



Alma Libre Books
Puerto Morelos, Mexico



Beach Reads

News from Alma Libre Bookstore - Puerto Morelos, Mexico

Year #02 - Issue #2 - December 2003

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News From Puerto Morelos

Feliz Navidad

The holiday season is here again! This is our second tropical Christmas and it never fails to sneak up on us. The usual triggers of cold weather and line-ups at the mall are no longer part of our life and we don't miss them a bit. Many people ask us how we can celebrate the Season without chestnuts roasting and Jack Frost nipping. The answer is quite nicely, thank you! Last year we went to the beach on Christmas Day. This year the plans are similar.

Scroll down a bit to read how the Holiday Season is celebrated here in Puerto Morelos.

Wherever this newsletter finds you, we sincerely hope you have a Holiday Season filled with cheer and a New Year full of fun and travel. We hope your plans for the New Year include a visit to Puerto Morelos!

Homeless No More!

Our home renovation is completed. It finished pretty much on time and pretty much on budget thanks to the hard work of our builder, Edwin Munoz Vado and his crew. Renovations, even in paradise, are messy and noisy, but worth the effort in the end. We now have a duplex just two blocks from the beach and a six minute walk from the square. We are renting out the suite long term right now, but will eventually rent it to tourists and snowbirds who want to "Live la Vida Local" for a little while.

We get so many requests from customers who want to rent homes or condos in Puerto Morelos for their next vacation that we are going to start featuring local homes on our website. Renting a home is often not more expensive than a hotel room, but is so much more comfortable and convenient. Some homes have

beautiful gardens or a pool. Contact us for more information and watch our website for details. (If you own a rental home in the Puerto Morelos area, contact us to get your free listing)

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News Briefs

Changes!

As mentioned last month, the new restaurant where Palapa Pizza used to be has opened. Called "Fungo Noire" it is three restaurants in one. Out front there is fresh baked pizza and sandwiches. To the side is a funky bar with snacks. Out back in the garden area is a fine Italian restaurant. Occasionally there is live music out back. (By the way, the name means "Black Mushroom" in Spanish and French)

"El Picudo Azul", the new taco place that opened right next to Alma Libre Bookstore now serves breakfast too!

Eduardo and Cece of Cafe del Puerto are now open for breakfast and have live saxophone music a couple of nights a week. Check out their blackboard for their nightly dinner specials, mostly revolving around their outdoor charcoal grill.

Mama's Bakery is open again for breakfast and open at night for dinner on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. She will have nightly "comfort food" specials like meatloaf and chicken pot pie.

A new internet cafe has opened just down the road from Don Pepe's featuring high speed internet access and brand new Dell computers.

Hola Asia's new rooftop bar will open in January. (or so says Miguel, the co-owner) We've waited for this one a looong time, but we know it will be a great place to get a drink with an ocean view.

Our favourite local monthly newspaper, Akumal's "Sac-be", will soon feature a monthly column about Puerto Morelos. We hope you like it because we're writing it! Sac-be is a fabulous paper for locals or tourists, featuring secret beaches,

unusual daytrips and great maps. Pick up your free copy at Alma Libre.

For those who can't wait for a visit to Alma Libre and want a book in their hands right away, you can now buy books directly off our website through Amazon.com. It is much easier than us trying to mail the books from Mexico! Well be adding new titles all the time. [Click here to have a look.](#)

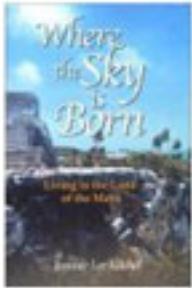
Current Exchange Rates (In Puerto Morelos) USA Dollar 10.95 CDN Dollar 8.10

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

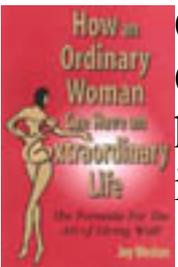
Books!

Local Authors



We are happy to have yet another book in the shop written by a local. Jeanine Kitchel, the owner of "Casa Maya" and the former owner and founder of Alma Libre, has published "Where the Sky is Born: Living in the Land of the Maya".

The book chronicles her and partner Paul Zappella's adventures exploring the Yucatan and building Casa Maya. A "must read" for anyone who is considering living in Mexico. We have a limited number of copies in the shop right now.



Other local authors we feature include Joy Weston, author of "How An Ordinary Woman Can Lead An Extraordinary Life". Joy has a home here in Puerto Morelos and often leads seminars at La Ceiba del Mar and in the United States. Her book was the local bestseller last season.

Also Sandra Dayton's "Ix Chel - Ancient Maya Goddess", A Message of Love and Peace for Women and "Ride That Full Tilt Boogie", a collection of poems by

Linda Back McKay.

Puerto Morelos obviously inspires authors, and we are proud to have local books in our shop.

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Christmas in Our Little Town!

You can tell that Christmas is coming to Puerto Morelos by the large red tinsel "tree" that has been erected in the town square and the kids that have started their nightly ritual of singing from door to door seeking donations for their Christmas party.

The preparation for the season begins December 1st, and although Wal-Mart is stocking the usual ornaments, lights and trees, the Mexican way of celebrating is unique.

There is much less commercialism, though every year we are seeing a little bit more. There are fewer TV commercials telling us to "Spend like Santa, Save like Scrooge". Generally there is much less hype than up North and more of a focus on the religious aspects of the holiday.



Many homes in Puerto Morelos have elaborate shrines to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Catholic Saint the Mexican people think of as their own because her skin is slightly darker in colour. Her day was celebrated on December 12th and began in the days before with a run, complete with torch bearers, to the main town square. Traffic is frequently interrupted for parades. Church bells ring from the tower as masses are held on the twelve nights before

Christmas Eve.

Our local ex-pat population has also got involved in the traditional Mexican festivities, participating in "Las Posades", a re-enactment of Joseph and Mary looking for room at the inn. The local town's people dress up as Mary, Joseph and Angels, going from door to door throughout Puerto Morelos looking for "room at the inn". It is customary to tell the group there is "no room at the inn". The evening ends with the group finding a place to stay for the night and a fiesta.

Mexicans celebrate Christmas on the night of December 24th with many businesses staying open until around 9pm. Family gatherings begin around 11pm or later and continue until the wee hours of the morning. You may be surprised to find many businesses in Puerto Morelos open Christmas Day. The owner of the ice cream shop next to us was stunned that we took the day off, yet he closed his store on December 26th, a day when people from the northern part of the continent are programmed to go shopping!

December 28 is the Day of the Innocents. This commemorates the children killed by Herod in his effort to murder the Christ Child. On this day jokes are played on family and friends in an attempt to be able to call them "Fool Saint."

Vispera de Ano Nuevo, New Year's Eve is celebrated in the usual manner with the countdown to midnight, as the clock strikes 12, Mexicans down 12 grapes to represent 12 wishes for the upcoming year.

There are more celebrations in January. See our next issue.

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Mexico Facts

The reef that you can see just off the coast of Puerto Morelos is part of the Mesoamerican Reef System, the largest coral reef system in the Atlantic Ocean. It extends more than 400 miles from the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula southward to Belize, Guatamala, and the Bay Islands, off the Honduran Coast.

The Reef in Puerto Morelos is protected as a National Marine Park. This means to visit the reef you need to go with a guide. There is also a small admission fee that you will be charged when you book your snorkel trip. This fee helps to maintain and protect the reef. You will appreciate these precautions when you visit and see

all the fish and sea creatures enjoying their healthy home.



This croc lives in the mangrove right behind the Mayan Handicraft Centre. If you are lucky you might get a glimpse of her. I wouldn't get too close though!

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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. We are closed on Christmas Day.

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.

We look forward to seeing you in Puerto Morelos!

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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.

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This is Year #2, Issue #2. Christmas 2003

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