



Alma Libre Books

Puerto Morelos, Mexico



Beach Reads

News from Alma Libre Bookstore - Puerto Morelos, Mexico

Year #02 - Issue #3 - February 2004

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In this issue:

- [News from Puerto Morelos - The Season, The Renovation and a Free Gift!](#)
- [News Briefs - New Restaurants and Rainman in PM](#)
- [New Books at Alma Libre - Viva Mexico!](#)

- [Questions About Mexico - The Toilet...And More!](#)
 - [Mexico Facts](#)
 - [Other Stuff](#)
-

News From Puerto Morelos

For Every Time There Is A Season...

"The Season" is here again. Up North you have Spring, Summer, Fall & Winter. Here we only have "The Season" and the "Off Season". The Season is when Puerto Morelos wakes up, more or less, and welcomes the world to slip under its spell.

This year was very busy for the entire Mayan Riviera, but Puerto Morelos, despite hosting many visitors, still felt like the quiet fishing village it is at heart. Many visitor's hours were well-spent/wasted wandering the sandy streets, combing the endless beach, swinging in a hammock or lost in a good read.



While Winter's grip seemed to have the rest of North America in a constant state of snow and cold, life plodded along normally in P.M.

We've seen some outstanding airfare and accommodation deals this year, especially last-minute sell-offs. Keep watching and come up with your own escape plan!

The Joy of Sax

Puerto Morelos is falling for the "Sax-uality" (sorry, no more sax puns I promise) of Jorge Olarte. In a town where it was rare to hear live music, Jorge and his ever-present Saxophone have blown us all away. Look for him at Café del Puerto and Fungo Noire (the new Italian restaurant where Palapa Pizza used to be)

House Renovation Update

We've had lots of emails from readers who enjoy living through our home renovation through the newsletter. In June we bought a two story house in Puerto Morelos and have since converted it into a duplex. We've finished the basics, now we are trying to set up house.



Getting window coverings is easy in Mexico. When you buy fabric at a fabric store, they will make it into custom drapes for free. It took only six days and they look great.

We also drove to Valladolid to look for furniture. There is a small pueblo near Ek Balam where they make beautiful stuff, custom if you like. After driving all those kilometres, we ended up buying a couple of pieces on our way back home...in Cancun!

Another adventure was buying a couch. After scouring the entire Mayan Riviera, we settled on one we liked, then found out that the store had only the floor model in Cancun. Our couch would have to come from Mexico City, and that would take 35 days! It actually arrived early...just 30 days!

The place still needs to be painted and the all-concrete yard could use a little greenery...or a lot! Luckily growing something here is literally as easy as sticking something in the ground and walking away.

Free Gift From Alma Libre



For those of you still stuck up North, bring a small piece of Puerto Morelos to your home or office with our new Puerto Morelos Wallpaper. Beautiful, of course, and practical too with a February and March Calendar built right in.

We'll have new pictures available for download every month!

Pick your wallpaper size:

[1024 x 768](#) [800 x 600](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR WALLPAPER INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS](#)

Locals! We are doing a big book order this month! If you have anything you would like to special order, contact us immediately!

[back to top](#)

News Briefs

Changes!



Two new speed bumps (topes) were recently completed in Puerto Morelos. Usually speed bumps are redundant here as the omnipresent potholes tend to slow traffic down to a crawl.

PM celebrity sighting: Dustin Hoffman was recently seen at John Gray's Kitchen.

New York's Fox 5 anchorman Chris Gailus and wife Jane were recent visitors to Puerto Morelos, and he couldn't help

but brag about his vacation on Fox 5's "Good Day New York". Manhattan was suffering through a very cold stretch of winter at the time, so we suspect many New Yorkers were booking their own trip after seeing the show.

A new bar & restaurant has opened in the Hacienda hotel (on the beach where Johnny Cairo's used to be) called Beracudas. Managers Chad and Tracy hope to feature a lot of live music.

A new t-shirt shop has opened across from the Mayan Handicrafts Centre.

An African restaurant has opened south of the Handicrafts Centre.

Speaking of live music, it's getting a little easier to find here with Tito's, Don Pepe's, and as mentioned before, Cafe del Puerto, Fungo Noire and Beracudas all recently featuring music in the afternoon and evening.

Hotel Inglaterra is undergoing a major renovation and upgrade.

The little pizza place across from Don Pepe's (where Chip's Bar used to be) has closed. Look for this month's "Sacbe" newspaper, featuring Joanne's article on PM's Botanical Garden. Current Exchange Rates (In Puerto Morelos)
USA Dollar 10.75 CDN Dollar 8.00

[back to top](#)

This Just In! *New Books & Products at Alma Libre*

Books!

Viva Mexico!

This year we are proud to offer some unique titles celebrating the history, culture and art of our adopted country. Here are some highlights:



History of Mexico: A book so complete that it is used as a text book in Mexican studies in Canada and the United States, yet it does not read like a text book. Focuses on how the events that shaped Mexico's history also created its unique culture. Covers everything from the pre-Columbian period to the impact of NAFTA.



The Friends of Pancho Villa: The story of Mexico's most famous and colourful Revolutionary hero. Pancho Villa rose from being a sharecropper peasant on a hacienda to the revolutionary hero of millions.

"This is a tremendous book, replete with wonderful characters, an interesting plot, and wonderful atmosphere. The author has recreated the time of the Mexican revolution

wonderfully, and the main character, and narrator, is someone you'd like to sit and have a conversation with...though not in a dark alley." -Amazon.com reader



Mexican Handmade Style: Make your own memories of Mexico. This book features twenty easy to make projects to brighten your home and garden. This beautiful book features more than 150 colour photographs.

"Each project is a twist on a traditional method. They are easy to read and follow and offer a bit of history about where they came from." - Amazon.com reader



A Taste of Mexico: The best place to recreate a little of your trip to Mexico when you are back home is in the kitchen. "A Taste of Mexico" features 70 exotic recipes packed with the colour and flavour of Mexico. Recipes range from soup to desserts to drinks. Step by step colour photographs illustrate each recipe.

[back to top](#)

Mucho Gusto!

Answers to a Few Questions about Mexico

Why Can't I Flush? – The first thing we do with guests staying at our casa is sit them down and have “The Toilet Paper Talk”. It must go in the wastebasket, not in the bowl. Everyone here is on a septic system and some places have crazy plumbing that just can't take the paper without clogging. Even at first-world institutions like Wal-Mart, you must use the basket. The exception is the big multi-million dollar resorts, which have their own plants, providing enough pressure to flush a Chihuahua if necessary.

Why Can't I Cross the Street? – You may have the luxury of pedestrian right of way at home, but here, the pedestrian is at the bottom of the list. Right of way seems to be based on who has the biggest vehicle and is the most motivated. Taxis and buses usually win. Look out for them, because they are not looking for you.



Will My Blow Dryer Work? – Electricity in Mexico is the same voltage as elsewhere in North America, more or less. The difference is the power is often unstable. In our first month living here, we suffered a series of power spikes that blew up a battery charger, two hair dryers, a fan and we had two surge protectors go up in smoke! Consider packing a small surge protector to protect your

electronics and unplug everything when not in use.

Should I Tip? – YES! Tipping is very important here. Most service workers are paid very little and rely on tips to survive. You also need to tip a wider array of people. The guy who helps you back your car out and the kid that bags your groceries makes no wage at all and relies on your tips to live.

Why Am I Being Stopped? – Police and the Military routinely have permanent checkpoints on the highways. They will ask where you are from, where you are going and may wish to search your vehicle. Stay cool, show them your papers, let them look and you will be on your way in moments. Great place to try out your Spanish...on armed men.

Are You Sure You Are Covered? – When renting a car you may think you have insurance through your credit card but most cards don't cover Mexico. If they do, make sure you have an 800 number (that works in Mexico) to call if you have an accident. Police can throw everyone in jail until they determine who is at fault. You want to be able to call for help from an insurance company lawyer anytime.



Why Won't They Bring Me My Bill? – We sat confused in restaurants for ages until we figured this out. Even if the restaurant is crowded, it is customary in Mexican restaurants not to rush you, so they will not bring you the bill until you ask for it. Saying “*La cuenta, por favour*” or using the seemingly international hand motion of pretending to sign a

cheque, will produce the bill.

How Can I Live Longer, Be Smarter and Look More Attractive? - Reading a book does all these things! – Okay, we can't prove this one, but do you want to take a chance? Visit Alma Libre Bookstore in Puerto Morelos today!

[back to top](#)

Mexico Facts

We have now had visitors from 40 countries in our bookstore:

Argentina Australia Austria Bahamas Belize Brazil Bulgaria Canada Chile
England Finland France Germany Greece Holland Honduras Hungary Iceland
Israel Italy Jamaica Japan Martinique Mexico New Zealand Norway Peru
Philippines Poland Scotland Slovakia Slovenia South Africa Spain Sweden
Switzerland Ukraine United States Wales



We have had visitors from every continent...except Antarctica. If anyone ever needed a tropical vacation...it would be someone from there!

Most Northern visitor: Barrow, Alaska

Most Southern Visitor: Bunbury, Australia

[back to top](#)

Just a reminder that we are in our high season hours now. That is Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am until 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Sunday we are open 4:00 to 9:00. We are closed Monday.

Our hours are always posted on the front page of our website at www.almalibrebooks.com.

We take trades every day, so our selection is constantly changing. If you are planning a trip down, why not bring some recent bestsellers to trade and check out our store.



For you locals, remember we are always bringing in Special Orders. Contact us for details. Amazon can't touch us!

We look forward to seeing you in Puerto Morelos!

[back to top](#)

Beach Reads is the official newsletter of Alma Libre Bookstore in Puerto Morelos Mexico. It is mailed directly to your mailbox if you request it. Beach Reads is published on a sporadic, seemingly random basis...but it is supposed to be approximately monthly during the season at Puerto Morelos. The season is November until after Easter. We do our best to publish it regularly...but the beach is so pretty...

Our website is located at www.almalibrebooks.com Our store hours are always on the home page.

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please [Click Here To Unsubscribe](#)

This is Year #2, Issue #3. February 2004. We were supposed to have a January issue, but we just never got around to it...sorry.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please [Contact Us](#)

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