

Southwest[®]
The Magazine

The

Islands

Issue

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CAFES

United States

Anchorage
Atlanta
Atlantic City
Baltimore
Biloxi
Boston
Chicago
Dallas
Denver
Detroit
Four Winds
Foxwoods
Hollywood, CA
on Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, CA
at Universal CityWalk
Hollywood, FL
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Key West
Lake Tahoe
Las Vegas
Las Vegas
at Hard Rock Hotel
Louisville
Mall of America
Maui
Memphis
Miami
Myrtle Beach
Nashville
New Orleans
New York
Niagara Falls
Northfield Park
Orlando
Philadelphia
Phoenix
Pigeon Forge
Pittsburgh
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Seattle
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Tampa
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Yankee Stadium

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Niagara Falls
Toronto

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Guanacaste
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Panamá
San José,
Costa Rica

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Santo Domingo
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Asia

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Fukuoka
Gurgaon
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Hong Kong
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Koh Samui
Kota Kinabalu
Kuala Lumpur
Macau
Makati
Melaka
Mumbai
Mumbai Worli
New Delhi
Osaka
Osaka,
Universal
Pattaya
Penang
Phuket
Pune
Sentosa
Seoul
Singapore
Singapore
Changi Airport
Tokyo
Tokyo,
Uyeno-Eki
Vientiane
Yokohama

HOTELS

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Ibiza • Las Vegas • Macau • Orlando • Palm Springs
Panama Megapolis • Pattaya • Penang • Punta Cana
Riviera Maya • San Diego • Singapore • Tampa • Vallarta

CASINOS

Biloxi • Hollywood, FL • Las Vegas
Northfield Park • Punta Cana • Tampa

LIVE

Biloxi • Hollywood, FL • Las Vegas Strip
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FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Reader,

There's something uncanny about visiting an island. Whether Aruba or Gilligan's, each one has its own clearly bounded story. Whenever my wife and I travel to a new island, we like to read as much as we can. We always find a singular tale in its own world.

Over the past couple months, we managed to visit two: a protected seashore with its own semitropical wilderness, and a city bearing a tale of heroic resilience.

First, we celebrated our anniversary by spending a few nights on Cumberland Island, Georgia, near Jacksonville, Florida. Slightly longer than Manhattan, Cumberland offers a few campsites and just one hotel, the beautiful Greyfield Inn. We're talking 18 miles of jungle, empty beach, and wild horses; and the inn itself grows its own food for gourmet meals. Before we left, Dorothy read a shelf-full of books, including Nevada Barr's Cumberland-based mystery novel *Endangered Species*, and Charles Seabrook's *Cumberland Island: Strong Women, Wild Horses*. I read up on the history of the Native Americans who grew crops and thrived there before Europeans arrived.

The following month we traveled to Galveston, Texas, having read Erik Larson's prizewinning *Isaac's Storm* ahead of time. At the island's visitor center, we caught an open-air electric shuttle for a tour of the East End Historical District, filled with gaudily painted houses that somehow survived the Great Galveston Hurricane of 1900 as well as 2008's Hurricane Ike. We passed oak trees that had died in the last flood, only to be carved by artists into sculptures.

Both islands grabbed us with a force all the greater for the advance reading. It was as if, having read a ripping good novel, we became minor characters in the stories, with strong women and wild horses and gingerbread houses, forever in print and for real.

Jay Heinrichs
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PHOTOGRAPH BY ISTOCK

Daytripper



Antelope Island

Northwest of Salt Lake City, discover 15 miles of horseback riding, mountain biking, and hiking trails winding across this 28,000-acre state park—the largest of 17 islands in the Great Salt Lake—home to roaming bison, mule deer, and bighorn sheep. And thanks to quick access to some of Utah's best beaches, it's also easy to chill once you dismount.

PUT-IN-BAY, OHIO

Locals call this tiny getaway the “Key West of the North.” Rent a golf cart and reach anywhere in 10 minutes, like the chocolate museum or Perry’s Cave, where soldiers found an underground lake during the War of 1812.

ROOSEVELT ISLAND, NEW YORK

Catch the gondola from Midtown for stellar views of the East River and Manhattan. Once there, it’s a short walk to the stark white columns of Four Freedoms Park.

Once Upon an Island

You wouldn’t know it from first glance, but Mexico City, the largest metro area in the Western Hemisphere, was founded on a small island in a lake. Centuries later, the water was drained, the lake covered by a vast sea of concrete. But residents’ daily lives are still shaped by the city’s island origins—in part, writes author **Jennifer Clement**, because it has been steadily sinking for decades.

EVEN AS A CHILD I knew Mexico City had been built on top of Lake Texcoco. Everyone, for as long as I can remember, was always lamenting the sinking Palace of Fine Arts. The radio in our kitchen was often tuned to programs describing how archeologists had to wade through the flooded metro tunnels to retrieve Aztec relics like bones and pottery.

Yet no one in Mexico ever asks why the city was built on a lake because we all know it was the fulfillment of a prophecy. In 1325, after wandering for hundreds of years, the Aztecs came upon an island in a lake and saw an eagle perched on



a nopal (prickly pear cactus) with a snake in its beak. The prophecy came from the god of sun and war, Huitzilopochtli, who foretold that when his people encountered an eagle, a snake, and a nopal, their civilization would be founded at that place.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDY ANDERSON (ANTELOPE ISLAND)

SAUVIE ISLAND, OREGON

Twenty miles from downtown Portland lies one of the biggest river islands in the country. Start early to fit in a hike, plus a trip to the pumpkin patch and Kruger's Farm, where a beer bus serves fresh microbrews on weekends.

MATLACHA, FLORIDA

Grab your rod and reel and hook a redfish, snook, or spotted seatrout on this sleepy speck of land near Fort Myers. The kayaking and bird-watching are also outstanding.

NICOLLET ISLAND, MINNESOTA

The perfect spot for an afternoon picnic or leisurely bike ride is minutes from downtown Minneapolis. Or make a night of it and stay at the historic Nicollet Island Inn, built in 1893.

GALVESTON ISLAND, TEXAS

Explore the burgeoning arts scene, an acclaimed Gulf Coast beach, paddling trails, and an amusement park built atop a historic pier.

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON

Ride the ferry from Seattle and wander Japanese-inspired gardens in the 150-acre Bloedel Reserve. Stick around for happy hour: The island boasts seven wineries, a brewery, and a distillery.



The view from Antelope Island

Here, in the center of the lake, they built Mexico's first teocalli, or great temple, and out of necessity built canals and floating fields and gardens on the water. Two centuries later, upon beholding the city for the first time, Spanish conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo wrote, "It was all so wonderful that I do not know how to describe this first glimpse of things never heard of, seen, or dreamed of before."

In her 1843 classic, *Life in Mexico*, Frances Calderon de la Barca called the city a "western Venice."

Now, due to the demands of a population the Aztecs

could never have anticipated, Mexico City is sinking like an old, majestic ship moored on quicksand. The effect is dizzying. In the downtown area, many first floors have become basements, and windows have disappeared under sidewalks. To enter my favorite shops, I sometimes have to walk upstairs to a second floor to go downstairs to the first floor. Walls curve and streets undulate.

In the towering Metropolitan Cathedral, in the heart of the city's historic district, the weight of the church bells

has made the structure tilt to one side, and the cumulative stress has caused a large crack in the building. Walls and columns buckle and twist. The measures taken to save the cathedral—scaffolds, shafts, steel panels and walls, wires, and weights—have turned the place into a surreal, sacred puzzle. Right outside, on the Zocalo square, there are glass display windows built into the sidewalk. As indigenous dancers move around me and vendors hawk Japanese peanuts, I can peer through the displays as if I were in a glass bottom boat and see how far the city has sunk.

Rising from the center of the Zocalo, soaring above the city, is an enormous Mexican flag, emblazoned with the symbol of the Aztec myth—an eagle perched on a nopal with a snake in its beak. Each day, as our city descends into the lake, the prophecy fulfilled accompanies our lives.

Jennifer Clement is the president of PEN International. Her most recent novel is Prayers for the Stolen. She lives in Mexico City.