



Oaxaca Times®

The inner life of Oaxaca

GUELAGUETZA MEMORIES

Reflections from a Oaxaca native

By GEORGINA M. DOMINGUEZ ALLEC

Growing up in Oaxaca was a privilege. As a little girl I was able to enjoy a very safe and colorful city whose churches and parks were often decorated to celebrate a patron saint or a national holiday. The people of Oaxaca are very good at finding an excuse to celebrate, and we do it often. Even after having the opportunity to attend many

beautiful traditional festivities, I could have never imagined what I was about to witness the first time I saw a Guelaguetza.

My father, a very proud Oaxacan man, had patiently waited for me to be "old enough" to fully appreciate the celebration. He considered 10 years old the perfect age, and one afternoon announced to me that the next Monday we would be going to see my first Guelaguetza.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



TRADITIONAL OAXACAN & INTERNATIONAL FOOD

MMMMM...
Crepes!

501 M. Alcalá St.
Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 8 AM to midnight
Fridays & Sat. until 3 AM For Reservations call.5012126 Credit cards accepted



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I remember I was very excited and couldn't wait to go, even though back then I only had a slight idea of what the Guelaguetza was or what it meant.

My first Monday at the "Lunes del Cerro" arrived and my dad made sure I put on a nice hat. When we got to the auditorium, the large number of people caught my attention. Among the audience, there was people from all over the State and the World and different languages could be heard.

Once the Guelaguetza started, and for as long as it lasted, I was mesmerized by the beauty of the costumes, the cadence of the dances and most of all, the spontaneous unity between the audience and the delegations of dancers who have gotten together to celebrate who we are, what we love and what we want to preserve, leaving aside our regional differences and conflicts.

When the Guelaguetza concluded with the "Danza de la Pluma" I realized I had not had a drink of water throughout the ceremony and my skin was really sunburned but that didn't matter. I think I understood what my father wanted me

to understand and cherish forever: the pride and happiness of being from a very rich and beautiful place.

Many years had to pass for me to see another Guelaguetza. By 2005, I had not lived in Oaxaca for seven years and was visiting my parents after a trip abroad. My best friend had an extra ticket and I decided to join her. How beautiful it was and how deeply I fell in love with the music, the dances and the colors all over again. It made me feel at home.

Now, after almost six years living in the United States, I can still close my eyes and hear the verses of the Canción Mixteca saying "how far I am from the place where I was born" and see the many hands of the Guelaguetza's audience rhythmically waving in the air under the sky of my homeland and I still feel like that little girl who almost twenty five years ago discovered the tradition and beauty that we - those from Oaxaca, those foreign residents of Oaxaca, and those just passing by our city - have been given to enjoy through the magic of the Guelaguetza. Because that is the beauty of this tradition: it unites.



Guelaguetza Info

- Guelaguetza 2012 will be held Monday, July 23rd and Monday July 30th in the Guelaguetza Auditorium on the Fortin Hill.
- Tickets can be purchased through Ticketmaster or at the Alcalá, Theater (Independencia and 5 de Mayo)
- The Guelaguetza celebrates the diversity and the union of Oaxaca's 16 ethno-linguistic groups.
- The festival is a combination of pre-hispanic celebrations of the corn goddess, Centeótl, and the Catholic feast of Our Lady of Mont Carmel.
- This year marks the Guelaguetza's 80th anniversary.

Oaxaca's Baseball Academy

By Dick Rosthchild

It is hard to spend much time in Oaxaca without coming across the name of Alfredo Harp Helú, the philanthropist whose foundation has created such projects as the Textile Museum and who is actively supporting Oaxaca education, health, cultural and conservation initiatives in several formats.

You might be surprised to learn, however, that Harp Helú is something of a baseball fanatic and that one of his important, if lesser known accomplishments, has been the realization of the Academia De Béisbol, The Baseball Academy.

The Academy is located on a twenty five acre spread in sleepy San Bartolo Coyotepec, about nine miles south of Oaxaca. It's the town which gained fame in the 1950's when one of its potters, Dona Rosa, discovered a polishing and firing technique to produce barro negro, the clay pottery which has a distinctive black metallic sheen.

As you enter the Academia De Béisbol gates, you are struck immediately by the center's six professional baseball fields. Four of these fields are used exclusively to train as many as 60 promising young players who are attending the Academy

in hopes of having a career in baseball. The remaining two fields are used for practice by the Guerreros, Oaxaca's professional baseball team. You can catch the Guerreros in action between mid-March and the end of July on their home field, the Eduardo Vasconcelos Stadium on Niños Heroes de Chapultepec.

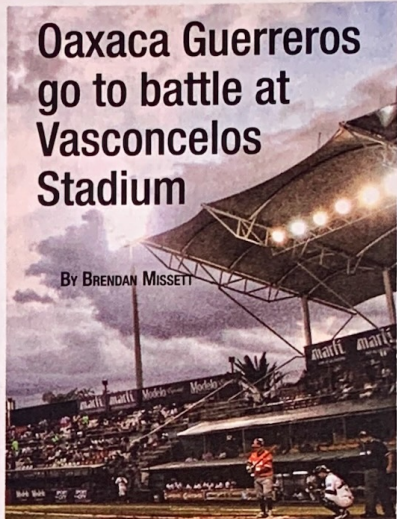
The Baseball Academy's goal is to develop the skills of promising young players while encouraging them to complete their general education. Eleven and 12-year-olds are trained on two of the fields and a third is reserved for 13-14 year olds. A fourth field is used primarily for infield instruction.

The Academy's young baseball hopefuls are housed in a stunning contemporary building equipped with such amenities as a fitness center, library and a computer room.

The Academy dispatches scouts to seek out the most promising young players and invite them to attend. Tuition and room and board for those fortunate enough to attend the Academy are paid for by the Harp Helú Foundation, eliminating economic barriers to admission for talented youngsters.

Oaxaca Guerreros go to battle at Vasconcelos Stadium

By Brendan Missett



Whether you've been in Oaxaca for five days or five years, it's not difficult to become roused by the Oaxaca Guerreros, the baseball team that has been entertaining crowds in the city since the spring of 1996. For those with a mind for baseball, the fresh lawns of Eduardo Vasconcelos Stadium and bloom of an evening sky will be enough to inspire excitement for the local team. For newcomers to the game, just sitting among the rows of rambunctious fans may do the trick. (No matter the outcome of the game, Guerreros fans hang on every pitch, and are sure to give frequent feedback to stingy umpires.)

The Guerreros play in the Liga Mexicana de Béisbol, a Triple-A level league that is comprised of 16 teams throughout southern Mexico. The team has won a single championship, in 1998, but in 2012 has built a competitive team anchored by stars like Cuban first baseman Barbaro Cañizares, Venezuelan pitcher Gabriel Alfaro, and Oaxaca native, infielder Jaime Brena. Cañizares, a hulking, barrel-shaped batter, is the team's main source of power, sending 20 homeruns over the fence last season, while batting .396.

There's not a single bad seat in the cozy Vasconcelos stadium, which opens to a view of Oaxaca's mountains in left field. Vendors file through, selling beer, snacks and hearty empanadas, and a troupe of cheerleaders, the Guerreritas, entertain the crowd between innings.

Among their home games this season, the Guerreros take on the defending champion Tigres de Quintana Roo and the traditionally powerhouse Diablos Rojos del Mexico. The final home game of the regular season falls on July 22nd, while playoffs and the Final Series last until August 30th, when a champion will be crowned. Tickets range from 25 to 100 pesos.



La Capilla se viste del color, el sabor
y el ritmo de la Guelagueta.

Todos los viernes de 7:00 a 10:00 PM.
Camino Real le hace honor a la tradición más rica de Oaxaca.
Consulta nuestras Guelaguetas especiales en www.camino-real.com/oaxaca
Reservaciones al 52 161 60 Centro del Mayo Num. 200, 55A, Centro.


CAMINO REAL
OAXACA
LA VIDA EN SU MEJOR ESTADO



A Treasure Map to Oaxaca's Culinary Riches

By BRENDAN MISSETT

Adventure-seekers are prone to travel the globe, jumping out of airplanes, cascading down waterfalls and climbing the tallest of peaks in search of a complete and visceral thrill. But why go out of your way? Few activities absorb all five of our senses as much as sitting down for sizzling meal. And in Oaxaca, a tour of the region's gastronomic specialties can be just as exciting as the more hardy and dangerous pursuits that travelers are known to chase.

In Oaxaca's eateries, sitting down to a meal can feel like an act of discovery. The path to the table often trails through market buildings that are cluttered with handcrafted wares, baskets of chapulines, bargain shoppers and food stations pluming with smoke from seared and dripping meats. The structures, filled with tantalizing smells and the crackling, scraping sounds of ingredients becoming food, create an atmosphere that is separate from the city, enclosed in a disparate precinct that is responsible for feeding Oaxaca.

In the Centro Historico of Oaxaca, the

20th de Noviembre market is one of the finer examples of the city's culinary treats. The machinery of the market propels forward in a colorful swatch, accented by the earthy hues of the region's crops, squash blossom soups, and tlayudas - large tortillas drizzled with queso, avocado, tomato, frijoles and meat, in the manner of a Mexican pizza. Slabs of seasoned beef and strings of chorizo are slung over countertops. Tortillas are piled high, and Oaxaca's famous moles are stewing nearby. These sharp and sweet sauces, often served with chicken and rice, are a balanced blend Oaxaca's most distinctive ingredients. Some versions of the deep red mole coloradito include guajillo chili, almonds, tomato, cinnamon, peppercorns and even chocolate and bananas.

The barbacoa wing is veiled by skein of smoke and peopled by hungry strangers who slide into their booths, often shoulder-to-shoulder, and sink into grilled tasajo, pierna, or pollo (cured beef, lamb, or chicken). Feel free to shred these flanks with your fingers, arrange them in a tortilla, add some

guacamole and salsa, and dig in. This is your discovery, and your reward.

Of course, the delights of Oaxaca are not constrained to the walls of the market. The region's dedication to its unique and delicious cuisine extends to the cafes that turn out huevos al gusto and fresh fruit in early mornings, the fondas that serve comida corrida (fixed daily menus) throughout the slow drag of the afternoon hours, and the taquerias that sprout up on Calle Las Casas in the evenings.

For an adventurous tour of Oaxaca's best dishes consider the following treasure map. Start the day with Oaxaquean tamales, hot cornmeal stuffed with meat and salsa, and a cup of coffee with cinnamon. In mid-afternoon spend \$35 to \$45 pesos on a soup (I'd recommend a caldo de camarones), side dish (vegetables or rice), entree (how about amarillo de res?) and a dessert (jello or pudding). If you're still hungry in the evening, it won't be difficult to find a roadside taco or empanada stand to satisfy any remaining rumblings.



TRY THIS:

On the busy corner of Calle de la Victoria and Calle de los Huzares is "Antojitos Angelita." Extremely popular with the local oods of foot traffic by the Abastos market, Angelita prepares her food from the taco stand on one side of Victoria Street and serves it from the quaint eatery on the other side, which provides ample shade as you wait for the city's best chilaquiles.



TRY THIS:

At the corner of Garcia Vigil and Calle Jesús Carranza sits an ordinary food stand that serves extraordinary fare. From this locale, you can grab a seat and enjoy an empanada or memela for about 20 pesos. The stand draws most of its customers at night, where you can enjoy a late snack, and sit in the dim light filtering from Santo Domingo Plaza.



TRY THIS:

Inside the 20 de noviembre market, amongst the cluster of food and drink vendors, lies a standout establishment called Abuelitas, run by an energetic woman named Carmen. The food is fast and delicious, and you might even get a chance at a comical exchange with your mercurial host. Editor's pick: the tlayuda with chorizo.