

La Paloma's Where to Eat? Guide

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Melaque - San Patricio - Villa Obregon

These tri-villages, which are all connected, are situated alongside the beautiful Bahía de Navidad one mile northwest of Barra de Navidad. Melaque is at the far Northwest end of the Bay and has been a Beach Vacation Community for generations of Mexicans until discovered by Canadian visitors who are well known for seeking less costly areas, due to their weaker currency. San Patricio only a half mile wide, is the center of these tri-villages. It contains most of the areas retail shops and the main town square that serves as the gathering place for all three communities. New paved streets are appearing everywhere. San Patricio/Melaque/Villa Obregon now form the largest community on the Costa Alegre between Puerto Vallarta and Manzanillo. Their post office, bank,

ATM machine, and central markets serve this large rural area, which is a stretch of paradise covering 200 kilometers of oceanfront. The Costa Alegre boasts resorts and private retreats covering the spectrum of prices from \$200 pesos per night to \$500 dollars per night and is being compared to Puerto Vallarta of the fifties. San Patricio - Melaque - Villa Obregon are spread over three miles of beachfront, and is quickly equaling Barra in its number of good Gringo and Mexican eateries. There are even night clubs, discos, and strip joints, tennis courts, an Art Center, Art Gallery and the only bank and ATM machines between P.V. and Cihuatlán.

The Beach

Playa Melaque is the main beach in Melaque. As in Barra de Navidad, the slope of the beach is steep which causes the waves to break on shore. The beach

is good for swimming in general, there is neither undertow nor rip currents, but will present difficulty to all swimmers when the waves are big. The steep incline in the Barra end of the beach gives way to a gentle and inviting incline at the far end of the Melaque beach. From the trailer park in Melaque to the west end the water is easy to enter and the waves smaller. The beach is rather long, extending from the jetty in Barra de Navidad to the west end cliffs of Melaque. Not recommended for snorkeling, or surfing. You might explore some areas down the trail west of Melaque town to find hidden beaches... watch the tide table for the high tide can maroon a sleeping sunbather.... As in all Ocean sports keep your eye on the waves, and wait for the large sets of waves to end before entering or exiting the ocean.

'FOOD GUIDE' From a Gringo Point of view!

Breakfast: Bananas in Barra/Bananarama in Melaque. Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla. Victor's in Villa Obregon. Los Ardos de Jalisco in Barra.

Lunch: Restaraunt Maya. Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla. Los Ardos de Jalisco in Barra.

Burgers: Hamburgesa Maui in Melaque, Restaurant Maya, Tessa's Malt shop and Seamaster in Barra. Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla.

Bar B Q Ribs: Seamaster in Barra, Koalas, Restaraunt Maya.

Steak: Koalas in San Patricio, Bananas in Barra, Restaraunt Maya. El Dorado in Melaque. Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla.

Seafood: Restaraunt Maya, El Dorado, Valeros, Seamaster & Bannanas in Barra and most Palapa restaurants, Chualos

in Cuastecamonte, Martins & Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla.

Pasta: Romeos & Resataurant Maya in San Patricio, Bannanas in Barra.

Salads: Restaraunt Maya, Romeos in San Patricio. Martins & Palapa Joes in La Manzanilla.

Authentic Mexican: Flor Morena, Alcatraz , Cabo Blanco ,Bigotes & Seven Stars in San Patricio, Patty's, Ramones & Los Arcos in Barra, Martins in La Manzanilla., Los Arcos de Jalisco.

Fish&Chips: Ramones in Barra , Pedros in Villa Obregon.

Burritos: Burrito King in Melaque, and Bananas Breakfast Burritos.

Hot Dog: Restaurant Maya & El Pirata cart in town square, San Patricio.

Pizza: Pizza Y betta in Barra.

Sushi: Comeda Japanese in San Patricio

Italian: Romeos in San Patricio.

Inexpensive food: Flor Morena, Los Arcos de Jalisco , Ayala,Hamburgesa Maui.

Wine selection: Restaraunt Maya, Ambar, Martins, Palapa Joes

Groceries: Hawaii Market in San Patricio

Fruit & veggies: El Pirata market 150 meters right from Cathedral.

Grains in bulk: Main street San Patricio across from delegation office.

Cigars: Cheapest and best selection at Tobacco shop next to Ramone.

ATM machines: 1 in Barra Main Street 2 in Banamex Melaque.

Restaurants

Here is a list of restaurants that our guests have enjoyed, and feel use proper food handling methods & sanitary care. That is not to say there are not others that fit this category and we would appreciate hearing from our readers with information and recommendations that we have missed. Unless otherwise stated, these establishments, like La Paloma, are OPEN ALL YEAR!.

Eating Out In San Patricio/Melaque November, 2001 Update

BREAKFAST at **BANANARAMAS!** **NEW LOCATION** Turn left from our main entry and walk 100 yards. The best breakfasts in town, with David on the grill and Marie on the tables (not literally). Good Coffee, Fresh fruit and Juice, Ham, Sausages, Home fries, omeletes, waffles and more! **OPENS EARLY EVERY DAY** with service till 1:00 **OPEN FOR DINNER** at 5:00 Closes after Easter and **RE-OPENS** early November.

Walk out our main gate and turn right for a hundred yards to a truly outstanding restaurant that serves up fine cuisine in our South Pacific environment. **THE RESTAURANT MAYA** - set amongst swaying Palms, Tiki Torches and a Palapa Bar right **ON THE OCEAN** - (with live music and dancing). It's the creation of two gals from Vancouver, with loads of expertise in Food and Fun! Once you've experienced Chef Peg Montgomery's **CUISINE**, You'll be back again and again. Appetizers Galore, Salads, Pastas, Chicken, Pork, Ribs, Filet Mignon and **The BEST FRESH SEAFOOD** on the Costalegre! **OPENS AT 12:30** for **LUNCH, DINNER & HAPPY HOUR** at 5:30, and closes Late. **DAILY SPECIALS** too. Closed on Mondays. **OPEN** November to June.

GO Right out our main gate to the wide street and up for 300 meters and to your right will be **KOALAS** - run by Beverly from down under and hubby Bill Weston, former C.B.C. producer. Delightful setting in their own home patio. Gringo Food prepared by Beverly,

Cocktails & Wine by Bill. Dinners nightly. You'll see me eating the **RIB EYE** hot off the barbie, and sharing her chocolate peanut butter cheesecake. **Open** December, **Closed** by Easter.

Directly out our main gate and straight through the field, across the street and left for 35 yards to **ROMEOS ITALIANO**. Luke and Anna from Saltspring Island B.C. opened their latest creation last year and received raves from our guests. **PILES OF PASTA, FRESH SALADS .DAILY SOUP** and much more make this a popular spot for romantic dinners. **Opens** from December till Easter. **Thursdays HAMBURGER NIGHT** is a **HIT~ CLOSED SUNDAY**. Congratulations to Luke and Anna on the arrival of baby Lara in October.

A new **BREAKFAST** place in Bananaramas original location! **HARVEYs** opens at 7 and serves till noon. Everything a gringo wants including **BREAKFAST BURRITOS** and **BAGELS** which should be a hit!

Across from the Town Square is **FLOR MORENA** - a tiny spot with Great home cooked Mexican Pazole, Tacos, Tamales, Enchiladas, and more. Prepared fresh each night by owner **UMBITA**. Always a line but worth the wait. **Opens** at 5:00. **Closed** Mondays. **Inexpensive**

SEVEN STARS restaurant is directly across from the town square on our main street. It's **ALWAYS OPEN** and serves many daily specials known as **COMEDA CORIDA** - all inclusive meals. On **FRIDAYS** it's **CHILE RELLENOS** not available anywhere else in this area.

BURRITO KING serves great Tex Mex burritos and Tacos. Homesick for some real Norte American Mexican like back home? This is it! **OPEN FROM 5 TO 11**. Closes Tuesday

HAMBURGESA MAUI, kitty corner to **KOALAS** serves good tortas and hamburgers and fries. **MOST ALWAYS**

OPEN. Eat there, take out, free delivery! **ECONOMICA**.

AUTHENTIC FRESH JAPANESE CUISINE served in the corridor market place off our main street. Very good fresh food, and **SUSHI** and **TAKE OUT** too. Operated by Goro and his family, San Patricio's number one Samurai! Closes at 5:00

STREET STANDS throughout our towns serve some of Mexico's tastiest food!

ALCATRAZ, upstairs in their new Palapa is kitty corner to the Trailer Park. A **GREAT MEXICAN GRILL** featuring chicken and beef dishes served in a sizzling pot! **POPULAR!** Closes after Easter to November

LA TERAZZA. Barney and his Mexican born wife Dianna from Saltspring Island B.C. operate this very economical restaurant situated across from the bus station and in a second story Palapa entered from The Hotel Monterey. Gringo and local food and **FRESH SEAFOOD** at economical prices. Closes after Easter till November.

On the other side of the **TRAILER** park is a good **FRENCH FRY & HAMBURGER** grill.

Cihuatlán's **CHICKEN BOY** is now serving his **GREAT TACOS** on Melaque's Main.

AYALA - walk up the small street across from the trailer park. **OPEN ALL DAY** with home cooked specials. **VERY POPULAR!** Economical

EL PIRATA HOT DOGS. At the Town Square nightly. **MUY BUENO!**

CLUB DORADO a huge beautiful palapa on the Bay, Great Setting, Mex-style seafood. Live **MUSIC & DANCING**.

LAS PALMAS: The most **ECONOMICAL** spot on the beach, Mexican style seafood, and full of old t

time HOSPITALITY! Open daily till sunset.

OPEN AGAIN for dinner this year just left off Alvaro Obregon is EL GUERILLERO. It's situated four blocks up from the beach, and around the corner with cute little tables outside. Watch them prepare tortillas in front of you and enjoy Bar B Q prepared chicken and steaks. Served with a bean soup.

RIGHT out our beach gate for 100 meters is BIGOTES PALAPA Long time local favorite ALWAYS OPEN. Eat under the palapa or on the beach. Full bar service. GREAT HAPPY HOUR.

The WEST END of Melaque Bay offers a spectacular view of the entire horseshoe shaped Bay of Navidad. It is very Polynesian in feeling, and the sea is calm. Most of the local fishermen launch from this protected area. It is a MUST to visit this part of the Bay at DAYTIME!

There are MANY PALAPA restaurants here serving similar Mexican favorites and MUCHAS selections of FRESH MARISCOS! Get another perspective of the VIEWS from our Bay. Recommend CABO BLANCO.

PEDROS FISH & CHIPS opens November 1 in the same location as last year. From Alvarro Obregon go down the main oceanfront road for about five blocks and look for their sign pointing left for another fifty yards. Pedro is on the fryer and Racquel on the floor (not literally) FRIED CHICKEN & CHIPS as well and Racquel's yummy carrot cake. To PICKUP & TAKE OUT - Phone 35 7069.

Eating out in Barra de Navidad

Barra de Navidad is a cute oceanside town at the east end of our bay. Reminds us much of LAHAINNA MAUI of the seventies. GREAT spot for wandering, Happy Hours, Sunsets, and Dining. Boat rentals, Fishing and Diving charters, lagoon tours all originate in Barra.

BANANAS - The original great BREAKFAST establishment, and still is THE BEST! OPEN from 8:00 to Noon. Great Breakfast Burritos, home fries and more. OPEN FOR DINNER from 6:00

to 10:00 featuring wonderful fresh seafoods, homemade pastas, and STEAKS. The FASTEST SERVICE around. There is no better MARGARITA anywhere, anytime Bar None! LOCATED On the Mezzanine level of the HOTEL BARRA DE NAVIDAD! Closed after Easter.

NOTHING OVER 40 PESOS at the beautiful NEW LOS ARCOS DE JALISCO. Famous Mariachi performer and recording artist Vincente Fernandez opened this lovely RESTAURANT and BAR last summer. Authentic Fresh Mexican Comeda. OPEN ALL DAY for BREAKFAST, LUNCH, and DINNER. Closes after ten p.m. after the MUSIC stops.

GOURMETS will cheer the opening of EL OLIVIA RESTAURANTE!. Next to Ramones and opposite Hotel Barra El Olivio opened by former Food & Beverage Manager of the Grand Bay Hotel. Neptune Couscous, Seabass Osso Bucco with wild mushroom risotto, Baked Lamb, Beef Tournedos with veal sweetbread, and Lobster tail trio served with a delicate Champagne and herb sauce are an example of their menu. Great Salads, Scallops & Shrimp Thai style, Crab Tacos, and much more for starters. How about Fresh Strawberry Soup with basil and green pepper corn served with a lemon sorbet, or a rum flambéed tropical fresh fruit crepe for dessert! Of course you will pay a little more, but you'd pay twice as much at home!

SEAMASTER - East of Bananas on the Ocean. Famous for SPARERIBS. Their other specials feature fresh seafoods and muchas sautéed veggies. LARGE SERVINGS. Wok-style cooking. Good Burgers too. OPEN ALL THE TIME. GOOD!

PANCHOS - next to Seamasters, long-time favorite for OYSTERS and lots of other local comida! OPEN ALL THE TIME.

SUNSETS- West of Bananas, GREAT HAPPY HOUR ALL THE TIME!

AMBAR - Located upstairs in a groovy little Palapa. Looks down on the open mall where the Church stands, or above

Kosso Pizza. Owned and operated by lovely French lady Veronique featuring Crepes and much more, and a good wine selection. Very Intimate! OPEN FOR DINNER. Closed from Easter till October.

CHIPS- another groovy upstairs spot on the ocean across from taxi stands. Best for Sunset cocktails or late evening. Live Latin Jazz.

LOS ARCOS- Longtime MOM & POP Mexican Home Cookin. On Mazatlan across from the Posada Pacifico. Nice people, Economical.

VELEROS - FRESH FISH MEXICAN STYLE. Overlooking the Lagoon and Grand Bay. Lovely setting! Good Food!

RAMONES - Longtime favourite of Mexicans and Gringos alike, satellite TV, Huge menu, ALWAYS OPEN, across from Barra Hotel. for BREAKFAST, LUNCH, and DINNER. GOOD MEXICAN FOOD and great SEA-FOOD ÔN CHIPS! A Meeting Place!

TESS'S MALT SHOP for Great malts and outstanding HAMBURGERS CHICKEN BURGERS and SALADS. Located above the CRAZY CACTUS in the Church Square. You'll see me there! Closed from Easter till December

PATTYS - Longtime favorite Mexican Cafe with good food and low prices. On the Main street across from Church Square.

Other Destinations

CIHUATLAN is ten minutes past the Grand Bay entrance enroute to Manzanillo. It's our Government centre! and BEEF LOVERS TAKE NOTE! - Halfway through town on the left side is CHARLIES, with a large entrance to a large parking area. In shaded comfort you will find the most DELICIOUS BEEF and the BEST ARACHERA STEAK ANYWHERE! Don't miss this opportunity and their refried beans.

PALAPA JOES in La Manzanilla. Another Great New Restaurant to our Cost Alegre, and OPEN ALL YEAR. Three blocks down the main street on

the left side. Created by popular Joe Santana who knows how to do things right! Great environment and really good food to please any taste. Salads, Sea food, Steak, Chicken, and a lot more. Excellent presentation. Chef Larry from Michigan knows how to please. BREAKFAST, LUNCH, & DINNER. EGGS BENEDICT TOO!

.MARTINS (MARTEENS) in la Manzanilla. From Valero's fame. Martin has opened his own fabulous NEW restaurant at the end of the main street on the oceanside. He is open all the time with wonderful cuisine with a French Mexican flavor. Great wine list and exotic drinks. He will create anything you ask for and serve it to you with style. Give yourselves lots of time, and you'll be back again and again!

TENACATITA BEACH - wonderful swimming, sunbathing, fair snorkelling, boogie boarding, and body surfing when conditions are right.

There are over a dozen beach palapa restaurants. We like CHELYS, which is just as you enter. Named after Don Franciscos' lovely daughter who greets you on your arrival with a great big smile and Mama Francisco. VERY FRESH SEAFOOD prepared any way you like. We have not tasted fresher seafood anywhere! Other non seafood items also. OPEN FROM 10.00 to 8:00p.m. ALL THE TIME.

NEXT DOOR is another beach palapa owned by Chely's brother and his wife LOLA It is called CATO and is also another favorite. Also OPEN ALL THE TIME!

COSTA CAREYES - Twenty minutes drive west of TENACATITA is The CAREYES HOTEL, with a fabulous patio bar and restaurant right on the Ocean. Excellent cuisine with the flavours of the south pacific regions and Mexico. Very Fresh, worth the drive, and 1/2 the price you'd expect to pay for the same, at home!

Another great OCEANFRONT private restaurant lays to the right of the Careyes and is operated by a French lady. I've forgotten the name at this point, but you

make a right turn rather than a left turn when heading into the Careyes Hotel

You get to both of these restaurants by making the same left turn off the main highway with a well marked CAREYES sign. CLUB MED is just next door.

East of us...

GRAND BAY HOTEL- Can be accessed by highway seven minutes down the road, or better still, can be accessed by lagoon boats from the Barra Harbor. A world class 27 hole golf course with clubhouse and restaurant which opens for Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner and serves good food at escalating prices There is a very expensive main restaurant in the hotel open to the public and we have not tried it yet.

CIHUATLAN - Just ten minutes down the road from the Grand Bar turnoff. I call it the town from hell because you cannot bypass it. Buckle your seat belts for a roly bumpy ride through. Visit as you drive through for great BIRRIA, which is GOAT, and it's delicious! Also, when heading home, the STREET TACO stand next to Bancomer serves up Chopped barbecued Prime Rib Tacos and other specials from time to time This same person also operates CHICKEN BOY, and are now in Melaque near the Bus Station. VERY GOOD TACOS!

LE RECIFS', with a FANTASTIC SETTING, and EXCELLENT FOOD! Look for the signs on the right hand side of the road prior to the COLIMA AUTOPISTA turnoff in the village of NARANJA. You will drive to the Ocean and come to a sign that says PALMA ROYALE a two story set of buildings that looks like a condo. Walk up the stairs to Paradise. CLOSED EASTER TO DECEMBER.

ONWARD is the BAY OF MANZANILLO. This very long strip of Hotels, including The Bo Derrick Movie 10 LAS HADAS and dozens of other hotels. Apartments. Time share condos etc, offers more eateries than carter has pills. A few blocks before the Las Hadas turnoff, and on the right side is JUANITOS owned by red headed Gringo JUAN and his lovely Mexican

wife. And all their mostly adult kids and extended family. It's been a big favorite with both gringos and Mexicans for a long time. PATIO and INSIDE set-ups. CNN on the tely, INTERNET-connected computers on-site. SPOTLESS BANOS. Look for a line-up of American License plates in front. And you'll know you're at JUANITOS.

The old COLONIAL HOTEL is the place to eat, when you visit the City of MANZANILLO! On the Main street a block up from the Town Square.

LIME IN MEXICO IS A STAPLE AND PUT ON MOST FOOD. IT ADDS FLAVOR AND KILLS BACTERIA! USE IT! ALSO stops the itch from PESKY INSECTS!

YEARS AGO, VISITORS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE WATER. TODAY, PURIFIED WATER IS EVERYWHERE. AND VISITORS ARE GETTING ILL BY NOT DRINKING ENOUGH WATER!!!

DRINK LOTS OF PURIFIED WATER WHILE IN MEXICOS HEAT!

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www.tomzap.com/lapaloma.html
www.tomzap.com/paloma-art.html