



Taxco, Mexico

*Photographs by Rolf Brauch
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A cantina in the shade of a giant cactus.

Below: a picturesque village — going back some in time



Shortly after Cortés conquest of Mexico City, he sent two emissaries to search for gold and silver in Taxco. They found silver, and in 1529, the Spaniards quickly moved into the area and it quickly became Spain's primary source for precious metals. As more accessible silver deposits were discovered elsewhere Taxco was left untouched for almost 200 years.





It never ceased to amaze us to find trees seemingly completely dried out, sporting one or two incredibly beautiful blossoms.



The local, non-polluting, (and considering the terrain) efficient, but not always readily willing, mode of transport.





*Top: Taxco viewed from a hilltop overlook.
Bottom: with flat land at a premium, houses are set tightly against the surrounding hills. One man's roof becomes another's parking spot.*





*Above: The Casa Blanca, a small hotel
Below: Typical town square*

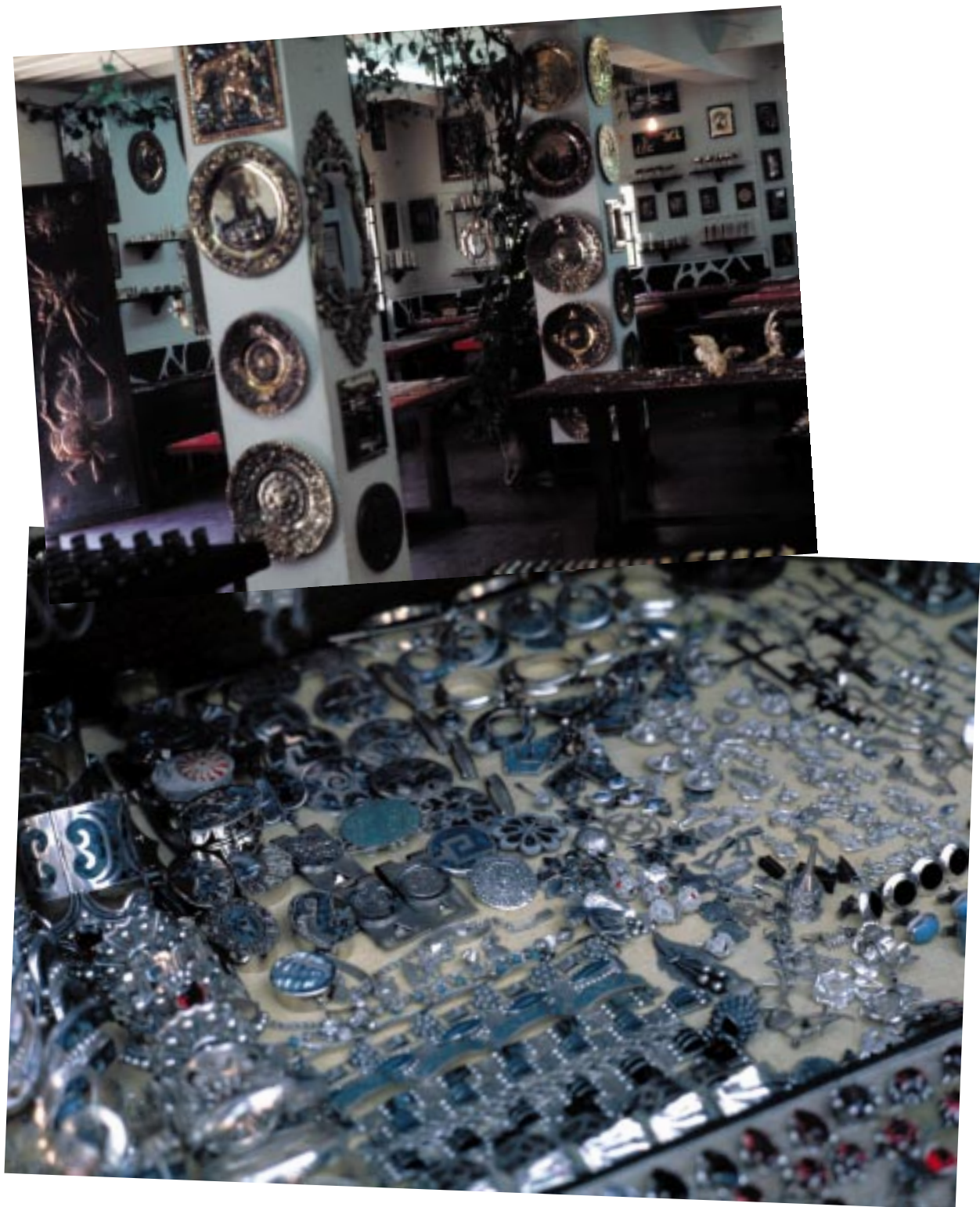




Mayan Calendar

The Mayan calendar is one of the most accurate in the world — more precise than the one generally used today. This one has a diameter of more than four feet. It is made of multicoloured stones (jade, etc.)





You want to have lots of cash with you — you will find an abundance of exquisite silver (and gold) jewellery and art objects, as well as lots made of brass, copper and leather. Of course there never is no shortage of colourful pottery — all of superb quality and fantastic prices.





Church of the Later-Day Silver Thieves (forgive my sarcasm) — in 1716, Jose de la Borda, a Spaniard of French ancestry, came to Taxco and re-discovered silver. Borda quickly became rich. He built schools, houses and roads. Also, he built the magnificent cathedral Santa Prisca, which to this day is the focal point of the town.





Made of local sandstone, the masonry is as ornate and well crafted as any found in Europe





Taxco (tas-co) is a Spanish adaptation of the Nahuatl Indian name Tlachco, which means "place where the ball is played". Taxco lies at an altitude of 1,780 meters (5,850 feet). It has a population of 150,000 and is located 164 km. (111 mi.) southwest of Mexico City and 50 miles south of Cuernavaca on the road from Mexico City to Acapulco.

Taxco is perched on a steep hillside with its red tile and white stucco houses, and pink geranium gardens, blended into lush mountain greenery. The streets are paved exclusively with cobblestones.

Today it seems that the ground floor of every building in town holds a silversmith shop. There are hundreds of silversmiths producing a fabulous mixture of European, Aztec, Mixtec and Zapotec and other pre-Columbian designs made from .925 sterling silver.

The exquisite work of the silversmiths, has made Taxco a popular day trip from the Pacific resorts of Acapulco and Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo. But Taxco's quaint, quiet beauty begs for a longer stay. Taxco is truly what visitors expect Old Mexico to be.

