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LOCAL & WORLD NEWS

A Winter Getaway Special With Dining Offered At The Rosarito Beach Hotel & Spa

ROSARITO BEACH, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO---The landmark Rosarito Beach Hotel & Spa, Baja's largest and best known beachfront resort, is offering an oceanfront winter getaway special perfect for those who might have postponed travel this past summer.

The special extends through Jan. 31 of 2021, excluding holidays and special events. It includes American breakfasts for two and a $20 dinner credit, plus a 20 percent discount on select treatments at the resort's luxurious Casa Playa Spa.

With the special, a one-night weekday stay at the self-enclosed resort 30 miles south of San Diego is $99 for a standard oceanfront room or $129 for a one-bedroom suite in the 17-story Pacifico Tower. Friday and Saturday night rates are $119 and $159 respectively. These rates include the two American breakfasts, $20 dinner credit and select 20 percent spa discount.

Specials, which have a maximum occupancy of two adults and two children ages 12 and under, are plus tax and subject to availability. Reservations must be made at least one day in advance by calling 1-866-767-2648.

Spa services are by appointment. The 20 percent discount applies to 60-miinute hot stone massages, 30- or 60-minute Swedish or deep tissue massages, or 30-minute back or neck massages,

Further specials, including one for Thanksgiving, are listed on www.rosaritobeachhotel,com Now with 500 rooms and suites, the self-enclosed resort celebrated its 96th birthday this year as it counts down to its 2024 centennial.

The full-service resort is completely self-enclosed but also near major Baja attractions and activities. The region also is ideal for early holiday shopping, and is just 30 miles south of San Diego CA, with which it shares a temperate year-round climate.

MEDIA CONTACT: Ron Raposa

The Thanksgiving And Christmas Turkey Originated In Mexico

Written by Tony Buxton

How is it possible that a Mexican bird (L) & (R) and a Mexican flower (C) are honored on the most quintessential of American holidays?

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Sea Lion Die-Off in Baja California Sur Linked to Red Tide

Written by Susy Buchanan for Mexico News Daily

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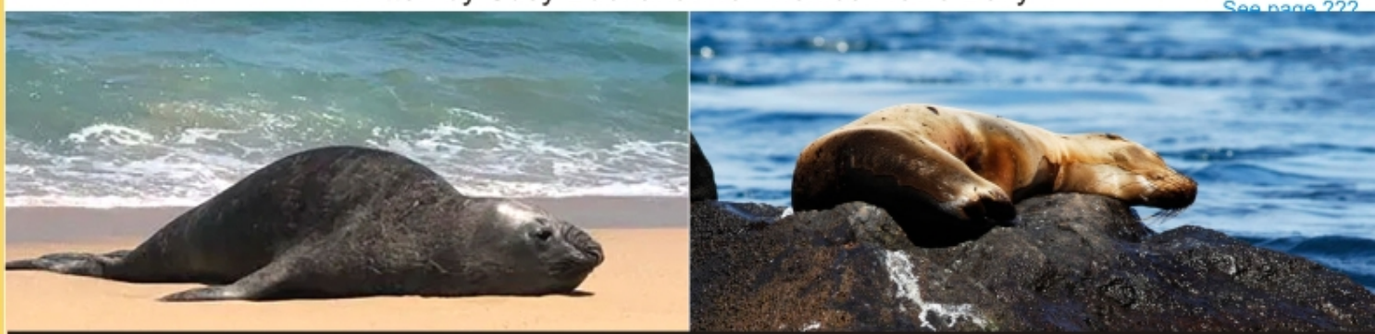

What these ubiquitous mammals eat (L) has killed off many of them in our local waters

See page 05

Sean Connery: Fans and Colleagues React to News of His Passing

Written By Jordan Hoffman

Bond,James Bond (L) is how many of us will remember him but this Oscar-winning actor (R) was definitely not limited to his most famous role.

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From Front Page...

The Thanksgiving And Christmas Turkey Originated in Mexico

Did You Know…?

Strange but true; the bird now so closely associated with many festive meals is a direct descendant of the wild turkeys still found in many parts of Mexico. How is it possible that a Mexican bird acquired the name turkey?

Turkey

The most likely explanation derives from the fact that the merchants who traded in the Middle Ages between the Middle East and England were based in the Turkish Empire and hence known as "Turkey merchants". Turkey merchants are believed to have introduced the guinea fowl, a native of Madagascar, to European dinner tables.

Later, the larger New World bird, the present-day turkey, was brought back to Spain by the conquistadors. The rearing of New World birds gradually spread to other parts of Europe and North Africa. The Turkey merchants capitalized on the new opportunity, and began to supply the new birds instead of the guinea fowls to the English market, and the rest is history.

The first use in English of the word "turkey" to describe the bird dates back to 1555. By 1575 , turkey was already becoming the preferred main course for Christmas dinner. Curiously, the Turkish name for the turkey is hindi, which is probably derived from "chicken of India", perhaps based on the then-common misconception that Columbus had reached the Indies.

Mexico's wild turkeys had been domesticated by pre-Columbian Indian groups long before the Spanish conquistadors arrived. Several archaeological sites provide tantalising clues as to precisely how turkeys were reared. One such site is Casas Grandes in the northern state of Chihuahua, an area where modern, large-scale turkey-rearing is an important contributor to the local economy.

Corn

According to Ernst and Johanna Lehner, corn, which also originated in Mexico, was misnamed as Turkish corn at the same time, and for much the same reason. Europeans first saw corn, called maize or mahiz by the indigenous people, when Columbus and his followers arrived in the New World. They took samples back to Spain at the very end of the 15th century.

It quickly became an important crop, successfully cultivated throughout the continent. 16th century herbalists in Europe called the new plant by various names, including Welsh corn, Asiatic corn, Turkish wheat and Turkish corn. The latter name was the most usual, since they believed that the grain had been brought into central Europe from Asia by the Turks, who had introduced dozens of other products from the east into Europe at about the same time.

The Turks themselves called the crop "Egyptian corn"; the Egyptians called it "Syrian sorghum"… The German botanist Hieronymus Bock, in his New Kreüterbuch or herbal in 1546, remained on the fence, calling it "foreign corn". Given the confused terminology, perhaps it is not surprising that, to quote Ernst and Johanna Lehner, "It took Spanish botanists more than 50 years to convince other European herbalists that corn was American." Corn was given its botanical name, Zea mays, by Carl von Linné in the 18th century.

Potatoes

Alongside turkey and/or corn at Thanksgiving and Christmas, the humble yet versatile potato is often eaten. That, too, was introduced to Europe from Mexico. A previous Did You Know? delved into the connections between Mexico, the potato, and the Irish migration to North America following the potato famine of the early 19th century.

But did you also know that potatoes were originally sold in Spain on the strength of claims that they could cure impotence, at prices up to two thousand dollars a kilo?

Nowadays, potatoes in one form or another are virtually ubiquitous – from mashed or baked or potato salad, to French fries and the quintessentially Québécois variation of poutine (fries, curds and gravy).

The first Thanksgiving

My esteemed colleagues Don Adams and Teresa Kendrick have presented a strong case that the very first Thanksgiving celebration by Europeans in North America was held not in the U.S. at all, but in Mexico, on April 30, 1598.

This date certainly precedes the claims of Plimoth Plantation, Massachusetts, site of the 1621 thanksgiving, and negates the latter's claim to the be the birthplace of Thanksgiving. One curious historical footnote is that the feast on that occasion apparently did not include either turkey or potatoes!

Pumpkin Pie

And how could you have pumpkin pie without the pumpkin? All varieties of pumpkin, whatever their size and shape, belong to the Cucurbita genus. While there are some doubts about the precise origin of the wild forms of pumpkin, they were certainly being cultivated in Mexico as long ago as 5500 B.C. and were an integral part of the daily diet of many Indian groups. The use of "pumpkin" in English can apparently be traced back to 1547. For many people, pumpkins are eternally associated with both Thanksgiving and with Halloween.

Christmas Poinsettias

Putting menu details to one side, Christmas in North America would not be complete without the finishing splash of color provided by another Mexican native: the Poinsettia.

This beautiful plant, with its colorful bracts, has become indelibly associated with the season. Most people who buy indoor pots of Euphorbia pulcherrima, commonly known in Spanish as Flor de Noche Buena (Christmas Eve Flower), probably do not realize that the plant in its native habitat grows as high as a small tree. Poinsettia, its English name, honors Dr. Joel R. Poinsett, a U.S. diplomat who served in Mexico in the 1820s. While most poinsettias have modified leaves or bracts that are scarlet- or vermilion-colored, other varieties have pink or even white bracts.

So, wherever you are this festive season, keep your eyes open for Mexican influences…

Many traditional Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners would simply not be the same were it not for a few key ingredients from Mexico!

¡Feliz Navidad! Seasonal greetings to all!

Sources:

Lehner, Ernst Lehner, Johanna. Folklore and Odysseys of Food and Medicinal Plants. New York: Tudor Publishing Company. 1962.

Don Adams and Teresa A. Kendrick. "Don Juan de Oñate and the First Thanksgiving". Don Mabry's Historical Text Archive. Retrieved on 2008-07-13.

Elizabeth Armstrong (2002-11-27). "The first Thanksgiving", Christian Science Monitor. Retrieved on 2008-07-13.

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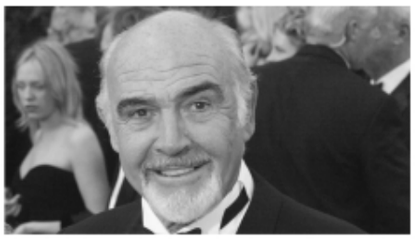
Sean Connery: Fans and Colleagues React to News of His Passing

"One of the true greats of cinema."

Written By Jordan Hoffman



The gun barrel view of 007 – the first 007 – as he faces the camera to fire a deadly shot is, along with Chaplin's tramp and Rhett carrying Scarlett up the staircase, one of the most iconic images in cinema. The announcement of Sean Connery's death on Saturday naturally brought out strong emotions on social media from movie lovers, and those who work in the entertainment industry.

Daniel Craig, the current James Bond, made a statement through the film franchise's official social media channels, saying "It is with such sadness that I heard of the passing of one of the true greats of cinema. Sir Sean Connery will be remembered as Bond and so much more. He defined an era and a style. The wit and charm he portrayed on screen could be measured in mega watts; he helped create the modern blockbuster. He will continue to influence actors and film-makers alike for years to come. My thoughts are with his family and loved ones. Wherever he is, I hope there is a golf course."

The estate of Roger Moore, the third actor to play James Bond, said that Moore always considered Connery to be "the best ever James Bond."

Sam Neill, who worked with Connery on The Hunt For Red October, remarked on his unique "charisma and power."

Hugh Jackman called Connery his idol.

Viola Davis called him "our James Bond icon."

Director Paul Feig, known to look good in a suit himself, called him suave.

Also focusing on Connery's charisma, Elizabeth Hurley found a particularly dreamy photo to share on her social media feed.

Nicola Sturgeon, the First Minister of Scotland, shared some thoughts on Edinburgh's most famous son.

While Connery will forever be first thought of as James Bond, there was more to his career. (Indeed, his one Academy Award was for his supporting role in 1988's The Untouchables.) Fans were eager to recall the breadth of his output. Among them, Stephen King.

Additional tributes came in from Cary Elwes, George Takei, Edgar Wright, and Robert Carlyle.

One of the great film nerd Twitter accounts, @TheSpaceshipper, took this opportunity to remind followers that Connery was more involved in sci fi than some may remember.

Indeed, to a certain core of underground moviegoer, John Boorman's 1974 freak show Zardoz may have had just as much impact as Goldfinger or Dr. No. Comic book writer Jimmy Palmiotti (one of the leading creators of Harley Quinn) represented that side of the fandom.

Film critic and historian Bilge Ebiri reminded that Connery pretty much invented the trope of the wise-cracking action hero.

With jokes in mind, Connery's fun-to-imitate his Scottish accent was, for many, a source of fond memories with the news of his death.

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Greta Thunberg Reflects On Living Through Multiple Crises In A 'post-truth Society'

In an interview with National Geographic, the teen climate activist considers the successes of the youth climate movement and the challenges it will face.

Writtten By Oliver Whang

Since her first sit-in outside the Swedish parliament building more than two years ago, Greta Thunberg's fundamental message has been clear and unchanging: The climate crisis is humanity's greatest existential threat and we need to treat it as such. That message inspired millions of young activists to protest for change and led to a series of viral speeches that have defined Thunberg's global fame. She was Time's 2019 Person of the Year and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize two years in a row.

Now, though, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic—a global crisis of a much different nature—and the looming threat of the U.S. backing out of the Paris Agreement, the 17-year-old activist is back at school in Sweden. National Geographic spoke with Thunberg via Zoom about how her activism has changed over the past year, and how her message might survive an increasingly complex world. (This interview has been lightly edited for length and clarity).

Oliver Whang: A lot has happened in the past half year or so. How has your work changed since the coronavirus hit?

Greta Thunberg: Well, we have moved from lots of physical things, meetings and strikes and so on, to doing it digitally. But, I mean, since we are a movement of people who don't fly because of the environmental impact, we haven't had to change that much in the way we work. And then every country, every local group, differs. Because we are a very decentralized movement. We are not run top-down, but every local group decides on their own what they're going to do. So it's been different from city to city, from country to country.

Oliver Whang: Have any of those countries or cities adapted in a way that's been really successful?

Greta Thunberg: Yeah. Some do weekly digital strikes, which have been successful. And many have done symbolic actions. Some have put up signs or shoes outside the parliament buildings to symbolize that we should be here, but we are home. So there are lots of creative ways people have adapted.

Oliver Whang: Do you feel like the climate change crisis has been kind of forgotten in the middle of all this other stuff?

Greta Thunberg: Well, that's a very poignant narrative because, yes, of course, as have all other issues. In an emergency like this, you have to expect that other things are going to be put on hold, as they have been.

Oliver Whang: One thing that's been striking to me about the worldwide response to the coronavirus pandemic is that a lot of countries and companies have made really big moves. Stimulus bills were passed and companies are developing vaccines quickly. Do you see this kind of response as inspiring some kind of action towards addressing the climate crisis?

Greta Thunberg: Well, we shouldn't be comparing different crises, but it does show that we can treat a crisis like a crisis. And that it will probably change the way we perceive crises and crisis response. And it really proves that the climate crisis has never once been treated as a crisis. It's just being treated as a public and important question, like a political topic. Which it is not, because it's an existential crisis.

Oliver Whang: But has the response to the coronavirus given you more hope? As in, we can have a similar response to the climate crisis?

Greta Thunberg: It confirmed what I already knew. That once we treat the climate crisis like a crisis, we can change things and we can achieve things.

Oliver Whang: Here in the U.S., an election is coming up and our country is

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Greta Thunberg Reflects On Living Through Multiple Crises...

scheduled to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on November 4th. Our president has been promising to do this for years—he says that the accord is unfair to America. And there are a lot of people, not most of the people in the U.S., but a lot of them, who agree with the president and agree with that decision to withdraw from the accord. What would you say to those people?

Greta Thunberg: Nothing. Just as I always do, refer to the science. Because people have been trying to impact these people for so long, and they haven't succeeded. So why should I? Why should I be any different? If they don't listen to and understand and accept the science, then there's really nothing that I can do. There's something much deeper that needs to change them.

Oliver Whang: What might that deeper thing be?

Greta Thunberg: That we live in a post-truth society today, and that we don't care that we have lost empathy. We have stopped caring for each other in a way. We have stopped thinking long-term and sustainable. And that's something that goes much deeper than just climate crisis deniers.

Oliver Whang: So do you think in order to address the climate crisis, we might need like a cultural shift or a paradigm shift rather than just passing carbon taxes and legislation, influencing leaders and developing technology?

Greta Thunberg: Well if I say that, then people will take that quote out of context and say that I want a revolution or something. But I mean the climate crisis is not the only problem here. It is just a symptom of a larger crisis. Like the loss of biodiversity, acidification of the oceans, and loss of fertile soil, and so on. And these things will not just be solved by stopping our emissions of greenhouse gases. The earth is a very complex system. If you take one thing and put it out of balance then that will have an impact on things beyond our comprehension. And that goes for equality as well. Humans are part of nature, and if we are not doing well, then nature is not doing well, because we are nature.

Oliver Whang: Does it bother you that you might be missing all these people who maybe accept that climate change is a thing and that it's a crisis, but prioritize joblessness or access to food or other domestic issues over the climate crisis? Do you feel like you're missing them?

Greta Thunberg: No, it doesn't bother me. We have not been made aware of the climate crisis—the climate crisis has never been treated as a crisis, so how can we expect people to care about it? Since we are not aware of even the basic facts, how can we expect people to want climate action? And so that is something that needs to change. We need to understand that we are not fighting for separate causes. We are fighting for one and the same cause even though it might not seem like it. It's the fight for climate justice, social justice. Whatever is the issue, it's the fight for justice.

Oliver Whang: Do you think that we've made any significant progress towards addressing the climate crisis since you started protesting more than two years ago?

Greta Thunberg: It depends on how you see it. In one way, yes. It feels like the debate has shifted and more and more people are starting to slowly understand the climate crisis more and prioritizing it. But on the other hand, it has still never once been treated as a crisis. And the emissions are still rising. So it depends on how you see it.

But I mean we can't expect that this one movement will change the world. If we think that is the case then we have not understood the climate crisis. People are like, 'Has your movement failed since you have not accomplished your goals?' But, I mean, what are our goals? We don't have any goals. Our goal is to do as much as we possibly can to be a small part of a very big shift. To be one of countless of activists who push in the same direction from different perspectives. And that is our goal. We can't expect one movement or one initiative, one solution, to change everything, or to put us in the right direction. Because the climate crisis is very complex. It's not just that simple.

Oliver Whang: Was there anything that you did or that other youth climate activists have done that you think has been particularly successful? Or any sort of manifestation of what you've done in policy or in the economy that you think is an example of your success?

Greta Thunberg: Yes, we have many. Especially local examples. But I think the biggest thing that we have accomplished is to put the focus on the science. We just say, 'We don't want you to listen to us, we want you to listen to the science.' This not a question about politics, this is not our opinion. We don't want the emissions to reduce, it's what the science says is needed if we are to stay in line with our commitments. We don't want things to be like this. But unfortunately, that's where we are. And we will continue to push for people to listen to the science.

Oliver Whang: Do you ever have any doubts about your work? Do you ever doubt yourself or what you've been doing?

Greta Thunberg: No, because I know it's the right thing to do. We are at a time now where we must step out of our comfort zones. I feel like I have a moral duty to do what I can, since I'm a citizen. And that makes me part of something and it is my duty, my moral duty, my moral responsibility, to do everything I can.

Oliver Whang: And that's never been in question for you?

Greta Thunberg: No. I mean, I don't want to be an activist. I don't think any climate activist does it because they want to. We do this just because no one else is doing anything, and because we need to do something. Someone needs to do something, and we are somebodies.

Oliver Whang: I'm curious if you feel like your moral duties or your responsibility has changed as you've become this more recognized name.

Greta Thunberg: Well, yes. Of course everyone has a responsibility, but the bigger your platform, the bigger your responsibility. And the bigger your power, the bigger your responsibility. The bigger your carbon footprint, the bigger your moral duty. So of course, as I've gotten a bigger platform that also comes with a bigger responsibility. I must use these channels, or whatever you would call them, to educate, to spread awareness.

And the things, all the resources I have, they will disappear one day. I mean, I won't be this person for a long time. Soon people will lose interest in me and I won't be so-called "famous" anymore. And then I will have to do something else. So I'm trying to, as long as I have this platform, use it.

Oliver Whang: How do you see yourself proceeding from here? Do you want to go to university? Do you have any plans?

Greta Thunberg: Well, I don't really know. I just do what I want to do at the moment. And right now, I just started gymnasium (Editor's note: "gymnasium" is the Swedish equivalent of high school). And there I will be for the following three years. And unless I want to do something else, I mean, we will see. The world changes from day to day. So you just have to adapt, I guess.

Oliver Whang: How do you plan on sustaining this movement? Are there specific things we need to do that are different from what needed to be done two years ago or one year ago or eight months ago?

Greta Thunberg: I mean, it's very complex. But right now we have kind of hit the wall. There are no arguments left. There are no excuses left. Now, it's just, either you try to minimize the crisis or just completely deny it, or you try to distract. We just need to start treating the crisis like a crisis and continue to lift up the science, but now everyone's blaming each other and we are stuck in a loop. We won't get anywhere unless someone breaks that chain, so to speak. Someone needs to do something. I mean, of course, many people have to do lots of things, but unless someone with a big platform or big responsibility does something to start treating the crisis like a crisis—for instance, the media—then we won't be able to move from here.

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Sea Lion Die-Off in Baja California Sur Linked to Red Tide

Written By Susy Buchanan For Mexico News Daily

The September 3rd death of 137 sea lions whose bodies were found on San Lázaro beach in Comondú, Baja California Sur (BCS), was caused by red tide, scientists said after studying samples of the animals' vital organs and body fat.

The natural phenomenon occurs when domoic acid produced by a massive bloom of algae accumulates in shellfish, sardines and anchovies which are then eaten by mammals. Reactions can begin 30 minutes after ingestion and may include vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, respiratory distress, coma and sometimes death.

Studies show that the sea lions, 136 males and one female, fed on schools of fish that had consumed the biotoxin.

In an interview with the newspaper Excélsior, Ricardo Rebolledo of the Museum of the Whale and Marine Science in La Paz reported that results obtained by the state's Marine Mammal Stranding Network and the federal environmental protection agency Profepa are currently being compared before making an official announcement as to the cause of the die-off in the Gulf of Ulloa.

The gulf is located on the west side of the Baja California peninsula between Cabo San Lázaro and Punta Abreojos.

"Sometimes this type of algae does not affect the fish so much, but it does affect those that consume the schools. In this case, they would be dolphins, whales or sea lions," he said, indicating that a few final tests have yet to be run.

The high mortality of male sea lions, he explained, is because bulls typically band together and separate from cows while hunting.

Rebolledo said that red tide is likely responsible for other sea lions found dead last month in Bahía Asunción and San Juanico.

The red tide was not reported at the time by the Federal Commission for Protection Against Health Risks (Cofepris) because Rebolledo said it may have occurred far from the coast and thus did not represent any danger for humans.

A whale of a photo

Mexican photographer Jospeh Cheires has taken first place in the nature category in the 2020 Drone Awards. His winning photo, which was selected by an international jury, is entitled Gray Whale Pushing Tourists, and was taken in Puerto Adolfo López Mateos.

"At the end of the gray whale season, I was told about a gray whale that, for the last three years, used to play with the boats, pushing them gently," Cheires says. "So we went back the year after and incredibly the gray whale appeared and this shot is the result."

López Mateos plays host to the annual Gray Whale Festival in late January, where in years past 14,000 people have gathered to celebrate the return of the leviathan. Gray whales travel to Baja Sur from the Bering Sea to mate and give birth in the state's warm, coastal waters, making the longest migration in the animal kingdom.

Wayward whale

A beluga whale last seen alive in southern California in June was found dead in the waters off Laguna Ojo de Liebre this week, baffling scientists.

Belugas typically are found in the frigid waters off Alaska and Russia and one had never been seen before in California, much less in BCS. A team of scientists is attempting to recover the body, which from photos did not appear injured or emaciated, to determine the cause of death and, if possible, why the whale journeyed this far south, The Orange County Register reports.

Beluga whales, easily identified for their distinctive coloring, are white to blend into the snow and ice of their northern habitat.

High-end tourism flourishes

High-income tourism in Los Cabos is on the rise despite the coronavirus pandemic, officials say. Luxury travel to the popular resort destination by visitors whose annual income exceeds US $500,000 has increased by 13% over 2019, rising from just 5% of all visitors to 18%, said Rodrigo Esponda Cascajares, director of the Los Cabos Tourism Trust.

He attributes the boost to Los Cabos' reputation for safety, an increase in direct flights, and the fact that there are relatively few countries people from the United States can travel to due to coronavirus restrictions.

In addition, private aviation increased by 75% in July and 88% in August over last year's numbers, Esponda says.

Romance tourism, visitors who typically come to Los Cabos to get engaged, married or celebrate an anniversary, is also up, increasing by 2% over 2019. This year 8% of all visitors have come to Los Cabos for a romantic celebration, BCS Noticias reports.

Bars to remain closed

Bar owners in La Paz and Los Cabos demonstrated in the state capital on Wednesday, demanding that bars and nightclubs which have been closed since March be allowed to reopen.

The protest took the form of a caravan of vehicles, many of which made the journey to the Ministry of Tourism from Los Cabos to plead their case, arguing that they are in a critical situation after being closed for seven months, El Universal reports.

In Los Cabos 200 bars remain closed, as do 50 in La Paz, a situation that is unlikely to change any time soon.

"The state health safety committee is there to protect this and all sectors of the population, but we are not here for parties. The time will come, but it is not today," said the commissioner for the Protection against Sanitary Risks, Blanca Pulido Medrano. "… this is not feasible due to the high risk of contagion that it implies."

Bars will be allowed to reopen when BCS reaches the low risk "green light" level on the state's coronavirus stoplight system.

Currently, BCS is at the first of two yellow stages. The state has recorded 10,849 reported cases of the coronavirus and 510 people have died. Health Minister Víctor George Flores says that 94.57% of those infected with the virus in BCS have recovered.

Lifeguard honored

Lifeguard Erick Rasgado Bonilla was honored in Cabo San Lucas this week for his courageous attempt to save the life of a young woman struggling in strong surf that was kicked up by Hurricane Genevieve on August 18.

The 33-year-old selflessly rushed into the waves in front of the Riu Palace Hotel in Cabo San Lucas after noticing the 15-year-old was in peril, but both lost their lives.

"He was a proactive, brave, attentive person with a positive attitude and always willing to help. His loss really hurts us a lot," said Matías Ponce, general manager of the Riu.

Family, friends and co-workers gathered at the Cabo San Lucas fire department on Wednesday to pay an emotional tribute to Rasgado, honoring him with a plaque that emphasized his courage and heroism, Primero BCS reports.

"There is no greater sacrifice than losing one's life for that of another," a portion of the plaque reads.

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The Unexpected Benefits of Pumpkin for Runners

By Emily Shiffer for Runner's World

Fall is the season of pumpkin everything. Whether it's tasting that sweet PSL you've been waiting to get your hands on, baking pumpkin bread as the weather cools, or drinking a postrun pumpkin beer, you can't escape the season's orange mascot. And why would you? For runners, there are many benefits of pumpkin that aren't just embracing the fall flavor. It can be an excellent source of fuel, nutrients and hydration.

What Is Pumpkin?

Pumpkin is a winter squash that is technically a fruit because it has seeds, but is considered a vegetable, based on the nutritional breakdown. There are many different types of pumpkins, not just the standard orange, smooth-skinned one that sits on many front porches during the fall.

"The pumpkin you carve on Halloween is not the same pumpkin you find in canned form in your local grocery store. The one you eat and find in canned form is called sugar pumpkin," says Roxana Ehsani, MS, RD, CSSD, and a spokesperson for Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Nutrition-wise, a serving of ½ cup of fresh pumpkin provides:

·35 calories
·0 grams of fat
·8 g of carbohydrates
·3 grams of dietary fiber
·1 gram of protein
·310 percent daily value of vitamin A
·6 percent daily value of vitamin C
·8 percent daily value of iron
·2 percent daily value of calcium

"Pumpkin adds that nice fall flavor we all know and love to both sweet and savory recipes," says Maggie Michalczyk, RDN and owner of Once Upon a Pumpkin. "You could definitely say it's a fall superfood!"

Another bonus: it's an affordable source of nutrients.

"Pumpkin is relatively cheap, especially when in season during fall and winter," says Ehsani. "Buy a fresh sugar pumpkin or purchase it in canned form. Either form is highly nutritious."

Why Is Pumpkin a Great Food for Runners?

Given the nutrients that are packed in pumpkin, it's an obvious choice for runners to add into their diet, whether it's fresh or canned. Specifically, the vegetable's iron content is a major bonus for runners.

"Runners have higher needs of iron, iron deficiency is common amongst runners, especially amongst women runners. Since pumpkin contains iron, pumpkin is an ideal vegetable for any runner to incorporate," says Ehsani. "Whenever incorporating a food rich in iron, it's recommended to pair the food also rich in vitamin C."

For example, if you add pumpkin puree to your morning oatmeal, add an orange, strawberries, or a glass of OJ (foods high in vitamin C) to your breakfast to better absorb the iron in the pumpkin.

And don't forget the seeds. "Pumpkin seeds also contain some iron, so be sure to sprinkle those on your pumpkin oats, too!" Ehsani adds.

Pumpkin, like other fruits and veggies, can also help runners hydrate. Because runners sweat often, you have an increased need for fluids—and while drinking water is always important, you can also boost your hydration by eating a diet rich in fruits and veggies, which are high in water, Ehsani says.

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The Runner Who Beat Covid-19 and Then Ran The Virtual 2020 NYC Marathon

After her 2010 marathon, Rojas ran both the 2017 and 2019 NYC Marathons, as well as eight half-marathon

Tatiana Rojas woke up at 2 a.m. feeling like somebody had set her lungs on fire.

She gasped for air, but her nostrils were blocked and no amount of wheezing brought in enough oxygen.

She decided to walk to the kitchen for a steam inhalation. She hoped that would clear out her trachea, even if briefly.

Rojas, 59, had run several marathons, but walking to her kitchen from her bedroom that night felt almost impossible. She paused after every other step, holding on to the walls for support, still gulping for the air that seemed to be everywhere around her but nowhere within her.

"I am going to die here," she remembered thinking to herself.

Somehow, in a trance, she made it to the kitchen, focusing on nothing but the next step. She boiled water, and just when she thought she was going to pass out, she inhaled, the warm vapors releasing the clog in her nose long enough for her to take a decent breath. She sat on the kitchen floor for a long time, hugging the bowl of water for dear life.

Rojas felt like that for three weeks, and during that time, she probably got five hours of sleep each night, if lucky. This was in the middle of May, one month since her positive COVID-19 test, and during those unending days, it was easy to believe she would never beat it.

But, on June 23, she got her first negative test. And five months after this life-altering experience, she ran the NYC Marathon -- virtually -- after beating COVID-19.

As the world came to a standstill in mid-March, Rojas, an office coordinator on the case management team at Elmhurst Hospital in New York City, kept going to the hospital in scrubs and a mask. Before a team meeting on March 23, she'd heard that the virus had reached a member of the hospital but didn't know who it was. She felt exhausted as she walked to the meeting but figured she was either having a psychosomatic reaction to the news or that it was general fatigue. By the end of the day, she had a full-blown headache and sore throat.

She called her doctor, got an amoxicillin prescription -- she didn't have a fever -- and decided she was going to beat this. She cooked and ran a few miles every day as she had for much of her life. If she could run even a little bit, that meant she was in control, that she was OK, she thought.

Her husband, Juan Carlos Nattes, showed similar symptoms and sometimes had a fever, but nothing was out of control.

Yet.

Then, two weeks in, she woke up early one morning with a sharp pain in her lungs. She tried to take a breath and felt like she was falling deeper into water.

On April 16, after the urgent care she went to wouldn't give her a COVID-19 test, she found a free testing center two hours away -- in Far Rockaway -- and drove there. Two days later, her test came back positive, her husband's negative.

"I've already spent a month suffering; what kind of a disease is this and what is going to happen now?" she remembered thinking to herself fearfully. And then a smaller voice in the back of her head: "I can't not run. But I can't even breathe. What do I do now?"

While her husband got better, her condition worsened. He cooked for her, made sure she had enough pillows to prop up her head so she could breathe easier, and made minimal grocery runs to keep the house going.

"I was so scared to see her like that -- I was there to help her, but we all felt helpless. This disease, we didn't know what it was doing to her," Rojas' husband said.

This was when, in mid-May, she found herself on the kitchen floor, thinking about death.

She wouldn't wish those three weeks on her worst enemy. Her body would shake every time she tried to walk.

But even though it felt impossible, she thought of running. Before the coronavirus, she had used her lunch break every day to run a 5K around Elmhurst Hospital. Three times a week, she'd change after work and run the 5 miles from the hospital to her home. Now thinking about running gave her a fresh boost of energy. Something to hope for. Something to look forward to when all of this was over.

Working as a gym teacher in Bolivia, Rojas spent hours in her school stadium, either training middle and high school children or doing intense aerobics herself. When she wasn't in the stadium, she was out running. Even back then, one of Rojas' biggest dreams was to run the New York City Marathon. She read about the everyday people who ran the marathon, the people who had to be carried to the finish line, the people who crawled to the finish line, and she thought, "Wow, what a profoundly human experience. I want to be a part of it."

Then she immigrated to the U.S., had three children and life got in the way. After she had her third child and knew that would be the last time she'd go through pregnancy, she applied for her first NYC Marathon. She'd already started running half-marathons and going on longer runs to get back in shape after childbirth.

But the marathon lottery results came back and she didn't get picked.

For several years after, she applied and got the same response: rejection. Right before the 2010 NYC Marathon, she said to herself, "I am turning 50 next year. This is the last time I will try, and if I don't get in, I will quit."

A few weeks later, she got an email. "Congratulations, you're running the 2010 NYC Marathon."

"It was like a miracle," she said. And it changed her life.

She trained on her own, digging into her gym teacher knowledge, running 5Ks every day in preparation for a longer run over the weekend. She ran her first marathon one week before she turned 50, finishing it in seven hours and 37 minutes. The last two hours were hard, her brain constantly convincing her that it was too hard, that her legs couldn't take another step. But she kept pushing, and when she crossed the finish line, even though there was no ribbon, she felt an invisible energy pushing her across the line. She received her medal afterward, sobbing uncontrollably as she felt the medal in her hands.

She'd imagined finishing the New York Marathon so many times, but she wasn't prepared for the floodgates of emotions, the intense feeling of gratitude she had for her body and her mind. It was like she was sharing her deepest part of her being with every runner who has run the marathon before her -- the energy was that palpable.

"It was more beautiful than I could have ever imagined in my mind," she said.

Since then, she has run both the 2017 and 2019 New York City Marathons and eight half-marathons. She ran her fastest marathon last year at 6:21:55.

When COVID-19 hit her like a truck, she visualized the feeling of climbing up the final hill during her first New York Marathon. She remembered turning around during the last mile to see a swarm of people at the finish line. She remembered the feeling of the brisk November New York City air guiding her through the tough parts.

Even before her test came back negative, she'd made up her mind. She was going to run another NYC Marathon. Due to COVID-19, the marathon would be virtual this year, and the window to run it was Oct. 17-Nov. 1.

A few days after her negative test in June, she realized her body had stopped shaking when she walked. So she decided she'd step outside for the first time. She did a one-and-a-half-mile loop, walking to her bank and back, her step slowing down considerably toward the end. When she returned home, she stumbled onto her couch. She stayed in bed for three days recuperating from the walk. But she tried again three days later.

"Getting my shoes on for that second walk was harder than most things I've done in my life, but I said to myself: 'No. I won't let this virus win. I am free of it now, and I will work to get my body back.'"

By the end of July, five weeks after she tested negative, she ran her first 5K. It wasn't her fastest, not even close, but she nonetheless felt a huge sense of accomplishment at the end.

A few weeks ago, she ran 22 miles around Central Park, mirroring what this year's NYC virtual marathon would look like. She ran her first virtual marathon last year (also the NYC Marathon), and it required a lot more discipline and strength to run 26.2 miles around one neighborhood, with no guide maps or fans to support her through the ups and downs.

"You have to look deep inward when you start feeling like you can't do it," she said.

On Oct. 25, Rojas started her virtual race at 60th Street and 1st Avenue at 4:30 a.m. and, looping through Central Park, finished at Flushing Meadows Park in Queens. As she reached the 20th mile, her knees hurt, like they were on fire, and through tears that rolled down her eyes, she repeated over and over to herself, "God, I've been through so much, just please let me finish this race."

She walked the last 6 miles, slowly and deliberately, taking in the quietness of Manhattan, owing to the early-morning hour and the pandemic. When she slowly walked to the finish line, held up by her husband and her friend -- she finished at a time of 7:31 -- she raised her hands up in the sky, unable to believe her body allowed her to run 26.2 miles.

To her, running a marathon -- especially on the 10th anniversary of her first -- months after suffering from the disease that has killed more than 225,000 Americans is her way of standing up for all the people who couldn't.

"I want to run more now and not stop. I want to have the power and the energy that coronavirus took from me. That's why I am here."

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For Valentino Dixon, A Wrong Righted

With an investigation Golf Digest helped open, an Erie County court vacated Dixon's murder conviction after he had already served 27 years in jail

Written By Max Adler

After 27 years in prison, a man who loves golf walked free today. Not only that, he was given back his innocence. Of course, the state can regift innocence about as capably as it can 27 years.

Nevertheless, the Erie County District Court in Buffalo, N.Y., has vacated the murder conviction of Valentino Dixon, 48, who was serving a 39-years-to-life sentence—the bulk of it in the infamous Attica Correctional Facility—for the 1991 killing of Torriano Jackson. On that hot August night long ago, both were at a loud street party with underage drinking when a fistfight over a girl turned to gunfire.

But before we dive into what really happened, a quick refresher on why golfers might care extra about Valentino Dixon. Six years ago, Golf Digest profiled this inmate who grinds colored pencils to their nubs drawing meticulously detailed golf-scapes. Although Dixon has never hit a ball or even stepped foot on a course, the game hooked him when a golfing warden brought in a photograph of Augusta National's 12th hole for the inmate to render as a favor. In the din and darkness of his stone cell, the placid composition of grass, sky, water and trees spoke to Dixon. And the endless permutations of bunkers and contours gave him a subject he could play with.

"The guys can't understand," Dixon has said. "They always say I don't need to be drawing this golf stuff. I know it makes no sense, but for some reason my spirit is attuned to this game."

It took about a hundred drawings before Golf Digest noticed, but when we did, we also noticed his conviction seemed flimsy. So we investigated the case and raised the question of his innocence.

The case is complicated, but on the surface it involves shoddy police work, zero physical evidence linking Dixon, conflicting testimony of unreliable witnesses, the videotaped confession to the crime by another man, a public defender who didn't call a witness at trial, and perjury charges against those who said Dixon didn't do it. All together, a fairly clear instance of local officials hastily railroading a young black man with a prior criminal record into jail. Dixon's past wasn't spotless, he had sold some cocaine, but that didn't make him a murderer.

Golf Digest's 2012 article led to further national spotlights on the case by NBC/Golf Channel, CRTV.com, Fox Sports, the Georgetown University Prison Reform Project and others. Alongside this, Dixon's daughter, Valentina, led a grassroots campaign to raise money for her father's legal fees by selling his artwork online. Still, the gears of the legal system refused to turn. As of Christmas 2017, appeals exhausted, Dixon's petitions for pardon or clemency drew no response from New York governor Andrew Cuomo's office.

But now suddenly, a vacated conviction—which means innocence—a far more lofty legal victory. Why now?

It rises from a confluence of factors, according to Donald Thompson, who along with Alan Rosenthal, filed Dixon's latest motion (which included the Golf Digest article) pro bono. "Once a case crosses a certain threshold of media attention, it matters, even though it shouldn't," Thompson says. "It's embarrassing for the legal system that for a long time the best presentation of the investigation was from a golf magazine."

Thompson says Golf Digest's work eventually was eclipsed by the recent report filed by the Erie County district attorney's wrongful convictions unit, which is a new type of department popping up in various districts these days. Their report was helped by the Georgetown University students, a group of undergraduates who have also created documentaries, websites and social-media campaigns around three other individuals thought to be wrongfully imprisoned, as part of a class. "They did a great job of speaking to witnesses who could still be located, as well as getting Chris Belling [who prosecuted Dixon] to say things at variance with positions he's argued in the past."

Also not to be discounted is the value of fresh blood. Frank Sedita III, the longtime Erie County district attorney who's said that society ought to be more concerned with "wrongful acquittals," is out. The new man, John Flynn, has been in the job a year, and it's basically due to his blessing that Dixon was released.

Of course, one small matter to be addressed before a man's guilt is absolved is to place it on someone else. Just before Dixon walked out of the courthouse, LaMarr Scott walked in and officially plead guilty to Jackson's murder. Scott admitted responsibility the night of the shooting and has for decades since (including to Golf Digest), with the exception of a brief window of time when Belling pressured him to say otherwise. Scott is already serving a life sentence for a 1993 shooting in an armed robbery that left one victim a quadriplegic. Tacking on a concurrent sentence for Jackson's murder doesn't change his prospects, other than maybe making any future parole a slimmer possibility.

Where's Dixon heading after the courthouse? "I'm going to Red Lobster to celebrate with my family and my support team, then we're going to go a park," he said. The next day he's going to visit his grandmother, and the day after that he's going to buy a cellphone and register for a passport at the post office so he can visit his wife of 12 years, Louise, who lives in Australia. She has a golden heart, and the two met because she has spent her life seeking to help those she can.

"So many times I've come close [to giving up], but God kept giving me the strength to keep on and now I know why," Dixon told me by phone, hours after learning of his impending freedom.

The careers of the people who put Dixon away will not be impacted. All have either retired or moved to new positions. "The positive is that this case could serve as a shining example to wrongful convictions units elsewhere," Thompson says.

Lesser men would've broken. With his mind and body in tact, Dixon hopefully has some good years ahead. Maybe he'll even take up golf.