

SOL AZTECA

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PROJECTS ABROAD MEXICO NEWSLETTER

ProjectsAbroad

San Pedro
TLAQUEPAQUE
GOBIERNO MUNICIPAL 2010-2012



Volunteer Story by
FRANKA GERHARD

Discover
COLIMA

Get Together!

*Salsa
Goodbye's
B-Day's*

Editor's Notes

Hello!

June is here, halfway through the year already! Mexico is really hot at the moment but it is also the beginning of the rainy season! It means it will be cooler than before due to rain. But don't worry, it is a great time to visit Mexico and enjoy all of its wonders as well.

In Projects Abroad Mexico we have been pretty busy with new placements but also it has been a month full of goodbyes! A month full of social events too!

We have enjoyed being so busy over here!

I want to let you know that we are already on Twitter! If you are a user then I invite you to follow us: @Proj_AbroadMEXI

I hope you enjoy our June edition!

Special thanks for this newsletter go to:

- Franka Gerhard for the story about her experience in the Care Project.
- Oliver Garcia for his update on the Turtle Conservation Programme.

I also want to invite you to join our Facebook community where we share our pictures, happenings and news. The name of our network is: Projects Abroad Mexico-The Official Group

We also encourage everyone to write their stories for us to publish in our newsletters. If you want to write something about your current, past or future experience with us, please do not hesitate to send it to me along with your pictures to jonatanarriaga@projects-abroad.org.

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Jonatan Arriaga

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Projects Abroad Mexico

Volunteer Story



Wenn ich mit einem Wort Mexiko beschreiben müsste, denn wäre es wohl das Wort "warm". Und damit meine ich in erster Linie nicht das Wetter, sondern die Menschen hier. Die Mexikaner, die ich kennengelernt habe, sind sehr herzliches und fröhliches und genießen das Leben. Bei meiner Gastfamilie habe ich mich sofort wie zuhause gefühlt, auf den Strassen sind immer Menschen – es ist einfach immer etwas los. Diese Atmosphäre ist einer der Gründe,

warum mir Mexiko so sehr ans Herz gewachsen ist.

Der entscheidende Grund jedoch ist meine Arbeit im Waisenhaus. Im „Casa Hogar Cielo para un Angel“ leben 40 Kinder, die meisten davon sind zwischen fünf und acht Jahren alt. Am Anfang habe ich in der Küche gearbeitet und mit den Kindern Hausaufgaben gemacht. Danach habe ich mit einer anderen Freiwilligen angefangen, Englisch zu unterrichten und dies dann weitergeführt.

Unser Englischunterricht war auf sehr einfachem Niveau, damit auch die Sechs- und Siebenjährigen etwas davon hatten. Spielerisch lernen war der Schlüssel. Wir haben Bingo gespielt und so die Zahlen geübt, Vokabeln mit Hilfe von Zeichnungen beigebracht und die Körperteile mit den Liedern „Head & Shoulders“ und „Hokey Pokey“ gelernt.



Immer wieder gab es kleine Preise, um die Begeisterung der Kinder zu erhalten. Jetzt, gegen Ende meines Einsatzes, sagen die Kinder schon nicht mehr „Gracias“ sondern „Thank you“ zu mir - schön zu wissen, dass sie wirklich davon profitieren konnten und dies hoffentlich auch in Zukunft können.



Neben dem Englischunterricht bestand der Alltag weiterhin damit, den Kindern bei den Hausaufgaben zu helfen oder ihnen das Rechnen beizubringen. Auch mit den kleineren Kindern haben wir gegen Ende meiner Zeit sehr viel gespielt. Sie haben mich oft zum Lachen gebracht, und das Herz erwärmt. Es hat mich immer wieder erstaunt, wie die Kinder mit einer so schweren Vergangenheit so

fröhlich, fürsorglich und gütig sein können und überhaupt kein Problem damit haben, alles zu teilen. Es hat mir sehr viel Spass gemacht, dort zu arbeiten und ich bin mir jetzt sicher, dass ich mich in meinem Psychologiestudium auf Kinderpsychologie spezialisieren werde.

Der dritte Teil, der meine Zeit hier so toll gemacht hat, waren die vielen Leute, die ich kennengelernt habe. Ich habe hier schnell Freunde gefunden, sehr gute Freunde sogar. Wir trafen uns, um abends wegzugehen und unternahmen gemeinsam Ausflüge. Mit meinen zwei lieben Mitbewohnerinnen bin ich durchs Land gereist und habe Guanajuato und andere Städte kennengelernt. Auch die Mitarbeiter von Projects

Abroad waren total lieb und lustig – die Piñata auf dem gemeinsamen Grillabend werde ich definitiv nicht vergessen. Ich habe in diesen drei Monaten so viel erlebt und Neues gesehen und erfahren. Es waren rundum perfekte drei Monate und es macht mich traurig, dass meine Zeit um ist. Denn ich hatte die Zeit meines Lebens! Also tut es mir nach und wagt euch ins Ungewisse – es lohnt sich!

By Franka Gerhard
Switzerland - Care in Mexico

Tlaquepaque Fair



Tlaquepaque, Jalisco, June 18 to July 3

The traditions and pastimes of Mexico's artistic city of Tlaquepaque, on the outskirts of Guadalajara, are celebrated at this annual event, taking place at the Expo Ganadera. Children can enjoy a variety of games and activities, while adults enjoy art and mariachi,

while savoring some authentic Mexican cuisine.

There is no better place in the country to buy popular art. Here, the most expert artisans exhibit their fine work in wood, silver, brass, crystal or leather. And to end a day of shopping, Tlaquepaque also offers typical restaurants, *cantinas* and lovely patios. It is also a Pueblo Magico in the state of Jalisco, which today is part of Guadalajara's metropolitan area.

Tlaquepaque is a municipality devoted to ceramics with a long tradition, which carries the clay in its very name. From the pedestrian bridge, it receives curious travelers eager to fill their cabinets and takes them along the streets with fantastic handicraft stores stuffed with original pieces in forged metal, gold or silver work, embroidery and ceramics.

When you visit Tlaquepaque do not forget to pay a visit to "El Refugio" Cultural Centre which is a cultural and commercial area. The Culture House is located at the former Chapel. Temporary exhibits are shown there.

"El Alamo" Square (or Monument to the Revolution) was created by sculptor Miguel Miramontes in 1968.

El Parian was constructed in 1883. There are bars and restaurants that offer typical cuisine while mariachis play joyful songs. So enjoy Tlaquepaque!

Fathers' Day!

Such a great celebration in Mexico; the day we celebrate our dads.



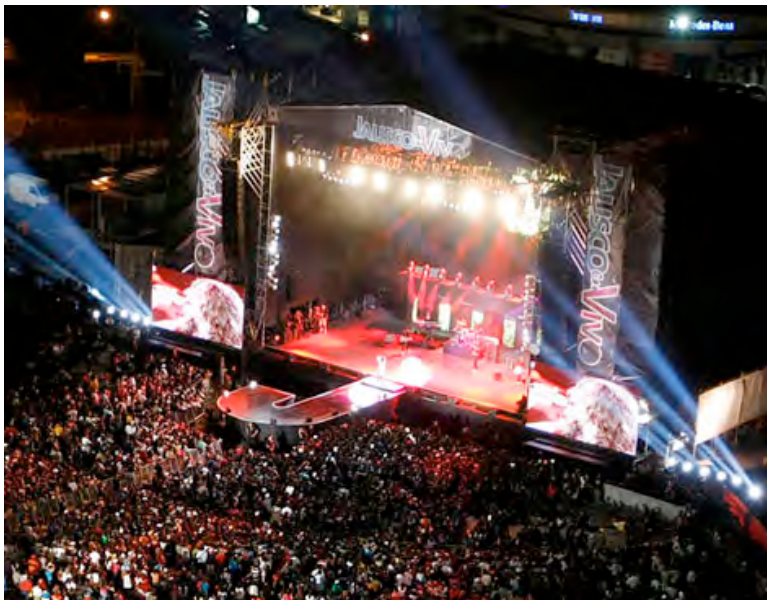
In Mexico this tradition is celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of June! The family gets together, everyone brings food, snacks, drinks and has lots of fun! For sure, same as mothers' day, Mariachi and banda music are present during these celebrations, so you might hear loads of singing people all around the city!

If you were here during June, you probably had the chance to

spend this Sunday with your Mexican family! Mexico is a very familiar country!

Congratulations to all the fathers all around the world!

Jalisco Vive Concert!



A free outdoor concert to be held at Guadalajara's Glorieta Minerva featuring big names in the Mexican music scene, including Vicente Fernandez, Julieta Venegas, Diego Torres and Luis Fonsi. The public is asked to bring donations of canned and dried foods, and blankets to be donated to needy communities in Mexico.

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Projects Abroad Chair Donation!



During the last month we have been pretty active in the care centers. The amount of work to be done is amazingly huge! The volunteers really make a difference in the daily work in each one of them.

As part of our activities we arranged a chair donation to 'Cielo para un Angel A.C.' With this donation the kids will have enough chairs to do their homework, study and eat their meals more comfortably.



Thanks to the staff and to all the kids who received us in such a great way!

Social Events in June!

June was full of social activities! It is great to see how the group is so united!



We started with our traditional Salsa Class. The first Thursday of every month we have one. The ones who have had more than three classes are now doing pretty well in the dance floor, so congratulations! This class combines a bit of 'beginners' for the ones who just arrived and 'advanced' for the ones who have been with us for a while already! I can see a huge improvement in the way of dancing of the guys so for sure; we will continue having those classes!

Secondly we had a visit to the Salsa Club after requests from everybody in the group! They wanted to practice what they've learned! It was a great night at Mambo Café Guadalajara! Located in Chapultepec Avenue, this place offers the best live music when it comes to salsa, mambo and merengue. We had a great time there!



Thirdly we had goodbye gatherings! These ones I don't like that much! We got together to say goodbye to Charlotte, Nicky, Lauren and Catherine! Everybody was an important part of the group and seeing them leave was really sad! All the best wishes from all of us to you guys!

We all hope to see you soon!!!

To end the month we had the birthday party of Rocio, a member of the Projects Abroad Mexico staff! What a great party we had with her, staff and all the volunteers!

Happy Birthday Rocio!



Rocio Blancarte, Projects Abroad Mexico staff member, is celebrating her 25th birthday! June 15th was the exact date.

She started collaborating with us in 2010 as Assistant Manager and she is also member of one of our host families! She has been in really close contact with Projects Abroad since 2008. She is a passionate photographer and runs her own photo business during the weekends.

Thanks for being part of the family! Happy birthday!

Destination- Colima

The state of Colima has one of the smallest territorial expansions in Mexico, yet it's strategically located along the Pacific coast in the southwestern region, making it an important destination. The mountains, warm beaches and abundant marine life are reason enough to visit Colima. It is a perfect weekend get away if you live in Guadalajara and Ciudad Guzman! Turtle camp is located in this state as well!



About 38 km (24 miles) north of the state capital, you'll find two natural wonders that are ideal for ecotourism outings: El Nevado de Colima, a mountain which is 4,330 meters (14,289 feet) above sea level, and the active Volcan de Fuego (Volcano of Fire), which is 3,960 meters (13,068 feet) above sea level. Located in the Volcan de Colima National Park, you can appreciate its awe-inspiring beauty from the town of Comala, which was the setting for Juan Rulfo's novel Pedro Paramo.



There you can try excellent regional cuisine, including sweet bread and mezcal punch. About 12 km (7 miles) from there lays Colima, the state capital, which invites you to visit its Jardín Libertad, the Cathedral and the Palacio de Gobierno, where you'll find interesting murals that chronicle Mexico's history. As for archaeological zones, there's El Chantal, where a unique ideology of time was created. There you'll also see graves known as the Tumbas de Tiro. If you head 20 km (12 miles) from the ruins, you'll arrive at Los Ortices, an important religious center. For some fun in the sun, you can visit Boca de Pascuales, a beach that draws many surfers and is known for its excellent fish and seafood. If you're looking for a different kind of outdoor adventure, you can visit the volcanic islands of the Archipiélago de Revillagigedo Biosphere Reserve, where you can spy various birds and sea turtles.

Another point of interest is the saltwater Cuyutlan Lagoon and its wildlife conservation center. If you're looking for comfort and exclusivity, the port of Manzanillo, known as the Sailfish Capital of the World, is lined with posh hotels. Manzanillo hosts important international sport fishing competitions, as well as golf and sailing tournaments. You can also enjoy kayaking at the Marabasco River and scuba diving at Isla Navidad, a tourist resort that lies northwest off the coast.



Get ready for a great weekend!

Mexican Kitchen- Tacos al Pastor!



Tacos al pastor...what a traditional dish in Mexico! Pastor is one of the top 3 most traditional sorts of tacos in Mexico. Here is the recipe so you can prepare them from home!

Ingredients:

- 1 Kg pork leg or loin meat, cut into strips
- 1 Cup white vinegar
- 5 Dried guajillo chili peppers
- 5 Dried pasilla chili peppers
- 2 Dried ancho chili peppers
- 1 Medium tomato, toasted, peeled and seeds removed
- 2 Medium onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 Head of garlic peeled
- 1 Tablespoon cumin powder
- 5 Cloves
- 1 Cup pineapple juice
- Salt to taste
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 40 Small taco style corn tortillas
- 5-6 Limes, cut into wedges, optional
- 1 Bunch of cilantro, finely chopped, optional
- 2-3 Cups pineapple, finely chopped, optional
- Pico de gallo salsa, optional
- Salsa de aguacate (spicy guacamole salsa), optional

Directions:

Since most people don't have a rotisserie or spit, here's another method to prepare tacos al pastor.

Marinate the pork in the vinegar for about 2 hours. Remove and drain well. Boil the guajillo, pasilla and ancho chilis in about 3 cups of water until soft. Remove the veins and seeds. In a blender, combine the chilis, tomato, half the onion, garlic, cumin and cloves and blend until smooth. Add the pineapple juice and salt to taste. Heat one tablespoon of the oil in



a skillet over a medium heat. Add the sauce, reduce heat, and simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat and cool. Marinate the pork in the sauce for at least half an hour. Heat the other tablespoon of oil in the same skillet. Add the remaining chopped onion and cook until tender. Add the pork and cook until done. Slice the pork into smaller pieces if necessary. Warm up the tortillas and serve the meat on the tortillas taco-style.

Remember, it's usually 2 stacked tortillas per taco as they are quite small. Serve with the lime wedges, cilantro, pineapple, and salsa to taste.

Conservation in Mexico

Conservation in Mexico – Monthly Update June 2011

RAINS are here.



After a very long dry season, Mother Nature found a way to deliver and in which way! Torrential rains commenced to pour all over us by the third week of June, marking the official beginning of our high season for turtle nests protection! Even though we know the rain and thunder storms make our labor more difficult, we also know that these factors are

essential for the turtles to come out of the sea to lay their precious nests, at the moment we have passed the nest 300 protected in our corral areas, with the arrival of these heavy rains we hopefully can anticipate another successful year in matters of sea turtle conservation.

But not all these rains brought were good news. The past 20th of June the hurricane *Beatriz* hit the camp with winds of around 120 km per hour, leaving a great deal of damage in our facilities, mainly in our tent area and in the south corral, the winds managed to bring down the main pillars of the tent area and literally blew away half of the south corral, fortunately the damage was only material, and thanks to the invaluable help of our volunteers along with the local staff, we managed to reconstruct and improve our infrastructure, for all of those new arrivals. As also the number of volunteers that have come to join our project is rising up again, to all of them the tear down and reconstruction of the camping area will come up as good news.

From this moment on the number of patrols also increase, another shift is available every night and the amount of work in the corral increases dramatically every morning.

The rains not come only as good news, their destructive power had its effect in the crocodile farm were the levels in the lagoon reached their highest in years flooding the crocodile pools area, these might not be a big deal for the reptiles, but unfortunately the problem eradicates in the fact that the crocodiles have had already laid



their nests and the increase in the humidity in the area might have a disastrous effect in this year's offspring, hopefully we will manage to see the birth of these amazing creatures. But not all is bad news, a week ago we managed to collect a couple of nests from the lagoon, being sowed by our staff in a higher place there is a really good chance that the survival rate in these particular nests remain high.

Difficulties are there for us to meet, it comes as a part of the everyday job, we can only face it with a happy face always looking at the Brightside!

See you in July.

Oliver Garcia
Conservation Director
June 2011
Projects Abroad Mexico