



Devilish, daring and delightful dance partners

Dance with a *Catrina*, or a gypsy? Let the devil's tango sweep you away or be transported to mystic India. The city fills with the rhythms and passions of dance this week

p27, 28 & QP centerpages

Eat all about it!

Mexican culinary traditions, recipes and sayings on *Día de Muertos* and the spices of the newest chef in town, a combo that must be a number one.

p18 & 32

Mexico not a nation of readers

By Jesús Ibarra

San Miguel is currently hosting the book fair FELISMA 2010 to promote reading through sales and exhibitions, book presentations, lectures and writing contests. Mexico is considered a country with a very low number of readers. The Mexican poet and essayist Gabriel Zaid wrote in his essay "Reading As an Educational Failure" that 8.8 million Mexicans have university degrees but 1.6 million of them have never been in a bookstore, and after some calculations he concluded that more than half of the university students in Mexico do not buy books.

Some reading figures

According to UNESCO, Japan has the most readers and 91 percent of the population has developed the habit of reading. Germany is in second place with 67 percent and the US is in third place with 65 percent. Mexico is in 107th place with 2 percent. Another interesting statistic is that Mexicans buy and read only an average of 2.8 books per person a year.

Reading preferences in Mexico

According to the Encuesta Nacional de Lectores, ENL (National Reading Survey) performed by CONACULTA, 43 percent of Mexicans read textbooks, 22 percent read history books, 19 percent prefer novels, 16 percent read self-improvement books, 15 percent read biographies, 14 percent read encyclo-



Mexico, un país de no lectores

Por Jesús Ibarra

Durante esta semana se presenta en San Miguel la tercera feria del libro, FELISMA 2010, en un intento por promover la lectura, a través de exposiciones de libros, exhibiciones, y presentaciones de libros, conferencias y certámenes de escritura. Sin embargo, México es considerado como un país de no lectores. El poeta y ensayista mexicano Gabriel Zaid dijo en su ensayo "La lectura como fracaso educativo", que 8.8 millones de mexicanos tienen carrera universitaria, pero 1.6 millones de ellos, nunca han estado en una librería, y después de algunos cálculos, concluye que más de la mitad de los estudiantes universitarios en México, no compran libros.

Algunas estadísticas de lectura

Según la UNESCO, Japón tiene el primer lugar en el mundo en cuanto a lectores se refiere, con el 91 por ciento de la po-

blación que ha desarrollado el gusto por la lectura. Alemania ocupa el segundo lugar con 67 por ciento y en tercer lugar Estados Unidos con 65 por ciento. México está en 107 lugar con 2 por ciento. Otras estadísticas interesantes son que los mexicanos compran y leen un promedio de 2.9 libros por persona al año, mientras que en Noruega la gente lee y compra 18 libros por persona, 17 en Canadá y 7 en Argentina.

Lo que leen los mexicanos

Según la Encuesta Nacional de Lectores, ENL, llevada a cabo por CONACULTA, el 43 por ciento de los mexicanos lee libros

p5

Centerpages—CEDESA heroes

Hard working *promotores* of the CEDESA program are true local heroes the rural communities.

p34-35

ENJOY OUR Friday Special!
Bicentennial Breakfast
 Atención w/ juice, eggs & coffee
60 pesos
 Café Santa Ana, Reloj 50-A

Reflections upon my work with CEDESA
 Reflexión sobre mi trabajo con CEDESA
 REAL ESTATE TEAM
 www.aceite.com

¡Buen Provecho! To the meal of life on the Day of the Dead

By Patricia Juana Merrill Márquez

So, you overhear the maid say “*Lo van a cafetear el martes.*” And you have no idea what is being said. Yes, coffee will be drunk... but why? A person only now *se petateo*... died. The *petate*, a mat that was used for sleeping on and later for being buried in, is referred to here in *petatear*. The following *dicho* explains *la cafeteada*, the coffee event:

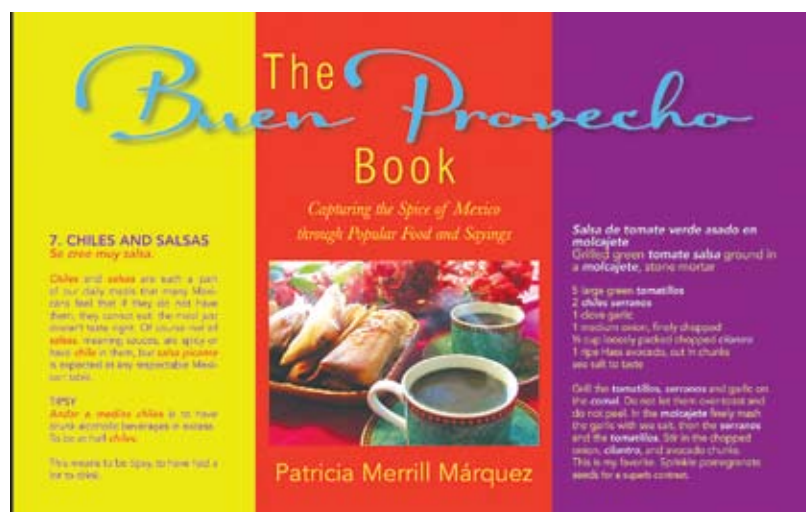
Mourn

Cafetear

Have coffee over someone.

Because at “wakes,” the attendees usually stay up all night, drinking coffee to stay awake; this has become representative of mourning someone’s death. We often say “Take care of yourself, or we’ll be having coffee over you!”

El Día de los Muertos is November 2. It is the day to commemorate those who have long since departed. It is celebrated on the day after *Día de Todos Santos* which is November 1, the day after Halloween. Open street stalls selling *alfeñiques*, figures made of sugar paste in shapes of coffins, skulls and crosses, animals, and plates filled with prepared dishes, are set up days before in special market areas. These will be placed on altars, whether in one’s home or in the cemetery, together with fresh fruit, salt laid out in the shape of a cross to purify the soul, cut paper decorations called *papel picado*, a glass of water for the returning souls to quench their thirst, a candle to light the way for each person honored, their photos, aromatic *copal* and incense, varied flowers including *cempasúchitl* (marigolds), all following a specific and strict set of rules. More recently, humorous rhymes called *calaveras*, making light of personal traits and preferences of the deceased, have become customary. Earth, wind, water and fire are all represented. The purpose is to guide the souls as they return to



Satisfaction

Más vale morir de lleno y no de vacío.

It is better to die of fullness than of emptiness. Now, if the person who has gone onto a better life was careful enough to enjoy this life also, the following saying is appropriate:

No Regrets

Lo bailado y lo comido nadie se lo quita.

What one danced and ate cannot be taken away. The concept of no regrets for good times is presented as triumphant, even if bad times or difficulties should follow. And of course, eat we must!

Accepting Reality

A todo se acostumbra uno... menos a no comer.

One can get used to anything, except not eating. This is said in reference to any situation where acceptance is desired, whatever emotion or reaction this may cause in us. The main purpose of the saying is to point out that even if there are varieties of realities, the need to feed oneself is unquestionable. And feed ourselves we do! Even modest homes serve delicious homemade drinks, handmade *tortillas*, delightfully spicy *salsas*, and specialty items on festive occasions. These expressions, *dichos*, give insight into Mexican culture—its playfulness, advice, warnings, jealousy, irony, criticism, joy and pain. Throw in some proverbs and *albures* (double entendres), as well as *refranes* (rhymes), all related to food and eating, add historical facts, anecdotes, recipes, and illustrations, and you have *The Buen Provecho Book*.

Patricia Merrill Márquez presents her book *The Buen Provecho Book: Capturing the Spice of Mexico through Popular Food and Sayings* at Abrazos, Calle Zacateros 24, on Tuesday, with a lecture and reception. Traditional *muertos* refreshments, café de olla, *piquete* de mezcal y pan de muertos, will be served. Also featured at Abrazos will be *muertos papel picado* and attire, playful aprons and shirts with Mexican *calavera* skeletons.

share the day with loved ones, and for those still here to offer the returning dearly departed their favorite food and drink.

For the Day of the Dead we place our departed loved ones’ favorite foods on our altars. We are craving *pan de muertos*, the special bread for this holiday, with a *jarrito de chocolate caliente*, hot chocolate. Pan de muertos, decorated with part of the pastry forming the shape of bones, is a must and is sold in all the bakeries. We may purchase the bread from a bakery, but the favorite foods will most likely be prepared at home. Food is so important to us that we tend to eat, sometimes too much. This *dicho* is an appropriate warning:

Mortality

De limpios y tragos están llenos los panteones.

The cemetery is full of people who are clean, and binge. This tells us that bathing when one has the flu, and over-eating, can make one ill. It is often recited when a sick person does not want to bathe or to eat. It jokes with the concept of mortality, making light of death.

Of course, if getting fed to your satisfaction is not always the case, you may feel this *dicho* is the one to keep in mind:

Book signing
The Buen Provecho Book
 By Patricia Merrill Márquez
 Tue, Nov 2, 7pm
 Abrazos
 Calle Zacateros 24
 50 pesos discount off book
 purchase
 Books 750 pesos



“EL ORDEN DEL CAOS”

Bellas Artes

Gerry Gill

Through November 16th

Sala Equis

Hernández Macías no. 75, Centro, San Miguel de Allende