



Memories of Acapulco in the 70's

*Photographs by Rolf Brauch
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In the 50's and 60's, Acapulco was 'the' destination for the rich and famous. A number of movie stars build retreats on the peninsula which forms the harbour. By the early 70's Acapulco was beginning to run down a little as other resorts started to compete.

Acapulco offered a wide variety of hotels and a lively nightlife.



Top: view from the El Matador hotel west to the peninsula.

Bottom: view from the El Matador north towards the harbour.

Cover: Sunset at Pia de la Questa, a superb beach a few miles north of Acapulco.



The wet-bar had stools built into the pool you could sit on; a generous roof overhang kept the sun off your back.



The El Matador was our favourite hotel, built into the side of a hill, one block from the beach, it sits within easy walking distance of the best restaurants on the main drag.

It also had a good sized pool with a built-in bar. From the upper floors you had a super view of Acapulco Bay. I took these particular photographs in 1978 — the last time we visited Acapulco — when Renée was ten and we spent a week together as her birthday present.

Some shots you make, and some you don't.





The south side of Acapulco Bay has good beaches and a number of world-class hotels; the El Presidente was not among those.



Remnants of another era - a Spanish galleon left on the beach. The photo above from our balcony at the El Presidente — the beach and the huts south of the hotel were fine, the water in the bay was not.





One of the things that has always attracted me to Acapulco is the splendid display of flowers everywhere.

Most stone walls were covered with some kind of flowering vine and the centre boulevard of the main drag had beautiful flower beds and trees.

This photo is of a centerpiece on a table in a restaurant we visited.

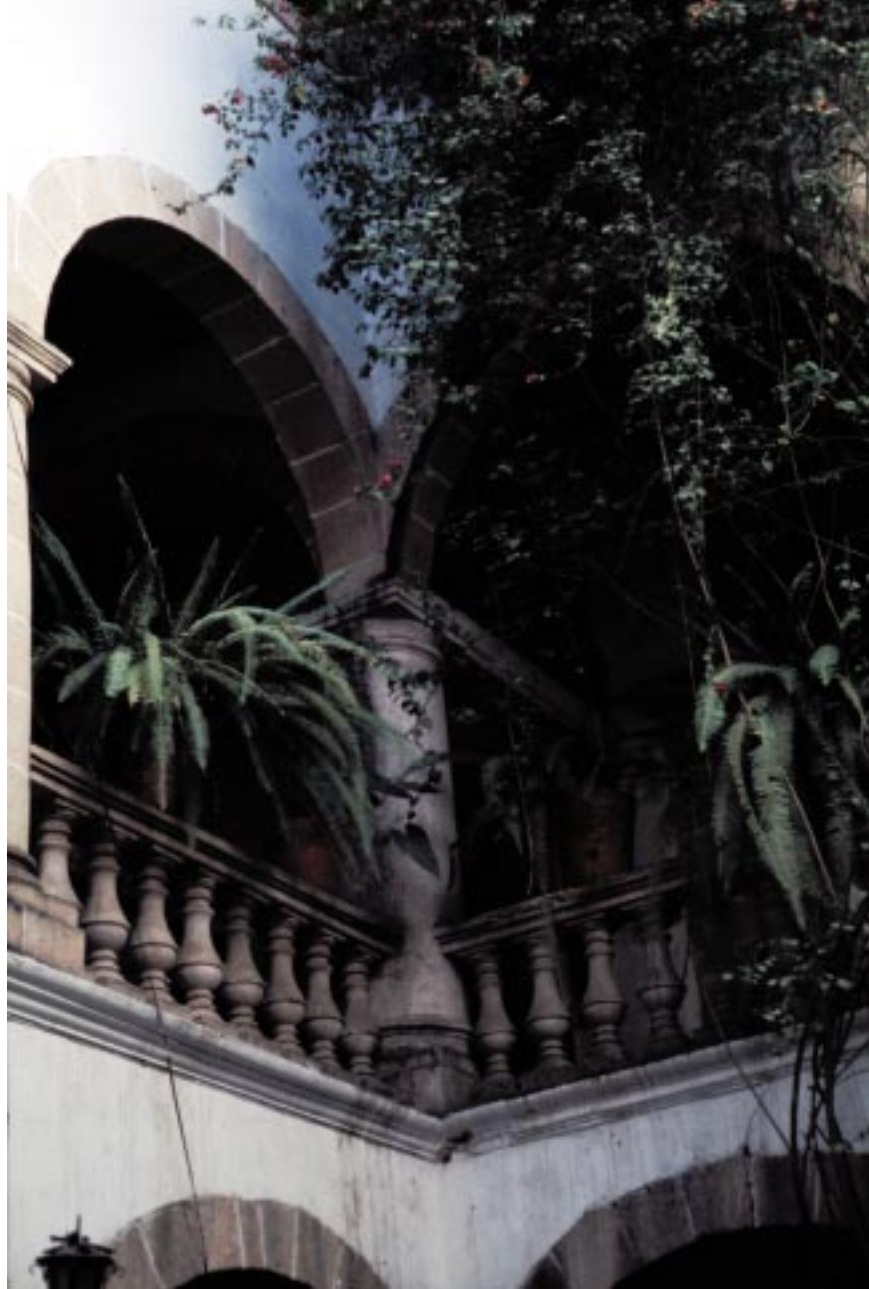




Above: the Portofino restaurant set up for cleaning.

Below: downtown Acapulco at the fishingboat harbour.





Inner courtyard of a private villa in the hills above Acapulco.





A colourful collection of pots and other cooking utensils at the local market.

We quickly learned two things: don't go shopping until you have a good tan, and do wear dark sunglasses. The former was important lest the locals got the impression we just got off the plane and were therefore an easy mark. The latter was critical to keep vendors from seeing what you are looking at — on our second day, Irma spotted a cute kitten sitting among a pile of watermelons, when an enterprising young lad quickly tried to sell it to her (wasn't even his).





Bring lots of money — gold and silver jewellery is on display in such abundance as to defy belief.

Renèe checking out the quality of the hats she bought for her sisters.





Pia de la Questa — a quiet beach a few miles north of Acapulco — a great place to swim and eat freshly caught Red Snapper while taking in incredible sun sets.





The Princess, a world class hotel complex located just south of Acapulco. A superb hotel with lush, lovingly tended grounds with an abundance of gorgeous flowering trees and plants. The beach, while great, does not quite match the Pia de la Questa.





An impressive drive leading up to the main entrance of the Princess hotel.



A huge indoor atrium at the center of the hotel also served as the lobby with its elegant stairways and mature trees.





The hotel resembles a pyramid, with loads of flowerboxes on each balcony.





When viewed through the telephoto lens, the balconies appear to meld together into one flowery mass.





The three-level pool set among lush greenery is simply stunning. A hanging bridge between the first and second level makes for an interesting walk.

The second level has a waterfall with a bar — a great place to relax.





Leaving on an evening harbour cruise.



Catching the sun in the evening haze.





On our way to a diving expedition, as we pass between the island and the peninsula.





*Irma and I
set to go
overboard.*





Ted, our dive master, became a good friend over the years. Ted learned to dive as a young man in the oil fields of the Gulf of Mexico.





Acapulco is an important port on the Pacific Coast of Mexico, almost due south of Mexico City. When Cortez arrived in 1530, he established a shipping center and an important commercial route between the Philippines and Spain.

In order to protect the city and ships from pirates a fort was built by the Spaniards in the shape of a pentagon and named "Fort of San Diego". It is now a museum housing the history of Acapulco.

In 1818 the Spaniards left, taking their lucrative trade with them. Acapulco fell into a decline lasting approximately 100 years until the first

road was opened in 1927. The first hotel was built in 1934. Acapulco's popularity grew, making it necessary to build an international airport in 1964 with direct flights from major U.S. cities. This was the beginning of Acapulco's jet-set fame.

Due to the popularity of Acapulco, a four-lane super highway was recently built and it now only takes three hours to drive down from Mexico City.

For a more information about Acapulco see:

<http://www.acapulco.org/>
<http://www.acapulco-cvb.com/>

