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Publishers/Editors
John & Terry Kovick Biskovich
Photography Luis Toribio, César Tián
Graphic Designer Hadazul Cruz
Contributing Writer Mark D. Walker
Webmaster/Social Media JB
Administrative Assistant María Solis
Systems Luis Juárez, José Caal, Luis Toribio
Publishing Company
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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE INTERACTIVE REVUE
consultas@revuemag.com
PBX 7832-4619
Corporate offices: 3a avenida sur #4-A, La Antigua Guatemala

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IN THE FACE OF THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC
by Shad Qudsi

While everyone is concerned about the Covid 19 virus and its effects, a local community centered non-profit in Tzununa has taken positive steps to help their community and a hospital. ...

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AMALIA’S KITCHEN
Amalia Moreno-Damgaard

BOQUITAS - Guatemalan Tapas

In Guatemala, bars and restaurants always accompany cocktails, wine and beer with boquitas (literary meaning little mouths), the tapa equivalent. Because of the fusion of cultures during colonial times, it is likely that this custom came to Guatemala with the Spaniards. ...

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From the Publishers

There is not much to say this month. Same as last month. We hope everyone is staying home as much as possible. Most businesses are still closed. Several restaurants offer take-out and delivery service.

We have some interesting photos from the Photo Contest “Guatemala Indoors.” Chef Amalia shares some recipes for Boquitas. The NGO Wellkind Guatemala is helping communities with tree and garden planting.

Here’s hoping we all get through this soon. Stay safe everyone.

— John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

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In the Face of the Covid 19 Pandemic

by Shad Qudsi

While everyone is concerned about the Covid 19 virus and its effects, a local community centered non-profit in Tzununa has taken positive steps to help their community and a hospital.

Wellkind Guatemala supports and empowers local leaders of Tzununa, Lake Atitlán. This year the group helped to establish 40 family gardens, plant over 1,500 native trees, remodel over a dozen houses, and built a local market for greater access to fresh and local produce.

Planting native trees and establishing family gardens are strategic areas of focus that yield many beneficial results. Trees provide sustainable firewood yields and also prevent erosion in the high-risk areas of Lake Atitlán. This, in turn, protects and regenerates the health of the lake and its surrounding ecosystem. Using native trees also encourages the return of at-risk populations of birds and other fauna. Gardens, as well, recycle food scraps, yield nutritious produce, and reduce travel to other towns.

Family gardens are often the key to bringing the missing nutrients and vitamins into the local diet. The gardens have proven to be a big success within the community. We tend to focus on a mix of common vegetables as well as local native favorites. Beets, onions, peppers, and chard grow alongside chipilín,
hierba mora, miltomate, and güisquiles.

Some of the gardens have expanded and the women have begun selling produce as well as for home consumption.

In the face of the recent Covid 19 crisis, Wellkind Guatemala was instrumental in distributing emergency food supplies to over 120 families in the town of Tzununa. It also supported a team of local women artisans to produce over 1,300 hundred masks for distribution to the elderly population, also merchants and drivers, and to the nearby Hospitalito Atitlán. The women are now producing masks for sale in the community and earning a fair-trade wage for their efforts.

Tzununa is located on the northern shore of Lake Atitlán. Aside from struggling with deforestation and ecological degradation, Tzununa is also one of the most at-risk communities on the lake in terms of food and housing security. As in most of the Department of Sololá malnutrition and access to healthy food is a major challenge for people in their communities. The need for access to affordable healthy food, as well as the community’s desire to protect and enrich the local ecosystem, led Wellkind to focus on family gardens, reforestation, and local economic development.

According to Director, Shad Qudsi, “Our plan involves coordinating between the local organizations including the municipality, the cocodes, the local elders, and the emerging neighborhood leaders to align goals and support the execution of sustainable local initiatives.”
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Baja Verapaz by Kénet Reyes
“A longing from the confinement / Un anhelo desde el encierro”
Ciudad de Guatemala by Diego Samayoa
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by German Velasquez
“Panorama de esperanza” Santa Cruz El Chol B.V.
by Glendy Calvillo
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“Untitled” by Tato Estralday
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We would like to recommend the work by these young and exciting artists that have enriched our lives and we hope that their work would enrich yours as well.

Sergio Alvarado, previously a traditional weaver, has developed from impressionism a self-named style called Tipiquismo, which celebrates...
the rich colors and wonderful landscapes of Guatemala; the lavish lyricism of the world of Guillermo Maldonado sometimes leads us to the surreal, but always reminds us where we are; Juan Francisco Yoc lures us into peaceful contemplation through ephemeral portraits and; César Pineda Moncrieff which is a poetic artist and his themes often explore the nature of consciousness in creative ways.
“Miradas desde adentro”
Quetzaltenango by Guido De León
"From my terrace / Desde mi terraza"
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On a recent trip throughout northern Spain, I had the pleasure of tasting the most amazing food, including tapas and pintxos. Popular throughout Spain, tapas in general are snacks or bread served on small plates with a variety of toppings. The origin of tapas is unclear. Pintxos, born in the Basque country, are the cousins of tapas served specifically in that region. The main difference is that pintxos — from the Euskara language meaning pinchos in Spanish and skewers in English — are small portions of food held with small skewers. Tapas and pintxos bars are a social way of life in Spain where small groups usually gather to eat casually standing at a bar and around hightops. The term “tapear” refers to a tapas-eating and bar-touring experience allowing visitors to sample a variety of treats in different bars in one evening.

In Guatemala, bars and restaurants always accompany cocktails, wine and beer with boquitas (literary meaning little mouths), the tapa equivalent. Because of the fusion of cultures during colonial times, it is likely that this custom came to Guatemala with the Spaniards. However, just as Spanish foods were adapted to local tastes in other Latin countries, tapas became boquitas and a custom closely linked to Guatemalan culture. Boquitas vary depending on setting and occasion. At social events at home and prior to a meal, people often serve easy and light boquitas, such as poporopo (popcorn), papalinas or plataninas (artisan or commercial potato or green plantain chips), manías (Spanish peanuts), chicharrones (spicy barbecue pork cracklings) and other ready-to-eat snacks along with alcoholic drinks. At bars and restaurants, boquitas can be more elaborate and are often mini-versions of mercado (market) fast foods, casual or street fare, such as mini-tostadas (crunchy tortillas with a variety of toppings), caldo or soup (small cups of broth or soup), ceviche (seafood and vegetables marinated in citrus juice) and more.

Boquitas are also a booming business in Guatemala. Hotels, restaurants and caterers tailor boquitas to the taste and budget of customers ranging from simple and casual to more...
elaborate and fancy. As opposed to the U.S. norm, boquitas rarely constitute the only food at a party or gathering and usually precede the main meal. During a reception, people drink and eat a variety of boquitas from light to heavy, sweet and savory. Many “bares de mala muerte” (hole in the wall bars) in Guatemala City that have been around forever share a special boquita culture and are famous for their specialty. For my wedding celebration in Guatemala City some time ago, I hired a neighborhood boquita catering business that delivered the prettiest, most delicious and sweetest bites presented in basket trays lined with banana leaves. They were a hit! These were mini-replicas of Guatemalan popular and traditional foods like chiles rellenos (stuffed peppers), chuchitos (tamales in corn husks), rellenitos (ripe plantain dumplings), huevos con salsita (quail eggs in home-style tomato sauce) and others.

For your next gathering, I encourage you to explore Guatemalan boquitas. It will be a fun experience for you and your guests. To get you started, below I share a couple of easy yet scrumptious delights that are as pleasing to the eye as the tongue. To create a boquitas menu of your own, observe street food vendors and visit local mercados to see what foods they offer. Ask questions, make a list of easiest ones, and use your imagination to bring your boquitas to life. Stock your bar with Guatemalan beer, such as Gallo, Monte Carlo and Dorada, in addition to award-winning rum Zacapa Centenario, and let the party begin!

¡Salúd! (Cheers!)

TOSTADAS GUATEMALTECAS

Crispy Corn Tortillas Topped with Guacamole, Beans and Salsa

Tostadas are one of my family’s favorite dinners at home, especially when we have very little time to prepare a full meal. Tostadas are not only fun to prepare, but also delicious to eat. They can make dinnertime fun for kids. Set up a tostada bar and have the kids form a line and assemble their own tostadas. To make the tostadas more substantial, add store-bought rotisserie chicken, carne asada, roasted pork, or any other protein to the traditional ingredients listed in this recipe. In Guatemala, tostadas are sold on the street at sidewalk shacks, festivals, fairs, church atriums, plazas and parks. This is my healthy version, which uses baked tostadas instead of the traditional fried ones. To make boquita-size tostadas, buy either small tortillas at the market, or cut mini-tortillas according to size from larger ones using a plastic cup or round cookie cutter.

Serves 4 to 6 people

12 to 16 corn tortillas
1 batch salsita de tomate ciruela (quick plum tomato sauce, recipe below)
1 batch guacamol para tostadas (Guatemalan guacamole, recipe below)

Adorno (Garnish)

1 cup thinly julienned red or yellow onion
1 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
Guatemalan quesoseco (or cotija cheese), crumbled
Bake the tortillas in a toaster oven at 350°F until they are crispy (5 to 7 minutes). Keep a close eye on them, as they can burn easily. Weigh them down with a small wire cooling rack to keep them from curling up. Once the tortillas are crispy, tostadas keep for days.

Prepare all the remaining ingredients. Set up all the ingredients in salad bar fashion. Or set up all the ingredients at the table. Invite diners to assemble their own tostadas. For boquitas, make them on the spot. If you make them too long before they are eaten, they will be soggy.

**Assembly suggestion:**
Spread salsa, guacamole or beans (if using) on a tostada. Add garnishes in the order listed. Top the tostada with your protein of choice, if you like.

---

**SALSIITA DE TOMATE CIRUELA**
*Quick Plum Tomato Sauce*

This delicious sauce is a staple in many Guatemalan homes, and its uses are endless. You can use it for tostadas, crispy rolled tacos, or fried or hard-boiled eggs. Build the sauce further by adding other ingredients, such as celery, herbs, spices and chile peppers. Panfry the sauce in 1/2 tablespoon of canola oil for a twist in flavor.
**Makes a little over 1 cup**

1 cup roughly chopped Roma tomatoes  
2 tablespoons chopped onion  
2 garlic cloves  
1/8 teaspoon thyme  
1/8 teaspoon crumbled oregano  
1/2 bay leaf  
1/4 cup water

**Sazón (Seasonings)**

1/2 teaspoon white wine vinegar  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Cook the first 7 ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to a quick boil. Lower the heat, cover, and simmer for 5 to 8 minutes.

Purée all ingredients and season them with vinegar and salt. Return to the saucepan and heat through. Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed. Use the sauce immediately or save it in a jar for later. It lasts in the refrigerator for 1 week.

---

**GUACAMOL PARA TOSTADAS**

**Guatemalan Guacamole for Tostadas**

Guacamol is what Guatemalans call the delicious simple avocado mash known in the United States as guacamole. The secret for a perfect guacamol is in the quality of the avocados. Guatemalan avocados are thicker-skinned, rounder and darker than
California avocados. The texture of a Guatemalan avocado is milky and buttery. Guatemalans often add them in chunks to soups and salads.

This basic avocado purée has multiple uses in the Guatemalan kitchen as a side dish and even as a sauce. To make a sauce, add herbs, chile peppers, water and a little olive oil. This recipe for tostadas is simple because the toppings add a lot of flavor. To convert this recipe to a side dish for churrasco (barbecue), add ½ tablespoon of shredded onion and ½ teaspoon of crumbled oregano to the mixture.

Makes about 1 3/4 cups

3 ripe avocados, mashed to a chunky texture
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix them well. Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed.

Amalia Moreno-Damgaard is an award-winning bestselling chef author born and raised in Guatemala City currently living in the Twin Cities. She provides individuals and companies with a taste and understanding of Latin cultures through healthy gourmet cuisine education, consulting, bilingual speaking and writing and fun culinary experiences.

Her cookbook “Amalia’s Guatemalan Kitchen-Gourmet Cuisine With A Cultural Flair” has won 9 international awards. AmaliaLLC.com
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“At curfew, everyone at home / Al toque de queda, todos en casa”
Cobán, Alta Verapaz by Emilio Vásquez Robles
“Introspección” Chisec, Alta Verapaz
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Puente de Río Dulce, Izabal by Esmen Duarte
Stay at Home

There are many activities that will keep you healthy and happy.

1. Working out

Release some endorphins doing physical activities

4. Reading

Great for personal enrichment and education. Besides, it’s fun!

1. Home Office

Treat it like a real job! Be disciplined with your work hours.
2. Cleaning
A cleaning routine is important to keep coronavirus germs out of our home.

3. Cooking
Healthy and delicious recipes can be found online. Cooking entertains you and reduces your budget!

5. Stay in touch
Staying in touch with the ones you love reduces anxiety, depression, and boredom.

6. Gardening
If you have a garden or outdoor space, then you have a great place for experiencing nature and benefit your health.

Useful TIPS

2. Online grocery ordering
Buying fresh online groceries helps to avoid the risk of contamination at real grocery stores.

6. Sleeping
Aim for 7-9 hours at night. Avoid napping!
We invite you to participate in our **MONTHLY PHOTO CONTEST** for July 2020 with the theme: **PORTRAITS OF GUATEMALA**.

Please send ONE (1) HIGH RES photo with caption/location and your name & website for the credit line to: **photos@revuemag.com**

More information at: **revuemag.com**

Submissions entered by the 15th of June will be eligible.

*Photos in this ad are from previous contests by: Susanne Guenther, Katrin Neuhaus, Guido de León, Luis Vivar, César Gramajo and Oscar Benitez.*
Te invitamos a participar en nuestro Concurso Fotográfico de julio 2020 con el tema: RETRATOS DE GUATEMALA.

Enviar (1) foto en ALTA RESOLUCIÓN con el título, lugar donde fue tomada, su nombre y el sitio web para el crédito a: photos@revuemag.com

Para más información: revuemag.com

Serán elegibles las fotos recibidas hasta el 15 de junio de 2020.
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