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**Fletcherfoto Photo Adventures presents:
The Colour and Culture of Mazatlan, Mexico
March 14 to March 21**

Invitation to participate

You are invited to join me, Paul Fletcher, for a 7-day photo adventure in Mazatlan, home of Mexican sun, culture and great photographic opportunities. We will be staying at the Olas Altas bed and breakfast minutes from the Pacific Ocean where Bill, who owns the B&B, and Tracy, the in-house chef, masseuse and local bon vivant, will look after us in the greatest comfort. Rooms are double occupancy making the tour perfect for couples or those who do not mind sharing a room with another participant. The rooms are wonderfully furnished with very comfortable beds, breakfasts are a daily feast and included in the price, the pool is cool and refreshing, wireless is available for laptop users and the pool-side bar is friendly and on an honour system.

The tour will be spent alternately exploring nearby picturesque villages or wandering the streets of Mazatlan. Oscar, our Mazatlan bilingual guide and tour leader who, in his spare time, researches the local whale and dolphin population, will lead out-of-town tours. Tours include El Quelite, a resurrected colonial town full of amazing colour, culture and great food; Las Labradas's ancient beach petroglyphs and the nearby fishing village of Barras de Piaxla; and Tecopan, our only full day tour to an area rich in wildlife and local flavour. Tour travel will be via air-conditioned minibus with lunch and drinks provided. Please view the attached tour information sheet for all the tour details.

Mazatlan city tours will typically be on foot where we will photograph in local markets and walk the street in search of local life and colour. A special treat will be a city history tour followed by a tequila tasting event at Pedro & Lola's restaurant where the doors will be opened just for us to learn about the pleasures and traditions of tequila. Our day in the Golden Zone, where the tourists play, will be spent photographing the tourist life on the beach, experiencing a great meal at Panchos and having some down time enjoying the pleasures of the beach side Playa Mazatlan Hotel. Travel to and from the Golden Zone will be via pulmonia, Mazatlan's unique Volkswagen open air taxi.

Every day in paradise deserves some siesta time and plenty of relax time is provided each day for you to check out your photos, ask photo questions, snooze, swim in the pool, visit the beach 5 minutes away or if you are really energetic, go shopping. For something different, or if you want to miss any any tours or walks, Tracy offers both cooking workshops ie: Mexican specialty salsa and shiatsu massage. To wrap up the fun times, for your last night in Mazatlan there will be a slide show of participants favourite photos and, as your hosts, we will treat you to a traditional Mexican fiesta of local food, drink and entertainment.

This tour is best enjoyed with a digital SLR camera equipped with a good quality wide angle to short telephoto zoom lens as instant imaging via the camera's screen is an excellent way to teach and learn about image making. There will also be a couple of opportunities to view and critique our digital efforts in the evenings. For well-equipped enthusiasts, extra lenses, tripods and flash are useful but not really necessary as we wish to keep the tours simple and light of heavy equipment. But if you don't mind carrying stuff, and enjoy changing lenses, then feel free to bring any extra gear you wish. A laptop or storage device is recommended for personal viewing, sharing and storage.

All participants should be in good health and able to walk reasonable distances as we will be walking a lot. Travel and travel health insurance is required for all participants. No worries otherwise, as your tour leader is First Aid trained and Mazatlan is well equipped with modern medical response and services.

The total tour price of \$1,250 US per person, double occupancy. The price includes accommodations and full breakfasts, tour transportation and lunches, tequila tasting event and history tour, La Playa beach afternoon, airport pickup and drop off, and the fiesta celebration. Price does not include airfare, non-tour lunches and evening dinners. A deposit of \$500 US is required on booking. Should you decide to cancel your booking your deposit will be refunded in full only if a replacement tour participant is booked.

Paul Fletcher is a professional photographer with over 30 years of experience, specializing in people, art and travel photography. He has been teaching photography to adults for over 20 years through Vancouver Island University and has taught high school photography for the last 10 years. He has traveled extensively over the years and in particular to Mazatlan, one of his favourite winter destinations, where he has visited several times. Paul guarantees that you will return from this tour with a much better understanding of your camera's potential, some great new friends and a lot of superb photos!

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Tour Itinerary

March 14	4pm	Arrival, check in and orientation
	6pm-8pm	Group dinner Machado Square
	9pm	Introductory slide show by Paul Fletcher
March 15	9am	Breakfast
	10am-1pm	Market & Machado Square
	3pm- 5pm	Streets of Mazatlan
March 16	8am	Breakfast
	9am- 1pm	El Quelite tour
	3pm-5pm	City history tour and tequila tasting
	8pm	Photo viewing and critique
March 17	8am	Breakfast
	9am –1pm	Petroglyph & Fishing Village tour
	3pm-5pm	Streets of Mazatlan
	8pm	Night photography
March 18	9am	Breakfast
	10am-noon	Golden Zone beach walk
	Noon	Lunch Panchos on the beach
	1pm-5pm	La Playa Mazatlan beach and swimming
	8pm	Photo viewing and critique
March 19	8am	Breakfast
	9am-5pm	Tecopan tour
March 20	9am	Breakfast
	10am-1pm	Streets of Mazatlan
	3pm-5pm	Tba
	7pm	Fiesta night and favourites slide show
March 21	9am	Breakfast
	Noon	Goodbyes & Departures

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Out-of-town tour details

El Quelite (5 hours)

Thirty-three kilometers [20 miles] northeast of Mazatlan, visitors leave behind the sun, sea and sand attractions of one of Mexico's most popular destinations to step into a fine example of rural or tourism.

El Quelite, is a tidy little community of 2,000 - a *pueblito* - traditionally based on cattle raising, agriculture, fruit growing and dairy products. Its streets and town square, invitingly strollable and litter-free, are mostly cobbled and graced with subtropical trees, shrubs and colorful flowers spilling over the sidewalks. Buildings are scrubbed, painted and repaired and the entire community is ready to welcome visitors by becoming a model of rural tourism in Mexico.



Inlcuded:

- Ground transportation in air conditioned vehicle
- Qualified bilingual guide and a local guide from the community
- Visit to a local bakery and tortilla factory
- Iced Bottled water
- Lunch at *Los Arrieros* Traditional Restaurant including a show of pre-hispanic dances and the traditional **Ulama** game.

MENU: Traditional Mexican antojitos and chips and salsa as entry, Arrachera steak or Grilled Chicken Breast w/mushroom sauce (steamed vegetables and rice aside) – vegetarian option available upon request-, hand-made corn tortillas, traditional natural flavoured “agua fresca” and dessert.

Las Labradas: Petroglyph site (5 hours)

Just 45 minutes north of Mazatlan, near the fishing village of Barras de Piaxtla an interesting group of petroglyphs can be found on the beach: **Las Labradas**. This particular set of over two hundred drawings were carved by ancient nomadic cultures of Tolteca origin as far back as 1,500 years becoming the actual remains of the most ancient cultural expressions in Mexico's northwestern territory and the only petroglyph site on a beachside location in the Americas.



While exploring the site, your expert bilingual guide will share with you interesting facts about the natural history of the *Meseta de Cacaxtla* Natural Protected Area, and assist you in translating the messages behind the petroglyphs which depict animals, people and other elements of nature composing the visions, beliefs and cosmogony of the native people many centuries past.



Lunch will be held at *El Mirador* Restaurant located at the nearby fisherman's village Barras de Piaxtla with great panoramic views of the bay. While they cook our traditional sarandeado fish we have time for an optional guided walk to the lighthouse for great photo opportunities.

Included:

- Ground transportation in air conditioned vehicle
- Qualified bilingual professional life scientist & naturalist guide
- Guided visit through most important petroglyphs and Barras de Piaxtla lighthouse
- Iced Bottled water
- Lunch at *El Mirador* Restaurant on the fisherman's village of Barras de Piaxtla
MENU: Chips & Salsa as entry, Traditional "fresh-caught" *Sarandeado* style Fish and –vegetarian option available upon request-, hand-made corn tortillas.

Teacapan: Mangrove Forests of Southern Sinaloa (All day)



Just 2 hours south of Mazatlán (82 miles) is the fishing village of Teacapan, located at the tip of an isolated peninsula that extends 18 miles down a coastline of pristine beaches. Mangrove lagoons and channels border its other side. Palm and mangos, cattle ranches, and an occasional cluster of houses dot the peninsula, which ends at the Boca de Teacapan, a natural marina separating the states of Sinaloa and Nayarit. Shrimp boats line the beach at the edge of the marina, which is backed by the worn houses and dirt streets of town.

The mangroves of Sinaloa and Nayarit are the largest area of mangroves in the Mexican Pacific. 40% of the more than 250 species of birds in this region are winter visitors, giving this region one of the highest concentrations of migratory birds in Mexico. The diverse bird communities feast on the many different invertebrates in the mangrove's waters and trees. These mangroves are also a feeding area for marine fish and crustaceans with over 50 species of vertebrates recorded in these mangroves, including four endangered sea turtles that use the coastal beaches of Sinaloa and Nayarit as a nesting site and cetaceans like the bottlenose dolphin, the only species of marine mammal using the area throughout the year. Mangroves filter nutrients, stabilize lagoon shores, help in forming soil, and prevent erosion of the coast. Because of its rich biodiversity, the site is among the most important wetland areas in the northern Neotropics.



On this expedition we will navigate the channels of this huge system of estuaries as we make our way through the mangroves looking for perfect photo opportunities while discovering a great variety of birds and other wildlife. Our primary objective will be to locate pods of bottlenose dolphins and take pictures of their dorsal fins for individual identification, thus participating in the first study ever made on the behavioral ecology of this species



in the Teacapan region.

Includes:

- Ground transportation in air conditioned vehicle
- Qualified bilingual professional marine scientist, naturalist guide and local guide from the community.
- Lunch: Choose from a great variety of seafood cooked traditionally by a local fishermen family.
- Iced Bottled water & Soft Drinks