

# SOLE AZTECA

ISSUE 50 AGUST 2011

PROJECTS ABROAD MEXICO NEWSLETTER

ProjectsAbroad

## DESTINATION: MARUATA BEACH

SALSA DANCING,  
MEXICAN WRESTLING  
& KARAOKE NIGHT!

OUR FIRST MEXICAN  
COOKING LESSON!

# Editor's Notes

*A Word from the Editor  
Hello!*

*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 August edition!*

*Special thanks for this newsletter go to:*

*- Danielle Babel for her Volunteer Story.*

*- Oliver Garcia for his update on the Turtle Conservation programme.*

*- Jonatan Arriaga for making this newsletter what it is today.*

*Good luck on your new journey Jonatan!*

*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 along with your pictures to:*

*carlosochoa@projects-abroad.org*

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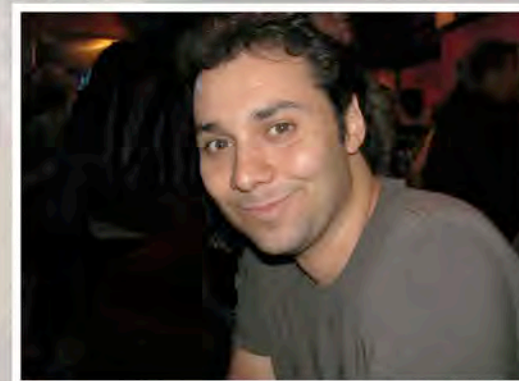
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Social Manager*

*Projects Abroad Mexico*

# Volunteer Story

I am just half way through my time with projects abroad in Guadalajara, and I am dreading the day of my project's termination. The first few weeks I spent with two pediatricians in internal medicine at Centro Medico, a large and well-supplied private hospital. I then transferred to a dramatically different environment and began work at the Cruz Verde, one of the city's public emergency hospitals. Both places have afforded me numerous learning experiences. I have done and seen things that I could never have anticipated.

At Centro Medico I saw the tender interaction between my supervising physicians and very ill children, and gained a lot of clinical insight on how to go about diagnosing disease. At the Cruz Verde I have seen severely injured patients and very involved surgeries on various parts of the body. The very welcoming staff has allowed me to practice handy emergency room skills like suturing open wounds, taking blood pressure and other vital signs, as well as reading X-rays.

They have even let me assist in complex surgical procedures. Just in this past month I have learned what I would learn normally in years. It will be hard to leave behind the daily dose of medical excitement and mental stimulation as well as the supporting doctors, residents, and nurses who have made this experience possible.



**Danielle Babbel**

**Medical Volunteer**

# NATIONAL HANDICRAFTS TRADE FAIR

## – Tlaquepaque & Tonalá -

Tlaquepaque, Jalisco, August 16 to 20

Over 130 Mexican artisans from all over the country exhibit their artistic wares at these handicrafts fair near Guadalajara. Jewelry, furniture, candles, ceramics, pewter, wood accessories and blown glass are among the products showcased.

In August of 1989 the Tlaquepaque/Tonalá Chamber of Commerce introduced to Mexico the first specialized Crafts and Decorative Art Products Show under the label of ENART EXPO (National Crafts Expo). Since then the venue for this event has been the El Refugio Cultural and Expo Center located in the heart of Tlaquepaque.

From 1989 to 1995, the ENART Expo was held as an annual event during the month of August, achieving during this time, an important growth that was propelled by the high quality of a great variety of crafts manufacturing companies that displayed their very best product lines of innovative design.

During the eighth show, it was decided the event would be held twice a year; during the months of February and August, starting in the year 1996. This decision was a great success for ENART. Since then, the area was established as one of the most important producers of arts and crafts in Latin America.

Today ENART includes the participation of more than 200 crafts manufacturing companies from many Mexican states. These companies offer the very best of their product lines, quality and design. Our database consists of over 16000 wholesale distributors and retailers of decorative products and gift items. These buyers are based in Mexico and 63 other countries.

It is a great chance for all visitors to enjoy of a great Mexican art exhibition!



## MEXICO CITY'S MUSIC AND SCENE FESTIVAL



This festival was born in 1998 as an adventure called 'Music y Escena'. It began with a minimal budget, presenting several options that were only staged once; as time went by, the festival grew and became more ambitious, to the point that more Mexican operas were premiered in it, than in Bellas Artes itself.

Scenic music is a space in which the traditional boundaries between artistic disciplines are broken down, with totally enjoyable results. Indeed, where else can one find music, choreographic movement, texts, lighting effects, up-to-the-minute technological advances, the visual arts, theatre, dance, and multi-media? We are speaking of well-known media such as chamber operas and musical theatre, but also of more current expressions, some of which are so experimental that they defy being pigeon-holed into specific categories.

The Music and Scene Festival of Mexico City was created in 1998 with the idea of creating an avenue for a type of repertoire which had previously been under-represented in Mexico. Owing to its unique characteristics, this repertoire is seldom presented in traditional concert halls. With this in mind, the Hellenic Center of Mexico City opened the doors of its three performance spaces (the Main Theatre, the "Cave" Theatre, and the Chapel) as venues for the festival. In 2002, the Music Department of the National Autonomous University joined forces with the festival in a co-producer capacity, and several of the festival's events were held in the University Cultural Center's Covarrubias Theatre. In a similar fashion, the National Center for the Arts also came on board in 2004, and since that time it has been the seat of many academic events which coincide with the festival. Year after year the festival has increased its audiences and its importance is undeniable, not only for musicians and/or creators, but also for those artists who wish to participate in musical/theatrical collaborations. In 2008, the festival's seats will be the Covarrubias Theatre and the National Arts Center's Salvador Novo and Arts Theatres.

## INTERNATIONAL MARIACHI FAIR GUADALAJARA

Jalisco invites you to the biggest event in the land of the Mariachi, with the participation of the best mariachis in Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba, Belgium, Chile, France, Argentina, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Australia, Aruba, Costa Rica, Slovak Republic, Canada and the United States. Another aim is to establish a new Guinness Record on September 4th, with the largest number of flowering charro roping while wearing the traditional charro style.



As it has become a tradition, in this coming month of August, Guadalajara will have the 18th International Encounter of Mariachi and Charrería. This is one great opportunity to actually feel involved and know more about our wonderful culture and music. You will not find anything more vivid and “Mexican” than this festival.

Your eyes will be fulfilled with amazing colour work wrought in the traditional folk clothing and you will unquestionably feel stimulated by the transcendental music of the Mariachi.

If you are a rodeo “aficionado” you would not want to miss the competition of Charrería. This is basically a contest to see who the best “Charro” is; competing in different areas, for example the famous “8 second” bull riding.

This year the festival coordinators and participants will try to achieve a new Guinness Record by having the most number of folk dancers dancing at the same time. Can you imagine that! All this will feel like an interlude for the Pan American Games which will be held here in Guadalajara 2011, by preparing the most beautiful folkloric environment the world has ever seen.

# Projects Abroad Donation-Update.

My last visit to Brayan! It really makes me sad to think that it will be a while until I see him again! It has been great to meet him and his mother. Two amazing people who have taught me to smile in the face of adversities and to be grateful for every little aspect in life.

I am glad Projects Abroad and I could have been in close touch with him, supporting him with very little. A little sometimes means a lot.

On the last visit he got another gift he was expecting for a few months...another action figure so he can play at home.

All my best wishes to Brayan and his mother Esther! I will bring you in my heart and mind forever!

**Jonatan A.F.**



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Projects Abroad Blog - Mexico

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Read our monthly newsletter

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteerdestinations/mexico/newsletters-from-mexico/>

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## Get together for Salsa Class, Karaoke and Lucha Libre!

### - Salsa class

The Salsa classes are back this month after a little break. This time we had a new teacher, Alex. He is a member of the staff and he is a really good salsa dancer so I called everyone to join us in Alex' first class.

Everything went great and it was so much fun. After the dancing, we were thirsty so we went to get a few refreshments straight away! Thanks to Alex and for the people who joined us in the class.



### - Lucha Libre

Lucha libre (Mexican Wrestling) as you know is something really popular in Mexico, so every couple of months we go to the Arena to watch this performance. All the new guys had not had the experience before so it was a great time to go!

'Glamour Tuesday' is the name of the event we attended! There were loads of funny wrestlers and great ones too; from being funny to being really acrobatic!



### - Karaoke Time!

Right after the lucha libre we still felt pretty festive so we headed off to the karaoke place! Tuning up the night to the always sing a long style of the Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Britney Spears, Heroes del Silencio, YMCA and many more!



## Godspeed To Our Friend Jonatan Arriaga!

Today from the bottom of our hearts we wish the best to one of our colleagues, one of our staff members, but most of all a dear friend who embarks on a new adventure to pursue a career in musical production.

Starting his career with Projects Abroad back in 2003, he's been one of the cornerstones of the Mexican office, starting as an Assistant Manager and then moving on as a Social Manager, guilty as charged of starting with a long time tradition of successful salsa lessons and Mexican barbecues as well as many Posadas (Mexican Christmas parties) under his Social Manager heavyweight belt. He has also had the opportunity to see and experience different cultures,



not just through the eyes of our volunteers but also by collaborating with offices in different destinations such as Argentina, India, Senegal and Ghana, experiences that help broaden minds, perceptions and forge one's character. And no matter the circumstances, his personality had always proven to be his more powerful asset, always bringing a smile to any situation and a positive attitude and wits that, combined, make for a great and undefeatable combo!

His passion for music, especially heavy metal, emerged in his early teens and soon developed into something more than just a simple hobby, bands like Kiss, Iron Maiden and Metallica were the molders and shapers of this axe-shredding lifestyle that would soon become his motto for life and a wish upon a loud guitar.

An inborn talent for guitar playing that humbly started in a house garage and very quickly evolved into hard dedication and fieriness that has taken him across many scenarios in the country, playing with his power metal band Circles of Mind, alongside many of the most important bands in the genre and bringing his musical artistry to many other projects. And just like all good artists with a hunger for change and transformation, his career has now taken a different path in search for new challenges that will see him venturing on university courses to polish his skills and get a degree in musical production.

Godspeed on your new adventure my friend...It's a long way to the top if you wanna rock & roll!

## Destination- Maruata Beach!

Hidden along the Michoacan coast, lies the small town of Maruata. It's relative obscurity and lack of mainstream accommodations leaves it to those of a more adventurous spirit. A favorite of backpackers, campers and Mexican students, Maruata caters to a younger, adventurous group.

Maruata has two main beaches, the main sheltered beach that looks out onto a small bay, and a smaller beach surrounded by weathered rock monoliths. The latter beach has no breakwater for the large pacific rollers, which break directly on the beach.

The main beach is a famed Sea Turtle nesting site. Indeed, there is a turtle sanctuary that is adjacent to the tiny town, about 2 miles down the beach. The sanctuary works to prevent the poaching of turtle eggs. There are palapas with beds available, but only a few. Otherwise, camping is the next form of accommodation.



There is a convenience store that sells some food items, but don't rely on it for anything specific. Much of the food spoils rapidly in the warm, humid climate. There are a few beach "restaurants" that offer tortillas, beans and fried fish, as well as a wide selection of drinks.

There is no direct bus service to Maruata. One must take the bus to Lazaro Cardenas and inform the driver that you wish to stop at Maruata. From there, you must then take a short walk (less than a mile) to the beach, passing through town and through the small stream.

## Mexican Kitchen- Carne a la Mexicana and Tomatoe Sauces

When people talk about Mexico, one of their first thoughts is food. This is why I find it very important to share this extraordinary part of my culture with people who haven't had a real experience with our food and what could be better than showing them how to cook their own Mexican food. I'm sure this experience will be not only part of their experience in the country but also a life experience.

- Recipe 6 portions:  
Beef 1.5 kg  
Tomato 1/2 kg.  
Medium onions. 2  
Salt N/q  
Black pepper N/q  
Chili (optional) 5  
Oil 5 tablespoons

(N/q: necessary quantity)

Way to prepare it.

Take the tomatoes and slice them in circles then

take the onion and do the same. If you feel a bit adventurous add a little bit of spice to your Carne a la Mexicana, you can also slice the chili and mix it with the onion and the tomato.

Put the beef in a frying pan with hot oil (you can use any kind of oil you have), add the salt and pepper and leave the beef in there until the meat gets a dark color. The meat will release its own juice so wait 10 minutes and take out some of the juice. Keep cooking the meat for another 5 minutes and add the tomato, onion and chili. Cook all the ingredients for another 30 minutes until the vegetables get properly cook.

Divide the portions over 6 plates and enjoy your meal. Buen Provecho!



# Conservation in Mexico

## Conservation in Mexico – Monthly Update August 2011

Finally the high season for turtle nest collection is here, we feel really glad that we have a chance once more to be part of the effort to preserve the olive ridley specie. By now, we have been able to collect over 900 nests; we expect that before the end of the month we reach the nest 1500, a really good start as we are way ahead of our own expectations with the addition of a new Quadbike brought by the Government office. The results are now better. As I mentioned before, that the amount of eggs we collect reflects our operational capabilities, a new quadbike, more staff, are factors that reflect dramatically in results.



This last Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> we had our first south wind effect, This phenomenon came at the right time as by that moment we had 14 volunteers who proved their help to be really invaluable, the patrols commenced around 2:30 pm. And as every shift was returning there were eggs that needed to be buried, this task was met by our volunteers successfully, the outcome by the next morning was 132 nests buried in the corral.

Nevertheless due not all is fun and games, due to a meteorological phenomena that took place in both oceans (Pacific and Atlantic) where two different tropical depressions meet along with a low pressure channel, in the Pacific shores rose massive tidal waves that for over 4 days made the sea level high up considerably, it was by the time the waves reached as far as to the other side of the road! Coming to hit the buildings hard considerably, it was then that the presence of the volunteers in camp became crucial to build barricades in order to protect the incubation areas and the buildings.

## Crocodile farm



The birth of the new baby crocodiles finally took place, sadly due to the never ending rains that are taking place in our country right now, a big part of the offspring was lost this year and the humidity levels in the area went really high, nevertheless there was a few of them that make it

out alive of the nests, they were collected and now are in the pools where in the next months will be branded and measured in order to have a control over their growth in the next year.

Our volunteers have the valuable chance to keep an eye in the birthing of the turtles hatching, giving them the occasional chance to see the baby leatherbacks coming out of their nests!

This New Year promises new and exciting challenges, we are really glad to have a chance to meet them.

**Oliver Garcia**  
**Conservation Director**  
**August 2011**  
**Projects Abroad Mexico**