

San Diego Horticultural Society and Sterling Tours present

Puerto Vallarta

March 13-18, 2016

Escorted by Robert Kopfstein

Join our host Robert Kopfstein in tropical Puerto Vallarta as we visit the Vallarta Botanical Gardens in the enchanted highlands of Jalisco, Mexico. We will also enjoy an orchid walk in the mountains and a day at a typical Mexican fishing village. We'll stay in a quaint, Mexican style boutique hotel with a beautiful courtyard, surrounded by gardens. Our hotel is located a block away from the beach and close to cafes and shops.



Sunday, March 13: Make your way to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico and our home for the next 5 nights, the Posada de Roger, a quaint Mexican-style hotel in downtown Puerto Vallarta surrounded by beautiful gardens



and authentic Mexican architecture. The hotel is within walking distance of many markets, shops, and cafes in the area and is located one block from the main beach in Old Town. We will get together for drinks at a Welcome Reception on the patio this evening.

Reception

Monday, March 14: Today we depart for a full day private visit to the Vallarta Botanic Gardens. The gardens are home to over 3,000 different species of plants including; palm garden, tree fern grotto, orchid house, and jungle trails with tropical birds. We will be greeted by our docent, who will give us an introduction to the gardens. Robert Price and his mother Betty founded the Gardens in 2004 after realizing the need for



conservation and environmental awareness in the area. Robert was specifically concerned with the numbers of orchids that poachers were taking from nearby jungles to sell commercially. The garden opened to the public in 2005 and just celebrated its 10th anniversary. We will relax and enjoy authentic Mexican cuisine at the garden restaurant. *Lunch*

Tuesday, March 15: This morning we depart for San Sebastian de Oeste, an old mining town buried deep in the heart of the Sierra Madre Mountains. San Sebastian



was originally settled in 1605 and was one of the gold and silver mining centers of Mexico in the 17th century. San Sebastian hosts a charming cobblestone plaza, classic white architecture, an 18th century church dedicated to San Sebastian, a classic Porfian bandstand and multitude of 18th century Haciendas. This colonial Mexican town has been relatively untouched by time and is surrounded by fields of cattle, corn and coffee plantations. *Lunch*

Wednesday, March 16: We will have a free day to explore Puerto Vallarta to enjoy sightseeing, visiting the zoo, shopping, or enjoying Puerto Vallarta’s scenic beaches. Optional tours include bird watching, snorkeling, and hiking in the mountains.

Thursday, March 17: Our day begins with a trip to Cabo Corrientes, the southernmost point of the Bahia de Banderas (Bay of Flags) on the Pacific coast of the Mexican state of Jalisco. This bay is a prominent navigational landmark and is often referred to as Mexico’s Point Conception. Here we will see the old lighthouse that has been in operation for 110 years and gorgeous white sand beaches. We will board a boat to the peaceful fishing village of Yelapa. Yelapa’s name comes from an indigenous saying meaning “where two rivers meet the sea.” Here we can take a short hikes to a 100 ft. waterfall and have a chance to explore tiny intriguing stores and possibly sample some

of the town’s famous pies. We finish our day with a walk around a modest little town called El Tuito. This is as close as you can get to traditional rural Mexico. The pine scented air will make us quickly forget the tropical beaches from earlier in the day. This town



was used for travelers to refresh their supplies of pack animals, food and water before heading off in to the Sierra Madre. We also include a visit to the Orchid Project. *Lunch, Dinner*

Friday, March 18: Today we check out of the Posada and return home or perhaps continue our exploration of Puerto Vallarta and beyond.

Flights - Nonstop service from San Diego to Puerto Vallarta on Alaska Airlines. Nonstop flights also available from Tijuana on Volaris (Transborder skybridge is scheduled to open December 2015). Daily flights from many other US, Canadian and Mexican cities to Puerto Vallarta. Please book your flight to arrive by 4pm March 13 to be sure you make our welcome dinner. Flights leaving from Puerto Vallarta March 18 may be booked at any time.

Passport - a passport valid at least 6 months beyond trip date is required for this trip.

Travel Insurance - As your deposit and eventual final payment are both non-refundable, we wish to make you aware that individual travel insurance is available to protect you against cancellation penalties as well as provide coverage should an incident occur during the trip. We will send an email with your deposit confirmation containing information about how to get a free quote and/or secure your coverage online or by phone. We strongly encourage you to purchase insurance at the time of deposit, as most pre-existing conditions can often be covered. Group travel insurance will not be offered with this tour.

Tour Land Cost - \$895 per person for members of the San Diego Horticultural Society, \$995 for non-members,* based on 2 persons sharing a room. Supplement for single occupancy is \$225. A deposit of \$200 per person is required to reserve a place on this tour with balance due 60 days before departure. A minimum of 14 guests are required to operate this tour.

Cost Includes:

- 5 nights accommodations
- Hotels taxes and service charges
- Reception, 3 lunches, 1 dinner
- Ground transportation as specified in the itinerary
- Tips to local guides and drivers
- Escort by Robert Kopfstein
- Donation of \$150 to San Diego Horticultural Society

Cost does not include:

- Airfare
- Travel Insurance
- Airport transfers
- Items or services not specifically mentioned on the itinerary

Physical Capabilities - This tour include a GREAT DEAL OF WALKING, sometimes on uneven or unpaved pathways and/or cobblestones, and occasional use of stairs. Some of the places we will be visiting can only be seen on foot with no other access possible. Guests with limited mobility MUST consult with Sterling prior to tour registration.

Important Note: This itinerary is subject to revision because the schedule for several included events had not been finalized when the itinerary was released. We do not anticipate major schedule revisions, but do want all guests to understand that revisions may be possible. Guests will be notified should revisions be necessary

For reservations and information, please contact:

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