

Foodorama

Letter # 13: From Jalisco to Michoacan

By Foodorama, January 21, 2019



Hi everyone, Thank you for your messages of encouragement. We left Baja California for 3 weeks now and we discover a very different Mexico that we like as well. Cacti have given way to fields of corn, sugar cane, forests and mountains. We always find the same welcome that we have known so far and it feels like a moment to play a little "I'll sleep at your home"! We discover the daily life of the inhabitants of small villages who have access to very limited water. Indeed, in many villages, running water is only available one or two days in the week or only at a specific time of the day. The rest of the time you have to make with the water reserves that you have been able to do. The showers are fast and most often with a small bucket of cold water!



In the state of Jalisco, near Guadalajara, we discover the archaeological site of Guachimontones. It is a set of circular pyramids, founded around IV century AD by members of the Nahuatlacas tribes who colonized central Mexico and disappeared around the 10th century.



It is believed that such structures were used in ceremonies in honor of the god of wind Éhécatl. They included a ball game and a priest mounted on a column to honor the deity. This column was placed in the central part of the pyramid. All this information was gathered by the archaeologists who found on the site clay models on the ceremonies of the tribes.



The inhabitants of Guachimontones are characterized by the use of obsidian for the manufacture of tools and sculptures. It should also be noted, among other things, the use of other important raw materials such as copper, gold, silver, malachite and the production of pseudo-partitioned paints. They lived on agriculture and their irrigation system survived them.



A traditional house was rebuilt on the site with the technique used at the time to see how long it would withstand the weather. The houses consisted of a bamboo structure, with earthen walls and straws coated with cactus juice for impermeability!!



In Guadalajara we dine with a friend of Kalima from high school who introduces us to her fiancé, Oscar, producer of Tequila. He allows us to learn a little more about the technique of making Tequila. His Tequila factory is one of the oldest in the region, it has been spreading for 5 generations and currently produces 9 million liters of Tequila per year, or 8% of world production. Indeed, Tequila originates only here in the state of Jalisco (around the city of Tequila), as for Champagne that only originates in Champagne.



Tequila is a very strong alcoholic drink made from fermented juice and distilled from blue agave. But do you know what distillation is? It is a process which allows, under the effect of heat, to vaporize the substances of a plant and to collect the liquid of the vapor obtained. It is this process that is used for many alcohols but also for the manufacture of perfumes.



But before distilling the Agave, it must still grow. All around us we see as far as the eye can see these fields of Agave of a bluish color. It will be necessary to wait between 5 and 10 years before being able to cut the leaves of the plant at the base and to collect a kind of fruit resembling a giant pineapple of 176 pounds!



This fruit is cut, and then cooked to obtain a juice that will be fermented and distilled to give Tequila. To consume with moderation!



After Guadalajara, we travel small country roads to visit the surrounding villages. During a getaway on a small sand and pebble track, Kalima misses her start and falls almost at a standstill. It does not really hurt but is deeply nicked on the leg by the speed plate of the bike. After a short hitchhike, the adventure ends in a health center in the neighboring village. In 30 minutes the story was set, small anesthesia, 3 stitches and Kalima was ready to go!



We are surprised by the efficiency and professionalism of care given in this small town and especially by the amount that we are asked for this intervention. We who have issued our insurance contracts and forms for reimbursement, we end up paying a bill of 23 pesos ... about \$ 1!



Here we are in Morelia, where we will meet the company Biofase tomorrow morning! We look forward to telling you more in the next letter. See you soon, Sylvain and Kalima

