

DECEMBER 12TH, 2018 TO JANUARY 19TH, 2019

La Jolla, San José de Cabo – Cabo San Lucas



Our Mexican holiday was planned early in the fall of 2018. Both Kevin and I were exhausted and needed to spend some time in the sun, relaxing, reading and doing little else.

On December 11th, Neil drove us up to the Kelowna airport accompanied by our two lovely grandchildren Kira and Tolkien. I am not sure now where #1 grandson Zen was, but I am sure he was very well occupied with one of his friends.

It was pretty cold the day we left and I for one was craving the sun. I was still in my walking boot cast, and thank heaven for wheel chairs. I would never have been able to walk the long distances through security and onto the planes. Alaska Air was wonderful.

The first leg of our journey took us to Seattle. The flight was great, however once we were dropped off in the arrivals' area, we had to wait for over 45 minutes for the hotel shuttle to pick us up. We were not dressed to stand out in the cold, but that's what we did. It took two phone calls to the hotel before someone came.

The hotel was OK. No, in fact it was not OK. The restaurant was seedy to say the least. The food I am sure was microwaved. I couldn't eat it. The wine, was not wine. So much for Seattle. The room itself was clean and large, but the bathroom sink was clogged.

We had wonderful service again from Horizon and a fabulous flight down to Cabo San Lucas



Airport. The warmth of the sun on our bodies felt so-o-o nice. The lovely young man who wheeled me down to the arrivals area had the right idea. “Bienvenido a Mexico. Tomar un tequila”.

So, I did. My first Margarita and I drank it in the back seat of Judi Skinner’s truck as she drove us from the airport to our new digs. That was a first for me.

It was quite interesting trying to get out of the airport. I think Judi had us going around in circles for a little while. There are two exits and entrances and she was familiar with one of them but couldn’t find it, so an adventure for her – we

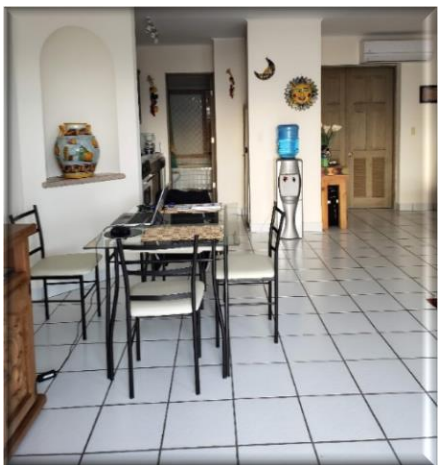
took the back highway. Judi said she liked it better as it was a new “toll” highway and fast.

I had no idea, I was enjoying my Margarita and watching the scenery fly by.

Judi drove us to Chadrauai a huge, new Superstore. We stocked up on a few things to at least get us through a couple of days and then headed to La Jolla Recidencias. The first sight elicited a very big WOW!

OUR HOME FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS – La Jolla Recidencias





Lomas de la Jolla is absolutely beautiful. We had a unit on the 2nd floor with a wonderful view of the ocean and an east facing patio for morning sun.

The inside of the condo was also lovely. It could use a little TLC as it is beginning to show its age, however it was still beautiful and we like the condo very much.

We understand from Joe the fabulous guy who looks after several of the condos in the complex that the owner is going to replace the appliances and do some upgrades this year.



The patio was amazing, and I have to admit that most of our 6 weeks was spent sitting out there reading, enjoying our lunches and tanning.



Kevin enjoyed a lot of time out there and I think he read over 10 books during this 6-week hiatus.

It was nice to see him relaxing those first few weeks and thank heaven he did as he picked up a horrendous cold in week 4 and it knocked the socks off him.

My favorite spot, after the deck was the infinity pool. OMG it was wonderful.





It doesn't get much nicer than this. A girl could get use to this kind of life. In fact, there were 4 units for sale in the complex and I wish I could win the lottery because I would buy one, rent it out to people when I wasn't there and enjoy it immensely when I was.



I went to the pool the first couple of days then, because of a very bad ear infection, I had to stay out of the water for a few days. Found out afterwards that the infection probably came from our shower water and not the pool. Regardless, ear-plugs and/or a bathing cap. I plan to spend lots of time in this amazing pool during our last two weeks here.

The one downside to this condo was that it was not on the beach, and though it was advertised as

being a short walk down the hill, under the highway and onto the beach it wasn't that easy. The beach access is control by a string of local resorts. In order to get down there it **was** a walk down the hill but then you had to walk through the hotel lobby to get out to the beach and then figure out how to get onto the beach. Security people were everywhere (a good thing), but a little unnerving. We walked down one day, gave ourselves a self-guided tour of the complex and

pretended that we were guests. That was EASY!



The resorts were incredibly beautiful and I found the room that I would like to stay in if we ever were to come back. Wouldn't it be nice to have this outside your patio each morning? Someone has to do it, so why not

us! Can you just imagine having coffee with our feet dipping into this? This place was gorgeous, top end and absolutely packed with people.



I spent as much time as I could in our pool, and I loved it, it was a high point in this vacation.



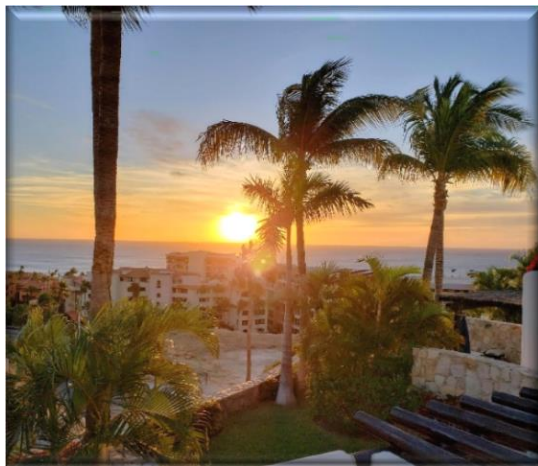
Talking about “sitting on top of the world” I was swimming on top of the world.

For the first 2 weeks I made sure that I was up no later than 5:30 because I love watching the sun rises and I can tell you I was not disappointed.

On these early mornings, this is what I was able to enjoy.

My time of the day... the peace that I felt on these mornings was soothing. My heart really did jerk a little each time I watched the sun rise. Every morning for two weeks it was like witnessing a miracle.

Probably sounds silly, but really that was how I was feeling. It was so quiet, I heard nothing but the birds and the water.



By the way, learn Spanish if you are coming down here. The locals love it when you make an effort to communicate in their language and they will try to speak English. I have been having fun with my “Google Translator”. I have my list of phrases that I put together each time I went out and I practiced. It has certainly made it easier to find things that I want.

Advice to people vacationing in Mexico. Get a Mexican phone or a Mexican SIM card. It is

important for getting around, for making reservations, for contacting friends like our wonderful Judi Skinner. It took me three weeks to realize that the deal offered by Koodo, Easy-Roam is a

big money maker for them. It cost me \$50 the first week I was here because if I used my phone or text anyone, they charged me \$12 a day. Having a Mexican phone and the ability to use What's App is all you need.



I did mention the one downside to our location, the big hill down to the main highway. YOU HAVE TO WALK BACK UP IT. The hill was awful for Kevin especially if we were carrying our groceries from the Chaudraui. The bus system was great and in fact I took it by myself a couple of times to the grocery store. We caught it on the beach side of the Highway. Got off in front of the Chaudraui and then very carefully waited for a break in the traffic to dash across the 5-lane highway. Coming back, we were able to get the bus right in front of the store, take a 2-minute bus ride back to our condo, and then... THE HILL. Walking up this almost killed us both, but poor Kevin really had a hard time.

I eventually was able to figure out how to get a taxi cab from the grocery store and it only cost 150 pesos but at least they took us up the hill to our parking lot.

Our lovely friend Judi, invited us to join her friends and her daughter Brooke for Christmas dinner. We were thrilled. Talk about an adventure. We hopped on the Chicken Bus, which we were used to by now (not like the chicken buses of old Bucerias) and we headed into Cabo San Lucas. In my newly learned rudimentary Spanish I told the bus driver to let us off at Home Depot, he repeated Home Depot to me, gave me a big smile and took off like a scaled cat. Well, after 30 minutes Kevin saw the Home Depot and I quickly went to the front of the bus and the driver pulled over, HOWEVER he was driving so fast he was almost a mile past the entrance, he slammed on his breaks, pointed back down the road and said you get off here. He literally dumped us on the side of the road and we had to figure out how to get back. Judi's condo was located directly across the road to Home Depot.

Just for the record this area of Mexico does not have sidewalks. You walk on the side of a 4, sometimes 5, sometimes 6 lane highway and pray to God you don't get hit by these crazy drivers. So off we trekked. We went about half way and suddenly the side of the road ended.... Kevin said we would have to cross onto the meridian and walk up that side. Holy s.... (sorry) Here we were walking on the highway with cars zooming past us like race track drivers. Talk about scared. Drivers were throwing their arms up in the air wondering what these crazy people were doing.



Waiting by the pool. I loved the lime tree – how civilized – fresh limes at your doorstep.

We finally made it back to Home Depot, crossed the four lane + highway between breaks in the race driver's traffic and then walked another mile down the hill to Judi's condo. She wasn't home yet so we waited by her pool. Of course, I had to use the darn phone to get in touch with her "another \$12"

Kevin looks like he could get use to this kind of life.



Finally, we were altogether, Judi, Brooke, Kevin and I so we walked over to another "Judi's" for a wonderful Christmas Dinner on her roof top patio. Oh, did I mention that just as we sat down to eat gale force winds came up and we all froze to death. We met lovely people at this event. One couple Christine and Roc own the Bed and Breakfast that is across from the Sicamous. (looks like a Mexican Hacienda). They were lovely people and Kevin spent most of the night on the sofa talking to ROC.





Most of these folks were from BC. They are snowbirds and live in the same complex as Judi. It is the oldest condo complex in Cabo. Cabo Bello.

Judi owns a 1-bedroom basement condo there however a lot of the folks just rent them for 2-6 months at a time and have been coming there for years.

It was a grand evening and a delicious meal. Our drive home with JW will be a story to share when we get home. His wife Virginia was a lovely woman and JW was a very interesting character. He was the inventor/builder of the elevator lift that is attached to military trucks. This invention greatly increased the efficiency of operations and saved hundreds of millions of dollars. He is Smokey Robinson's cousin.



Oh, yes just before Christmas we made a little trip into San José de Cabo. This was the old Mexico like I remembered. We did a little shopping, visited the local church and had our first Mexican "lunch". It was a fun day. We even found "Walmart" after I dragged Kevin over some back streets, asked for directions in Mexican and then dragged him a little further. I don't think he was impressed with me. It is another good story.

The week between Christmas and New Year's we pretty much just hung around the condo doing our normal relaxing, reading and enjoying the sun.



The day before New Year's Eve we headed back down to Cabo San Lucas. We booked a room in one of the local hotels – La Estancia Real located right in downtown Cabo and within walking distance of everything. Only \$59 USD a night and it included breakfast. The rooms were very basic, but they were clean and more than adequate.

We spent the afternoon walking around Cabo and just enjoying the ambience of the place. As I said to Kevin, now this is Mexico. I loved the hustle and bustle and excitement of the place and though many said we would be better off where we are staying, I have to say that I disagree. I

would have loved to find a nice little place in Cabo and soak up all the Mexican experiences.



We had lunch at a bar in the middle of a circular patio with all the Mexican stores around us. It was cool. It was also my second margarita time. We shared a delicious plate of Nachos. They just taste so much better in Mexico.

I picked up a couple of small gifts to take back to the kids. The bracelets made with their names on them.

We were meeting Judi Skinner and friends at The Los Cabos Winery, Jazz Bar and Restaurant for dinner. Now this is a place where everyone should go for dinner at least once when they are in Cabo. The food was delicious, the staff and

owner Richard are so nice and the music was fabulous. I would say we had one of the best evenings ever.

The young man playing the bass guitar is only 18 years old. The bands bass player took sick and they had to recruit someone very fast. This young guy joined them, learned all the songs within 24 hours and performed as if he had been with them forever. He is a very talented young man.



The vocals and the rest of the music kept us all singing and dancing all night.



It was a fun evening! Picture below is “the other” Judi and Judi Skinner’s daughter Brooke who is spending a month with her mother and then another few months on her own touring around Mexico.

Top picture is Judi Skinner with her friend, Daline, one of the performers at the restaurant on Friday nights.

We had a lovely walk back to our hotel following dinner and we were both looking forward to our further explorations in the morning.

Woke up to a beautiful sunny day and after a “continental” breakfast we started our walking tour of Cabo San Lucas.

Lots of funny, interesting buildings, a ton of restaurants, the typical tourist shops and the local merchants all mixed together - a mosaic of culture.





At breakfast I asked Kevin if he would like to do a boat trip out to the Arches. It was the one thing that I really wanted to do. So off we went in search of a “deal” on a boat ride. Judi Skinner had told us not to pay anymore than \$15 each. We did negotiate a price which worked out to about \$20 USD but we were very happy with that price because of the large number of guaranteed stops on the route.

The trip was amazing. It was nice just being out on the water, but the Arches and the rock formations all around there was so beautiful. I put my hand in the water where the Sea of Cortez meets the Pacific Ocean, listened to the sea lions barking, watched the pelicans fishing for their food, saw the tropical fish through the glass bottom of our boat and just thoroughly enjoyed the beauties of nature.



We discovered a fun restaurant for lunch La Taquiza. I was finally able to get my Chile Rellenos, and they were delicious. Kevin even got brave enough to order them.



I am working on getting this recipe to make when I get home. After a very tiring day we started to head back towards the bus stop. We found a little store that sold fresh veggies and fruit so we picked up a few things for tonight's supper.

I actually found a shop that sold knitting supplies so that really helped me out with my baby sweater project. I had checked on Trip Advisor and most of the reviews said there were no shops where you could buy wool etc. They didn't have a big selection of wool that I could see but they did have some and they had lots of choices in knitting supplies.

It has been an exciting three weeks. Only three more to go. It will be hard to leave here.