshingly cool. They are also curative mud and there is a small wading pool where you can apply white mineral mud in the tradition of the best mud baths of European Spas. My friend Lauren showed me a rash of insect bites that almost disappeared overnight with just one application.

This pristine and serene hideaway is on the verge of becoming a tourist attraction. After my first visit with an excursion from the Instituto de Comunicacion y Cultura, I spent the next week counting days until my return there. It was the beginning of Semana Santa and what I found when I returned was a different, more social Hierva el Agua.

The entrance level with the parking lot, picnic palapas, casitas and a swimming pool yet to be filled with water, looked different: There were actually cars in the parking lot! The entrance fee that had been N\$1 the week before was N\$2 and I was shown the new "servicios". At N\$30 per person it is now possible to stay overnight in one of the casitas' brand new dormitory style accommodations, with kitchenettes and bathrooms. I was tempted to be the first person to stay there...

After the short steep walk down to the springs I found a busload of



happy vacationers. Kids were flying kites, a family was loudly playing their favorite tapes and there were cookouts and laughter everywhere. While the previous week we brought a picnic lunch that we shared with some local dogs, just about the only ones enjoying the solitude and beauty of the place, my friend Felipe purchased tacos at two new palapas where other food was also available. While I was there, a truckload of Coca Cola and other beverages was being unloaded into the casita that now holds the changing rooms and bathroom facilities.

GRAPHIC ARTS INSTITUTE OF OAXACA

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MONDAY THRU SATURDAY:

10 A.M. TO 2 P.M. AND 4 P.M.

to 5 P.M.

CLOSED TUESDAY

A local older worker said that the second swimming pool was built only three years ago and that very few people came there. This may all change now. While villagers from San Lorenzo Albarradas were asking us for rides to the springs the first week, there are now three busses on Sundays and more on the way. They come from Oaxaca, Tlacolula, Mitla, and some go to the village and some to Hierva el Agua. Although San Lorenzo is a picturesque village with friendly Mixe people and two Mezcal distilleries where you can watch it being made the "old way" and purchase it at N\$8 per liter (less if you bring your own container), it is a long way from there to the springs. I would still recommend driving there directly and during daytime. The winding and sometimes unpaved and bumpy mountain roads could be a challenge for the uninitiated.

Although Hierva el Agua may no longer be the secret hideaway for the few, especially on weekend afternoons, it is still a wonderful and unforgettable experience.

For information about this and other excursions please call 6-34-43

Children's Day

FROM PAGE 1.

ing. For that we have to understand the values of the ethnic communities from which they come. In the Mixe language the advice, warnings, scolding and other lectures that adults impart to their children is known as Ayuuk jinma'an which in English means "the way life must be understood". The informal teaching of the Ayuuk Jinma'an play a significant role in boys and girls formation.

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 god who created you because he is the your father who loves 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.

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BEYOND THE CITY

Attractions are listed according to their direction from Oaxaca.

MONTE ALBAN: 10 km (6 mi) west, on artificially flattened mountaintop. One of the most important archaeological sites in Mexico. Large ceremonial plaza surrounded by the ruins. Small museum, cafeteria, shops. Tues-Sun 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

SANTA MARIA ATZOMPA: (or Atzompa) about 8 km (4 mi) northwest, a short distance off Hwy. 190. The village produces a green-glazed pottery and unglazed pottery figures.

CUILAPAN DE GUERRERO: About 14 km (9 mi) southwest of the Zaachila road. Contains what was once the Dominican Monastery of St. James the Apostle, begun in 1555 but never finished. Much of the structure stands roofless.

ZAACHILA: 5 km (3 mi) beyond Cuilapan, Zaachila was the Zapotec capital when it fell to the Spanish in 1521. Little of the archaeological zone has been explored, but a palace and two tombs can be visited. Daily 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

SAN BARTOLO COYOTEPEC: (or Coyotepec) About 15 km (9 mi) south on Hwy 175. The village is famous for its pottery. Valente Nieto, the son of Dona Rosa, who is credited with the black pottery, still practices the craft and gives demonstrations for visitors Fri. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

SANTO TOMAS JALIEZA: About 10 km (6 mi) beyond Coyotepec, off Hwy 175. A center for the weaving of cotton belts, sahes, table runners, place mats, and other items. The products are sold from a central location across from the village church.

OCOTLAN DE MORELOS: About 17 km (10 mi) beyond Coyotepec on Hwy 175. Market town and the home of the Aguilar family, producers of clay figures painted in bright colors.

SANTA MARIA DEL TULE: About 14 km (8 mi) east-southeast of Oaxaca on Hwy 190. Its main attraction is a gigantic Ahuehuetle, or Mexican Cypress, in front of the village of the church. The tree is estimated to be about 2,000 years old.

TLACOCHAHUAYA: About 14 mi east-southeast of Oaxaca. Sixteenth century Church of Jeronimo decorated by native artists.

TEOTITLAN DEL VALLE: (2 mi) beyond Tlacoachahuaya and about 20 mi from the highway. Main attraction is the center of the area. Main attraction is the production of ponchos, rugs and tapestries in traditional and modern designs.

TLACOLULA DE MATAMOROS: About 6 km (3 mi) beyond Tlacoachahuaya. Principal attraction is the 16th century Church of our Lord of Tlacolula.

YAGUL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ZONE: About 3 km (2 mi) from Hwy 190 and 1 km (1 mi) off the highway. Large archaeological zone includes a ball court and the Palace of the Palms. 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

SAN PABLO VILLA DE MITLA: (or mitla) about 5 km (3 mi) beyond Tlacoachahuaya along Hwy 190. Ther. 4 km (2 mi) turnoff. A center for lightweight wool and cotton weavings which are sold in a large market area behind the church. Center for the production of mezcals, (an intoxicating drink distilled from the leaves of the agave plant).

MITLA ARCHAEOLOGICAL ZONE: Remains of a large Zapotec position center that has been influenced by Mixtec culture by the time of the Spanish conquest. Of several groups of ruins, the most interesting are the Group of the Columns. Group of the Columns open 8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Even if you do not intend to do anything, just going to any of these villages can be a fascinating experience as each village is unique and has something different to offer.

There are various ways to get to these villages. You can catch a bus at the bus class station, located next to the Mercado de Abastos. Or, you can take a colorful taxi. A minibus service is located at the sixth block of Armenta y Lopez. Every other week there is a market in another of the nearby villages.

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