

Napa Valley Register



Finding Shangri-La

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PANDEMIC RECOVERY

Winery events make comeback

County granting permits after pause of more than a year

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Another sign that Napa County is trying to make a COVID-19 comeback is the return of festive temporary events at wineries. Two got approved at a county

Zoning Administrator hearing last week. Hall Wines can hold its Kathryn Hall Harvest Celebration and Napa Valley Grapegrowers its Harvest Stomp, both on Aug. 28. "Pretty straightforward," Zoning Administrator Brian Bordona said before approving the Hall request. "I'm happy to see people are getting back to normal and fundraising and socializing again." Napa County stopped granting temporary event permits in 2020

because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It resumed this past April. "By accepting temporary event permit applications, Napa County is opening up and supporting local businesses and community organizations who want to begin holding events again," Planning, Building and Environmental Services Director David Morrison said at the time. About three temporary event licenses have been granted this

year, with about another 20 applications pending, Bordona said in an email. Many can be approved without a public hearing. Other requests, such as for a non-subsequent event with more than 400 people, require going before the Zoning Administrator. Temporary events are not the same as winery marketing events. Napa County's 500 or so wineries already have a total of more than

23,000 marketing events approved annually as part of their use permits. Wineries can also apply to hold temporary events granted by the county on a case-by-case basis. Applicants must show the county how they will handle such matters as parking. Temporary events permits are required by the county for

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HOWARD YUNE, REGISTER

Work crews on Wednesday laid down sections of new grass on a Napa Valley Expo lawn, ahead of the BottleRock music festival that will occupy the fairground Sept. 3-5.

Drought impacts BottleRock

Expo receives new grass before music festival

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In the 26 months since musicians last left their stages at BottleRock, festival leaders have faced the hurdles of a historic pandemic, a sweeping stay-home order and heightened wildfire risks in their effort to bring bands and fans back to downtown Napa. Now BottleRock promoters are facing a new challenge: a

statewide drought that has led to water-use restrictions just as new grass is being laid down at the Napa Valley Expo for the tens of thousands of music lovers expected to pack the grounds for three days in early September. Directors of the state-owned fairground on Third Street, along with BottleRock producer Latitude 38 Entertainment, are overseeing the re-sodding after more than a year of idleness at the Expo, with irrigation equipment in need of repair and a recent city policy limiting watering to two nights per week. Over the past week, workers have unloaded and laid down numerous rolls

of fresh turf by forklift, tractor and hand — partly using a less thirsty grass variety and leaning more heavily on non-drinkable recycled water to lessen the load on city reservoirs. "We're fully committed to water efficiency, but we really need to resurrect the grounds as we return to normal activity and operations because these grounds are the way we generate our revenue," said Joe Anderson, the Expo's longtime chief executive who retired a year ago but has stayed on as a part-time manager. Turf installation, which is being paid for by Latitude 38, is taking place on a lawn that

normally hosts the midway of the Napa Town & Country Fair. Beyond the need to provide safe footing an audience that has totaled about 120,000 in recent years, the Expo also had to catch up with more than a year of upkeep deferred as the fairground sat dormant without events or revenue, and only a skeleton staff to oversee the property, after California imposed social distancing orders in March 2020. "A lot of systems were manually controlled so we needed real humans working on them, and we weren't able to maintain revenue

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Dr. Fauci: More 'pain, suffering' still ahead

JONATHAN MATTISE
Associated Press

Dr. Anthony Fauci warned Sunday that more "pain and suffering" is on the horizon as COVID-19 cases climb again and officials plead with unvaccinated Americans to get their shots. Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, also said he doesn't foresee additional lockdowns in the U.S. because he believes enough people are vaccinated to avoid a recurrence of last winter. However, he said not enough are inoculated to "crush the outbreak" at this point. Fauci's warning comes days after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention changed course to recommend that even vaccinated people return to wearing masks indoors in parts of the U.S. where the delta variant is fueling infection surges. With the switch, federal health officials have cited studies showing vaccinated people can spread the virus to others. Most new infections in the U.S. continue to be among unvaccinated people. So-called breakthrough infections can occur in vaccinated people, and though the vast majority of those cause mild or no symptoms, the research shows they can carry about the same amount of the coronavirus as those who did not get the shots. "So we're looking, not, I believe, to lockdown, but we're looking to some pain and suffering in the future because we're seeing the cases go up, which is the reason why we keep saying over and over again, the solution

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SAM JONES, REGISTER

"For me as an environmental science major, I wanted to do something that will make a difference for the planet, but also for people," said Garcia. "So to me, this is the best of both worlds."

AGRICULTURE

Keeping water use sustainable

Program helps farmers make best use of precious resource

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When Miguel Garcia was a child in small-town Mexico, he and those around him were constantly looking forward to escaping the farmland. But now, after earning his

Masters degree and Ph.D., Garcia is right back in the fields teaching farmers how to preserve water while producing their grapes. And honestly, he isn't mad about getting back to his roots. The conversation surrounding water use in California is certainly not a new one, but in recent years, the Napa County Resource Conservation District has been running a program geared specifically toward growers and their irrigation patterns, with

Garcia at the helm. According to the 2020 California Wine Community Sustainability Report, irrigation accounts for the greatest use of water in vineyards, suggesting why the work of folks like Miguel Garcia is so important for Napa Valley. Garcia, an expert in soil science, works directly with farmers across the region to help them gain a better grasp on the

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OBITUARIES | PAGE C6

Peggy Grabski, John Wild Shackford, Marion David (Dave) Wildman

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DOMINICK A. MERLE PHOTOS

The Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in Lijiang, China.

Finding Shangri-La — maybe, maybe not

China's ancient, remote city of Lijiang is one possible candidate for a novelist's inspiration

Editor's note: As international travel begins to flow again, we can all use a Shangri-La break. Here's one from our files from our long-time contributor to shoot for before it becomes a tourist trap.

LIJIANG, China — Is this the mythical Shangri-La come true? You might have a hard time convincing the old farmer hoeing his field for 12 hours a day, but city officials have been bold enough to re-name the main thoroughfare Shangri-La Road.

And the upscale Shangri-La hotel chain is eyeing more property in the area, something it does not do unless it can spot well-heeled travelers on the horizon.

I came here to find out what all the fuss was about and left with the conclusion that if this is not the elusive La-La land... well, we'll get to that later.

First, a little geography. Lijiang is far off the usual tourist route, situated in Yunnan Province in southwest China. A day's drive to the south is the Golden Triangle of Burma, Laos and Thailand. Drive north for a day and you enter Tibet.

Few North Americans head here, opting instead for the big-three glamour spots — Shanghai, Beijing and Xian, home of the magnificent terracotta army. Lijiang wants to be number four on that select list, and work up from there.

Webster defines Shangri-La



The gate to Old Town in Lijiang.

as "any imaginary idyllic utopia or hidden paradise." Translation: It doesn't really exist. Even British author James Hilton, whose novel "Lost Horizon" first described a place called Shangri-La, said you would not find it on any map. But he went on to say that it was located near "the loveliest mountain on earth" where people of many ethnic backgrounds live in perfect harmony.

He didn't know it at the time (or did he?), and there are no records of him ever visiting here, but he pretty much painted a picture of Lijiang. This ancient city lies in the

shadow of the 18,300-foot-tall Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in the lower Himalayas, and it is truly one of the most beautiful mountains you will see anywhere. Its 13 jagged peaks are snow-capped year around and resemble a dragon's teeth.

Lijiang is also home to many ethnic minorities — Naxi, Yi, Pumi, Lisu, Tibetan and Bai — who believe in many religions — Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, Dongbaism and Hanguism — all of whom seem to live in "perfect harmony," just like in the book.

But if author Hilton never set eyes on the place, then how

could this be his Shangri-La? Enter American botanist and writer Joseph F. Rock, and this is where the plot thickens, bordering on (yikes!) even hints of plagiarism.

Rock made his headquarters in this area as leader of the National Geographic Society's Yunnan Province Expeditions. He published a series of articles with scores of photographs between 1924 and 1935, many of them describing the history, culture, landscape and religions of the Lijiang area. Hilton's book was published in 1933.

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SURRENDERING TO MOTHERHOOD

When momortunity knocks

After 27 years of mom experience, I find that old habits die hard.

Like giving advice. I've spent almost 30 years educating, coaching, and cajoling



JENNIFER HUFFMAN

small and large humans about a wide variety of topics from the most mundane to life or death.

Now that the Huffman daughters are semi-adults, they don't need as much 'momming' as before.

As a result, I find myself with advice to spare.

And I'm ready to give it.

The good news is that you never know when a mom-opportunity (momortunity) will present itself.

For example, last Friday night I was talking to one of my skater friends. I'm guessing he's a 20-something, not married, no kids.

My knee is messed up, he said. I fell last month and now I can't do jumps.

My ears perked up. Momortunity!

Have you seen a doctor? I asked him.

Naw, he said. I probably needs surgery and I don't have the money.

Wellllll, you never know, I said, warming up my mom advice muscles.

Maybe you just need some physical therapy? Or some KT Tape?

Do you have health insurance? Because OLE Health has affordable rates. Have you thought about signing up for Covered California? More affordable rates. I can totally show you the Covered California website. Gimme your phone.

Yeah, my mom said the same thing, he said sheepishly.

Right?! Us moms think alike. Can't help ourselves.

Another night another 20-something skater that I had literally just met was waiting for a ride.

I don't even know this guy, but he said he'd give me a ride home, she said glibly.

Ooooh, I said, my mom antenna going up.

Ummm, is that such a good idea? I said before I could stop myself.

Do I need to walk you to his car and check him out, take a photo of his license plate, get his driver's license number? BECAUSE I CAN.

Again, mom instincts. We can't help it.

I know I'm not the only mom who can't help momming.

A friend's daughter is about to leave Napa for The Big City. Her mom is helping her move, so she's totally covered for any and all Mom-advice. Yet when we were hanging out the other night I was itching to get in on the action.

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Aboard the José Cuervo Express

It's a ticket to Tequila

Train travel beguiles me. It always has. I recall, at the age of 6, asking my parents why we could not travel between California and Greece on a train.

But as I was raised in San Francisco, train routes wouldn't truly come into my life until a rite-of-passage teenage stomp through Europe with the essential youth EurailPass.

Great train rides come in all sizes and categories, from the epic Trans-Siberian across Russia to the historic and charming Grand Canyon Railway and, of course, the Napa Valley Wine Train.

Mexico's equivalent is the all-you-can-drink José Cuervo Express. In Guadalajara, the capital of the state of Jalisco, the agave plant is held in similar regard as grapes are in the Napa Valley.

José Cuervo is a name synony-

mous with tequila. The company has been making tequila for more than 250 years. Indeed, the first license to produce and distribute tequila was a 1758 land grant from Spain's King Ferdinand to José Antonio de Cuervo for the purpose of planting agave. Cuervo barrels first reached California in 1852, shipped from the port of San Blas during the Gold Rush.

The spirit's popularity blossomed in the 1970s. Just as true Champagne is made only in northeastern France and Scotch whiskey is solely a product of Scotland, tequila's designation requires that it use blue agave only from the states of Jalisco, Guanajuato, Nayarit, Michoacan and Tamaulipas.

Luxury travel

After suspending service during the COVID-19 outbreak of 2020, the vintage José Cuervo Express is back in business in 2021. Departing every other Saturday, at sunrise and sunset, from Ferromex station in Guada-

lajara, it offers an easy two-hour, 40-mile excursion to the Pueblo Mágico ("Magic Town") of Tequila.

My wife and I opt for the Mundo Cuevo Sunrise Train — and, yes, it is acceptable to drink fine spirits before noon. But at 9 a.m., our guide, Maria, still recommends drinking responsibly and watching our consumption. Then Sebastian, our server, asks: "Mr. Kontis, would you and your wife like a craft cocktail or signature margarita?" And our pilgrimage begins.

We traveled in the opulent Diamond Wagon, a carriage with wood paneling, velvet couches and an intricately engraved roof. Its private bar offers several higher-end Cuervo brands, among them José Cuervo Especial, Tradicional, Gran Centenario and the company's flagship Reserva de la Familia, along with an explanation of the various selections.

Also, the height of luxury is the new Elite Wagons, their enor-



NICHOLAS KONTIS PHOTOS

Agave plants line the route, by train, to Tequila in the state of Jalisco, Mexico.

mous windows perfect for panoramas of layer after layer of blue agave. Lower-tier Express and Premium Plus wagons are anything but humble carriages; the Express wagons have coach seating and wood-paneled interiors, while the Premium category offers bar and waiter service. Ticket prices range from \$116 to \$166.

Upon arrival

After arrival in Tequila, passengers tour the José Cuervo grounds and production facilities. At 1 p.m., they are treated to a gastronomic extravaganza at Casa Ramos. After a spot of free time for rest or independent

Please see TEQUILA, Page C2

COMMUNITY BUILDERS

An award for the Queen's nurses

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiner and the International Lactation Consultant Association have recognized Queen of the Valley Medical Center for excellence in lactation care with the IBCLC Care Award 2021.

The award coincides with World Breastfeeding Week, Aug. 1-7, which commemorates the Innocenti Declaration signed by World Health Organization, UNICEF and other organizations that promote and support breastfeeding.

Sarah Juillerat, director of obstetric and neonatal care, submitted the winning application after expanding the availability of lactation support consultants to patients two-fold and increasing the hospital's breastfeeding rates to 81.3%, ranking in the top 25% of California hospitals during the pandemic.

The Queen of the Valley nursing team helps mothers to initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth. They also work with OB/

GYN outpatient clinics to educate families about lactation before the baby is born and help to ease the transition home through outpatient follow-up.

For more information about Queen of the Valley's Maternity Center, visit providence.org. For more information about the IBCLC Care Award program, contact visit www.iblce.org.

New officers for Rotary Club of Napa Sunrise

Rotary Club of Napa, Sunrise introduced its 2021-2022 board of directors and committee chairs at the July 8 meeting at Silverado Country Club.

Brian Doughty, owner of Napa's Creations Fine Jewelers, will serve as president.

Doughty is joined by Jason Domenici, secretary; Brenda Burke, international projects director; Emily Evans, youth service director; Paul Everett, vocational director; Justin Gomez, program director; and Eric Keffer, com-

munity service director.

Doug Roberts will continue in his role as treasurer, a three-year term. Committee chairs are Katie Anderson, Rotary Foundation chairwoman; Michael Basayne, membership; Angela Hoxsey, public image and Patricia Lawrence, attendance.

Bob Harris will continue to write the club bulletin. Jonny Karpuk will take on the role of sergeant at arms.

Immediate past President Hugh Linn stepped up to head the club for 2020, an unusual year due to the pandemic, during which the club met only online via Zoom. Attendance on Zoom was surprisingly robust, but many members report feeling energized and optimistic about being able to meet in person again at last. Paul Oseso, formerly international service director, is president-elect and will serve the 2022-2023 term.

Rotary Club of Napa, Sunrise meets at 7 a.m. each Thursday at the Silverado Country Club. For details, visit www.napasunrise-rotary.net.

Register Staff



DOMINICK A. MERLE PHOTOS

One of Yunnan Province's major attractions is the Stone Forest east of Kunming, a 200-acre site of limestone peaks ranging in height from about 10 to 100 feet.

Shangri-La

From C1

You do the math, the locals are quick to say.

Circumstantial and close, but still no cigar. The verdict to come.

Lijiang's Old Town dates back 1,300 years to the Song and Yuan dynasties. It is canal-laced and has often been described as a mini-Venice. Houses have earthen walls and tile roofs, courtyards are filled with flowers and trees are in bloom year around. Although there is snow on the peaks of the nearby Jade Dragon Mountain year round, you can still stroll through Old Town in T-shirts in late fall and early winter.

The narrow winding streets are cobbled, bridges are everywhere and the town is criss-crossed by rivulets and alleyways. Wooden planks lead from the streets — where no cars are allowed, only bicycles and carts — into the quaint shops and restaurants. The food is good, the atmosphere is intoxicating and the service is warm and friendly.

But fear not. If this sounds a bit too much like Shangri-La or perhaps Camelot, you're quickly jolted back to reality by the scores of street vendors hawking knock-off Rolexes, Gucci bags and the like. I bought a phony watch and got back some phony Chinese money in change. Hilton never described anything like that in "Lost Horizon."

I spent a memorable evening in Old Town at a concert of ancient music performed by members of the Naxi ethnic group. Wearing colorful robes and sporting Confucius-like beards, the 30-odd musicians, average age perhaps close to 75, played a type music called Dongjing that was popular among the elite during the 16th Century.

The instruments were strange and colorful, parts of them made from animals and reptiles. While the ancient music was literally foreign to my untrained ear, the sight of these seniors carrying on the tradition was both uplifting and entertaining. One member of the group, a man who looked to be well into his 70s, prefaced each segment with a strange chant. Each time he opened his mouth I counted no more than three teeth.

The group was established in 1987 to preserve the Dongjing music and has performed throughout Europe. But its aim may be a lost cause. There were only four members of the group



Elephant Rock is one of the mysterious formations in the Stone Forest.

under age 50 and it has become increasingly difficult to attract new members. It is sad to think that this delightful group will one day never again be a part of Lijiang's Old Town.

To get to Lijiang, one must fly from either Beijing or one of the other major cities of China to Kunming, the mile-high capital of Yunnan Province. Kunming is known as the "City of Eternal Spring." The climate is mild, the skies are clear and flowers bloom year-around.

Historically, Kunming was a gateway to the famed Silk Road. Today, it is a clean, uncluttered city of some 10-million residents that represent 26 ethnic nationalities.

The Chinese have a flair for colorful names and a mountain on the outskirts of Kunming is called Sleeping Beauty Mountain. But this is more than colorful; the peak actually looks like a sleeping beauty, as though it was carved to fit the description.

Lijiang is 40 minutes by air northwest of Kunming. In addition to its charming Old Town and cable-car ride to the top of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Lijiang can also be a base to view the Tiger Leaping Gorge, the first gorge of the Yangtze River system. The gorge has a drop of several thousand meters and the waters of the Jungshajiang River roll forward thunderously. Legend has it that a tiger, aided by a large rock in the center of the turbulent river, leaped from one side of the gorge to the other.

One of Yunnan Province's other major attractions is the Stone Forest east of Kunming, a 200-acre site of limestone peaks ranging in height from about 10 to 100 feet. They are packed closely together and some of the shapes of the peaks have strong resemblances to a baby elephant, two birds kissing...what-ever your mind wants to see.

You thread through the peaks along winding paths and bridges over pools and lakes. The Stone Forest was formed by sea sediment that was uplifted about

200 million years ago, and eroded into the limestone forest seen today. It's a geological wonderland that fits in easily with this mystical province.

But while the Tiger Leaping Gorge and the Stone Forest are bona fide attractions in their own rights, officials are banking on Lijiang to lure the tourists of the 21st century.

So now the answer. Is this the place? Is this what Hilton was talking about in "Lost Horizon," whether or not he (yikes!) lifted the description?

Maybe. OK, that may sound like a cop-out. But a few other spots in the world like to call themselves the one and only Shangri-La. Both Pakistan and Tibet have their candidates, and there's another claim being made right here in Yunnan Province, from the small city of Diqing a few hours north of here.

Let's give Webster the last word. He called Shangri-La "any hidden paradise." That doesn't sound like you could find it on a map. That sounds to me more like a place in the heart.

If you go

Passports and visas are required for entry to China. Contact your nearest Chinese Consulate or travel agent.

We flew Air China nonstop from Vancouver to Beijing, then changed to Yunnan Airways for the flight to Kunming.

Pack light. There are fantastic bargains throughout China. Buy a second suitcase after you arrive and stuff it with anything else you need.

Negotiate everywhere for the best prices, even in large department stores in big cities. Section managers are authorized to cut prices.

For further information, go to the websites tourismchina.com or www.cnto.org

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How to tame their son's hurricane-level tantrums

Q: Our 4-year-old, an only child, is giving us fits. As a toddler, he began ignoring us. That evolved into downright refusing to do what we ask, as in, "I'm not going to," and just



JOHN ROSEMOND

"No." It seems like the nicer we are to him, the meaner he is to us. In addition, his tantrums when he doesn't get his way become hurricanes that last until we give in. We know we shouldn't give in, but his fits just wear us out. There is no doubt that he's in complete control of our home. Is it too late to turn things around?

A: Not at all, but taking your son out of the driver's seat is going to require a complete parenting makeover, starting with how you give him instructions.

Two words pop out in your question: "ask" and "nicer." They may well hold the key to solving your problems.

In the first place, asking a young child to do something is akin to lighting a fuse on dynamite. The fact is, you want your son to obey. To obtain obedience, your instructions should be delivered in short, authoritative sentences, as in, "It's time for you to pick up these toys."

Your desire to be perceived as nice people is understandable, but something along the lines of "Hey, how about let's pick up these toys now, OK buddy?" gives him tacit permission to respond with something along the lines of "I don't want to," which just happens to be the default response for a child your son's age.

In short, stop asking your son to cooperate and begin telling him exactly what is expected. I call it "alpha speech." Trust me, that alone is going to cut his disobedience in half — if you stick to it — within a couple of weeks.

In the meantime, when he disobeys, confine him to his room for 30 minutes, defined by a timer set outside his door. Prior to using his room for timeout, however, you need to reduce its "entertainment value." In other words, make it boring.

Alpha speech and an immediate, meaningful consequence should do the trick, but mind you, things are likely to get worse before they get better. A child who's in "complete control" of the home isn't going to sit well when his parents begin taking back that control.

Which brings us to his magnificent tantrums. In that regard, let's not make things complicated. His room, after you transform it into his boring room, can also serve as his tantrum place. Every young child needs a safe place where they can protest not getting their way as long and loudly as they want. Immediately — and that is the key — upon the start of a tantrum, march him to his room with the instruction to stay until there's no more tantrum left in him.

It shouldn't take long for your son to discover that disobedience and tantrums are going to get him nowhere fast. When that happens, he will be a much happier camper — believe me.

Email family psychologist John Rosemond at questions@rosemond.com.

Huffman

From C1

Have you thought about this? I wanted to ask her. Or that? Because if you do it this way, you'll probably avoid the following hassles and potential pitfalls: X, X and X. Also: I should definitely mention health insurance and regular dental checkups.

I had to restrain myself. I am not her mom. Her mom is literally standing next to her. I should just nod and make encouraging comments. She does not need two moms ganging up on her.

This week a new colleague started at the Register.

Did she find a place to live? I asked.

Yes, but no, she said. Apparently, she'd fallen victim to an internet housing scam and "rented" a house before moving to Napa only to arrive in town and find the house already occupied,

by other people!

OMG, I said. Did she need help finding a new place? Would she get her money back? What's her Plan B.

Answer: none of my business. I even find myself trying to mom people that are old enough to be my own mom. Or dad.

When I heard that Kevin Courtney got poison oak (again!) after pruning in his garden, I wanted to drive over to the Courtney Casa De Leisure and shake him.

How many times over the years did he come to work, complaining about poison oak? Didn't I always say, "Stay out of the bushes! You will get poison oak!"

Did he listen to me? NO. And look what happened.

It just shows you're never too old to need a mom.

Surrendering to Motherhood appears every other Monday. Follow Jennifer on Twitter: @NVRHuffman.



NICHOLAS KONTIS PHOTOS

After shutting down because of COVID-19, the José Cuervo Express is running again from Guadalajara, Mexico, to the town of Tequila.

Tequila

From C1

exploration, everyone is invited at 4:15 to a Mexican cultural show, with dance troupes and mariachi musicians dressed to the nines. At 5:30, visitors trek to the Cuervo agave fields, where *jimadors* (farmers) demonstrate time-honored techniques of harvesting the agave used in producing tequila and mezcal.

Most visitors make the adventure a single-day event, arriving back in Guadalajara at 8 p.m. We opted for two nights at the splendid Hotel Solar de las Ánimas, beside the church of

Santiago Apostol in the heart of the town, at the foot of the great Tequila Volcano. It's a perfect location for visitors wishing to explore and enjoy all the attractions and tours of the area, as well as to experience day-to-day life in this Pueblo Mágico.

Cuervo Express tickets are in particular demand this year: Due to Covid precautions, the stellar deluxe train operates only every other Saturday. Travelers must act fast to reserve seats, as with vaccines now in place, demand escalates daily and tickets sell out quickly.

For details and reservations, visit www.mundocuervo.com/esp/jose-cuervo-express/.



The town of Tequila is sometimes called, "Pueblo Mágico" (the magic town).