

# Foodorama

## Letter # 12: A New Mexico

By Foodorama, January 10, 2019



Holà y feliz año nuevo! We are back after the little Christmas break. It's quite strange for us because we spent Christmas and New Year in the sun with a temperature like a month of July in France. Although there are still garlands and Christmas trees everywhere, we are very far from the Christmas atmosphere that we knew until now.



We took advantage of this Christmas break to rest a bit in La Paz in southern Baja California and to offer us a little dive with the whale sharks that gather here in this season. The whale shark is the largest fish; it can reach 60 feet long for 34 tons. There is a very guarded area a few miles from La Paz where you can dive with them. We appreciated the fact that these excursions are very controlled by the local authorities so as not to harm the whale sharks. There is a maximum quota of boats and it is necessary to wait for the authorization of the authorities to go on the zone. Once there, we are informed of the rules to be adopted, such as not touching the whale shark. The snorkeling is quite short but so impressive! We swim 5 minutes with the shark before going back on board. We each plunged twice and were able to approach a few inches the shark that did not seem to pay any attention, busy feeding on plankton.



The whale shark is completely harmless to humans; it moves slowly and feeds only on plankton and small fish. It's still an incredible experience to swim with them. The icing on the cake, we even met dolphins that went a long way with us!



This wonderful day ends in beauty, with Pablo and Eduardo (you remember our friends in La Paz) at the seaside of one of the most beautiful beaches in the world Balandra beach.



It is time for us to reach the mainland by ferry across Cortes Sea to reach Mazatlan and a very different Mexico from the one we have known until then. But we had not imagined that it would be so difficult to buy a ferry ticket especially during this holiday season. After having tried several times on internet and at the offices of the company, we decide to try to buy the ticket directly to the port without guarantee of being able to board. We arrived early at 2 pm to have more chance to board on the ferry at 8 pm. We were on the waiting list and after waiting 6 hours, at the last minute (second), we were finally allowed to embark. VICTORY



Obviously boarding at 7:55 pm for a departure at 8 pm, we arrived last on an overloaded boat; it is the lodging crisis and there is no place to sit or lie down. So we slept where we could, on the deck at the front of the boat with a persistent wind! Kalima will not close her eyes all night long.



On board we met two cyclists, Florian and Betto, who travel like us on the continent. Florian is French and Betto is Mexican. Florian must find his brother in Cancun and Betto has planned like us to stay a few days in Mazatlan and then go to Guadalajara. Appointment is taken; we will leave with Betto together after the New Year.



So we had the opportunity to spend a week with him. Betto is an extraordinary person. At age 5, during a serious car accident, he lost the use of his left arm. This accident did not prevent him from becoming a composer, teaching the piano and undertaking several bicycle trips, including this one from Alaska to Patagonia, just that! During this week, we learn a lot from him. He is always positive, never complains and can pedal, cook, eat, pitch his tent, wash, store his belongings ... with only one hand. Taking a bike trip around the world is already a challenge for most of us but doing it alone with only one valid arm is a real feat! He speaks perfect English which allows us to enjoy his sense of sharpened humor. As our Spanish is still a bit limited for advanced conversations and we also want to improve our Spanish, we decide to speak one day in Spanish followed by one day in English and so on.



Kalima felled a little sick in the climbs to reach the city of Tepic (kind of big cold a little too present), so we decided to take a day off at the Lagoon of Santa Maria del Oro. The lake is located at the bottom of an old volcano crater. A vertiginous descent (5 miles for 600 feet vertical drop) awaits us and we think immediately of the bike ride return that will be difficult ... After enjoying the lake one day, we decide by mutual agreement that we are part of Bicycle travelers who have no objection to taking a car from time to time and we spend an hour hitchhiking to wait for Vladimir our savior who brought us back with his pick up to the top of the crater.

