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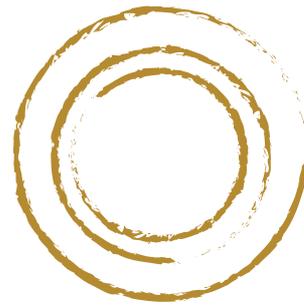
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A wide-angle photograph of an outdoor dining terrace at sunset. The terrace is filled with numerous wooden tables and wicker chairs, each set with a lit candle. The terrace overlooks a beach and the ocean, with a town and a prominent mountain in the background under a colorful sky.

# el Farallon

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A photograph of an indoor dining area with a large glass wall overlooking the ocean. The interior is dimly lit with warm, glowing lanterns hanging from the ceiling. The name 'Don Manuel's' is written in a cursive font across the top of the image.

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PHOTO BY PATRICK KIPP

# LOCAL DATES OF INTEREST

IN LOS CABOS, MEXICO

## MAY 1: Primero de Mayo

This Mexican national holiday is equivalent to the U.S. Labor Day.

## MAY 3: Holy Cross Day Día de la Santa Cruz

This is the time when construction workers decorate and mount crosses on unfinished buildings, and then celebrate onsite with fireworks and picnics.

## MAY 5: Cinco de Mayo

This Mexican national holiday honors the Mexican victory over the French army at Puebla de los Angeles in 1862.

## MAY 10: Mother's Day

This holiday is especially significant in Mexico, due to the importance of the mother in Mexican culture.

## JUNE 1: Navy Day

Navy Day is an official Mexican holiday.

## JUNE 24: Saint John the Baptist Day

This religious holiday is celebrated with festivities, fairs and popular jokes involving being dunked in water.

## SEPTEMBER 1: Annual State of the Union

The Mexican President delivers the autumn address at approximately this time.

## SEPTEMBER 16: Mexican Independence Day

This holiday celebrates the date upon which Miguel Hidalgo delivered El Grito de Dolores and announced the Mexican revolt against Spanish rule.

## OCTOBER 12: Día de la Raza

This commemorative holiday celebrates Columbus' arrival to the Americas, as well as the historical origins of the Mexican people.

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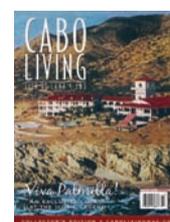
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ON THE COVER: Early aerial view of The Palmilla Hotel. Photography courtesy of Rodriguez family.



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# Janet Jensen

PARTNER · THE AGENCY LOS CABOS

With 20 years of experience in the Los Cabos market, Janet Jensen specializes in luxury beachfront properties. Janet's knowledge extends to properties within the resort communities of Hacienda Beach Club & Residences, Chileno Bay, Mar Adentro, Villas Del Mar, Palmilla, Puerto Los Cabos, Cabo Real and throughout Los Cabos (Cabo San Lucas, San Jose del Cabo, East Cape).



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## A Fine Wine that gets better with Age

*On the edge of San José sits the heart and soul of Los Cabos. An on-going reminder of the understated age of luxury resorts.*

A large part of this issue of *Cabo Living* magazine is devoted to the jewel, the diamond of Los Cabos.

The pride and joy of Rod Rodriguez and his family.

The incomparable area called Palmilla. When I first set eyes on Baja two decades ago everyone who knew anything about Baja Sur encouraged me to stay at the Palmilla.

They say first impressions are everything. Well, they were full so I end up down the road, but we did visit the iconic resort and it was everything they said, and so much more.

Palmilla has taken a few turns since that first visit, all for the positive.

The current owners are running the resort with the compassion and caring of their children - with white gloves at every turn - Peter Bowling at the helm.

It is a masterpiece of nature combined with man's greatest minds and craftsmen. It bespeaks what's great about Mexico and its people.

Also an important part of it is its neighbor, Del Mar properties, and the superlative developments of Ron Hatfield and his team.

Cabo's first golf course by Jack Nicklaus,

at Del Mar, is intertwined with majestic and one-of-a-kind homes. There is a shopping center that is ideal in design and size, and a new development that should add value to the area as well.

Spend some time learning more about Palmilla through the eyes of *Cabo Living* Magazine. Salute!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Leathers', written over a horizontal line.

*David H. Leathers/President/Editor*



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# In memory of a Dear Friend, Michael McHatton



As I write this column family and friends are celebrating the life of my dear friend, Michael McHatton, who lost his life a little over a year ago. I thought about

Mike a lot that day. I realized that Mike embraced life in southern Baja as much as anyone I knew.

As a transplant from southern California Mike first traveled to Baja over 40 years ago to look at a piece of property in Buena Vista left by his father. Within a year he moved and never looked back. He was retired from teaching and crazy about fishing. After his marriage to Alma Vazquez and the oncoming birth of their daughter Linda, Mike realized he needed to earn money again so he began giving English lessons to local bankers and businessmen. This went on for about 10

years and then he ultimately started selling real estate. Throughout his career he sold for Reyna Houston, Lulu Jacobson, Prudential and Pedregal.

But what defined Mike was his passion for the things that he was interested in. It was said that when he wanted to learn something he immersed himself in it until he mastered it. This was certainly true about fishing. To supplement fishing locally he frequently took long range trips aboard the Royal Star for 10-12 days at a time. Mike was equally intense about his love of food. He loved to cook and loved to dine at a wide range of establishments. But one thing was clear, Mike knew what he liked and what he did not in food.

I best knew him for his love of fine wine. Frequently, he would order wines online, have them delivered to my office in Long Beach for me to deliver on my next trip down. If you ever shared a bottle of wine with Mike, you were in for a special treat.

He also loved dogs, as many as five to seven in the household at any given time. He embraced Mexican music and the Mexican culture.

I got to know him best during the many times that he transported me back and forth to the airport on my frequent trips into Cabo. We discussed many things intensely and he always wanted to know anything new that was going on in Cabo.

Mike McHatton exemplified the Los Cabos lifestyle and I was happy to have him as my friend. Mike, you are missed!

Sincerely,

Bob Kirstine/Publisher

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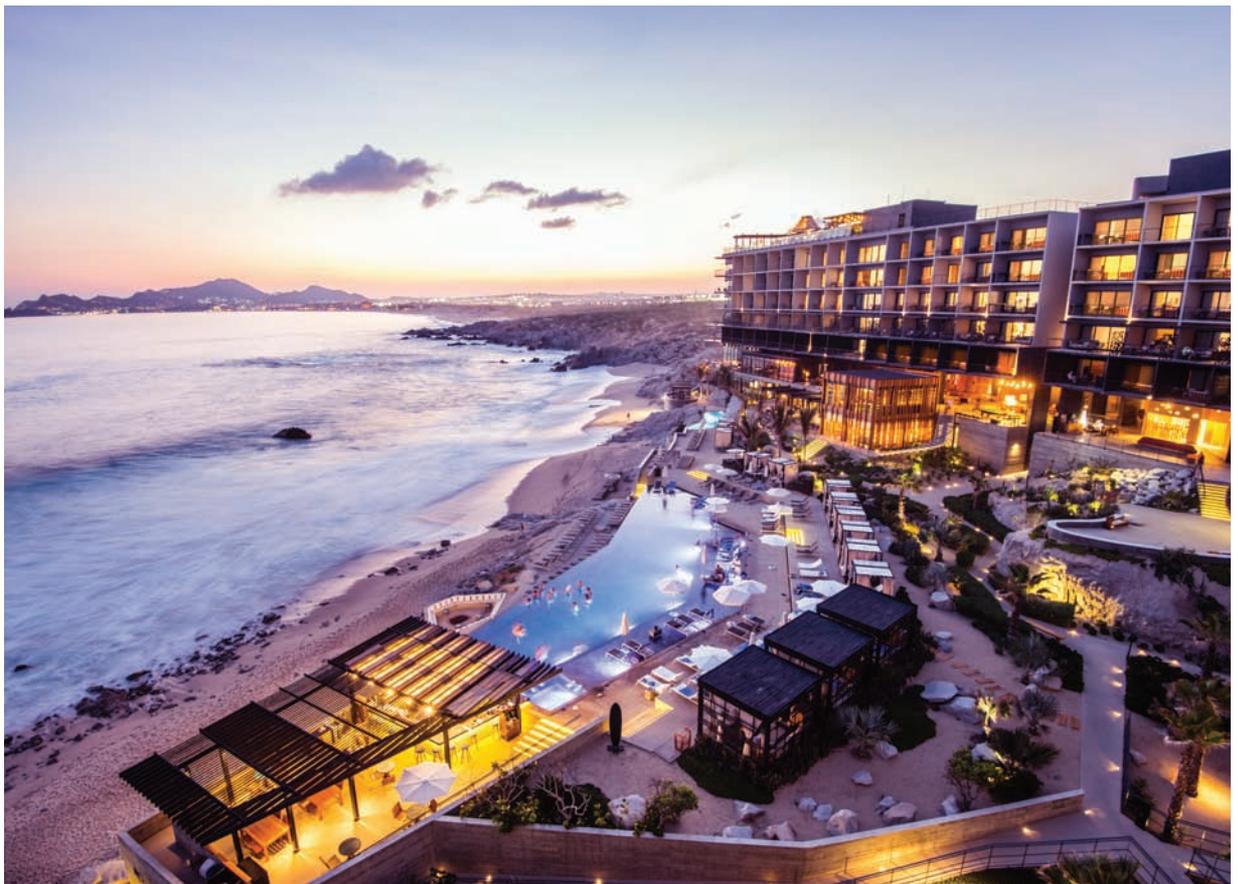
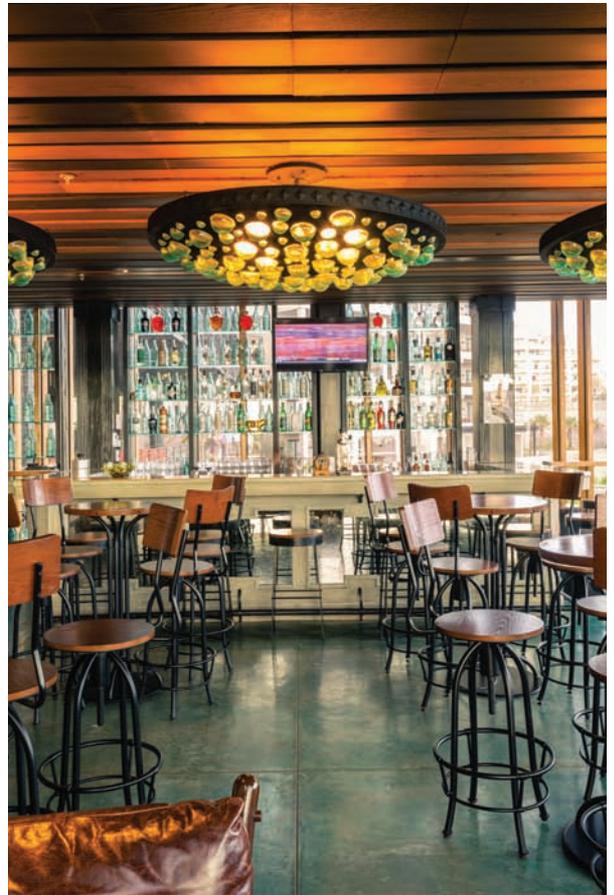
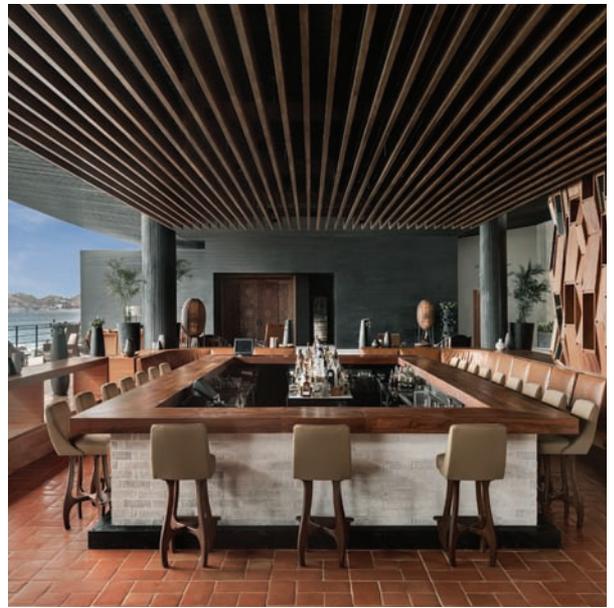
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*One&Only Palmilla and  
Del Mar Development*

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*-by Michael Koehn-  
-photos by Francisco Estrada,  
courtesy of One&Only Palmilla,  
Del Mar Development  
and the Rodriguez family-*





**(ABOVE AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page: Aerial view of Palmilla Hotel, circa late 1960's. Opposite page: Peter Bowling of One&Only Palmilla, and Ron Hatfield of Del Mar Development.*

It all began when, in search of a perfect location for a new hotel property at the tip of Baja California Sur, Abelardo “Rod” Rodriguez began flying the coastline between San José del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas until he spotted what he felt has the most ideal spot in the entire peninsula, a place called Punta Palmilla.

After creating the first luxury resort on the Sea of Cortez in southern Baja with Rancho Las Cruces, Rodriguez began making surveillance flights along the coast of southern Baja, looking for other properties that could be developed into resorts. “Somehow I knew in those early days that tourism would become an important, lasting industry for the territory of Baja California Sur,” Rodriguez explained.

In June of 1953 Rodriguez purchased a property at Punta Palmilla, 400 acres and a mile of beachfront near San José del Cabo. He then spent hours in the Los Angeles Public Library, studying books on Spanish Colonial architecture and drawing up plans for buildings and design details for the

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*Continued on next page*



Las Cruces Palmilla (now One&Only Palmilla) including the original chapel bell tower, tile fountains, stone terraces, iconic arches, ornamental tiles and hand-forged wrought iron.

By October 1956 he had finished plans for the hotel, with the buildings set to conform with the most advantageous view of Palmilla Bay. He decided upon a two-story structure with 15 guestrooms on one side, and kitchen, dining room and bar on the other. When complete in June of 1958, the hotel began attracting celebrity guests like John Wayne, Bing Crosby and Lucille Ball,

who immediately fell in love with the exotic location and luxury services and amenities that Las Cruces Palmilla provided.

And so it began, a legacy that has now lasted almost fifty years. What Rodriguez created with his initial properties was the foundation for the tourism industry in Los Cabos. Located on 35 acres of tropically landscaped grounds, Rodriguez described La Cruces Palmilla as a “magical edifice,

**(BELOW)** | Top, left: San José del Cabo in 1926. Top, right: Houses near the Cabo San Lucas airstrip, February 1966. Bottom: Interior of the Palmilla.

*Continued on next page*



# One&Only

PALMILLA

*Los Cabos*



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**(ABOVE)** | *The staff of One&Only Palmilla. Exterior check-in and Vista Pool at One&Only Palmilla.*

pristine and glowing, that blended with the superiority of the beautiful point of land on which it had been built.”

Those words are as true today as they were then. Over the decades of its operation, and now under new ownership, One&Only Palmilla has been recognized as one of the greatest hotels anywhere in the world, and in 2017 continues to honor its legacy as the last of the grande dame hotels in Los Cabos. Remaining effortlessly contemporary, One&Only Palmilla continues to evolve in its own very natural, organic way. It’s

a luxury destination that has always been maintained and manicured to keep it ahead of the game, never changing anything in a major way but is, instead, always in a state of refinement as the resort expands and elevates its service standards to be consistently among the best in the world. The One&Only Palmilla not only tirelessly meets its guests’ highest expectations, it also consistently exceeds them.

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# PALMILLA

Resort Community

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Rich in history, the community of Palmilla remains the embodiment of Cabo living. The residential communities, anchored by the *One&Only* Palmilla and the Jack Nicklaus golf course, have grown to feature boutiques and markets at The Shoppes at Palmilla, award-winning restaurants and the finest swimmable beach in all of Los Cabos.

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Oceano Alta | Oceano Baja | Villas Del Mar | La Cresta | Palmilla Dunes | Villas at La Montaña



**(ABOVE, BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page: Ocean Front Pool Casita one bedroom Junior Suite. Opposite page: the iconic structure of One&Only Palmilla.*

“We realize that nothing stays the same and lifestyles change, but over the years this hotel has received thousands and thousands of people from all over the world,” explains Peter Bowling, Managing Director at One&Only Palmilla. “We are very proud of the fact that this hotel has been the source of so many amazing memories and so much joy and contentment.”

In doing that, it’s become a place where generations can gather, where grandmothers could bring their families and each age group is able to find their own comfort level, with

activities for the children at the KidsOnly Club to surfing lessons from the on-site TropicSurf team for teens, to relaxing around the pool for the adults. “Our beach itself is a wonderful amenity,” says Bowling, “and we’ve enhanced the area with added cabanas and a beach bar at Pelican Beach, and added paddle boarding, snorkeling and kayaks for our active guests.”

Hurricane Odile, though it caused much

*Continued on page 48*





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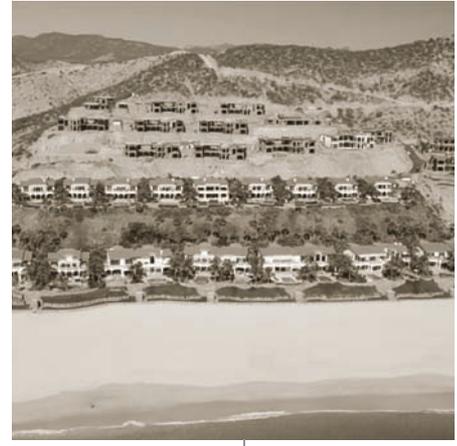
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devastation in the area, also gave One&Only Palmilla a change to reset and make some improvements. “That hurricane, as bad as it was, also gave us a renewed sense of purpose here,” says Bowling. “It gave us a renewed energy, and we were able to enhance the resort in many ways, to add state-of-the-art technology and Wi-Fi for the convenience of guests, to refresh it and redo the signature restaurants and our spa here and give the grand old dame a facelift in other areas. We’ve also added a magnificent modern 4-bedroom luxury villa called Villa One.”

Beyond its many on-site pleasures, One&Only Palmilla also serves as a base to

explore the Palmilla Resort development, which includes a 27-hole Jack Nicklaus golf course, a Blue Flag swimming beach, retail shops and restaurants and more than 400 luxury residences.

In 1994 two other visionaries journeyed to Los Cabos and also discovered a place they thought was incomparable, when Ron Hatfield and Kenneth Schnitzer traveled to Los Cabos to play the new Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course at Palmilla. The Houston-based partners had an extensive

**(FAR LEFT AND ABOVE)** | *Opposite page, top to bottom, left to right: Double Bedroom, Villa Cortez at One&Only Palmilla. Services at One&Only Palmilla. Terrace Bridge Library. Jack Nicklaus golf course, Ocean 3 Green. This page: Aerial-view, Punta Bello, Palmilla, 1993.*

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**(ABOVE)** | *This page: Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Schnitzer. Palmilla Golf Course under construction, 1992. Beachfront Villas under construction, 1999.*

background in developing upscale residential and commercial projects in the U.S. and were immediately struck by the scenic beauty of the area surrounding the Palmilla resort.

“We were just so impressed with the whole area and the hotel was really the catalyst for the residential community at Villas Del Mar,” Ron Hatfield, President of Del Mar Development, explains. “Don Koll was the person who really took the Palmilla Resort to the next level, adding the Jack Nicklaus golf course and that expanded its reputation internationally as a luxury destination.”

“In 1995 and 1996, after Koll built the

first Villas Del Mar homes on the beach Ken and I bought the row of lots overlooking Koll’s property and started building homes. People would walk over from the hotel and tell us ‘We’re glad someone is doing this, we’d like to buy a home here.’ And those homes all sold before they were completed,” Hatfield says. “It was so exciting there. The hotel really was the community center. There were fiestas every night of the week. The

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sense of community that we experienced at the hotel during this time really inspired our residential development. From the inception of the project, our goal has been to maintain the community, camaraderie, amenities and character of Palmilla and extend that same feeling into the communities that we eventually built. In that first effort we were just trying not to lose the community character of the place, but instead become an extension of the welcoming tradition that was so much a part of the hotel and resort.”

One&Only Palmilla has hosted many guests who went on to become homeowners

at Villas Del Mar. “From the very beginning, when Ron and Ken built their first homes here, a lot of homeowners would buy from them because of the resort; there is no disconnect between the two,” Peter Bowling explains. “Many owners stayed at the Palmilla first and they connected with the social scene here and had a rapport with many of our employees. They really had a strong feeling, an emotional attachment

**(BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | This page, top left: Two men, one vision. Top right: First Villas, 1996. Bottom: Ron Hatfield and others at the Champions Cup.

*Continued on next page*



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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Top: A historic aerial view of the Palmilla golf course. Bottom: Del Mar Development, La Cresta.*

to the area and the way that everything works in harmony here.” That culture at One&Only Palmilla, where everything and everybody seem to have found the right balance, served as the catalyst for a new level of residential community created by Del Mar Development.

“The hotel truly helped with getting Villas Del Mar started, and it was just natural that we put our sales office there,” Ron Hatfield says. “Everything that we wanted to do in

that immediate neighborhood was within walking distance, and the hotel was our center of gravity.”

Inspired by the unparalleled beauty and heritage of the Palmilla area, Ron and Ken brought a new standard of quality to southern Baja as they developed their communities around One&Only

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# One&Only

PALMILLA

*Los Cabos*

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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | Del Mar Development residences, Villas Del Mar.

Palmilla, bringing the highest standards of construction techniques, materials and craftsmanship to the homes they built. As their community began to grow at Villas Del Mar, Del Mar Development would become the gold standard for high-end residential development in Mexico.

They also began a full service property management company to ensure that any local issues would be taken care of. As with One&Only Palmilla, world-class service was the key, a way of maintaining comfort and satisfaction with owners in the community. “We set up comprehensive services that cover

any issue that an owner might have,” Ron Hatfield says. “We have about 200 employees who do things like make sure the homes are properly maintained, put license plates on owner’s cars, make sure that local taxes were paid and maintained bank accounts in both pesos and dollars for our owners. There was nothing else like that service here at the time. Still isn’t.”

With the success of the initial community of Villas Del Mar, Del Mar Development

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*Continued on next page*



*One & Only*  
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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Del Mar Development residences, Espiritu.*

continued to expand the Del Mar brand with adjacent communities, creating world class single family luxury homes in neighborhoods named Espiritu and Oasis Palmilla. Last year they added a new concept called The Ledges, a limited collection of residences and penthouses in the Espiritu community.

To make sure that their owners had a complete, family-oriented sense of community, Del Mar Development also added residential amenities like recreational green areas and the Club Ninety Six Beach Club and Club Espiritu Fitness Club & Spa facility. “It’s a real tribute to the homeowners here that every week we hold a community

cocktail party, with the intent to present new opportunities in real estate. That get-together is always well attended, sometimes up to a hundred people, and it’s not that those people, for the most part, are interested in buying real estate. They just like getting together so they can meet and reconnect with each other,” Hatfield says. “Some of these people have families that grew up together in our communities, and that’s what makes these communities special.

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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | Del Mar Development residences.  
 Above: Villas Del Mar. Bottom: Espiritu.

The owners have come to know each other here, and they genuinely like getting together and playing golf, having a barbeque, dining at One&Only - just socializing with each other. You really can't find that kind of feeling at other resort-based communities here in Los Cabos."

Del Mar Development recently acquired another site up in the hills above Punta Palmilla called La Cresta, which will be used to develop 11 luxury homes with a commanding view of the surrounding area. La Cresta, or "The Ridge" is located more

than 360 feet (110 meters) above the Sea of Cortez and is one of the last available locations with a vista overlooking the Palmilla coastline. "We bought the property from Cristina Rodriguez, Rod's daughter, so it's an honor to still have that family connection to the man who developed the resort at Palmilla. That gives us a sense of continuity. We'll also have some unique features as we develop that property,

*Continued on next page*





PALMILLA

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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Del Mar Development residences at La Cresta.*

like possibly a chair lift,” Hatfield says with a smile.

The stories of One&Only Palmilla and Del Mar Development are so complementary, so intertwined, that many of their stories seem to be interchangeable. In talking with both Peter Bowling and Ron Hatfield, themes of mutual respect keep coming up, and other stories seem to echo one another.

Ron Hatfield now hears from clients and homeowners who were involved with the

hotel or Del Mar community some twenty years ago and who have now returned to their home in Palmilla. “Some of the people who bought homes from us back when we were starting out, their lives took them in other directions, and they were living in Palm Springs or Aspen or somewhere else, and they have all the money in the world and have travelled extensively and I was

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**(ABOVE)** | *Del Mar Development residences at Palmilla Cove.*

pleasantly surprised when they began to filter back to Los Cabos and have them tell me ‘We don’t know why we ever left. We’re so thrilled to be back.’ The consensus is that this place offers the best real estate property anywhere in the world.”

“It’s an amazingly similar experience for the hotel,” Peter Bowling says. “Many of our guests are very discerning and sophisticated travelers who have travelled the world and enjoyed a variety of elite luxury destinations, and they end up coming back here, as they can find no better place in the world. And then they want to settle in and commit to buying a home in the area.”

Moving into 2017 and beyond, expect One&Only Palmilla and Del Mar Development to continue to raise the bar for the luxury lifestyle in Los Cabos, nurturing a mutual relationship that has been going on for more than two decades, creating communities that are synonymous with the highest form of luxury living and the best that southern Baja has to offer.

So what is it that attracts us to this very special place along the Los Cabos coastline? It’s partly the physical location

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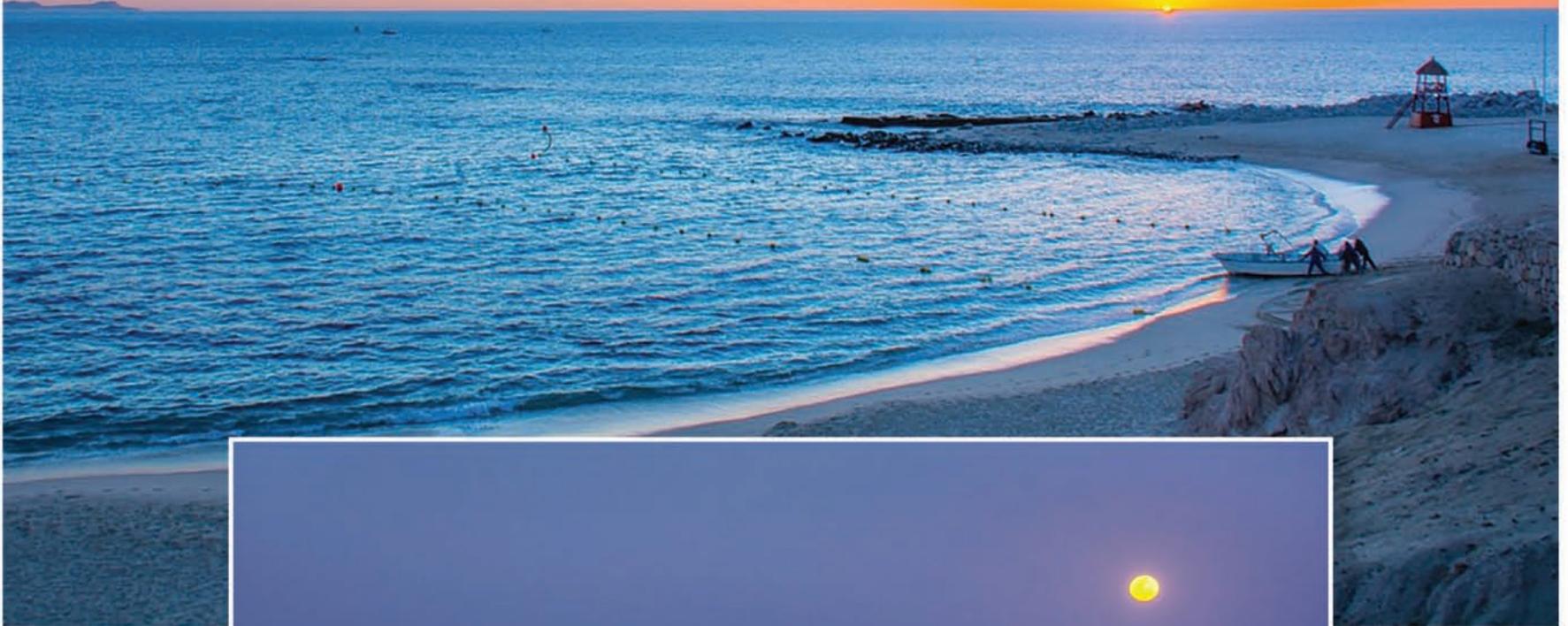


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**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Top: Del Mar Development residences, Villas Del Mar. Bottom, left and bottom center: Villa Cortez at One&Only Palmilla. Bottom, right: Agua Larbi at One&Only Palmilla.*

at Punta Palmilla, the raw bones of the landscape that Rodriguez recognized when he flew over it and knew instinctively it was an ideal location for a resort. It's also something maybe indefinable, a sense of peace or serenity, an emotion that you can feel when you exit the highway and enter the community, when you see the first employee salute you with the signature hand-to-heart gesture that is part of their culture. In its understated elegance, One&Only Palmilla,

and by association the communities built by Del Mar Development, are places where the highest quality of service and traditional values like etiquette, good taste and attention to detail still matter. When you enter the community at Palmilla you're entering an oasis of tranquility, a private world that has been carefully cultivated and nurtured, one

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*Continued on page 70*

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# PALMILLA DUNES

Just across the highway from One&Only Palmilla a new residential community is taking shape, offering yet another option for luxury living in Los Cabos. Carved into the mountainside with spectacular views of the Sea of Cortez, Palmilla Dunes is a 29-acre residential development that will offer 200 luxury homes when complete as part of a community that also includes many family-oriented recreational and entertainment amenities. The master-planned development offers a wide range of activity options, including tennis, pickle ball and paddle tennis courts, a state-of-the-art gym and spa, a semi-Olympic lap pool, a lounge pool, pool bar, hot tub, fire pits, children's pool and recreational areas, a sports bar, restaurant and a private movie theater. Palmilla Dunes is located across the road from the Shoppes at Palmilla, and is a convenient three-minute golf cart ride to Palmilla Beach.

Phase one of the master-planned community Palmilla Dunes, which broke ground in August of 2016, consists

of 72 units of two-, three-, and four-bedroom luxury residences, from ground level Garden Residences to multi-level Penthouses and double-height Lofts with rooftop terraces overlooking the One&Only Palmilla resort and the Sea of Cortez. Floor plans range from 2,014 square feet to more than 4,000 square feet of living space for the Royal Penthouse Loft with rooftop terrace. Each residence has been designed with vanishing pocket slider doors to open up the indoor space and take advantage of the expansive views of the coastline.

Central to the lifestyle at Palmilla Dunes is the Club, a family-oriented complex where owners and guests can relax or enjoy the recreational opportunities of swimming, tennis, pickle ball, and also plenty of room to relax at the outdoor hot tub sauna and steam room. Members will also enjoy first class dining at the club restaurant and sports bar, while younger members can enjoy the children's pool, an indoor and outdoor playground and a private movie theatre. Original homeowners

at Palmilla Dunes are entitled to a lifetime membership to this new sports and social club and all of its amenities (a value of \$25,000 US).

Palmilla Dunes is being developed by one of Mexico's oldest and most reputable property developers. The Cufac Group was founded in Mexico City in 1949 and has a long-standing reputation as a premier luxury lifestyle property developer, and the quality going into this new residential community is of the highest order, from the superiority of the building materials and lush landscaping to the wide range of amenities afforded homeowners at Palmilla Dunes.

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- The Shoppes at Palmilla



**(ABOVE AND FAR RIGHT)** | This page: The veranda patio, ribeye steak and the interior of SEARED. Opposite page, top: the lifestyle and activities at One&Only Palmilla. Opposite page, center: lower deck at Agua by Larbi. Opposite page, bottom left: wedding table arrangement at One&Only Palmilla. Opposite page, bottom right: spa pool.

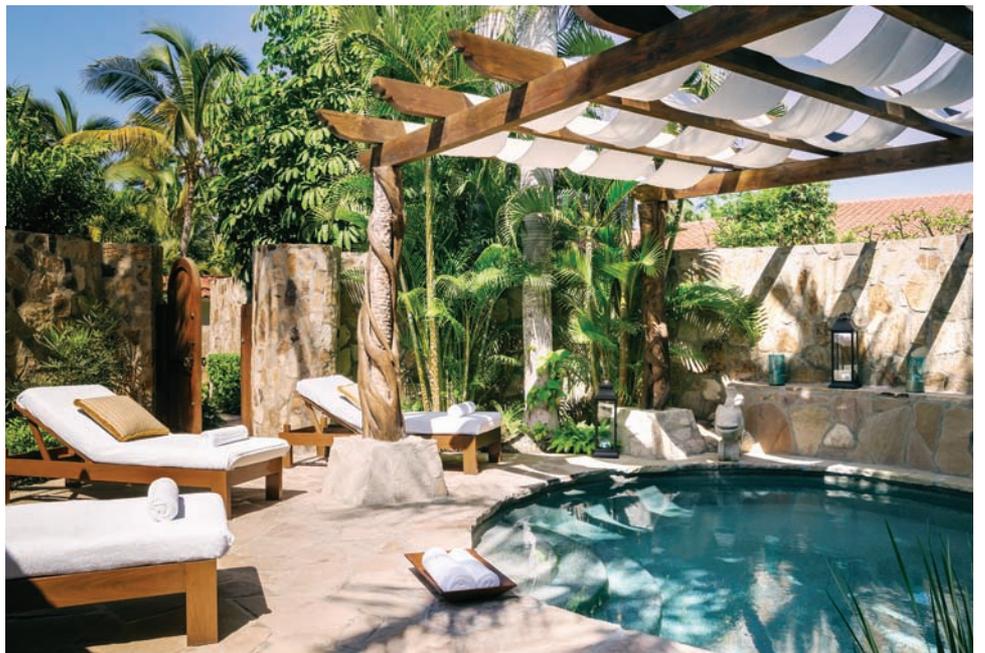
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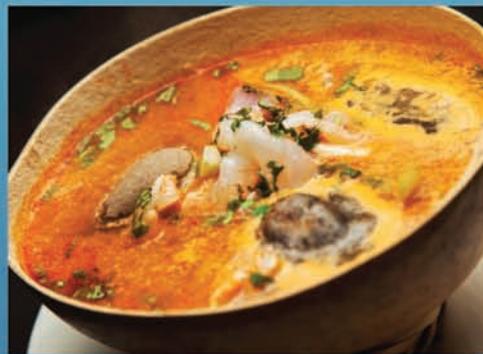
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# FISH *Tail*

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*A bar in La Paz provides a great opportunity for saltwater angling, even for beginners!*

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*-by Paul Papanek & Joan Tucker | photos by Paul Papanek-*

We were well into our second (or was it our third?) round of drinks at Jonathan Roldan's Tailhunter restaurant and bar in La Paz when we overheard the people at the next table raving about what a great day they'd had. They were more than animated and, ever the nosey duo - as we're known in many circles - we asked them what they'd been up to. Just then, a server set down two plates of fish filets on their table - one beautifully grilled, and another golden-brown beer-battered. They looked at us and answered "Fishing!"

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*“...over 20 species of fish, in-shore style of fishing...  
calm and clear water, no fancy gear or lures...  
Great for experienced fishermen and novices.  
If we could hold a rod, we could fish with them...”*



**(ABOVE AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page: Dawn at La Arenas.*  
*Opposite page, top: Joan says the fish was "this big!"*  
*Opposite page, bottom: Jonathan Roldan.*

We eyed their plates, leaned in and, hoping to be offered a taste, said "...Go onnn..."

"We went out with Tailhunter and it was incredible! Today was our 4th – and last day! We go home tomorrow..." they told us sadly.

Joan and I looked at each other as a dim light bulb lit above our heads at the same time.

Tailhunter has been our local bar for the past eight years. It's right around the corner from our house, and we often go for breakfast, for dinner, or to just have a drink while watching the sun set over the bay. But suddenly, we became hyper-aware of our surroundings. We noticed, seemingly for the first time – the myriad of mounted fish everywhere. We saw rods, reels, and fishing nets that we'd never noticed before. We finally read all of the signs surrounding us and realized that they were all about fishing.

We were in an angler's paradise and we had never taken the time to really look. It was an experience right out of a movie – kind of like Brad and Janet seeing the details of Frank-N-Furter's castle for the first time (look it up).

Of course, we had met Jonathan before, and were well aware of Tailhunter's fishing trip business and reputation (the best in La Paz), but we had never, ever, thought about going fishing. Fishing was for people who...well...fish. That certainly wasn't us. As we were contemplating the act of fishing, Jonathan appeared at our neighbor's table to chat about the day's catch.

Sensing our curiosity, he sat down with us and, for the first time, we really learned what fishing in La Paz was all about. He described

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it – and a Tailhunter’s trip - in a way that we could actually imagine ourselves doing: no pressure, over 20 species of fish, in-shore style of fishing and always in sight of land, calm and clear water, no fancy gear or lures and – no trolling. Great for experienced fishermen and novices. If we could hold a rod, we could fish with them. Take a break and go snorkeling? Run over to that secluded cove for lunch? No problem. It’s the client’s captain and boat for the day.

Before we knew it, we had committed to going fishing the next morning at Las Arenas – one of the top five light-tackle fisheries in the world. More world records come from that area than anywhere else, Jonathan told us. He promised that we were in for some fun.

At 5:30 am the next morning, Jonathan and his wife, Jilly, met us and the other guests with coffee and a hot breakfast in the parking lot of La Concha Hotel. It was immediately obvious that Joan and I were the novices. We were the only ones in the group who were not arranging their multiple fishing rods, reels, and tackle boxes, but we were the ones with the largest bag of spare clothes, hats, towels, water bottles, and sunblock. After loading up the van with coolers full of snacks, drinks, and our lunches, Jonathan handed each of us a slip of paper with the name of our captain, ushered

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**(FAR LEFT AND BELOW)** | *Opposite page, top: Captain Pancho. Opposite page, bottom: Joan fighting the fish. This page, below: Some of the gear.*





us into the van, and waved goodbye as he and Jilly ran off to greet the next group who would be fishing in La Paz Bay that same day.

About an hour later, under a cloudy pre-dawn sky, we pulled into Las Arenas and piled out of the van. The beach was busy with a small army of people getting dozens of boats loaded with supplies and into the water – backing the trailers down the embankment with a collection of pickups and old Jeeps half-eaten by salt water. We found our captain – Pancho – right away, climbed into his panga, and off we went. After stopping to fish for bait, we headed farther out as the sun began to crack the horizon. True to what Jonathan told us, we weren't far from shore when Pancho shut down the engine and

began to get everything prepared. He gave me a bait cutting lesson and showed us both how not to impale ourselves with a hook when casting – the latter being the most important of the two.

While this was going on, we heard excited whoops coming from boats across the bay. Other people were already reeling in fish before we even got our hooks in the water. But as soon as we did, we felt nibbles. Being the newbies, we had no luck setting the hooks (the fish obviously enjoying our inexperience) but Pancho patiently helped us figure it out. Suddenly, Joan found herself with something big and heavy on the line.

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*Continued on next page*

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| Joan catches her first fish! |





**(ABOVE, BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page, above: A friend (brown pelican) is hoping for leftovers. This page, below: Other guests fishing - always in sight of shore. Opposite page: Paul catches his own bonita.*

Pancho quickly strapped a fighting belt around her waist as he instructed her how to play out the line and reel in the fish. The fight went on for about 10 minutes, and when it was over, Joan, exhausted and amazed, held a beautiful, silvery 10-pound Bonita in her hands – the first fish she'd ever caught. Pancho was genuinely thrilled. As soon as we released it after the obligatory photo op, Pancho's radio crackled to life with an announcement from another captain that the Roosterfish were biting half a mile away. We fired up the motor and headed over.

La Paz - the Roosterfish capital of the world. Who knew? They're on every fisherman's bucket list because they're exotic and beautiful, can be found in five to ten

feet of water, they fight hard, and grow really big. Because Tailhunter promotes CPR – catch, photo, and release – actual reports of weights and length are generally estimated by the captains. But in 1960, in these very waters, the International Game Fish Association (Tailhunter is the current IGFA representative in Baja) recorded the world record Roosterfish, weighing in at 114 pounds. That record still stands. We were getting excited.

By this time, Joan and I both had fighting belts on – fully prepared for anything the water would throw at us. And then we

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*Continued on next page*









waited. And lost bait to nibbles and unset hooks. Until, suddenly, my rod arced downward toward the water with such force that it almost got pulled out of my hands. Recalling Pancho's instructions to Joan, I fought the fish as Pancho drove the boat slowly in the direction the fish was running. Soon, we could see the distinctive dorsal fins momentarily break the surface. It was a Roosterfish! Pancho kept giving me pointers about how to keep it on the line and, after what seemed like half an hour, we had it alongside the panga. Pancho grappled it onboard and removed the hook.

After marveling at this beautiful creature for a little while, back into the water it went. Fantastic!

We spent the rest of the morning moving around the bay, catching another couple of Bonito – which we released - as well as a few Pargo which we kept for dinner. We motored over to watch a few of our van mates land large Roosterfishes of their own. It was great fun - exciting and strangely relaxing all at the same time. We loved it.

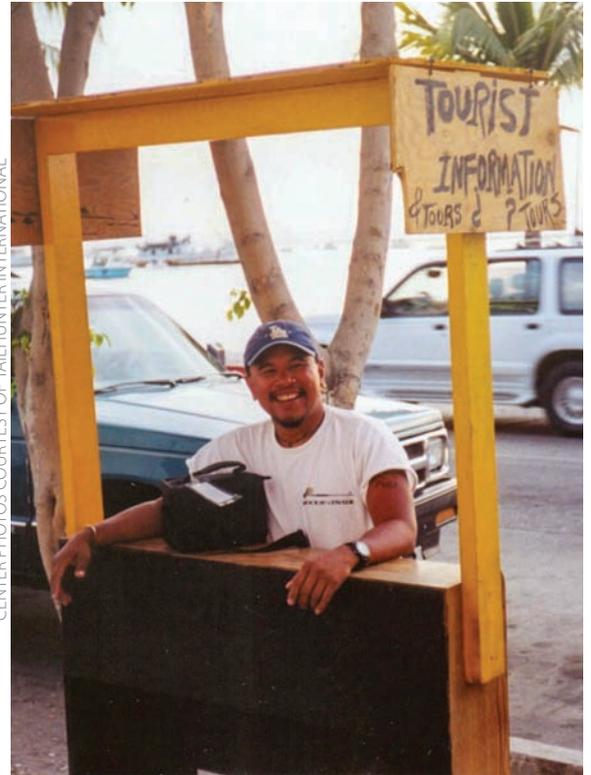
All too soon, we were heading into shore. Around the van, everyone was comparing notes and photos and digging into the boxed

**(FAR LEFT, ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Opposite page: Paul catches a Roosterfish! This page, above: Other guests with something on the line. This page, below: A guest with a Cabrillo.*

lunches that had been sent along. From the stories everyone was telling, it was obvious that some people (not us) were going to have a bigger dinner than others. But we were ecstatic with our catch, and couldn't wait

*Continued on next page*





CENTER PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAILHUNTER INTERNATIONAL



to get back to town where Jonathan would clean and filet all of our fish.

Jonathan and Tailhunter International have been leading fishing trips in La Paz since 1996 – both in La Paz Bay and Las Arenas. They host about 1500 guests per year, and 85 percent are repeat customers. Obviously, they're doing something right. And that something is their attention to every detail of the guest's experience. It's also Jonathan's warmth, charisma, and enthusiasm – all coming from a man who is doing what he truly loves to do. He and Jilly personalize the trip, know everybody by name, and make sure that everyone is matched to the perfect captain – many of whom have been with Jonathan for as long

as 20 years. He ensures that everyone has a great and memorable time no matter how many fish they catch. Though he didn't say it in so many words, a day with Tailhunter is not a contest.

That evening, back at Tailhunter – now with our friend Juli – we eagerly waited for our own beer-battered Pargo to arrive at the table – a mere 24 hours after we had been longing for a taste from someone else's plate. Funny how the world works. Jonathan came by to ask about the day and laughed when we told him how great it was.

"Yeah" he said. "A bad day here is catching only five fish and running out of beer before noon."

As he walked away to check on other

guests, Joan whispered to Juli "I have such a crush on him!"

Juli smiled and replied "Stand in line!"

**For more information on Tailhunter International, call (from the US): 626-638-3383, or visit: [www.tailhunter-international.com](http://www.tailhunter-international.com)** **El Fin!**

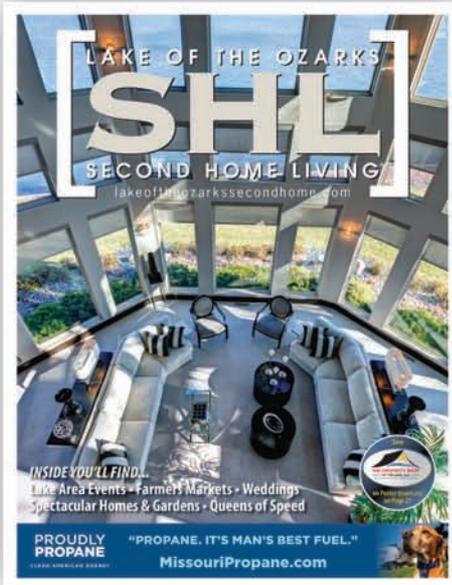
**(FAR LEFT AND BELOW)** | *Opposite page, top: Taking the boats out of the water at the end of the day. Opposite page, middle left: Tailhunter La Paz. Opposite page, middle right: Jonathan pre-Tailhunter selling fishing trips on the malecon. Opposite page, bottom: Our Tailhunter group. This page: Another guest with his Roosterfish.*



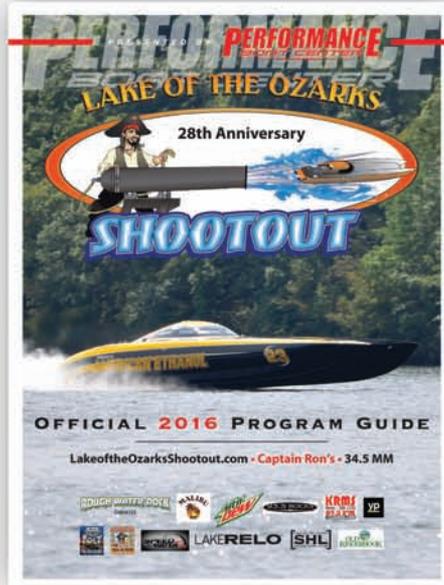


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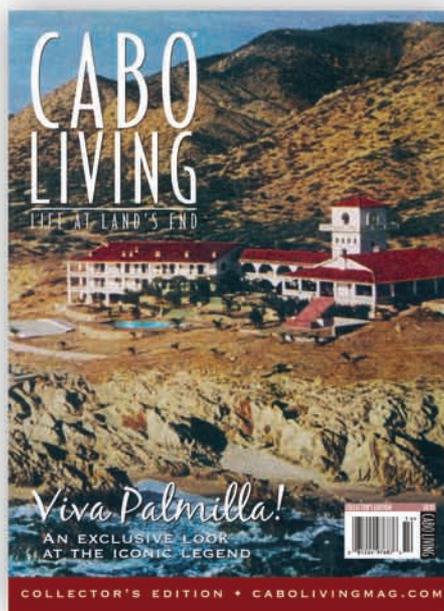
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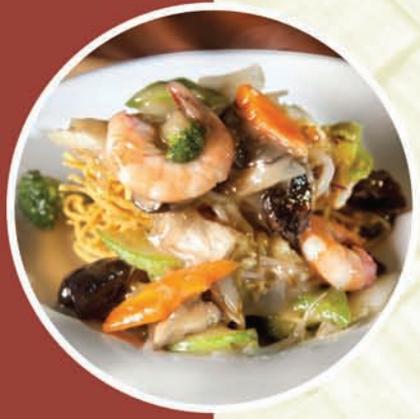


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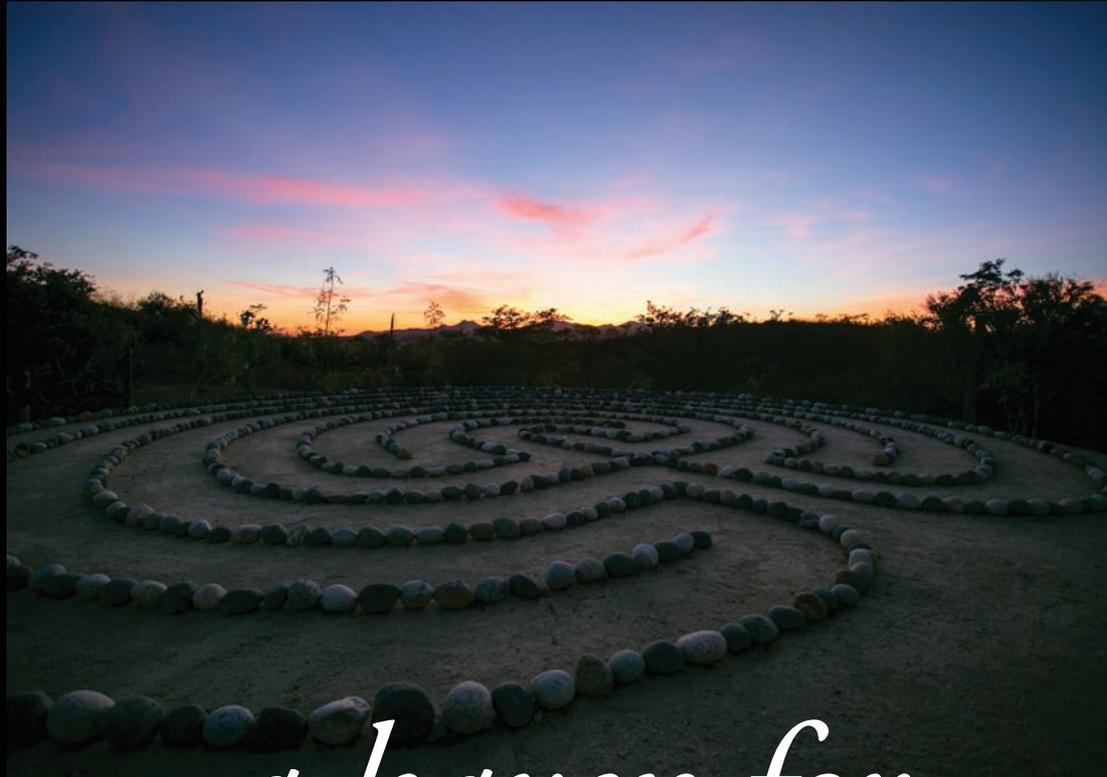
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*A Peaceful Oasis in the Desert of Chaotic Cabo*

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*-by Diane O'Byrne | photos by Francisco Estrada-*

Her eyes sparkle as if she holds the secrets of the universe. Rukhsana Khan welcomes all with gentle arms to her wellness center, accurately called Rukhsana's Wellness Heavenly Retreat. The moment you enter the spectacular gardens with an unparalleled view of the Sea of Cortez, you have a feeling that your life is about to change.

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Rukhsana's place awakens every sense of your body. Your eyes feast on a spectacular view framed by her flowering gardens. Your ears hear the songs of the many birds who, like the human visitors, are drawn to the Retreat. The soft whisper of a gentle mountaintop breeze and the soft wind chimes hum in the background. If you choose to have a massage, the sense of touch is ignited. The smell from one of Rukhsana's Indian cooking classes is in the air, and if you're one of the lucky ones to take this class, the delectable tastes are unforgettable.

Rukhsana was born in the middle of the last century in Pakistan on the border of Afghanistan. Growing up as a woman in a Muslim country was challenging but she fought back with true grit and honed her cooking skills from an early age. When she

immigrated in 1976 to Calgary, Alberta, she quickly found a job cooking for high-ranking politicians and visiting heads of state. She has always loved to cook, but kept searching for a deeper connection between food and spirituality.

Soon after moving to Calgary, she began a life-long journey of learning all she could about Ayurveda cooking, massage and cosmetology. Over the years, she has obtained more than 45 certifications to demonstrate her dedication to providing an array of services for the body, mind and spirit. Rukhsana graduated from the Chopra Center for Well-Being with a certification for Primordial Sound Meditation and also is

**(BELOW AND FAR LEFT)** | *The beautiful, serene, and tranquil surroundings of Rukhsana's Wellness Heavenly Retreat in Cabo.*

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*Continued on next page*

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a Sivananda Yoga instructor for Hatha Yoga and is now earning her Master's Degree from the Chopra Center.

After running one of the top rated spas in Vancouver for seven years, Rukhsana knew in her heart she was called to a higher purpose. After successfully improving the outside, cosmetic side of peoples' bodies, she dedicated her focus to her true mission of healing our bodies from the inside out. With this in mind, Rukhsana moved to Cabo San Lucas in 2012, treating the people of the Baja with her many gifts and talents.

She started first with meditation, building a loyal following of Expats, locals and visitors for a weekly meditation circle. In 2013, she bought a rundown property and transformed

it into an oasis of peace. It is the only wellness center in the Cabo San Lucas area that offers a tranquil bed and breakfast stay and a wellness retreat to empower visitors to be free. Rukhsana says, "Every human who's been here has felt the energy of this place."

Every Sunday morning people gather in the Retreat's meditation room to ask themselves the four key questions of life: "Who am I? What do I want? What is my purpose? What am I grateful for?" Participants of all ages, differing life experiences and from around the world come

**(FAR RIGHT AND ABOVE)** | *The setting of Rukhsana's Wellness Heavenly Retreat was transformed into a place to be free and to meditate.*

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*Continued on next page*



**(ABOVE AND FAR RIGHT)** | *Rukhsana's cooking classes are centered on the relationship between food and the health of the human body.*

together and support one another in their spiritual journey.

Before beginning the meditation, Rukhsana teaches everyone how to breathe properly. She cites research that shows humans quit breathing properly after their first birthday! She walks participants through the steps of “ujjayi breathing,” the act of taking deep, loud breaths.

Participants go through the exercise seven times to ensure breath is clean and restored. Rukhsana encourages beginners and those experienced to make this THEIR time; time to not talk, not pray, but to LISTEN. She's quick to acknowledge that some may fall asleep, not be able to tune out the “monkey chatter” or simply get restless. No judgements here; only the opportunity for the spirit to be refreshed! After 30 minutes, she asks those willing

to share their experience. Sheepishly, some admit their inability to get totally relaxed. Rukhsana reassures them, like anything, meditation takes practice. She gently advises those in the circle: “Go to the gym to work on the ‘hardware’ of your bodies. Then come to meditation to enhance and reboot the ‘software’ of your bodies!”

A sense of peace and calm fills the air. Her gentleness of heart warms even the most skeptical in the room. There is a sense that she genuinely wants to help you find the joy in life that is often elusive. This meditation is nourishment for the soul!

Smiling, she says, “I’m not into world peace; I’m here to bring peace to the individual.” There’s no charge for joining the

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*Continued on next page*





meditation circle, but she humbly encourages participants to donate any amount that will go to women's shelters in Cabo, Calgary and Pakistan.

To complete the wellness circle, Rukhsana also focuses on nourishment for our bodies through her hands-on cooking classes. She has thoroughly studied the medicinal value of food and how to use it to heal everything from bug bites to depression.

Currently, Rukhsana offers cooking classes every week on Wednesdays from 11 am-1 pm where she invites eight lucky people into her kitchen as family to learn her award winning cooking techniques for Indian delicacies. Classes are limited and booked via her Facebook page.

She prepares all of the fresh ingredients before class, so that participants can learn (and eat) quickly. For one of her favorite

curry dishes, she prepares the base before class so she can illustrate how easy it is to make a cauliflower side dish, a spicy chicken main dish and a rice dish that make the taste buds sing! When asked about turning down the "heat" on the chicken, she didn't miss a beat to give her spunky response... "BE BRAVE!"

Starting in the spring of 2017, Rukhsana offers the next phase for inspiring wellness by offering several new and exciting services including:

- Full day retreats
- Expanded massage services
- The opportunity to stay at the retreat center overnight for a full day of meditation including walking meditation
- A meditation labyrinth

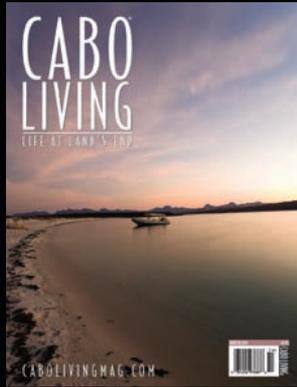
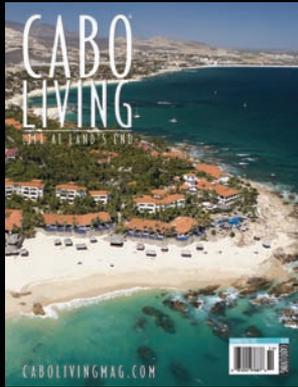
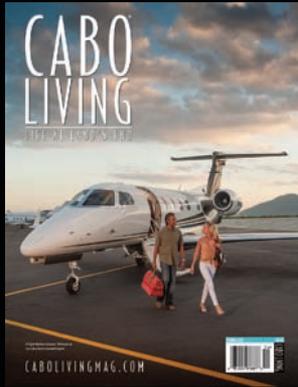
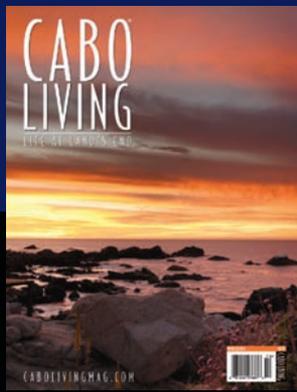
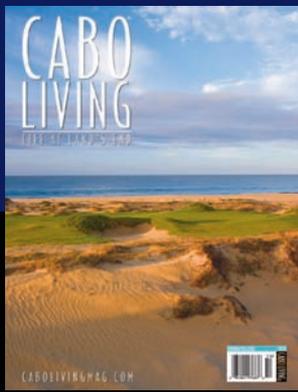
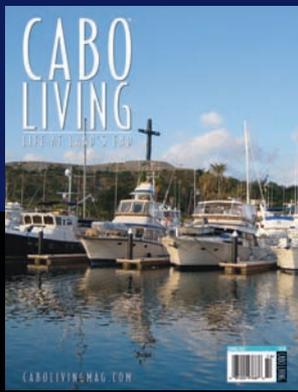
Guests may stay in one of her spectacular

rooms for a bed and breakfast experience or consider holding a special event on the most beautiful grounds in all of Cabo! Check out her web site at [retreatcabo.com](http://retreatcabo.com) or her Facebook page, Rukhsana's Wellness Heavenly Retreat. You can also pick up her homemade Ghee at the Green Goddess health food store in San Jose. Rukhsana describes her Ghee as a "beautiful, golden accumulative sap of true vitality" and cites it as the secret ingredient in all her cooking.

Honor yourself with a visit to the Rukhsana's Wellness Heavenly Retreat of Cabo! Renew your body with a massage; inspire your mind to cook differently; grace your spirit with meditation. You will leave with a heart full of gratitude, a sense of joy and a soul re-ignited! And yes, an understanding of the secrets to the universe!

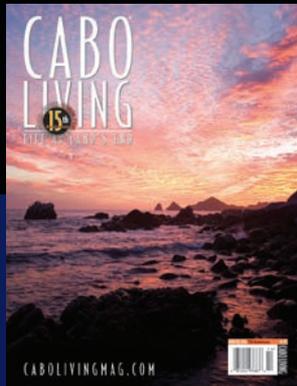
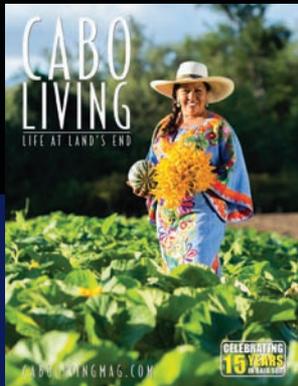
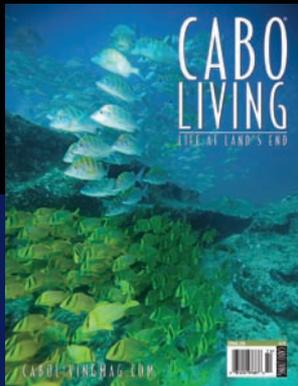
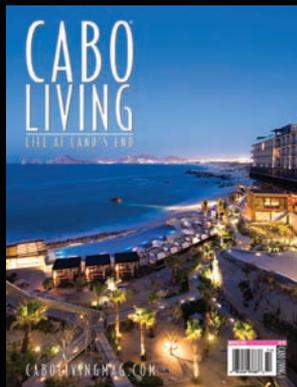
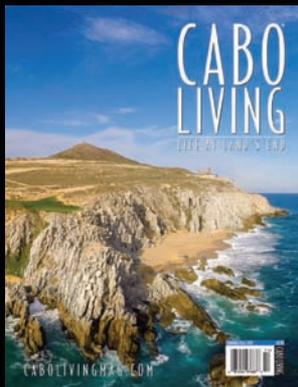
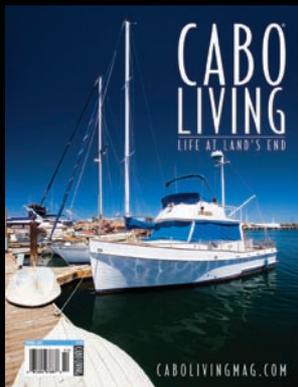
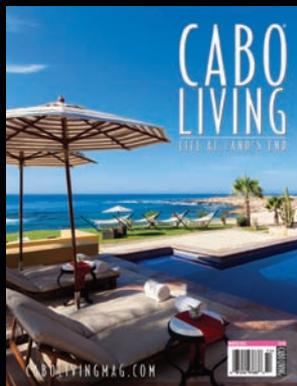
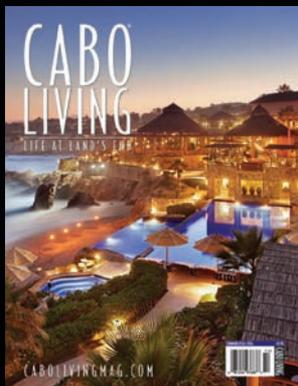
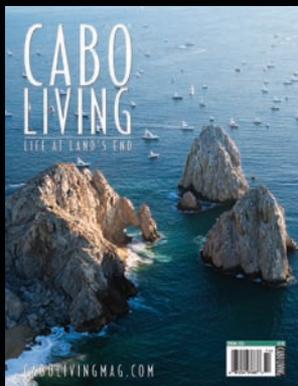
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# Chileno Bay

## RESORT & RESIDENCES

*This newly-opened 22-acre private community  
exemplifies the best in Baja luxury!*

*-by Michael Koehn | images courtesy of Chileno Bay Resort & Residences and Francisco Estrada-*



Ask anyone what *Cabo Living* magazine is about and most people will tell you it's about the lifestyle here in southern Baja. And, it's true. In covering southern Baja we try to share the best of what the area offers, including 5-star luxury hotels, great dining venues, adventure activities and the natural beauty of the area.

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*“The whole concept of the resort is to be a place that exudes energy...”*

Over the years we've seen a lot of options in terms of luxury resorts and beachfront communities, but the newly opened Chileno Bay Resort & Residences has come together in a way that exemplifies the best local lifestyles of Los Cabos. It's adjacent to history, the site of Bud Parr's original Hotel Cabo San Lucas, and also fronts some of the most popular beaches and swimming coves in the area. If location is everything in that classic real estate mantra, then Chileno Bay Resort has the advantage of having one of the finest natural locations anywhere in the world. It's an opportunity that isn't lost on the people who gave you Chileno Bay Resort & Residences as the tastefulness of the

design, the range of amenities and the sheer natural beauty of the area is a testament to the well-conceived long range planning of SV Capital, Auberge Resorts, Discovery Land Company, and General Manager John Volponi and his staff at the resort.

Chileno Bay Resort & Residences is a 22-acre private community located along two miles of Chileno Bay, one of the few year round swimmable beaches in Baja. The community lies within the larger area of 1,200 acres on two sides of the highway, with Chileno Bay Resort serving as the heart and soul of the area. When I visited they were in the process of finishing out Phase 1, consisting of thirty-three 3 and 4-bedroom

home residences, and twenty-nine hotel rooms. In March they started marketing Phase 2, with twenty-eight additional residences, including six 2-bedroom residences and more of the 4-bedroom, 4.5 bath design that were so popular in Phase 1, plus twelve additional hotel rooms.

The Chileno Bay development is different than other luxury properties in that the master plan incorporates all the natural amenities that homeowners and visitors have access to. The design is centered on a three-tiered pool (their centerpiece

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*Continued on next page*







138-meter swimming pool with a second pool for families) that simulates a river, with waterfalls as the levels descend, flowing through the center of the resort. The overall design of the resort is low level, with no building over two stories on a very walkable property, and a color scheme chosen to fit in with the natural environment. It's also designed to avoid any high-density issues, where buildings are typically crammed into a small, beachfront area and people feel like they're living on top of each other.

"The whole concept of the resort is to be a place that exudes energy," says John Volponi,

General Manager. "Unlike places where the emphasis is on being subdued and quiet, we have a place that encourages activity, where you can come in with a group of friends and be very active, taking advantage of our location and can grab kayaks and stand up paddleboards from our H2O Cave anytime the inspiration strikes and explore the local coastline and waters teeming with aquatic life. At the same time, things are very relaxed

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here and people can let their hair down and enjoy the serenity and quiet places. You can walk into COMAL, for instance, our signature restaurant, in shorts and a golf shirt and flip flops and be welcomed.”

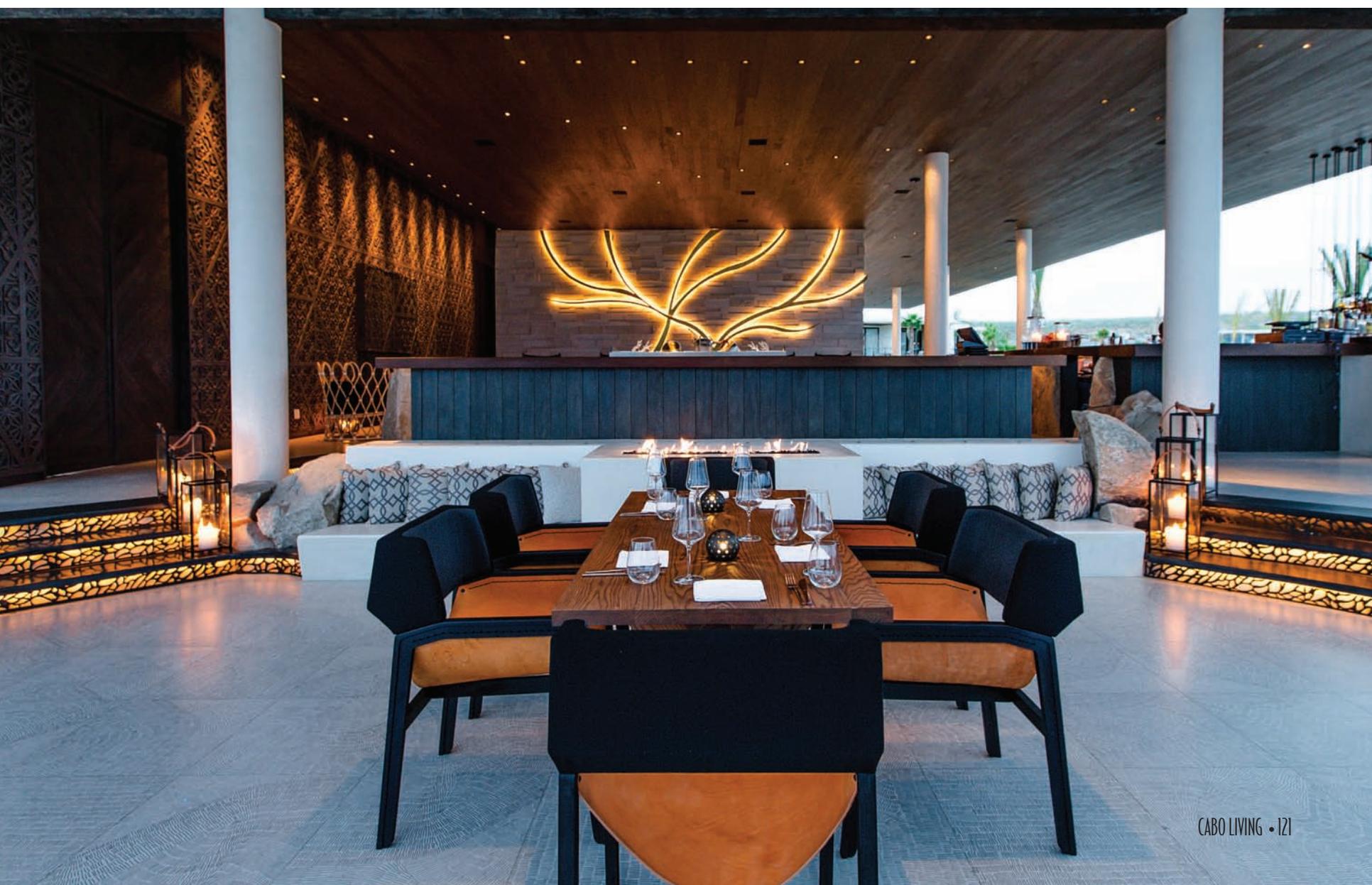
If Chileno Bay Resort has everything you need for a world class active vacation, and I would say the snorkeling here is among the best in the world, they’ve also made sure that other luxury amenities are also well in place. Their spa, which is managed by Auberge Resorts, offers a number of unique features, including sanctuary garden areas for both men and women, ten treatment rooms, a salt inhalation room with pink Himalayan salt lined walls, a larger private suite for couples or smaller groups, a reflexology pool

and fountain and salon services and men’s grooming den. A visit here will result in a spa-directed journey, and after treatments or a visit to the fitness center you’ll feel completely rejuvenated, and ready for other adventures.

Like a round of golf at the private, members-only Tom Fazio-designed 18-hole, par 72 course. It’s a place that caused Fazio, who has designed many courses around the world, to jump up and down with excitement when he saw the vantage point, inspiring him to create something special here. Located on the other side of the highway of the larger resort property, the beautifully laid out course

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*Continued on next page*





**(ABOVE, BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page, above: Devin McDavid, mixologist Osvaldo Vasquez, and Executive Chef Yvan Mucharraz. Tuna Causa. This page, below: Braised Short Rib with Cacao Broth. Pumpkin Toast. Ceviche Chileno at COMAL. Moscow mule classic. Baked Lobina. Opposite page: COMAL Lounge. Cacao - Mezcal Chamomile Cocoa Tea Cream. TnT at Chileno Bay Resort.*

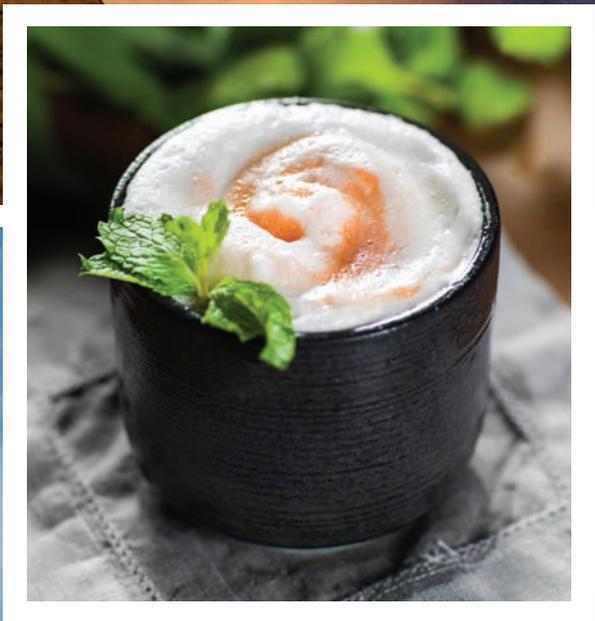
is manicured to perfection and provides dramatic vistas of the desert and Sea of Cortez, with Casamigos tequila refreshment stations positioned along the way.

COMAL, the resort's signature restaurant, is helmed by Chef Yvan Mucharraz, who will be familiar to those who dined at the Resort at Pedregal in years past. Designed by Los Angeles-based Gulla Jonsdottir Architecture + Design, COMAL is a sleek, contemporary space and a place where Chef Mucharraz could develop the restaurant's menu from scratch right up to its opening. In concept, COMAL is a way to explore not only the flavor profiles of Mexico, but also of other

Latin American countries, broadening the style of cooking shared here by Mucharraz, not offering typical categories like appetizers and main courses, but instead seasonal categories that include "things from the street," "things from the sea," and "things from the farm." There is also a live-action ceviche station, contemporary cocktails created by Osvaldo Vasquez, one of Mexico's most respected mixologists, and nightly live music offerings at COMAL. Then after dining, if you're in the mood, you can catch

*Continued on next page*







a popular movie at the resort's private theater.

Down near the beach you'll find a place that is destined to become a local favorite, not just for owners and guests of Chileno Bay Resort, but for all of Los Cabos. TnT (for Tacos and Tequila) serves up a variety of tacos (*al pastor, pulpo, arrechera*) and an impressive selection of liquid refreshments, including a large number of premium tequilas and mescals. Sitting there with that gorgeous stretch of coastline in front of you (on my visit in January we saw gray whales breaching right in front of us) and people paddleboarding and snorkeling right off the beach, it's like no other place in Los Cabos, a truly magical spot.

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As impressive as Chileno Bay Resort & Residences is now, there's a lot more to come in the future. Down the road the Discovery Land Company plans additions like an organic farm, an open air specialty market – Mercado - where you can pick up freshly prepared foods for a family picnic or discover handcrafted souvenirs to bring home, a farm-to-table restaurant, a water park, sports fields, tennis and pickle ball courts and hiking trails where you can explore the desert while also keeping an eye out for migrating whales offshore.

Chileno Bay Resort & Residences is much more than another 5-star resort assuming its place on the local coastline. It's designed

to be a true community, a place for families that promotes the most stylish and healthiest lifestyles anywhere. What SV Capital, Auberge Resorts, Discovery Land Company and John Volponi and his management team now provide at Chileno Bay is ease of ownership, world class amenities and access to some of the most spectacular natural resources anywhere in the world. We look forward to seeing it develop and grow.

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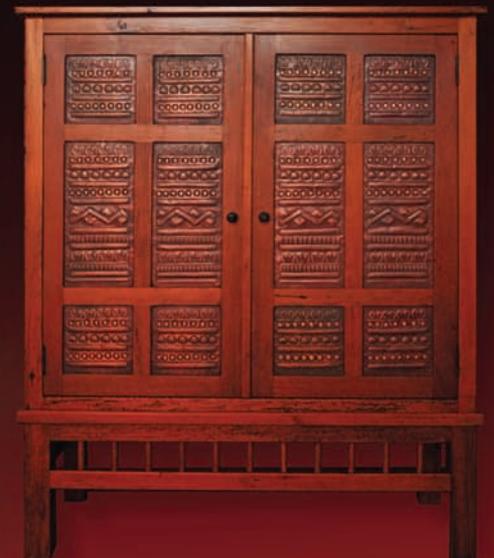
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In April 2015, a surgical team headed by Dr. Juan Carlos Arriola decided to take Elizabeth's case to H+ Hospital. Due to the severity of her conditions, no other hospital was able to take her case. Only H+ Hospital saw hope for Elizabeth's health and future.

13 months after the accident, Elizabeth finally received the treatment and support she so desperately needed to save her life. After an intensive 8-hour surgery the medical team not only successfully

healed her, they also secured her future.

Thanks to the support of H+ Hospital's private donors, today Elizabeth lives a normal life.

Through the Give+ Campaign, you too can help patients like Elizabeth live normal, healthy lives. Give+ Campaign is an initiative for U.S. donors who are passionate about improving the health and quality of life for all residents in Southern Baja. H+ Hospital has partnered with the International

Community Foundation (ICF) and local partner organizations to identify individuals from the most vulnerable communities in the region who lack access to needed medical services. Contributions to the Give+ Campaign will cover all relevant expenses of these life-changing services.

H+ Hospital is Los Cabo's newest and most advanced hospital, offering highly trained, qualified personnel and the newest, state-of-the-art medical technology. H+ provides solutions for all health needs, and endeavors to redefine the standard for quality in healthcare in Los Cabos by focusing on the patient's safety and comfort.

The International Community Foundation (ICF) is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to inspire international charitable giving by U.S.

donors, particularly those with an interest in Northwest Mexico and Baja California, in order to strengthen civil society and promote sustainable communities.

Driven by donor passion, together H+ Hospital and ICF are leading health initiatives, in partnership with local non-profit organizations, which can refer their beneficiaries to the program. There is high demand for these services.

With your support, in 2017 the Give+ Campaign could provide 10-12 complex surgeries to local children and adults who otherwise would not have access to these critical services.

Through the Give+ Fund at ICF, your contributions are eligible for the maximum allowable U.S. federal income tax deduction.

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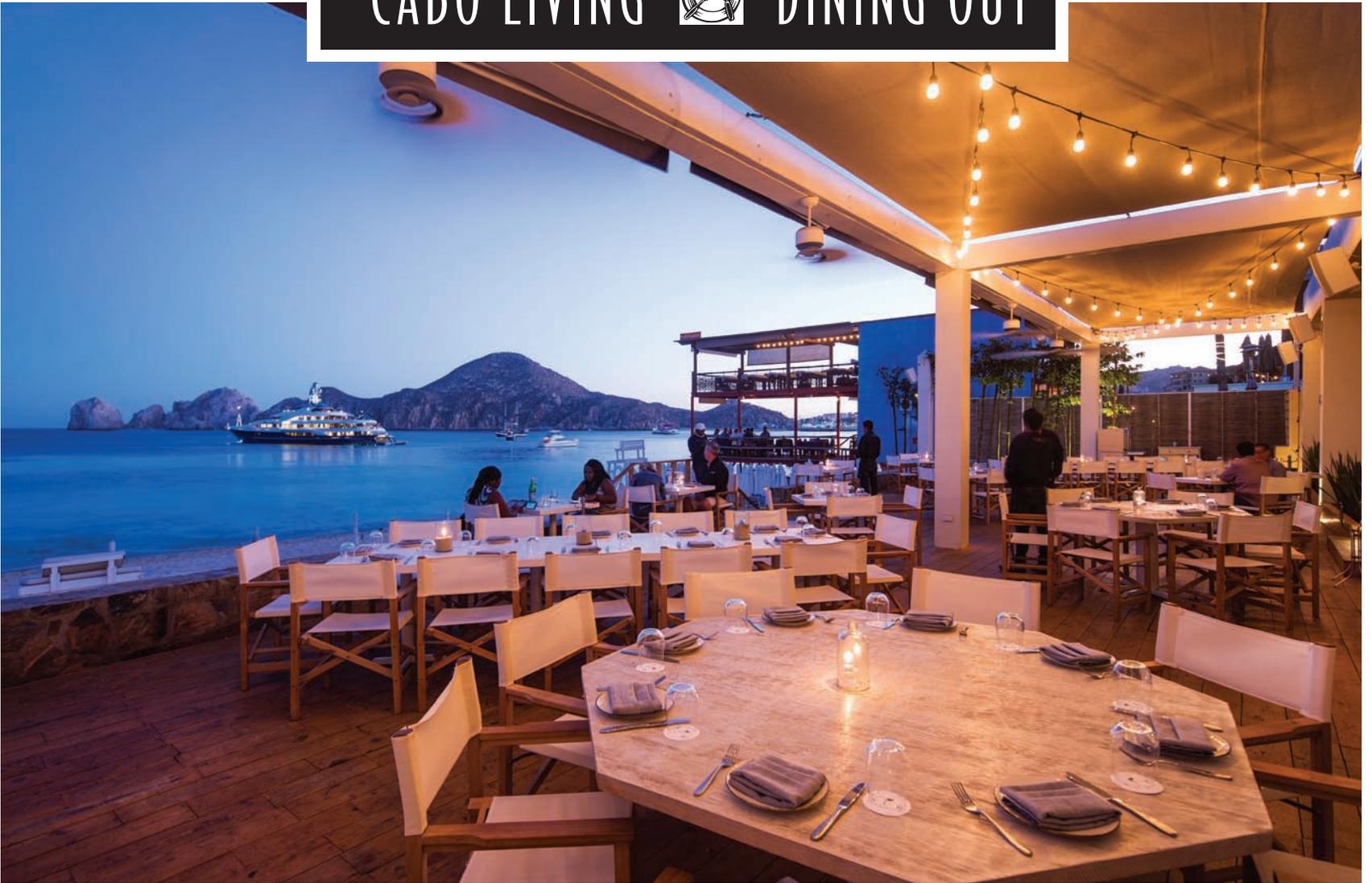
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# dining DIVERSITY

*-by Michael Koehn | photos by Francisco Estrada & courtesy of TrasPatio-*

At *Cabo Living* we always try to keep up to date with the latest dining hotspots. Sometimes new ones show up in the most obvious places, like on the beachfront at Medano Beach and sometimes we hear of promising new places opening up in the backstreets in Todos Santos or San José del Cabo. In this issue we visited two relatively new restaurants. One, SUR Beach House, is a sophisticated and stylish upgrade of the typical Cabo beach restaurant, as you might expect of a place that's an offshoot of The Bahia Hotel and Bar Esquina. Here Chef Andres Bracamontes works his magic, combining innovative ingredients in ways that are both eye appealing and delicious. TrasPatio is one of those hidden gems that sometimes only locals know about, a casual outdoor space where Chef Aldo Servin brings his considerable culinary skills into play with an emphasis on the outdoor grill. It's an inviting place where you're welcomed like family from the moment you arrive. *Buen provecho!*



## ***SUR Beach House by Bar Esquina***

Los Cabos is home to some of the world's finest beaches—and beach restaurants. While enjoying a bucket of beers and some nachos there are plenty of places to enjoy the beach action and views of the famous arch at Land's End as you spend a few hours at one of the areas many festive beachfront spots.

Now, in addition to those options, Medano Beach has added a unique and elegant new dining destination at SUR Beach House, an impressive new hotspot that seriously upgrades the concept of the beach restaurant and features, in addition to a world class view and creative menu, beach-oriented amenities that include lounge chairs

and daybeds, a private area for events, towel and butler service, a water sports activities center with guided tours to the arch, live music in the evenings, wellness retreats and valet parking. As fully featured as a local restaurant can get, SUR Beach House is open daily for breakfast and lunch and serves dinner from 7:30 pm to 12 am.

SUR is an offshoot of highly popular Bar Esquina at the Bahia Hotel—one of *Cabo Living* staffers' favorite hangouts, and in mid-January we had an opportunity to visit and enjoy dinner with executive chef Andrés Bracamontes and manager César Castillo.

SUR Beach House offers a front-row seat to Cabo's postcard perfect view and all the local beach action, while not necessarily being right in the middle of it all.

**(FAR LEFT, ABOVE AND BELOW)** | *Top left: Tiger roll with shrimp tempura, nori, cucumber, avocado, kanikama (crab) and masago (fish roe). Below, top left: Chef Andrés Bracamontes at SUR Beach House. Below, top right: Kale watermelon salad with shaved Parmesan, kalamata olives, pumpkin seeds and lemon vinaigrette. Below, bottom right: Green curry shrimp with black rice, eggplant sofrito and coconut milk.*

The décor, a striking combination of white canvas and beautiful natural wood, which lends a clean look to an already breezy, open space, was beautifully designed by the same New York-based ownership that created

*Continued on next page*



Bar Esquina and the urban boutique hotel, the Bahia, under the supervision of its Managing Director Felipe Rebelo. That connection also means if you're staying at the Bahia you won't need your wallet when you dine at SUR, as it is an account linked to the hotel.

If you've visited Bar Esquina you can expect the same level of culinary excellence here, but SUR has its own point of view

**(BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | Beautiful settings, impressive views and tantalizing dishes at SUR Beach House. This page, below, top right: Octopus tacos on blue-corn tortillas with grandmother's chicharrón and Xnipec (Yucatan-style habanero salsa). Opposite page, center: Grilled red snapper Veracruz-style with quinoa tabbouleh.

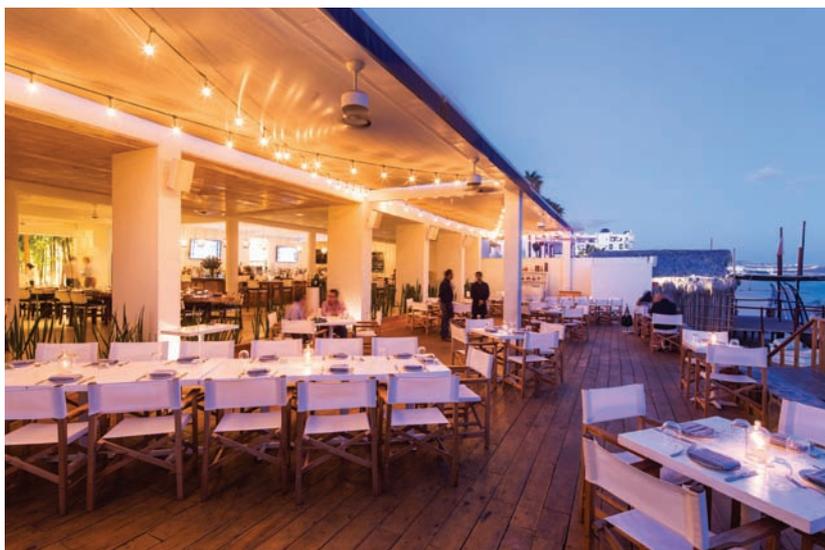
when it comes to its food and beverage menu. A big reason for that is Bracamontes, the executive chef who came to SUR from the highly evolved kitchen at Templo Cabo, and before that had stops in Miami, Spain, and the acclaimed Biko restaurant in Mexico City. It's his creativity that's on display in the very diverse menu that covers breakfast, lunch and, more recently, dinner.

The name SUR, I found out, was a tip of the hat not only to this southern part of Baja, but also to some of the culinary influences here from countries in South America and Asia.

"The idea was to create a menu that would provide tasty, refined food that was also healthy and light, as well as organic and locally sourced," says Castillo, the manager at SUR. "You can come and have breakfast or lunch with us, go to the beach, engage in an activity such as stand-up paddle

boarding and then come back and continue your day at SUR. We are finding, through chef Andrés Bracamontes's menu, ways to create lighter but delicious fare that also serves an active lifestyle. We also have about 30 percent of our clientele coming in by boat right off the beach, so it's not unusual to see our diners in boating clothes or bathing suits." Private yachts often anchor in front of SUR in order to spend the day at the beach house.

If you opt for breakfast here, rest assured that SUR has all the classics, including a first-rate version of eggs Benedict, a *croque madame* and *chilaquiles*, the traditional Mexican dish that is prepared here with *morita* chiles (those spicy, smoky, slightly fruity cousins of the chipotle). SUR is also the place for a leisurely lunch or snack, but we were here for dinner, something added the week of our visit.





First impressions are everything on a new service launch, and our reception was especially warm. Selecting a table with a perfect view of Land's End we noticed a lot of nice touches here, including a large trough of ice filled with chocolate clams, king crab, fresh oysters, and bottles of Taittinger Champagne on display as you enter the dining area. We opted for selections from the raw bar, which arrives beautifully fresh and included Peruvian *saviche* (a playful combination of the words "ceviche" and "sashimi"), *aguachile* composed of scallops and shrimp with mango, cilantro, and avocado and we also decide to share a couple

of crab cakes. If you know the crab cakes at Bar Esquina, this is a slightly different version: larger patties served with a chipotle-date aioli and avocado mousse. Some glasses of wine arrive, and the beautifully prepared appetizers quickly disappear. If you're a fan of burrata, Chef Bracamontes's version is a revelation: the creamy cheese is served with fresh, locally sourced tomatoes, as well as an avocado-arugula green sauce; its presentation patriotically mimics the colors of the Mexican flag.

Taco fans, which is just about everybody, will find a couple of exemplary versions here, including SUR's signature octopus taco

trio with some *chicharrón* added for texture served on house-made blue corn tortillas. The crunchy rib eye version is another winner, the flavorful cuts of rib eye served with a little quince for sweetness and guacamole; it's the kind of casual plate you can savor the tastefulness of each bite as the juices run down your arms. These are beautifully prepared tacos, the height of tacolicious, and we're told that Bracamontes checks every plate that leaves the kitchen to make sure it meets his high standards.

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*Continued on next page*



**(ABOVE AND BELOW)** | Top left: Trio of tuna tartare “al pastor” tostadas on jicama tortillas. Top right: Hamachi tiradito (Peruvian-style sashimi) with passion fruit, Leche de Tigre, crispy calamari, yuzu aioli, cucumber, turnip and cherry tomato. Bottom: Sunrise view from SUR Beach House on Medano Beach.

Main dishes at SUR naturally include some of the local seafood bounty, like the Veracruz-style grilled red snapper, a green curry shrimp dish, and a *frutti de mare* combination of shrimp, squid, mussels with capellini, and olives. These are all flawlessly executed, as is my dish of Alaska salmon with an accent of sweet and sour miso and served with broccolini and asparagus. I’ve had a lot of salmon over the years, but I have to say that this version may be the finest salmon dish I’ve ever had, perfectly seared and not overcooked. Burger fans will also be

impressed with the SUR Burger, angus beef served on a house baked brioche bun with cheddar and onions rings, and the grilled organic New York prime (at 12 ounces) served with truffle and leek butter will deeply satisfy the most ardent beef lover.

And that’s the whole idea at SUR Beach House. The entire staff here is committed to an elevated customer experience, which is why those customers often include chefs from other parts of town.

“We’ve become part of a ‘days off’ club, where every week we have chefs from other great restaurants – people like Nick-San’s Angel Carbajal, the food and beverage managers from Palmilla and the Resort at Pedregal, people from Manta, Michelin-starred chefs from Grand Velas, and other chefs from around town,” Bracamontes says. “They drop by, and sometimes they just want our version of crispy chicken wings, or the octopus tacos, the burrata and especially the roasted pork belly. They come to relax

and hang out with friends by the beach.”

So don’t take my word for it. If the major chefs in Los Cabos like to camp out at SUR Beach House, that should tell you all you need to know about Bracamontes and his kitchen. As the newest addition to the beach club restaurant scene, SUR has already established itself firmly on the local landscape.

It’s a place where you can indulge in the culinary greatness and scenic beauty that is Cabo. SUR is also one of the few places in town that will seat diners and serve dinner up until midnight. Then, afterward, you can take a glass of añejo and a cigar and pull up a chair on the sand next to SUR’s glowing fire pit and welcome the coming day.

**SUR Beach House**  
*Cormoranes s/n, between Pelicanos and Acuario, El Medano*  
**Phone: +52 (624) 143-1889, Ext 702**  
**Web: [www.SurCabo.com](http://www.SurCabo.com)**  
**E-mail: [info@surcabo.com](mailto:info@surcabo.com)**





## TrasPatio

In Los Cabos we've come to expect great cuisine wherever we go. From street stand tacos to the internationally recognized restaurants in 5-star hotels, there's a cornucopia of great dining options all the way from Todos Santos to the East Cape.

That's why it's always exciting when a new place turns up unexpectedly, on a side street in San José del Cabo, a place that might go unnoticed, and that would be a shame, since the space is as comfortable as your friend's backyard and the kitchen puts out beautiful plates of food prepared with great care and love.

Tipped by local resident and *Cabo Living* friend Ed Peterson (see Spring 2017 issue of *Cabo Living*), we were lucky to be able to dine at a place called TrasPatio (for "backyard") just a few weeks after it opened, and it did not disappoint. Peterson's personal chef, Aldo Servin, it turns out, had just opened this new

restaurant with his partner Arturo Fuentes and since we had dined with Ed and knew the level of quality in his kitchen at Villa Azul, our expectations were high.

Our dinner party followed Peterson's Martin Engineering Escalade out of Espiritu and toward San José. It wasn't long and we turned off to Colonia Magisterial at Paseo Malvarosa to the Oxxo market at Calle Guijarro and took a right. TrasPatio is just up the street, and on any given night you can find it if you follow the smoky aromas of meat being seared on their outdoor grill.

We were welcomed like family at the entrance, something that probably happens with all guests, and the initial impression of TrasPatio, true to its name, is that you are attending a well-heeled backyard barbeque at a good friend's house. It's a large, charming outdoor space with an open grill at one end near the kitchen, gravel underfoot, strings of overhead lanterns, several whimsical

(ABOVE) | *The Charcoal on the grill at TrasPatio, in San José, is ready to cook at 6:00 pm.*

graphics featuring meats and garden shears and covered seating along one wall, a place to accommodate a large party, which we were that night.

It's also noteworthy that all of the woods used at the restaurant, for their patio construction, pergola, chairs and tables is 100% recycled. In fact, it's the same plywood used to create the forms for the concrete used in the construction of the restaurant. It's another touch, a concern for natural materials, that tells you something about the philosophy in place here.

The grill was already doing its job when we got there, with some plump tomatoes,

*Continued on next page*



**(ABOVE AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page: Traspatio grilled ceasar salad, original recipe from Tijuana, with grilled bread. A full-time carpenter at work during the backyard remodeling. Everything was designed and created on site. Mushrooms used on the Cazuela plate. Opposite page: Cheeses and house preserves platter. A heart lamp at Traspatio, a Mexican-craftsmanship work from San Miguel de Allende, is an invitation to guests to feel as family. Baked potatoes, one of the side options for steaks at Traspatio. Mac & Cheese with cheddar, crunchy bacon, sun-dried cherry tomato and grilled garlic bread.*

onions and what looked to be citrus halves basking on the grate. Vegetables and, in this case fruit, roasting on a wood grill is always a good sign at a restaurant, as was the music wafting through the outdoor space, classics like Sinatra, Ray Charles and Louis Armstrong playing as the night wore on. We also found out they have local guitarists and live acoustic music on specific nights of the week.

Before we knew it plates were showing up, large platters of appetizers including their Cheese and House Preserves Platter, with a nice selection of local cheeses, some home made preserves (which, depending on season, might include guava, mango or other tropical fruit), local honey, some roasted sliced beets, onions with a balsamic glaze and home made focaccia bread. It was a perfect way to start the evening, and when the wine showed up, dinner was officially under way. We were then offered an interesting take on everyone's

favorite salad, the Caesar a la Chef Servin. Using that glowing grill he has lightly charred the leaves of Romaine lettuce and added the requisite shaved Parmesan, some bacon accents and a wonderfully fresh Caesar dressing accompanied with grilled French bread. If you like Caesar salad - and who doesn't - this version will be a revelation.

If you have children along on your visit, you'll want to order Traspatio's Mac & Cheese, with its rich cheddar sauce, crunchy bacon and sundried cherry tomatoes, but adult diners will want to opt for the Portobello mushroom and risotto dish, a version so authentic, so perfectly stirred to that *al dente* moment that if you closed your eyes you'd swear you were at a little café in Venice or Milan.

As good as these plates are, and in execution they are the equal of anything in the area, the focus at Traspatio is really all about that glowing outdoor grill. Aldo's



restaurant is really a place that celebrates beef. On the night we dined there was no chicken, pork or fish on the menu, listing instead several beef dishes. The emphasis on beef here means that you're going to get the tastiest beef cuts perfectly grilled and presented, but on any given day a wild card may show up, like the fresh tuna sashimi that was offered since they had run into Rocky, the beach master at Palmilla Beach who had just scored a 20-lb. yellowfin tuna.

If you're a beef lover, you can be assured your favorite cut is on the menu here, and the plates include three *carne asada* tacos made from top sirloin, served with homemade corn tortillas, a Mexican style bean stew and roasted tomatillo and avocado salsa. If you're a taco aficionado these will rank at the top of any list you may have. Other cuts listed on



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the menu include their *arrachera*, skirt steak that has been marinated with citrus, garlic, chiles and onions, and a uniquely prepared rib-eye that is given a rub of dried porcini mushrooms and guajillo and ancho chile ashes and grilled over super hot coals.

The top dog at TrasPatio is their magnificent, perfectly seared T-bone, the smaller cousin of the Porterhouse, served as a 400-gram (almost a full pound) portion with homemade chimichurri butter. You don't need much else with a plate like this, maybe some of that grilled garlic bread to

soak up the juices and a glass of red wine, but there are also nicely prepared vegetable side dishes here, including roasted garlic potatoes, grilled corn and other vegetables and onions caramelized in balsamic vinegar. In fact, vegetarian guests will be well served at TrasPatio (we were asked about allergies or food concerns as we sat), as Chef Servin knows his way around all of the great organic produce available locally.

The kitchen skills are impressive here, but that came as no surprise given the connection to Ed Peterson, who hired him through Villas del Mar. Chef Servin has his roots in Puebla and its food-rich heritage and also spent time in Toronto, where he learned a lot about Mediterranean and Asian fusion and brought those skills to individual clients in the Del Mar communities in Los Cabos. The key to his cooking is a passion to create a wonderful experience for his guests and a philosophy that centers on a "less is more" concept. "With a good tomato or cut of beef, it doesn't need much more than some salt and pepper to bring out the best flavor," Chef

Servin says, "We treat each ingredient with the respect and love it deserves."

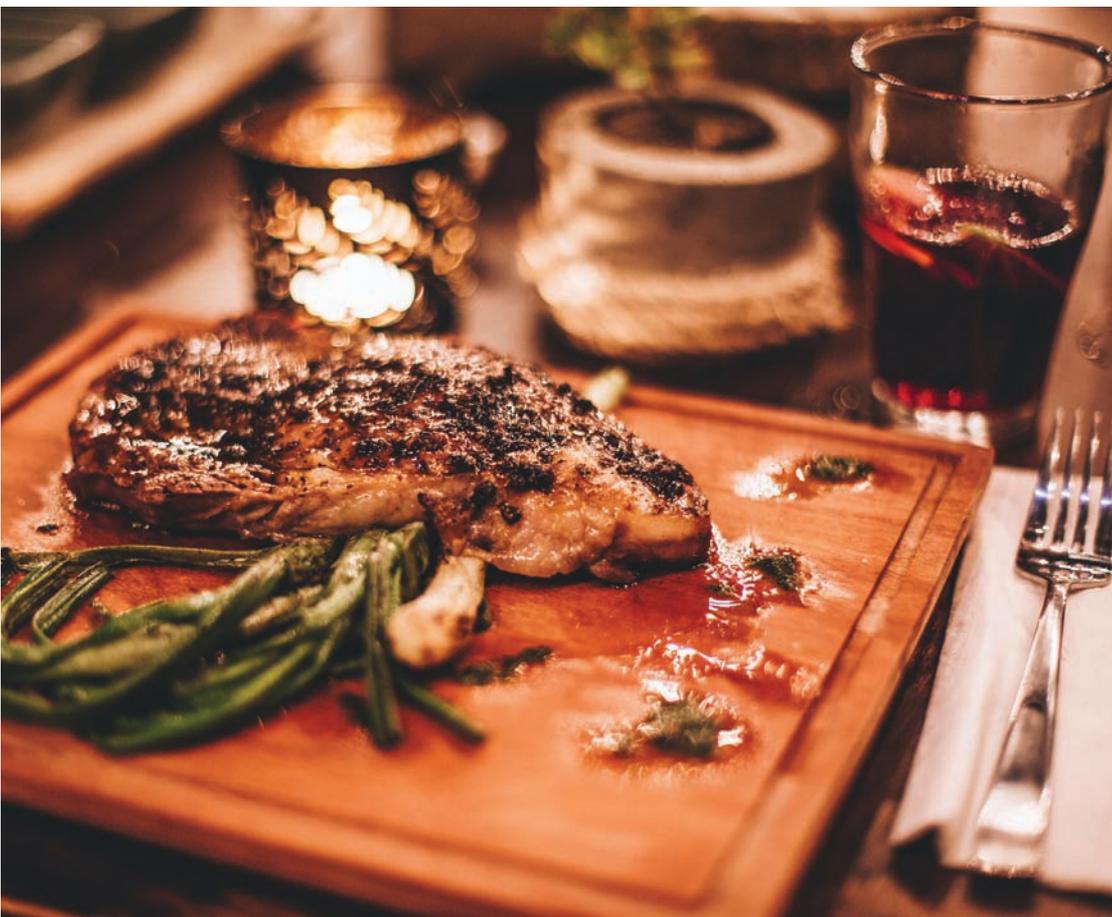
TrasPatio is off to a great start, and we look forward to visiting again. In the meantime it seems like it will become one of those local under-the-radar gems, a place where you can visit as you would a good friend's backyard barbeque, but with expectations of enjoying some of the finest culinary skills in all of Los Cabos.

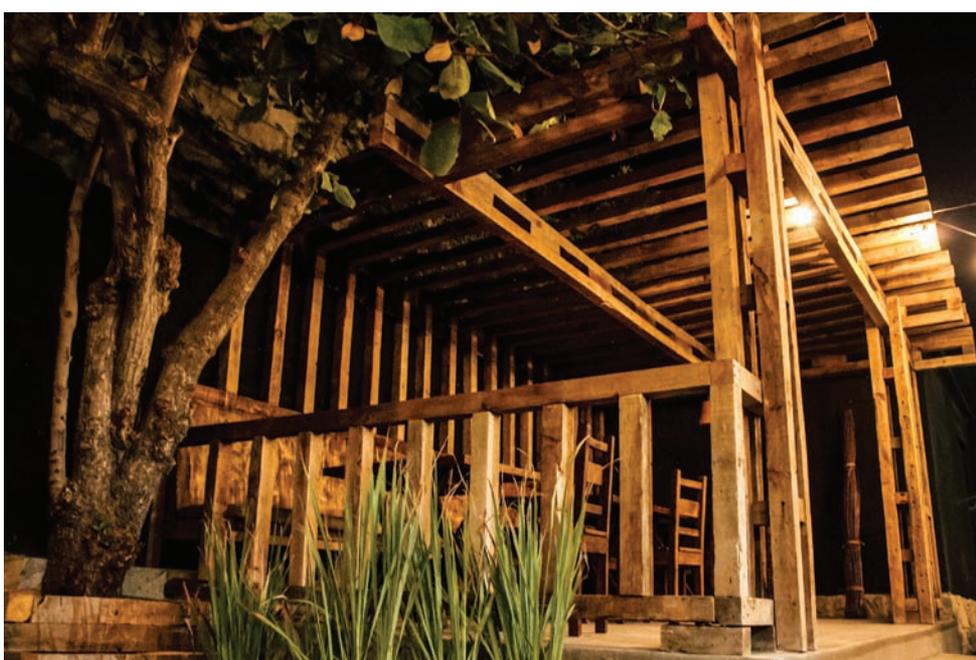
In the best traditions of Mexican hospitality, TrasPatio is a place that, even though it's new, feels warm and familiar, exuding the atmosphere of a family home where you're welcomed and handed a drink and see the steaks on the grill and know that you're in for a very satisfying evening. When it comes to a dining experience, there is no higher praise than that.

**TrasPatio**  
**Calle Guijarro M8 L4**  
**Colonia Magisterial**  
**San José del Cabo**  
**624-150-4411**  
**E-mail: [hola@traspatio.mx](mailto:hola@traspatio.mx)**

**El Fin!**

**(BELOW AND FAR RIGHT)** | *This page: Romaine lettuce for ceasar salad. Ribeye steak. Opposite page: Cazuela, a mix of Chorizo español, spinach and mushrooms, usually ordered as an appetizer.*







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Rob Howard *for* Town and Country

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