



Oaxaca Times[®]

Issue 27/3

Nov / Dec 13 / January / 14

www.oaxacatimes.com



Christmas in Oaxaca

Writer by Oaxaca Times Newspaper

FESTIVITES BEGIN WITH A SERIES OF CALENDAS, OR PARADES, FEATURING PROCESSIONS OF HUGE DANCING PUPPETS, DECORATED AUTOS, CARRIAGES, AND BICYCLES, AND A STROLLING BRASS BAND.

From the breaking of the Plates, to the Feast of the Radishes, Christmas time in Oaxaca is a vivid celebration that combine Christian religious traditions with the deeply-rooted sense of community that bind together the pueblos and colonias.

You won't find last-minute shopping specials, or Salvation Army Santas on the street corners, what you will enjoy is a generosity of spirit that blossoms throughout the month of December culminating at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

Festivites begin with a series of calen-

das, or parades, featuring processions of huge dancing puppets, decorated autos, carriages, and bicycles, and a strolling brass band.

The first calenda begins on December 6, followed by one on the 10th celebrating the Virgin of Guadalupe. On the 12th everyone ventures to the Guadalupe church for a festive breakfast served in front of the church.

The richest calenda takes place on December 16th and is dedicated to La Virgen de Soledad.

This calenda is the most important in


Continued on page 3



PAGE
4 Review Of Il Giro
Restaurant



PAGE
5 While walking in
Oaxaca (part 1)



MANI TAJ
Indian Food

By Indian Chef
RAMESH CHAULA

115 Privada de Azáleas
Col. Reforma
Phone:
515 83 16 & 951 109 69 60

Continued from page 1

the entire state of Oaxaca and indigenous groups from all over descend upon the city to parade through the Zocalo to the Basilica of Soledad.

There on the steps of the church dancers perform the spectacular Danza de la Pluma.

December 16 also marks the start of the nine days of posadas that take place throughout the city in the days leading up to Christmas.

The posada is traditionally a neighborhood celebration, in which children selected to portray Mary and Joseph, along with shepherds, and attending families, stop at various homes in their neighborhood looking for shelter.

It is a musical event, with both visitors, and recipients singing out the call and response. Ritually turned down at many homes, the children finally reach the home of the padrinos (or godparents) for the event where they will be received with song and prayer.

Following the prayers a feast of tamales and coffee is served and a piñata, filled with fruits and nuts, is attacked and broken by the children.

Not all the breaking around Christmas gets done by children. From the 16th through the 31st of December everyone participates in the "breaking of the plates." If you've ever longed to throw a wineglass into a fireplace this festivity is for you.

Outside of the Cathedral Restaurant stands are set up serving hot chocolate, better than grandma ever made, and plates filled with "Bunuelos," the traditional Christmas time pastry.

Drink your chocolate, eat your dessert, then smash your plate afterwards. And you don't have to clean up. The tradition is said to have its roots in pre-Colombian tradition which warranted that all of one's personal belongings should be destroyed every 52 years.

The entire city is one big festival during Christmas, with an open air market in the already bustling zocalo, with food stands, carnival rides, and artisan crafts.

THE NIGHT OF THE RADISHES

If you aren't particularly all ho, ho, ho about Christmas then Oaxaca won't let you



The Night of the Radishes

down during the season. Instead of decking the halls with holly, think about using radishes as your holiday motif.

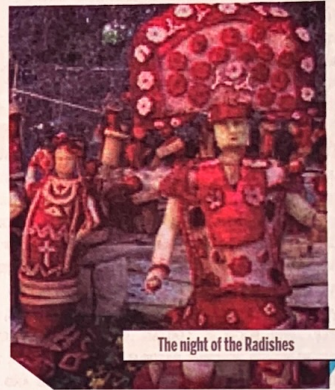
Legend has it that 350 years ago two Dominican monks came up with a marketing idea designed to help indigenous farmers market their produce. They came up with a plan to have the farmers carve their beets, radishes, and carrots into fantastic shape. Thus was born the "Night of the Radishes" a unique festival celebrating food as folk art.

Celebrated on December 23, the fiesta lasts only a few hours. But what a few hours those are. Since 1897 when the festival was taken over by the Oaxaca City Municipal Government thousands of visitors have ventured to the colonial capital for the unusual celebration.

Visitors who parade through the Zocalo will see radishes sculpted into everything from busts of Maria Sabina, the famed curandera, to exquisitely detailed figures of Gueleguetza dancers. The radishes, which are specially grown for the occasion, are not consumable, but are heavily treated with additives so that they can reach their colossal size, which sometimes reaches 40 inches.

These days the radishes are

In addition to the displays of radishes, artisans will compete in two other categories



The night of the Radishes

- dried flowers and corn husks. But without question the radishes are the big draw at the festival. These days they are cultivated in a park by the airport. The harvest takes place on December 18th, and the artisans have five days in which to complete their artworks.

But don't leave the Zocalo after viewing the radishes. The fiesta, one of Oaxaca's most spectacular will continue on until midnight with a fantastic display of fireworks, and this is a city that loves fireworks, at 11 p.m. Following the fiesta, meander back home and enjoy a rich cup of chocolate before going to sleep.

Los Chavales
Cerveza y comida a la mexicana

Is the perfect place for your next business or social gathering.

www.loschavales.com.mx

Follow us on Facebook
Grill Argentina y más
Los Chavales

Phone: 513 0688, 503 8673
Netzahualcoyotl 300, Esq. Eucaliptos,
Col. Reforma, Oaxaca, Oax. México

Use your phone, scan this code with your smartphone. If you haven't an app, go to www.f-origina.com

Writer by Steven Scott

Oaxaca Cine Celebrates Two Year Anniversary

To lovers of film, Oaxaca Cine has been providing an oasis of cinema culture for two years with screenings at the magnificent TeatroAlcala. Isabel Rojas, along with her partners Rigoberto Perezcano and Guillermo Quijas, founded Oaxaca Cine in 2011.

Their tireless programming efforts have brought an extraordinary number of international films and filmmakers to Oaxaca. Isabel is a cineaste extraordinaire whose dedication to film knows no bounds.

She studied visual arts at Guadalajara University and cultural management here in Oaxaca. From 2005 to 2010 she was coordinator at Cineclub El Pochote which features independent, art-house and classic Mexican and international movies. It was there that she honed her skills as a consummate film programmer helping to spark a widening interest in films throughout Mexico.

Her influences are Japanese, Korean and Portuguese filmmakers and she has a special place in her heart for the filmmaker Maya Deren.

She feels that this is an important moment for cinema in Mexico as evidenced by many festivals, conferences, exhibitions and projects.

"This very timely expansion of interest in cinema indicates a passion and need to explore films that have an impact both magically, philosophically and culturally."

She is interested in exploring film criticism not in academic terms but in its relationship to people.

What about the future of Oaxaca Cine? Films and more films plus a dedicated venue, a building of their own.

Talks are now in progress with the office of the Secretaria de Cultura to achieve that purpose.

Oaxaca Cine will rise anew as Cineteca Oaxaca whose objectives will be film exhibition, workshops, archives and filmpro-



Isabel Rojas

duction focusing on supporting the visions of Oaxacan filmmakers.

Teatro Alcala will continue to be used for galas and special screenings. "Films offer us the opportunity to have profound experiences.

A captured moment in space and time." Thanks to Isabel's efforts, film culture will

continue to flourish here in Oaxaca and throughout Mexico and we, the filmgoing public, will continue to benefit greatly from her vision, energy and passion.

Check out Oaxaca Cine's website to see their schedule of films, events and workshops at oaxacacine.com. See you at the movies!

CAFÉ TOSTADO
LATTE · CAPUCHINO
 · ESPRESSO ·
 · DESAYUNOS ·

DE 8:00 A 22:00 HRS. TODOS LOS DIAS DE LA SEMANA
 M. Bravo 206, Centro Histórico, Oaxaca. Tel. 50 12122
www.cafenuevomundo.com

*Sueños que cobran vida,
 colores que alegran las tradiciones.*

La Guelaguetza es la fiesta más conocida de Oaxaca. Durante este encuentro Quinta Real Oaxaca le ofrece todos los viernes, en el majestuoso Salón La Capilla, una deliciosa variedad de platillos oaxaqueños acompañados de bailes representativos de la región. Celebre el encuentro de los pueblos, viva la Guelaguetza.

Cena Show - Guelaguetza
 7:00 pm a las 10:00 pm



Restauración: 91 (854) 801 8112
 1 de Mayo 300, Col. Centro-Oaxaca, México
www.quintareal.com