



Creating a future that includes the cultural traditions, historic places, working landscapes, and natural treasures of southern Arizona's Santa Cruz Valley!

The Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to connecting people to the cultural, historic, and natural treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley through education, preservation and promotion of its unique resources and living traditions.

The Heritage Alliance is the local organization responsible for coordinate projects for the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area.



www.SantaCruzHeritage.org

Santa Cruz Meanderings:

News from the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance

Volume 3, Issue 2

Fall 2009

Place based foods of the borderlands weather the economic downturn - not just for the elite

By Gary P. Nabhan

This last week, I went out into the desert to find an old friend in her trailer-turned-artesanal kitchen. My friend is an Hispanic woman who lost her job after 9/11 in a borderlands community that lost thousands of more jobs during the mortgage fiasco two years ago and the more recent economic downturn. And yet, despite all the discouraging turns that have occurred in the Tucson, Arizona economy over the last decade, I did not hear discouraging words in Esperanza Arevalo's kitchen. I heard words like flavor, prayer and miracle; and I smelled the savory, smoky fragrance of mesquite tortillas just off the griddle.

Despite warnings that these are the worst of times to be starting a small business, her homemade mesquite tortillas are selling like hotcakes. Tortilleria Arevalo is having the best of times.

Esperanza—whose name means hope—is one of several entrepreneurs in the border states who have recently convinced me that local, place-based heritage foods are not just for the elite, but that other, less fortunate folks have chosen to purchase them during some of the toughest times that the U.S. and Mexican economies have ever faced.

Eleven years ago, Esperanza, coached by her Sonoran-born father Javier, began to offer on Tucson street corners a unique sort of tortilla whose heritage goes back centuries, if not millennia. It is made of the flour of mesquite pods, the flour of ground, popped amaranth seeds, wheat flour and olive oil. It may sound simple, but balancing the flavor and texture of these tortillas took months of experimentation by Esperanza

and Javier. I know, because I was their first customer! But within a year or so, Esperanza was making twenty dozen mesquite tortillas a week in her spare time, and Javier was helping her hustle them to prospective buyers, not only on street corners, but at a couple health food stores as well.



Mesquite pods, flour and honey. Photo from Desert Harvesters.

Then 9/11 hit, and she suddenly lost her job at an emergency lighting company in Tucson. Her father encouraged her to go out on her own big time; journalist Nathan Olivarez-Giles gave her first major news story in *The Arizona Daily Star*; and then several farmers' market managers invited her to set up a booth to hawk her wares. Suddenly, her demand grew to three hundred dozen a week.

"Now I have to watch how many I do, or I'll suffer from carpal tunnel," she laughs. "But it's going, it's really going now."

Esperanza cites the health value of her tortillas—they help lower blood sugars for diabetic sufferers—as well as the heritage or historic value of mesquite—it's perhaps the oldest staple food in the desert border-

Continued on page 3

Food for Thought from the Chair of the Board of Directors

Two years ago, during “fact-finding” visits throughout our proposed Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area to talk to local food producers, restaurants, and grocers that feature local foods, our board members and Executive Director kept asking the same question: “What is the biggest problem for your food business?”

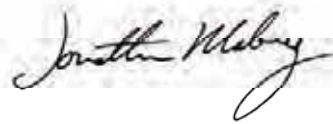
We were struck by the consistency of the answers. Farmers and ranchers remarked that direct marketing of their products takes a significant amount of their time, while restaurant and grocery owners complained about their constant struggle to find enough suppliers of local foods to meet the growing demand.

We quickly recognized that the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance could serve a much-needed role, and also increase public awareness of the agricultural and food traditions that are fundamental to the cultural identity of our region, by helping connect local food producers, grocers, chefs, and farmer’s markets.

Our recent publication of southeastern Arizona’s first *Local & Heritage Foods Directory* is an example of how the Heritage Alliance helps connect people to this unique landscape and its living traditions.

“Eating locally” reduces the energy costs and unhealthy processing of our food, and lets us know exactly where our food comes from. In addition, it supports the farmers and ranchers that keep southern Arizona’s agricultural heritage alive and help preserve its open spaces, and it supports our favorite locally owned restaurants and grocery stores that must compete with national chains. But also remember: when you eat local “heritage foods,” you are tasting the food traditions that are part of what makes this place different from everywhere else.

Be sure to visit our website to find updates to our online version of the *Local & Heritage Foods Directory*. Also check out our *Heritage Events Calendar* and interactive *Heritage Tourism Map* to help plan your explorations and experiences of the rich heritage of the Santa Cruz Valley.



Jonathan Mabry, Board Chair

Featured Member of the Board: Dan Judkins

Our featured member of the Board of Directors is Dan Judkins, RN, MS, MPH. Dan is the Trauma Educator and Injury Epidemiologist for University Medical Center. Dan’s work as an injury epidemiologist involves studying why people get seriously injured. His recent work looks at intersections in Tucson that have the highest fatalities from red-light running. Tucson is the 4th worst city in the United States for fatalities from red-light runners.

In addition to his work as an injury epidemiologist, Dan is also responsible for trauma outreach education to all nurses, EMTs and other emergency responders in all of southern Arizona. Trauma education involves training first responders how to treat trauma patients prior to their arrival to the trauma center.

A graduate of Nogales High School, Dan is a hobby historian and began reading about the history of the Santa Cruz Valley (and larger Pimería Alta) when he returned to Tucson in 1989. Over the past 20 years he has read and collected more than 2,000 books on the history of the Pimería Alta.

To host his book collection, Dan built his own raw adobe library at his house on the original Canoa Land Grant, which he proudly named La Biblioteca Canoa.

In 1999, Dan walked the entire 260 miles of the Santa Cruz River, from its headwaters in the San Rafael Valley, to its confluence with the Gila River, on the west end of the Phoenix South Mountain.

Dan describes the Santa Cruz Valley as his *la querencia*: a sense of place that makes him feel content, comfortable, and at home.

In 2004 Dan joined the Board of the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance and has been an active member ever since. Dan serves on our Heritage Foods Committee, where his contributions include an article titled “Regional Characteristics of Mexican Food in the Santa Cruz Valley” for our recently released *Local & Heritage Foods Directory*.

Dan lives in Green Valley with his wife Celia, and also serves on the Board of Directors for the Pimería Alta Historical Society, La Frontera Chapter of the Westerners, and many other trauma education related groups and affiliations.



Native American Heritage Garden Takes Root in Oro Valley

The Oro Valley Historical Society, in partnership with the Town of Oro Valley, has created a Native American Heritage Garden on the site of the historic Steam Pump Ranch.

This demonstration garden is the first in a series of Heritage Gardens at Steam Pump Ranch which will provide the location for many educational programs exploring native plants, desert adapted crops, and heritage foods of the region.

The gardens are supported by private donations. To make a donation to the garden or for more information contact Joyce Rychener at joyce@ovhistory.org or visit www.ovhistory.org.



Tohono O'odham corn and tepary beans thriving in the garden. Photo by Joyce Rychener.

Place based foods: continued from front page.

lands. But I would argue that the love she puts into her tortilla-making is expressed in the flavor and texture. Rich people, poor people, Indians, Anglos and Hispanics all flock to buy her tortillas.

It would be easy to dismiss Esperanza's success as a rare exception, with no relevance to the rest of us. But talk to John Hall and Joy Vargo, co-owners of Canela, a little bistro that opened in the ranch town of Sonoita, Arizona in September of 2005. Sonoita's official population count hovers just around 846 folks, and yet they served over ninety folks for Mother's Day brunch alone. Joy looked a bit weary when I spoke to her mid-afternoon on that day, but had served more exquisite tamales, chiles rellenos and locally-grown lamb than she ever imagined that Chef John could pump through their kitchen in one morning.

"We've never had a day this good," she smiled, almost giddy. "I guess all of our work in this community over the last few years is paying off. Folks really seem to like what we're doing."

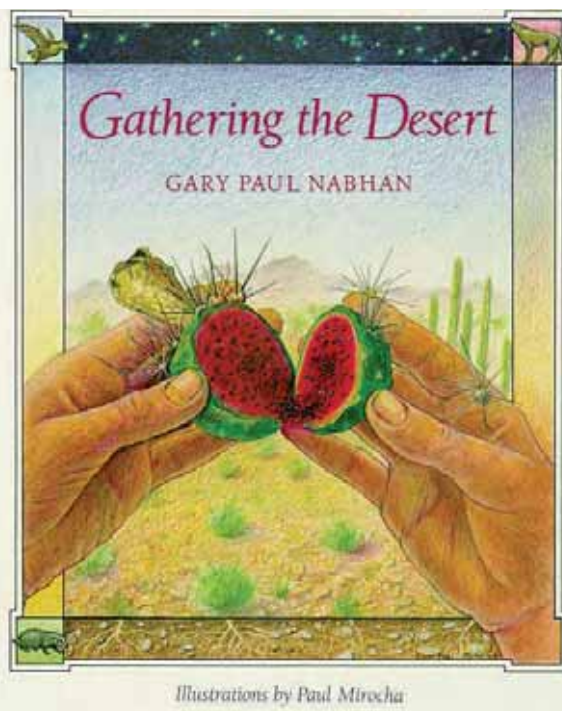
No wonder—they can taste the local harvests of their neighbors from both sides of the border—creatively prepared by two stellar graduates of the New England Culinary Institute.

If that were not enough, two other "local foods" restaurants opened in Arizona this spring,

and both are flourishing. One of them, Diablo Burger on Flagstaff's Heritage Square—revolves around local grass fed beef from Diablo Trust lands, one of the first rancher-environmentalist cooperatives in the Southwest. But it also features locally-produced vegetables, prickly pear pads and wines on its ever changing menu. Finally, I mused, a burger with a sense of place and a sense of taste.

From Dennis and Deb Moroney's all-natural grass-fed Sky Islands Brand beef from the 47 Ranch near Bisbee, Arizona, to Amy Schwemm's Mano and Metate moles—gourmet sauces prepared with locally-harvested chiles and nuts from the Santa Cruz River Valley—local food producers are making it through the toughest of times. If such foods were just another fad for the elite, these businesses would be suffering. Instead, people are willing to invest a little more for flavor, health and history; the value has been more than worth the price.

Gary P. Nabhan is co-founder of Sabores Sin Fronteras and Renewing America's Food Traditions. This article is also available on Gary's blog, <http://garynabhan.com/letswrite/>



Illustrations by Paul Mirocha

Fall Fundraiser & Heritage Art Exhibition at Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts

In partnership with Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts, we are co-hosting the juried heritage art exhibition ***Treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley: A Celebration of Our Natural and Cultural Heritage!***

Please join us for the three scheduled events, or stop by the Gallery during their regular business hours to see the heritage art exhibition between September 12—October 31.

Heritage Art Opening

Saturday, September 12th from 5p.m. – 8p.m. is the opening of Treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley. Come and celebrate with us the many local artists whose talents illustrate our region's cultural and natural heritage. The art exhibition will showcase a variety of media exploring heritage foods, scenic landscapes, cultural traditions, historic sites, and desert wildlife.

For more information about the art exhibition visit www.BlueRavenGalleryAndGifts.com, or contact Katie Iverson at Katie@KatieIverson.com or 520-405-3657.

Heritage Celebration & Fundraiser

On Saturday, September 26th from 5:00p.m. – 7:30p.m. we will be hosting our Fall Heritage Celebration & Fundraiser at Blue Raven Gallery. Join us to learn what the Heritage Alliance has accomplished over the past year, pick up a copy of our beautiful new Local & Heritage Foods Directory (free with membership), enjoy appetizers featuring local and heritage foods, sample local wine from Canelo Hills Vineyard & Winery, and bid on our silent auction items.

This year we have some exciting items to offer our supporters at our silent auction:

- Mata Ortiz pottery
- Tucson Culinary Festival tickets—Grand Tasting
- *Finding Birds in Southeastern Arizona* book
- Home-cooked hors d'oeuvres, local drinks, and conversation with Yar Petryszyn
- Family membership to Tohono Chul Park
- Framed photography
- Green Valley Pecan Co. gift basket
- Harvest Restaurant, dinner for two
- Canela Bistro, dinner for two
- Art by Pam Ross
- Birding class and nature walk with Friends of the Santa Cruz River
- Rocky Point Condo for up to 4 people

- Western National Parks Association gift baskets
- Winery Tour from Reisen Arizona Day Tours
- Wine from Callaghan Vineyards
- *Best of the Barrio* tour for 2 from Gray Line Tours

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased by Sept. 16th by contacting Vanessa at (520) 429-1394 or vanessa@santacruzheritage.org.

Heritage Book Reading

Join us on Sunday, October 11th from 6p.m. – 8p.m. for readings by local authors whose writings honor, celebrate, and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Santa Cruz Valley. Authors include Patricia Preciado Martin, Betty Barr, Jefferson Carter, and others.

This event is free, but please RSVP to Vanessa so we know how many seats to have available. Please check our website for the final list of authors and other details about the Treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley exhibition events. www.SantaCruzHeritage.org

Location for all three events:

Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts
3054 N. 1st Ave, Suite 4
Tucson, AZ

www.BlueRavenGalleryAndGifts.com

Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts is a small gallery that often hosts fundraisers in combination with art openings and exhibitions. A portion of proceeds from sales often goes to various non-profit organizations. The gallery features changing exhibits, often featuring works by local artists. Gift shop items include fine art cards, prints, books, tepary beans and cholla bud packets from the Tohono O'odham Community Action, Tarahumara baskets, a large and wonderful selection of Mata Ortiz pottery and jewelry, and unique jewelry from local craftspeople both north and south of the Border.

We'd like to thank to Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts for their generosity in hosting the art exhibition events and supporting our efforts to connect people to the heritage resources of the Santa Cruz Valley!



Heritage Tourism Map makes top 3 for Governor's Tourism Award

The Heritage Experiences of the Santa Cruz Valley heritage tourism mapguide was a finalist for a distinguished Governor's Tourism Award! The map was featured at the awards luncheon at the 2009 Governor's Tourism Conference in Scottsdale. Although we didn't win, we are thrilled to have been recognized for our contribution to Arizona's tourism industry.

The tourism map is available in print or as an online, interactive map that highlights regional heritage destinations at www.santacruzheritage.org/interactivemap.

In an effort to encourage residents to plan day trip vacations around local heritage destinations, the Heritage Experiences mapguide allows viewers to plan outings based on their interests in ten nationally unique stories this region has to tell, and the related heritage experiences available to the public at destinations throughout the Santa Cruz Valley. The Santa Cruz Valley includes the watershed of the Santa Cruz River, from Nogales to Marana and Oro Valley, and from Green Valley to Sonoita and Elgin.

"This is a user-friendly way to find interesting places in our region that you've never been to, or didn't know about," says Jonathan Mabry, Chairman of the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance. "With this map, many people are rediscovering the nearby historical and natural treasures that make southern Arizona unique, and this interactive map makes it easier to plan those affordable 'stay-cations'."



Thank you for your in-kind donations!

We'd like to thank the following businesses, organizations, and individuals for their generous in-kind donations to our silent auction.

Blue Raven Gallery & Gifts
 David Boomhower
 Barbara Brown
 Canela Bistro
 Irene Condor
 Friends of the Santa Cruz River
 Gray Line Tours
 Green Valley Pecan Co.
 Harvest Restaurant
 Yar Petryszyn
 Reisen Arizona Day Tours
 Pam Ross
 Cynthia Shoemaker
 Tohono Chul Park
 Tucson Audubon Society
 Tucson Culinary Festival



SUPPORT OUR HERITAGE!

Your support is critical to our role as a heritage advocate for the Santa Cruz River Valley. Invest today and play an important role in supporting heritage education and promotion programs, and in securing designation as a Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax deductible donation.

Or donate online at
www.SantaCruzHeritage.org





The stories of our communities form the fabric of a cultural and natural heritage that has the power to shape our future.

Knowledge and respect for this heritage contributes to a sense of place and improves the quality of our lives.



Heritage Business Membership Promotes Local Businesses & Supports Heritage

Through our Heritage Business Membership program, the Heritage Alliance has created a unique way to support local businesses that promote the rich cultural and natural heritage of the Santa Cruz Valley.

Join us as a Heritage Business member! Visit www.santacruzheritage.org/businessmember.

Heritage Business Member: Flor de Mayo Arts

We are proud to welcome our latest Heritage Business Member, Flor de Mayo Arts. The mission of Tucson-based Flor de Mayo Arts is to express appreciation of the desert Southwest and to teach the skills and joys of desert inhabitation. Flor de Mayo honors this land through many media, and is inspired by the beauty of the Southwestern landscape, its amazing plants, deep knowledge of its land-based Native Peoples, and its rich history.

Watercolorist Martha Ames Burgess, has come to art as a special way to appreciate and understand nature and history. Her background in geology, tree-ring dating, ethnobotany, and environmental education have given her a scientist's wish for rightness in her artistic documentation, an adventurer's sense of freedom about it, and a teacher's wish to share it.

Flor de Mayo is also a voice for Native Seeds/SEARCH at many markets and venues around southern Arizona. Native food products currently available for purchase on the website are native tepary beans, Tom's Mix, and Chia seed.

Flor de Mayo sponsors several workshops in traditional harvesting of wild and domestic desert plants throughout the season, the way Martha was taught as an apprentice by her Tohono O'odham mentor and adopted grandmother. Some of the harvesting techniques covered in workshops include cholla cactus buds, mesquite beans, bellotas, and prickly pear. The hands-on workshops guide participants in sustainable harvesting of desert foods and traditional medicines, then through culinary alchemy, into the joy and good health they provide.

On October 17, 2009, Flor de Mayo will be presenting a program at the Planting the Future Symposium at the Arizona-Sonora



Martha Ames Burgess teaching cholla bud harvesting at a workshop.

Desert Museum sponsored by United Plant Savers. The presentation will focus on Desert Foods as Medicine, discussing traditional (and current) ways our plants have helped to heal people.

Flor de Mayo Arts also features watercolor note cards and prints, featuring desert landscapes, buildings, and plants. Take a look at their amazing desert food products, herbal hydrosols, teas and oils, and beautiful art at www.flordemayoarts.com.



Red Riot, by Martha Ames Burgess.

Local Preservation Success Story: Pima County Buys Tumamoc Hill

By Linda Mayro, Pima County Cultural Resources Manager.

Tumamoc Hill, the rugged and iconic mountain centerpiece of Tucson, Arizona, finally has permanent protection, and the preservation of the entire 870-acre National Historic Landmark is now assured, as Pima County becomes custodian of one of the most significant archaeological and historical sites in the American Southwest. Preservation of this site is one of Pima County Government's most notable achievements, made possible by the voters of Pima County who approved bonds for the acquisition of this landmark historic property.

On February 23, 2009 Pima County won at a public auction the right to purchase 320 acres of Arizona State Trust Land on Tumamoc Hill that might otherwise have been developed into a 500-700 house subdivision. Until this successful auction and purchase by Pima County, Tumamoc Hill and the 870-acre Carnegie Desert Laboratory National Historic Landmark was a threatened and endangered landscape.

As Tucson grew so did the threats to Tumamoc Hill from multiple ownerships, increasing land values, conflicting uses, inappropriate zoning, development, gas pipelines, communications towers, recreational demands, and the State of Arizona's inability to restrict the sale of State Trust land for conservation purposes or sell land without going to public auction. In 2006, the Arizona Preservation Foundation identified Tumamoc Hill as the "2006 Most Endangered Historic Place" in Arizona.

Now the entire 870-acre National Historic Land Mark and natural and cultural preserve will be protected in perpetuity - 105 years after the Carnegie Institution of Washington, DC established the Carnegie Desert Laboratory on Tumamoc Hill because it had the richest and most diversified vegetation in any area of the desert Southwest and Sonora.

Recognized for its ex-

ceptional natural, archaeological, and cultural values and national research significance, Tumamoc Hill was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1965, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, as a National Environmental Study Site in 1976, and an Arizona State Scientific and Educational Natural Area in 1981.

The significance of Tumamoc Hill in the cultural history of the Tucson area has long been recognized. The word *tumamoc* is a Tohono O'odham word for horned toad, and the shape of the hill resembles this desert creature. Tumamoc Hill and its slopes reveal ancient settlement and agricultural systems that sustained indigenous peoples in this harsh high desert climate.

The hilltop, enclosed by a massive wall with remnant foundations of more than 160 prehistoric structures, is the earliest known *trincheras* village in the nation, occupied more than 2,000 years ago. *Trincheras* is a Spanish term applied to pre-Hispanic sites in the American Southwest and northern Mexico that have dry-laid or stacked-rock walls, terraces, and other features built on prominent hills.

In addition to the *trincheras* village, Tumamoc Hill has hundreds of petroglyphs, prehistoric dwellings and burial areas, stone quarries, historic wagon roads, and an extensive prehistoric agricultural area of fields and water control features that is one of the best preserved examples of dry farming field systems in the Southwest.

Prehistoric trails may still be traced from these fields to the hilltop village. Many centuries later, the Tohono O'odham view this as an important and sacred place that has been occupied by their ancestors since time immemorial.

Pima County is proud and pleased that its voters enabled us to protect this invaluable historic, cultural, scientific – and beautiful – desert resource for future generations.

Editor's Note: Visit our website for more Local Preservation Success Stories.



Tumamoc Hill lands purchased with Pima County Historic Preservation Bonds.



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To add or remove your name
from our mailing list call
520.429.1394 or email
info@santacruzheritage.org

Local & Heritage Foods Directory is now available

As part of our goal to promote local and place-based foods, the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance has published a guide to the local food producers and vendors in the Santa Cruz Valley.

The directory connects all levels of the local food supply chain, from farmers to restaurants to food enthusiasts, making it easier to buy and sell diverse, fresh foods. Also included in the directory is background information about local heritage foods, such as mesquite meal, prickly pear and tepary beans; locations and schedules of regional farmers markets and a seasonal availability chart for the Santa Cruz Valley.

The directory is available online at www.SantaCruzHeritage.org/Directory or may be purchased for \$5 through the Heritage Alliance. Members of Heritage Alliance will receive a free directory. Become a member and get your copy today!

The heritage foods directory was made possible by a generous grant from the Tohono O'odham Nation.

