



January 2014 -

San Jose del Cabo & Baja

Author: El Husbando

NEWSLETTER - GrandMayan.net & GrandLuxeResidence.com - Cabo

Happy and Prosperous New Year (Feliz y Prospero Año Nuevo) and THANK YOU for your continued Grand Mayan and Grand Luxxe Travel Reservations. We appreciate your business and truly hope that you continue to travel and enjoy of the beauty of life in Mexico.

We spent the week of December 20-30, 2013 in San Jose del Cabo and La Paz. The weather was beautiful with temperatures in the 80's. As usual we adventured to several places and more importantly we found some great restaurants!! We ate our way through San Jose.

Tips and Lists – Email us at diane@grandmayan.net to request any of our lists: 1) Things to take with you when traveling to Mexico; 2) Tips for enjoying Mexico; 3) Services if you are sick or injured in Mexico; 4) Grocery list; 5) More restaurant reviews.



Chileno Beach, just a short drive up the coast toward Cabo San Lucas. A must visit.

Chileno Beach - On weekends, it's popular with the locals, however it's not too congested on weekdays. With an amazing reef, Chileno is perfect for snorkeling, scuba diving and kid friendly swimming. A series of palapas offers much needed shade and for your convenience, you'll find a shop with kayak and equipment rentals on weekends (sporadic), public restrooms and shower facilities. Look for the highway sign marking the parking lot at Kilometer 14. Shhh - there are 3 different beaches here to explore.

Your Safety and Travel in Mexico

Despite growing concern over recent reports of violence and crime in México's northern border towns, travel destinations such as Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo, collectively known as Los Cabos, remain sound choices when planning a family vacation or romantic getaway. Located a thousand miles away from Tijuana, where many of the reported incidents have taken place, and with an entire sea between it and mainland México, Los Cabos offers a safe retreat, where travelers can indulge in delicious and diverse cuisine, explore secret beaches, and take part in a number of exhilarating activities or just lie around and eat.

The most charming part of Mexico is its wonderful people. In Cabo a group of concerned citizens and business owners has formed an organization to make the tourist experience the best it can be. Cabo Angels will answer any questions and address any complaints. 624-188-4455 – info@caboangels.com.

Eating our Way thru San Jose

Blue Fish – has now expanded with more tables and a pricier menu. It is located in the southeast corner of the Appleby's strip mall, across the highway and just south of the Mega. This trip we had the mixed ceviche, raw shrimp tacos and red snapper sashimi 2 beverages \$450 Pesos. Every time we eat here the food is fresh and consistently outstanding.

Los Claros – This place is great, located just a short walk toward downtown San Jose, on the right hand side of the main road. This restaurant specializes in Mexican tacos and seafood. I love the house special Papa Rellena (baked then mashed potato covered with meats and/or sea food offerings). El Claro is inexpensive with very good food and excellent service. It has become very popular with the locals, visitors & families. Don't forget the onion rings on top of the salsa bar.

This email newsletter is brought to you as a service of grandmayan.net and grandluxxeresidence.com. If you no longer wish to receive any email from us please notify me: diane@grandmayan.net or 602-791-1474 Gracias

Los Claros - (continued) Also, sitting on top of their salsa bar is the tempura chilies, try them. The seafood cocktails are also great. We ate here 3 times - twice with guests. 4 people with tacos and drinks \$400Pesos.

Tacqueria Rossy – located off the main highway on the way to the airport at the turn off to Pescadero. We always stop in here (at least once) on every trip. Tacos and seafood soups and ceviche. This is a local's hangout that does a big take-out and delivery business. Inexpensive...consistently good.

La Forchetta – across the street in the Plaza de los Pescadores. It serves Italian food with salads and pizza. Good food we had the Spinach and Beet salad and Shrimp offering with bread and goat cheese, \$550Pesos.

Gloria Jeans – also in the Plaza has good coffee from the Espresso Machine – no brewed coffee. Brewed coffee is found at Starbucks in the Mega Mall within walking distance toward the highway along the beach road.

Gelateria – also in the Plaza and has good gelato but expect to pay \$45Pesos for a single cone.

La Sultana – located off the marina and across the street from another Los Claros in Cabo San Lucas. If you like dive places where you eat in Grandma's kitchen, this is one of them. We had the Puerco in salsa verde (pork green chile) with fresh squeezed cantaloupe water, and it was excellent. 2 plates with beverages are only \$90Pesos.

Almas – located in Todos Santos just south of the Militaria street this family run restaurant is the favorite among the "hippie gringos". If you go to Todos Santos (and we recommend that you do) don't miss this place. Two drinks, fresh Dorado tacos, and a Dorado fillet for \$100Pesos.

Bismark – the best restaurant in La Paz. Located just across the street from the center of the malecon. Specializes in seafood tacos but had many many other offerings from both land and sea. Very popular place with both the locals and the few tourists that visit La Paz. La Paz is the capital of Baja and is 2 hours and 15 minutes from San Jose del Cabo along the new 4 lane. Inexpensive...

Flora Farms - We did not visit on this trip but this place is one of our favorites. It is not inexpensive but the food is always good and the farm offers the ambience of well - and old farm. You can't pick out the chicken you want to eat but its close. Almost all offerings and ingredients are grown and harvested at Flora Farms or nearby and the seafood is caught nearby. This trip I chose the 4 course lunch offering of eggplant soup, tossed salad, scampi with noodles, ice cream and a beverage for \$400Pesos. Excellent.

Los Tamarindos - A similar offering to the Flora Farms in that it is also a farm on the outskirts of town. Easy driving distance and a nice place to go for a lunch. I had the Japanese peppers, Cornish game hens and my wife had the yellowtail. Good food and good service. You might be the only ones there. Enjoy!



Chostomo - Located in the Mega shopping center, this place has awesome burritos of all kinds. Highly recommended for the semi-fast and good eat. This center also houses the Starbucks and the McDonalds with its latest offering the McNifico. Ole.

Mega – we do all of our shopping at the Mega. Good service from happy people and fresh daily seafood – especially the shrimp. If you want prescription meds or don't have a prescription; Walmart is the least expensive.

ADVENTURING

Todos Santos - is an easy hour's drive north on the new scenic 4 lane Pacific coast highway from Cabo San Lucas. An artist community brimming with creative souls (hippie gringos), this gentle sanctuary has captivated many with its peaceful, laid-back flavor. Set back from the Pacific and nestled in the foothills of the Sierra de la Laguna mountains, this small, intimate town boasts cozy restaurants, starry nights and cooler summer weather than Los Cabos. Surf Daddies....don't forget to visit Cerritos Beach on the way to Todos Santos a true gem, with a great Pacific surf and swim beach to enjoy. It's where the locals go to get away.

La Paz – the capital of Baja California Sir and a beautiful non tourist city situated on a beautiful bay outlined by a malecon that is a joy to stroll along. We stayed at the Hotel La Gaviotas which is a small intimate boutique hotel just one block off the malecon and within walking distance of downtown and many of the fine restaurants, market and small businesses of La Paz. Las Gaviotas is run by an American woman and her husband. It has a great family B&B atmosphere but the rooms are large with kitchens and look out over the ocean.

Massages – if don't want to get a great massage from the resort you can always venture down toward the Mega to Moon Valley. Owned by Jefe Pepe they do a good job for a very reasonable price - \$120USD for two 1-1/2 hour massages. You won't get a therapeutic massage but they ain't bad...

GRAND MAYAN LOS CABOS

My first impression of the Grand Mayan Los Cabos was how different this property is from the other Grand Mayan locations. With just 270 units and no Mayan Palace or Sea Garden nearby, the Grand Mayan functions well as a standalone resort.

Rental Car – our reservation for Europcar magically disappeared (do not use Europcar, ever) so we had to take a taxi from the airport to the Grand Mayan for \$45USD. That is the regulated fee and you have to pay a central cashier. The Grand Mayan travel guy called up the Payless guy and we were able to negotiate a favorable rate even though it was the holidays. He delivered a new Nissan Tiida and we did the paperwork out front on the hood of the car – no fuss, no waiting in line, easy. I will now rent all my cars this way. If you take the tour they can apply the 1000Pesos they offer you into 3 days car rental. Ask up front and get the voucher.

Great view – The single most awesome asset of the Grand Mayan San Jose del Cabo, is the ocean front views. The view is spectacular, whether you are watching the sunrise, sunset or any time of day or night. The Sea of Cortez is less than 300 feet from the edge of the infinity pool with huge waves rolling day and night. The sound is awesome and the whales cruise right by.

Beach – There is plenty to do on the beach. Clean sand, paragliders, volleyball, horseback riding, long walks in both directions, fishing from the beach, nesting turtles, whale watching and don't forget the sales guys.

Rooms – All rooms are ocean front in the U shaped building design. Each room has a wonderful view of the ocean. We spent a great deal of time reading, eating, whale watching (yes you can see the whales from your balcony – take binoculars) and relaxing on the balcony, which also has its own private pool for the one and two bedroom suites.

Restaurants at the Grand Mayan – They are now offering meal plans at the resort. For ~\$218 USD, you will get 6 meal tickets, each good for lunch or dinner at the resort. They also have a breakfast meal plan for ~\$118 USD, which includes 6 breakfast buffets. These meal tickets can be used by one person or several persons, pricing may change.

The breakfast buffet is 230 pesos or approximately \$20 USD, but if you eat between 7 and 8:30, it is only 190 Pesos or ~\$18 USD. The Sunday champagne brunch was 320 pesos or \$30 USD.

We have had the breakfast meals at the resort and that includes the complimentary one that comes with the tour. We always go on the tours to see what is new and to report back to you. They have really improved the breakfast buffets. Everything I had was good and the presentation and variety of selections is exceptional. Pancakes, French toast, eggs as you like them, bacon, sausage, lox, fruit and vegetable bar, juice bar, salsa bar. You will not leave hungry.

Spa – The Brio Spa is spacious, efficient and well done. Upon entering, you will find a massive fish tank consuming the right wall stocked with beautiful white jelly fish. The steam, sauna, cold plunge and hot tubs are well maintained and effective. They offer all the service of a spa including manicure, pedicure, massage, hair coloring and cutting. There is also a weight and resistance machine room for your exercise pleasure.

Walk barefoot – One of the first things we notice was that the walkways were poured concrete. Not the usual pebble tech that requires shoes. It is wonderful to walk around barefoot.

We liked the fact there were many things to do within walking distance of the resort. The town of San Jose del Cabo is a 10 minute walk, where you will find many art and tourist shops, restaurants, small cafes, nightlife, ice cream, and some truly amazing fine dining. Our teenagers and young adults loved the ability to come and go as they please.

Adventures – The Activities Desk is right in the Resort. You can choose from a list of offerings from snorkeling to whale watching. Book through them and get picked up at the front door. No fuss, no muss.

Plaza del Pescador - There are several new restaurants including a Sushi place, a coffee shop, bicycle shop, gourmet wine, and KISS Rock-n-Brew Bar just across the street from the Resort. Really nice!

Other Restaurants:

>>Ensalada - There is a wonderful little restaurant and pastry shop less than a 10 minute walk from the Grand Mayan, on your way into the town of San Jose. It is a gathering spot for many of the American locals that reside in San Jose all or part of the year. We found it a great place to stop for coffee and a roll or breakfast after our morning walk. El Husbando loved the Numero Uno, 3 eggs, bacon, 2 pancakes and coffee for \$8.50. I was partial to the cinnamon rolls, especially the huge one that they sell in sections. Pricey...

>>French Riviera (under new management) – Bakery and Restaurant with fresh breads, pastries, coffee drinks, gelato and full meals. My wife (La Jefa) had a wonderful smoked salmon crepe with a lemon dill sauce.

>>Esquina Café - Coffee and chocolate chip gelato

>>Habaneros – not bad

>>La Fonda – Hamburger for \$4.50

>>Baan Thai – Good Thai Food

>>La Panga – Highly acclaimed and a trip advisor top choice.

>>Morgan's and Morgan's Encore – We prefer Morgan's

Please let us know your favorite places. We appreciate you!! Diane G. Miller & El Husbando.

