



Oaxaca

WHERE ON EARTH

SASHA INDIA

Going Coastal Oaxaca

by TALIA WOOLDRIDGE



RESTAURANTE ESPADIN

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD FROM LEFT Puerto Escondido; Overlooking Carazalillo Beach at El Espadin.

ALONG OAXACA'S COAST, FROM SURFING MECCA Puerto Escondido to the quieter beaches of San Augustinillo, Mazunte and La Boquilla, a surprising variety of delicious meals can be found.

Halfway between Huatulco and Puerto Escondido sit the sleepy, fused beach towns of Mazunte and San Augustinillo. It is so laid back here that the two ATMs are rarely in service. While paying by card can be a challenge, the food I fell in love with is fairly inexpensive so if you budget correctly you'll be fine. **Maralto** is an open-air artisanal bakery and restaurant serving mouth-watering pastries, pizza and sandwiches near the intersection of both towns. The deluxe house burger with blue cheese is best followed by a vegan coconut-vanilla soft serve ice cream next door at **Helados**»



...Yoga and energy treatments are readily available...

«**Tortuga Marina**, named for Mazunte's Turtle Sanctuary where you can walk off your lunch for an hour. Be sure to stock up on Maralto's pastries as they sell out quickly!

For dinner I joined some friends at a sand-floored pizzeria that shares tables with Argentine *parrilla*, **La Vendimia**. True to its Argentinean roots, La Vendimia serves fantastic wine. I opted for a smooth Malbec — chilled as is the norm in Mexico. It paired well with a *filete de res* and roasted potatoes. The house-made hummus is also terrific. My compadres dined on wood-oven pizzas topped with fresh *camarones* and roasted vegetables. This was one of my best meals in Mexico and a fabulous way to dine as a group. As an added bonus, the restaurants are conveniently located steps from Punta Cometa, *the* place to take in sunset in Mazunte. La Vendimia also takes credit cards.

Luz del Sol is another card-friendly establishment and an excellent option for vegetarian fare. Its beautiful new location offers an array of fresh juices, Buddha bowls, vegan burgers, burritos, large omelets, zucchini pasta and raw cacao desserts. If you want to taste the divine, be sure to book a silent retreat or workshop at **Hridaya Yoga** a few doors down. Their in-house vegan meals are made with organic ingredients and radiate Love.

For more upscale dining, **El Navegante** is popular for seafood. Located in San Agustínillo, it is often »



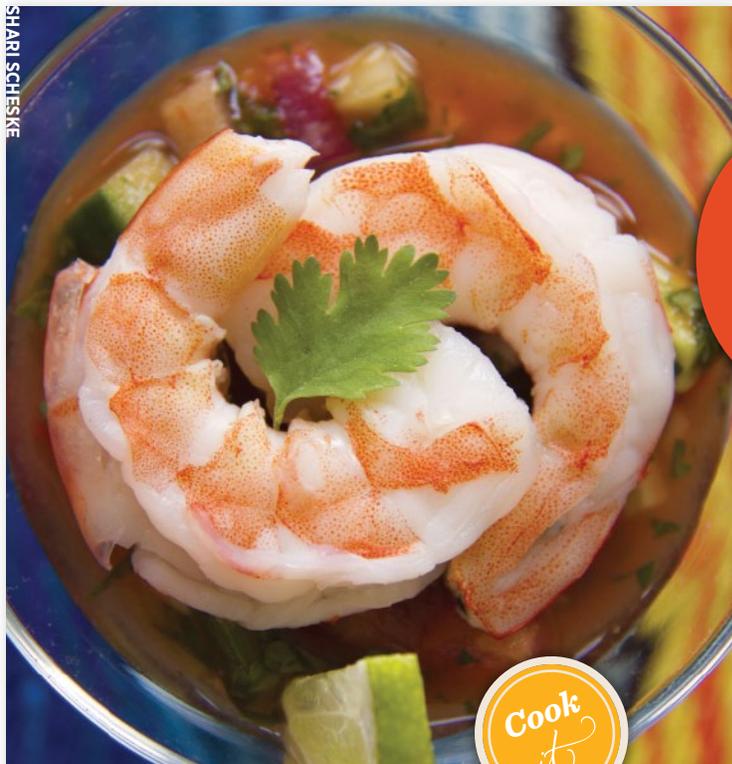


MARALTO

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD FROM TOP LEFT Yoga sign; Coffee and pastries at Maralto; Staff in traditional dress at Las Juquileñas.



LAS JUQUILEÑAS



SHARI SCHESKE

MEXICO

Cook
&

SERVES 4

Coctel de Camarones

Shrimp Cocktail

Whole Shrimp

1 lb, unpeeled, heads removed

Tomato Juice ½ cup

Lime Juice from 1 lime

Tomato Ketchup
2 Tbs

Worcestershire Sauce
1 tsp

Tabasco Sauce 1 tsp

Red Onion peeled and chopped, ¼ cup

Cucumber peeled and chopped, ¼ cup

Avocado 1, peeled and diced

Tomato 1, diced

Fresh Cilantro a handful, chopped

Lime Wedges for garnish

Tortilla Chips or Saltine Crackers for garnish

MEXICO'S PACIFIC COAST IS home the country's largest shrimp fisheries. You'll find this refreshing chilled cocktail served in beach bars and restaurants all along the coast.

- 1 SIMMER** the shrimp in water until just pink. Drain, cool and peel.
- 2 IN** a mixing bowl, whisk together the lime juice, ketchup, Worcestershire and Tabasco sauces. Gently mix in the shrimp and the chopped and diced ingredients. Chill in the refrigerator for at least one hour.
- 3 DIVIDE** between 4 parfait glasses. Garnish with lime wedges and tortilla chips or saltine crackers.



«booked up so be sure to reserve ahead of time. If you are craving to be seaside, the super-chilled backpacker vibe of **Rice Bowl** delivers great music and colourful hammocks overlooking the cyanic sea. Further down the road, the beachfront restaurant at **Un Sueño Cabañas del Pacífico** offers a full menu and larger tables. The food is decent but you're really here for the view. If on a budget, enjoy a drink in one of their shaded hammocks.

For those looking to get away from it all, an overnight at **Bahia de la Luna** in Playa La Boquilla is a great detour en route to Huatulco. They offer a daily menu with excellent service. Access is off the highway, south of Puerto Angel and the famous nude beach of Zipolite.



SERVES 4

Frozen Mojito

BRILLIANT BY THE BEACH, or anywhere in summer!

- Fresh Limes**
4
- Sugar**
4 tsp
- Fresh Mint**
8 sprigs
- White Rum**
12 oz
- Ice Cubes**
2 cups

- 1 ZEST** and juice 3 of the limes. Cut 4 wheels for garnish from the remaining lime and squeeze any remaining juice.
- 2 SET** aside 4 small sprigs of mint for garnish and pick the remaining leaves from the stems.
- 3 ADD** the ice cubes, sugar, mint, rum and lime juice to a blender and blend on high speed until slushy.
- 4 DIVIDE** between glasses and garnish with the reserved lime wheels and mint



IF FLYING IN OR OUT of Mexico City, the traditional-turned-trendy San Miguel de Chapultepec neighbourhood has some delicious new eateries tucked along its leafy side streets. Fantastic brunch, dinner and fresh coffees at **Cancino** which doubles as **La Ventanita Café** during the day are a must. To fuel up for a lengthy Sunday bicycle ride, we breakfasted over a cheesy *pecado* served in a sizzling mini cast iron skillet with home fries and fresh baked bread, a vegan and gluten-free *chia y matcha* bowl, and freshly-pressed juices at **Frutos Prohibidos** in Roma. For ceviche fans, Polanco's **Agua y Sal** provided a sophisticated finale to our Mexican *aventura de comida*.

Cancino
www.facebook.com/LosCancinos

La Ventanita Café
www.facebook.com/LaVentanitaCafe

Frutos Prohibidos
www.frutosprohibidos.com

Agua y Sal
www.aguaysal.com.mx



TALIA WOOLDRIDGE



AGUA Y SAL



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Cancino, Mexico City; Beachfront villas at Un Sueño Cabañas del Pacífico; View of Mazunte; Modern Mexican fare at Agua y Sal.



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MEXICO

La Vendimiawww.lavendimia.business.site**Maralto**www.facebook.com/maraltococinartesanal**Helados Tortuga Marina**www.facebook.com/Seaturtleicecream**Luz del Sol**www.facebook.com/luzdelsol.mexico**Hridaya Yoga**www.hridaya-yoga.com**El Navegante**

México 175 Santa Maria Tonameca, Oax

Rice Bowl

Santa Maria Tonameca, Oax

Un Sueño Cabañas del Pacíficowww.facebook.com/pg/unsuenocabanasdelpacifico**Bahia de la Luna**www.bahiadelaluna.com**Las Juquileñas**www.facebook.com/LasJuquilenas**Cochi & Mar**www.facebook.com/pg/CochiMar**Fresh**www.freshrestaurantandlounge.com**El Espadín**www.facebook.com/espadinrestaurante**Nómada**www.facebook.com/zipolitemexico**Aloha Bowls**www.facebook.com/alahabowlsPuertoEscondido**Lychee**www.facebook.com/lycheemex**Cafe Olé**www.frutasverdurasmexico.org**Elephant Garden**www.facebook.com/ElephantGardenPuertoEscondido**Spirulina**www.facebook.com/spirulinajucebar**Mercado Zicatela**www.facebook.com/mercadoZicatela

Up the coast, Puerto Escondido offers up traditional Oaxacan and Veracruz cuisine at **Las Juquileñas** and **Cochi & Mar** respectively. Cochi & Mar offers amazing panoramic views of Zicatela Beach and is fantastically priced casual dining. It's located in the new Mercado off the highway, easily accessible by *colectivo* or on foot. If you are craving international cuisine, **Fresh** offers fusion dishes and delectable sweet potato mash to a backdrop of live music on select evenings. A host of tasty Italian restaurants are scattered throughout the Adoquin, Zicatela and Rinconada. At Rinconada you will also find fresh falafel sandwiches and melt-in-your mouth French pastries. Overlooking the highly photogenic Carazalillo Beach, steps away, is the beautiful **El Espadín** — reservations recommended.

At the southern end of Puerto is Brisas de Zicatela, also known as La Punta. Many restaurants and bars here attract a surfer and backpacker crowd. Highlights include **Nómada** for the best coffee on the strip, refreshing acai and pōke at **Aloha Bowls**, BBQ fish nights or Thai-inspired food at the picturesque **Lychee** and the massive breakfasts of crepes, waffles and pans — all generous with Nutella — at **Cafe Olé**. If La Punta is too far to venture for breakfast, Zicatela's **Elephant Garden** is a beautiful oasis for a smoothie bowl or delicious amaranth- and seed-crusting bagel with guacamole and pesto. It's tucked off the main strip on Las Olas. Puerto's healthiest fish tacos are at **Spirulina**, a second-floor, open-air juice bar and restaurant located a few steps north of Zicatela Beach. Yoga and energy treatments are readily available here, making the well priced hearty, colourful plates and beverages a perfect post-class treat.

To eat like a local, venture to the large, bustling Mercado where fresh ingredients and well priced wares are found in abundance. The food court will have you sated in no time. 

In addition to writing, **TALIA WOOLDRIDGE** dabbles in music and fashion, works as an archival producer in film, runs Music Can Heal and enjoys meditation. She's currently working on a memoir. www.taliawooldrige.com ; www.musiccanheal.org