

Mexico Resort Real Estate Update

From The Settlement Company®

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Welcome to our Fourth Quarter, 2019 newsletter. In this edition we report on one of Mexico's most charming cities, a real estate conference and listing the top resorts in Western Mexico.

Mexico's Most Enticing Getaway: San Miguel de Allende

By Alexandra Kirkman, Fortune magazine.

A pivotal player in the early days of the Mexican War for Independence and onetime epicenter of the country's brisk silver trade, San Miguel de Allende is perched 6,000 feet above sea level in the central highlands state of Guanajuato. The city has long enjoyed a reputation as one of Mexico's crown jewels, luring streams of expats for decades with its storied history, enchanting Baroque/Neoclassical colonial architecture, and enviable climate. Now a burgeoning array of exceptional eateries and top-tier hotels, coupled with its vibrant arts community and richly textured culture, are amplifying its ineffable allure for new generations of visitors.

Named for Franciscan monk Juan de San Miguel, a benefactor of the Indians, the city—on the Unesco World Heritage List since 2008—was the first Spanish settlement in Guanajuato upon its founding in 1542. "Allende" was added in 1826, five years after Mexico's liberation from Spanish rule, to honor Ignacio Allende, a native son and former royal army officer who became a hero of the revolution. Allende's birthplace, an elegant brick and limestone dwelling built in 1764, is now a house museum near El Jardín, the leafy main square.

San Miguel's trove of colonial treasures have remained remarkably intact thanks in part to its tumultuous history. One of Mexico's most populous cities under Spanish rule, it teetered on the brink of ghost-town status in the early 20th century owing to a string of misfortunes, including the depletion of its silver ore and an influenza epidemic. These days, San Miguel's eminently strollable streets—most chockablock with low-slung buildings awash in shades of ochre, mustard, and vermilion—will keep you happily meandering for hours, as will its countless galleries and chic boutiques, whose sleek storefronts and soignée wares underscore the city's dramatic juxtaposition of past and present.

Fittingly, it was artists who first resuscitated San Miguel, starting about a century ago. Beguiled by its architectural majesty and exquisite light, they took up residence in droves, establishing art and cultural institutes including the Escuela Universitaria de Bellas Artes and the Instituto Allende, both cofounded by

Chicagoan Stirling Dickinson. Having happened upon the flagging city in 1937 after graduating from Princeton, he was instantly enchanted, promptly becoming a familiar sight around town atop his burro. After serving in intelligence posts during World War II, he returned to San Miguel and began recruiting young American veterans to study at Bellas Artes on the G.I. Bill, continuing to play a vital role in the city's renaissance until his death in 1998. Today, he's largely credited with turning San Miguel de Allende into both an international arts center and a sought-after destination for adventurous Americans.

By his own account, it was Dickinson's first glimpse of La Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel—the pink, neo-Gothic parish church renowned for its soaring spires—that compelled him to stay, and today the iconic cathedral remains the city's most awe-inspiring landmark. Having fallen into sundry states of disrepair following its initial 16th-century construction, its metamorphosis began in 1880, when Don Zefferino Gutiérrez, a local master stonemason and architect, was charged with giving it a serious facelift. Gutiérrez drew on images of European cathedrals for artistic inspiration. Because his craftsmen were illiterate, he sketched his designs in the red-clay soil with a stick, bringing his vision to life over the ensuing decade.

Not surprisingly, the city boasts some unique museums, like the Mask Museum of San Miguel, whose owner and curator, Bill LeVasseur, has spent nearly 25 years acquiring a collection of over 500 Mexican ceremonial masks. A Maine native and former advertising executive, the charismatic LeVasseur tells tales of his encounters with Mexico's indigenous communities that are as fascinating as the masks themselves.

From there, it's a five-minute walk to the Museo La Esquina, which showcases one of Latin America's largest collections of toys. Encompassing 3,000-plus playthings ranging from elaborately embroidered dolls and rainbow-hued piñatas to intricate Nativity sets and miniature Ferris wheels, it will make the world-weariest visitor feel like a kid again.

The city's prevailing penchant for aesthetics comes to life in an especially shoppable way at Fabrica La Aurora, a former textile factory, where halls once home to giant looms are lined with galleries and boutiques specializing in interior design, antiques, jewelry, and ceramics. Discerning shoppers can easily spend a few hours wandering its judiciously designed floor plan, which seamlessly blends indoor and outdoor space to winning effect.

Where to stay

Since opening less than a year ago, [Live Aqua Urban Resort San Miguel de Allende](#), the latest top-tier addition to the city's bustling hotel scene, has become a magnet for those in the know, thanks to its inspired mélange of luxurious accommodations, first-rate dining, and singular hacienda-of-the-future vibe that melds a modern aesthetic with subtle nods to the city's colonial past.

Mexican artist Javier Marin's 22-foot bronze sculpture, *Cabeza Vainilla* (Vanilla Head), stops visitors in their tracks at the entrance, an ode to San Miguel's towering artistic legacy. Inside, 153 guest rooms feature distinctive touches like turntables complete with LPs, splashy tile work, and freestanding, glass-enclosed closets.

Sprawling open spaces—like the ground-floor interior courtyard ringed by archways and anchored by *Matatena*, a massive metal-and-wood sculpture by Mexican artist Rodrigo Garagarza—lend the resort the tranquil ambience of an open-air gallery and serve as atmospheric venues for gatherings of up to 900.

At night, guests congregate by the fire pit in the inviting Patio de Arból, named for the majestic North American ash tree that presides over the space, its boughs aglow with white lights after dark. Across from the reception desk that doubles as a *panaderia* (bakery), Zibu Allende, one of the hotel's two fine-dining restaurants, serves imaginative Mexican-Thai fusion cuisine in a sumptuously designed setting, as well as a world-class breakfast menu with a sophisticated Mexican spin.

Upstairs, in the low-lit Casa Dragones cigar bar, leather Chesterfield sofas and a moody paint palette create a cozy yet sultry vibe perfect for late-night tipping.

After your long day pounding the cobblestones, the resort's subtly dazzling spa is a must-visit, featuring 10 massage rooms, a steam room, and a relaxation pool. The hotel also recently launched an exclusive hot-air balloon excursion that conveniently takes off from the rooftop terrace for a 40-minute, bird's-eye perspective on the colonial city.

Baja California Sur makes list of top resorts

Readers from Cond Nast Traveler selected resorts in Baja California Sur as the best in Western Mexico. Following is the complete list:

1 Esperanza, Auberge Resorts Collection

Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, Mexico

2 Chileno Bay Resort & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection

Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, Mexico

3 Solaz, a Luxury Collection Resort, Los Cabos

San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, México

4 Las Ventanas al Paraíso, A Rosewood Resort

San José del Cabo, México
5 Viceroy Los Cabos
San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, México
6 One & Only Palmilla
San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, México
7 Banyan Tree Cabo Marqués
Acapulco, Guerrero, México
8 Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal
Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, México
9 Cuixmala
La Huerta, Jalisco, México
#10The Cape, A Thompson Hotel
Cabo San Lucas, Baja California, México
#11 Pueblo Bonito Pacifica Golf & Spa Resort
Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, México
12 W Punta de Mita
Punta de Mita, Nayarit, México
13 Hacienda Encantada Resort & Residences
Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, México
14 Pueblo Bonito Sunset Beach Golf & Spa Resort
Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, México
15 Marquis Los Cabos Resort & Spa
San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, México
16 Las Alamandas
Costalegre, Jalisco, México
17 Pueblo Bonito Mazatlán Beach Resort
Mazatlán, Sinaloa, México
#18 The St. Regis Punta Mita Resort

Punta de Mita, Nayarit, México

19 Pueblo Bonito Emerald Bay Resort & Spa

Mazatlán, Sinaloa, México

20 Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita

Punta de Mita, Nayarit, Mexico

A gift from The Settlement Company® to the REALTORS® in Baja California Sur

As a community service, The Settlement Company® presented a series of “Mini Seminars” to the real estate industry in Baja California Sur. Over 40 students attend the event. Linda Neil was the instructor and Patricia Olachea delivered a session on money laundering and privacy.

The company expresses thanks to Keller Williams and Patty Soto for providing the meeting space and helping to organize the event.

Below is an outline of the topics that were covered and discussed.

FIRST THE BASICS!

Types of Property..... minerals? water? what do we own? Fee-simple? Rights? Ejidal? National property? **The Fideicomiso** and the foreign investment law..... how far can we go on the ownership question? **Ejido Land** - The price is right. Can it be sold to our buyer clients?

GETTING IT JUST RIGHT!

Closing the loopholes on Offers and Acceptances What does the written contract contain? what must we include? Details on offer and acceptance. **Arbitration and mediation**; .saving your clients heartaches, headaches and hassles! before they begin!

REAL LIFE! Life in a Condominium and How the HOA should work!

UGGGGGGH! The Tax Obligations and Responsibilities for Rental Income from Mexican properties. for Residents and Non-Residents

KYC (KNOW YOUR CLIENT) MONEY LAUNDERING and PRIVACY! Dos and Don'ts for a great real estate career, the mercantile code, the NAR code of ethics and full disclosure.

PAPER! and MORE PAPER! What do we need to ask a buyer to provide? How about a seller? What do the documents look like? The apostille, the factura,and more!and **CLOSING COSTS!** How much must a buyer budget for the transfer costs? Closing costs defined.

New Staff Member at The Settlement Company®

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Asheley Biesemeyer as Executive Closing Officer. Located in the la Paz office, she will be responsible for serving clients in the surrounding area.

Born in Phoenix Arizona she attended High school in Gresham Oregon and continued her education at the International Air School in Vancouver Washington.

In 1993 she started working for Transamerica Title doing title research and title reports. She eventually transitioned into escrow and comes to us from Fidelity National title of Oregon where she had a successful career as a Senior Escrow Officer.

The highlights of her successful career at Fidelity Title include: Oregon Escrow Council Member, American Land Title Association member affiliate, Outstanding customer service award, 2017, President's Club since 2014 to 2019 for handling \$500 million in transactions per year.

Asheley and her husband Jesus who hails from the state of Guerrero have taken up residence in La Paz.

International REALTORS invade San Francisco

More than 22,000 REALTORS including 1,700 from 68 countries outside the U.S. Gathered in San Francisco for the National Association of Realtor® (NAR) 2019 edition of the REALTOR Conference and Expo. The largest foreign group came from the Philippines.

During the week long event, 100 educational sessions were presented. New Certified International Property Specialists from around the world received their pins. And certificates during the official CIPS Pinning Ceremony. In 2019, 789 REALTORS® earned their CIPS Designation. Worldwide there are now 4,400

Designees. AREA member George Harvey Jr was in the Chair for the Global Business Alliances Meeting. REALTORS from around the Globe provided updates on their markets. The keynote speaker was Jennifer Da Silva Executive Chair of the San Francisco Development Alliance. She provided a report on economic development in the Bay Area and the outlook for the future

During the week there were literally dozens of receptions and cocktail parties sponsored by state associations and private companies.

. We attended three. These were Mainstreet Association of Realtors (Illinois, thanks John Gormley) The Eakin Group (Dallas Texas. Thanks Ed Eakin a CIPS student who came t Cabo San Lucas to undertake the “Institute” and the Associated Realty of the Americas (AREA) The latter was hosted by AREA member and newly installed NAR President Vince Malta. AREA Members ‘ron México attending were Mercedes Duenas (Guadalajara) John Glaab (La Paz) Linda Neil (La Paz) David Pullen (Puerto Vallarta) and Jay West (Cabo San Lucas)

During the week attendees were treated to inspirational speeches by two professional athletes. These were NBA hall of famer Earvin “Magic” Johnson and women’s professional tennis legend, Billy Jean King.

The 2020 Conference and Expo will be held next November in New Orleans, LA.

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