



Bienvenidos!

MEMBERS' EVENTS & NEWS SPLASHES

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:

- President's Message
- Manager's Corner
- Assistant Manager Upward Career Move
- HUGE Ocho Cascadas Surprise
- Luisa's Corner
- Self-Guided Taco Tour in Old Town
- Current Events and Entertainment
- The "Art" of Housekeeping
- Cooking Classes
- Staff Spotlight
- Calle Santa Barbara Update
- Ocho Cascadas Continues to Grow!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Querida Familia de Ocho Cascadas (Dear Ocho Members),

I'd like to take a walk with you down memory lane. It all started in 1961 when my Mom visited Puerto Vallarta on her way to Switzerland where she was planning to move. Instead, fate had different plans. My Mom fell in love with Puerto Vallarta, the jungle, the colors, and the Mexican culture. Meanwhile, my Father had been traveling around Mexico since the late 1950's and landed in Puerto Vallarta in 1960 where he was designing and building homes for Americans. While my Mother was getting to know Puerto Vallarta with my older brother, Pete who was a child at the time, she noticed some beautifully designed homes being built on the South end of town, which we know now as Amapas and Cochas Chinas. She couldn't conceive of how incredible my Father's work was, so she decided to go out by horseback through the jungle (due to the lack of roads and pathways) to see for herself. She loved the work so much that she had to meet this man who was designing and building these homes. Now, having lived in Vallarta for a short time, she had asked one of her friends: "Who is building those homes out there in the jungle?". Her friends told her that she had better watch out, he is this crazy architect from America who is a bit wild! He has been living here in Vallarta for a couple of years and is also an artist. Well, that explains everything...

One afternoon after a long day at the Playas Los Muertos beach, where anyone who was anyone hung out, including artists, movie stars, directors and producers, my Mom jumped into one of the 6 taxi cabs that were in Puerto Vallarta at the time. In those days it was common that people would share cabs due to the lack of them. It just so happened that the man jumping into the other side of the cab at the same time as her was my father, Ed Giddings. My Mom tells the story of that special day and the very moment where she fell in love at first sight!



There is a plethora of stories my Mother has told me about the sleepy little village, called Puerto Vallarta back in the good old days. Such stories include when they lived across the hall of a small apartment building where Richard Burton lived while filming, "A Night at the Iguana". According to my Mom, Elizabeth Taylor would come visit Richard Burton because she didn't trust him around Ava Gardner - this is all before my time, so you guys fill in the blanks.

Speed ahead a couple of years later to when I was born in Puerto Vallarta in 1963 where we lived until 1965. By this time my parents were working together on their projects. We then moved to Southern California but my parents never stopped building in Mexico. Although my Mom and Dad built dozens and dozens of wonderful homes in Southern California and a few beautiful office buildings, their love for Puerto Vallarta and the Mexican people only got stronger. Here are a couple old pictures that I hope you will enjoy:

It is an honor and privilege to be the president of the Board at Ocho Cascadas, continuing with my parent's vision and legacy!

Sincerely,
Mark Giddings

MANAGER'S CORNER:

Dear Members:

Here we are...summer 2023. Welcome! It's the perfect time for a golden tan, feel the breeze blowing, listen to the birds singing, or watch the spectacular sunsets with a glass of wine in hand.

Thank you for choosing Ocho as your getaway place, we are here to make your time memorable and unforgettable memories. Feel free to contact me or our front desk team, Angie or Marcell, to arrange a relaxing massage, an adventure, or a romantic tour.

We are working on the maintenance project plans for September 2023, e.g., replace some pool's tiles, appliances, paint, wood maintenance, floor polish, new palapas and much more.

Your feedback in the comment card form is very important and helps us to achieve the excellence reaching our goal to make your stay cozy and comfortable.

Let your soul and spirit fly!

Rosario Chávez
General Manager

ASSISTANT MANAGER UPWARD CAREER MOVE:

Farewell to David!

Dear David,

The Staff, Board and I wanted to thank you for your passion and dedication in the five months that you were at Ocho. Your new assignment is a new and exciting opportunity for you. We wish you success in your new adventure as General Manager. Being a manager can be difficult, but with your performance and capacity we are sure that you will achieve success. Please stay in contact!

All the luck and good wishes for your future!

Rosario Chávez



A HUGE OCHO CASCADAS SURPRISE:

Hello! My Ocho Cascadas journey started in 2018. As a member of a travel club, I received an email offering me an opportunity to rent a villa in Puerto Vallarta. I remember the picture, seeing swimming pools layered between the sky and earth. But, sadly no availability for renting. Over the next 2 years I would receive this same email about every 6 months. And each time I would think about this image of blue pools with water cascading down from one pool into another and how amazing it looked. But I got busy with life and I moved on.

Now this brings me to January 2020 where my wife of 40 years and I planned a 2-week trip for the first time to the west coast of Mexico and stay at a resort in Nuevo Vallarta.

Ok so hang on as this is where it gets interesting.

At the end of week 1 my wife received a phone call saying her sister was admitted to hospital and that she should consider coming home. After a brief discussion we agreed that she should book a flight and return to see her sister. And like all good husbands I would sacrifice myself and stay at the resort and finish my vacation. It was during this week I received another one of those emails promoting this resort Ocho Cascadas. This time I was in Puerto Vallarta, so I made the phone call to Ocho and spoke to a lady by the name of Luisa. We chatted for a bit and she explained that this was a time share resort. I immediately thought there is no way I am getting involved. But Luisa invited me for a tour of Ocho. The following day I called Luisa to thank her, but I would decline her offer. I did ask her to send me information on Ocho so I could review the details and she did.

Ok, so now I have received all this info from Luisa and I was very interested in what I was reading. I would email Luisa with every question I could think of and with each question Luisa would give me a sincere answer. She had my trust. Remember my wife is with her sick sister and she in no way would want to talk about buying a time share. So, I was on my own. It is hard enough to decide on this kind of purchase when your spouse is with you. But there I was, buying a timeshare unseen!!! A person would have to be crazy to do something like that! Well, I guess, call me crazy. Yes!!! I bought week 14 Villa 9 unseen.

Now the next step is how do I tell my wife. For the next 2 years, due to Covid travel restrictions, I kept this purchase secret. Yes, I wanted to tell her many times but the timing never seemed to be right, especially when you are dealing with family health issues. Just so you know, her sister is now doing amazing!!!

So, my decision was not to tell her and just take her there! In April of 2022 we made our first visit to Ocho Cascadas. Upon arriving to the lobby of Ocho my wife was instantly in awe of the view overlooking Banderas bay! As she took in the view I ran to see and finally meet Luisa to very quickly tell her, don't say anything about ownership as my wife does not know. You can imagine the look on Luisa's face. In Spanish she told all the staff that no one was to say anything about ownership to his wife. You just had to be there!!

Luisa took us to Villa 9 and immediately my wife was in awe which was the reaction that I was looking for. Luisa left us to settle in. After unpacking, we opened a bottle of wine and sat on the loungers to watch the most incredible sunset. My wife said she felt watching the sunset felt like what Heaven would look like. Ok, things are looking up for the big announcement. After another glass of wine my wife looked at me and she said with a tear that this is all so amazing and the only sad thing was that she only had it for this week and probably would never see it again...DOOR WIDE OPEN—I said, well dear I have something to tell you. You know when you left me in Mexico 2 years ago, I bought this! This is your view this week, and every year until such time, and then it will be the kids... She started to cry and hugged me. I guess she will keep me and Ocho Cascadas!

Gary Feener (and Cathy)



LUISA'S CORNER:

Hola Ocho Family!!

Have your Bonus Week Certificates expired?

Don't worry. At Ocho there are no problems, only solutions... Did you know that I am the Bonus Week Magician and that you can ask me to wave my magic wand to change the expiration date? Why not let someone special use them for a wonderful stay at Ocho if you are not able to. The savings can be 40% or more off our rental rates by using a bonus week.

Want to go somewhere this summer?

Our weeks are getting booked up, but we still have a few openings in weeks 23 through 35. If you have never been to PV / Ocho in the summer, you don't know what you're missing, so let me tell you...

- You will love your pool even more because the temperature is perfect.
- The ocean temperature is wonderful, so it is a great time to go snorkeling, swimming, or just spend time at the beach.
- The mountains are more lush and brighter green than you've ever seen them. It's an amazing view and a fantastic way to spend a day in your cascading pool with a cold beverage in your hand.
- PV is not crowded, so it is much more peaceful and relaxing to go to town to shop, dine, and walk around.
- The days are sunny and warm, and evenings are sometimes filled with a spectacular lightening storm that you can watch from the terrace of your beautiful villa....and, it's a free show!
- Remember those bonus week certs and my magic wand! Summer is a perfect time to use them.
- If you have never been to Ocho or if you want to come back down, call me for availability and great rates for our first time and returning guests.

I almost forgot! We have great weeks in beautiful villas for sale!

Most of our winter weeks (October through May) have been sold. However, we do have some resale listings in a few high demand weeks that you have been requesting. We never like to see our owners go but it is a great opportunity for those who have been wanting a winter week. Call me for the full inventory list and prices. These winter weeks won't last long!



Safe travels!

Luisa

011-52-322-150-6994



SELF-GUIDED TACO TOUR IN OLD TOWN:

If you or your guests should find yourselves struck by the urge to sample authentic, neighborhood tacos some evening, but don't care to venture too far, or, have no idea of where to stop among the dozens of great choices available, here is a route for a self-guided "taco tour" through a residential area in Old Town that is all within about a 6-block walk in a residential part of Old Town. Each location offers a wide selection, with the noted menu options providing an array of tastes along the way.

This "tour" begins at:

1) *Mariscos el Güero:*

Corner of Constitution and Lázaro Cardenas. Try the fresh Mahi-Mahi Taco! It will be as fresh as fish gets (the store owner also owns the seafood market across the street!)



2) *Taco Memo Grill:*

S-W Corner of Basilio Badillo and Aguacate. This is a permanent taco stand now operated by a second-generation young owner. Try the Taco Volcanes! It is an amazing array of flavors. A very busy place in the late afternoon and evening.

3) *Mariscos Cisneros:*

On the east side of Augacate, 1-1/2 blocks north of Basilio Badillo. A family run restaurant that offers a dinner menu and a separate taco menu. Try the crab taco with shrimp sauce. The family's home is the 2nd story of the building.



4) *Tacos de Cabeza el Chulo:*

Continuing north on Aguacata, about 1/2 block north of Lázaro Cárdenas is another fixed stack stand. It is on the west side of the street. The beef they cook and use in their tacos is super tender and tasty!

5) *Arnulfo's*

And for a desert: walk back (south) on Aguacate to the corner of Lázaro Cárdenas (at the church) to Arnulfo's, "The Churros Guy" churro stand. His Churros are made-to-order while you watch and handed to you, rolled in cinnamon and sugar, still piping hot! Arnulfo is a neighborhood institution.



Boun Appetito

SOURCES FOR CURRENT EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT IN PV:

Might you be looking for ready sources for local news and events in Puerto Vallarta?

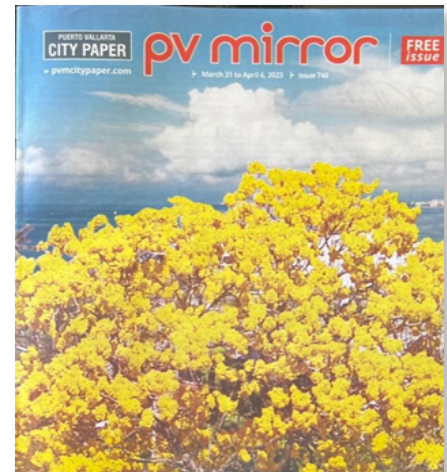
Here are two that might be of interest:

1) BanderasNEWS.com:

This website offers information on local news, entertainment, and Vallarta living. As examples: a progress report on the construction of the new passenger terminal building at PVR, the Mexican Open golf tournament, and plans for a new cruise ship terminal.

2) The "PV Mirror."

This is a free, weekly, newspaper that is distributed widely in PV at shops, Mercados, and the Saturday Market in Old Town. It is also available on-line at: pvmcitypaper.com. The 3/31 issue had articles on: the new bus fleet in PV, still \$10 Pesos; how, when and where the Easter holiday is celebrated in PV; current schedule of entertainment at local venues; and current fishing report. Here is what the 3/31 issue looked like:



Either source could be useful in keeping you updated on current happenings in PV or for planning activities during your stay at Ocho Cascadas.

THE "ART" OF HOUSEKEEPING:

The wonderful staff at Ocho Cascadas takes great pride in their work. And they get to share the professionalism of their work through an "art form" specific to their work:



Designed by Rosa.



Designed by Gabe

We are very fortunate to have such dedicated, professional, and artistic staff at Ocho Cascadas!

COOKING CLASSES IN PUERTO VALLARTA:

I love to cook but know nothing about the preparation of Mexican cuisine. So, I decided to explore Mexican cooking at two schools that Angie at the Front Desk recommended. The two classes are conducted in a similar fashion: meet the chef at a local Mercado, select the ingredients for the meal, and then go to the chef's home to prepare the menu. Each class is about 5 hours long. And each class offers a wide variety of menu choices based on the day of the week that you choose. Each course costs about \$100 US. And yes, we ate what we prepared!

The first class I attended was: [Cookin Vallarta | Authentic Mexican Cooking Classes](#)

And the class I chose featured "seafood." Students (8 of us) meet at 10:00 a.m. at Mercado Palmar de Aramara, a huge collection of fresh produce, meat, fish, and eateries near the Cruise Ship Terminal.

We were introduced to Enriche, the owner of the school and instructor chef, who's life's work has been as a chef, beginning as a kid in his family's restaurant, studying with a master French chef, working in restaurants and resorts, and eventually opening his school.

The first portion of the class was devoted to shopping; instruction on how to choose the freshest vegetables, ripest fruits, and best seafood. How to determine if a whole fish is fresh. His recommendation: "look them in the eyes!"

After collecting all the ingredients needed for the class, we were driven in Enriche's van to his home for the "cooking" portion of the class. And what a beautiful, designed kitchen it was for holding a class. Each of us had a station at the counter. This is a hands-on experience.



The first 2 courses we prepared were two different ceviches: octopus and a Mahi-Mahi.

Everyone was an active participant and busy. We were taught the correct method for preparing a tender octopus. Here, the octopus was just about fully cooked and ready for finishing. After the two ceviches were complete, it was time to taste the rewards of our effort.

Next, on to the main course: shrimp tacos, with some extraordinary sauces!

The class was characterized by one lesson or interesting culinary tip after another. After working together for the better part of the day, the 8 students had lively conversation while eating what we had prepared. Enriche is a wonderful teacher and expert, who went out of his way to ensure everyone participated in the day. I came away feeling that I had learned a great deal more than I had expected. And, the class was a lot of fun!



While at OC in April, we also attended a 2nd cooking class: Rosie's Cooking School. We met Rosie at a location in Old Town and she drove us in her van to Mercado Municipal (one of the stops on Luisa's former Friday a.m. tours of PV). Touring and shopping in the Mercado, Rosie was very careful in her selection of the produce she chose and explained to us what she was looking for, e.g..poblano peppers need to be smooth for Chili Rellenos.

After procuring all the fresh ingredients for our menu, Rosie drove the 5 students in the class to her BEAUTIFUL home for the cooking portion of the class.



The featured menu items for this class day were Chili Rellenos and Chili Nogales. This was also a very much hands-on class. We began by making her excellent recipe for guacamole:

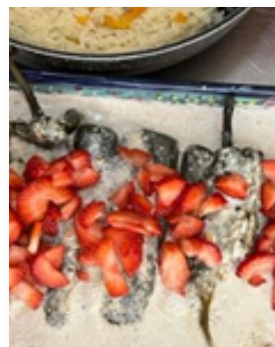
While the guacamole was being prepared the peppers and other veggies for the meal were being roasted on the wood burning hearth. After the peppers were roasted Rosie showed us the art of properly stuffing them:

And then it was time to batter the peppers in beaten egg whites. This is a task that she made look SO EASY...We all got a chance to practice...and the practice was a good thing.

When the cooking was all done, it was time to eat:

A marvelous cooking lesson and a feast for lunch!

But that's not all! Turns out Rosie was a professional traditional Mexican dancer for many years. During lunch, we were treated to a marvelous performance! You can find all the details about Rosie's Cooking Classes at:



[Rosies Cooking - Rosies Cooking](#)

Summary and Recommendation:

Both cooking classes offered excellent culinary learning experiences from professional chefs: everything from little trick such as how to remove the hot pepper oil from your fingers to the proper cooking of (tenderizing) octopus, to the fine art of proper stuffing, breading and frying of chili Rellenos. The meals prepared and then enjoyed by the students in each class were superb dining of authentic Mexican cuisine. And both classes were a LOT OF FUN!

To answer the inevitable question of which class to attend, if one could only attend one: decide what Mexican dish(s) you would like to learn to cook. Then check the schedules for the two classes and choose your class based on the menus offered on the day that you can attend.

Gene Stangel
Chair,
O.C. Communications Committee

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

Araceli – Ocho Cascadas Staff Cook

(An editorial note: it is a custom in the hospitality business in Mexico for the establishment to provide one, or sometimes 2, meals a day for their employees.)



It is with great pleasure that we present to all of you our highly esteemed cook at Ocho Cascadas. Araceli (but, she prefers her nickname, Cheli) Rosas Olivares is a woman who loves Mexican cuisine and traditional Mexican bakery. She was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, the birthplace of the Mexican Mariachi. She was the only child to her parents who lived in Tijuana, Baja California. She has 4 children who she protects and adores like a good mother. She has been living in Puerto Vallarta for 7 years. She has worked at several restaurants in Puerto Vallarta, including Sirloin Steak House.

Her favorite hobbies are reading and watching movies. Her favorite book is "Rich Dad, Poor Dad." She has been working at Ocho Cascadas for 1 year and is proud to be a part of this great family. Among the delicious meals she prepares for our staff are: Orange Chicken, Mexican Fajitas, Enchiladas, Veracruz style fish, ceviche and many, many more.

We all love her food and are extremely grateful to have such a kind person seeing to it that we are well fed and nourished every day. Thank you, Araceli!

CALLE SANTA BARBARA UPDATE - WALKING INTO TOWN:

Sadly, the popular walking route from Ocho Cascadas into Old Town via Calle Santa Barbara remains closed to foot and vehicle traffic.

There is, however, considerable, if slow, construction/restoration activity at the site, as reflected in these pictures taken from Calle Santa Barbara and the beach:



Looking from the beach to the area of the landslide. Work continues to stabilize the foundation of the home on the bluff above Calle Santa Barbara. Notice the dozens of "pins" that have been installed to stabilize the hillsides.

OCHO CASCADAS CONTINUES TO GROW - LITERALLY!:

We believe you will be simply amazed the next time you visit Ocho Cascadas and see firsthand how the new landscaping has developed!

Striking “curb appeal” on both sides of the main entrance:



Right side looking towards Patio Azul.

Note the tall palms on either side of the door with the bright red stalk. You will find this palm in the lobby and several Ocho Cascadas villas (where there was sufficient “headroom”). It has a long and interesting history in Mexico:

Left side, looking towards the Penthouse.



And some pictures from the villas:

An array of shapes, sizes, and colors!



Bougainvillea in full, brilliant bloom in April.



Penthouse looking great!





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