

## EMBAMEX SWEDEN FEBRUARY/MARCH NEWSLETTER

### STATE BY STATE: QUERÉTARO

Querétaro state offers a wide variety of natural, historic and recreational attractions. Its northern region is home to pine-clad mountains (the Sierra Gorda), giving way to rolling hills, and fertile farmlands, to the south. Most visitors spend their days exploring the state's handsome capital city, also called Querétaro, adorned by lovely architecture, quiet plazas and pedestrian walkways lined with color-splashed, colonial homes and mansions.

The capital, which was founded in 1531 by Franciscan monks, boasts a commercial center of over half a million inhabitants and is located only two and a half hours from Mexico City (220 km). The city has preserved its historic downtown and taken steps to beautify many areas. In fact, the Historic Monuments Zone of Querétaro was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1996. The buildings were inscribed on the basis of two of their cultural criteria: that the site is of outstanding universal value and an exceptional example of a colonial town whose layout symbolizes its multiethnic population. It is also endowed with a wealth of outstanding buildings dating to the 17th and 18th centuries. The historic city center is filled with lovely colonial mansions, immaculate pedestrian walkways (*andadores*) and quaint plazas that are almost unchanged since colonial days. One can explore the city via a double-decker bus that operates in the downtown historic center.



Image source: [www.queretarotravel.com](http://www.queretarotravel.com)

Day trips to outlying areas include the attractive villages of Tequisquiapan and San Juan del Río. The Sierra Gorda region north of Querétaro City is home to several splendid Franciscan missions, founded by Junípero Serra in the 1750s. The Franciscan Missions in the Sierra Gorda of Querétaro were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2003.



In addition, for visiting golfers, the state offers 81 holes to play in, as well as fine country club facilities. Querétaro's renowned symphony orchestra performs at the modern Auditorio Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez. Several mineral spas around Tequisquiapan are popular for their therapeutic benefits. The archaeological sites of Toluquilla and Las Ranas near the city of San Joaquín showcase Chichimeca and Huasteca influences. The state also boasts an ideal climate in which to enjoy its natural and architectural beauty.

Image and text source: [www.visitmexico.com](http://www.visitmexico.com)

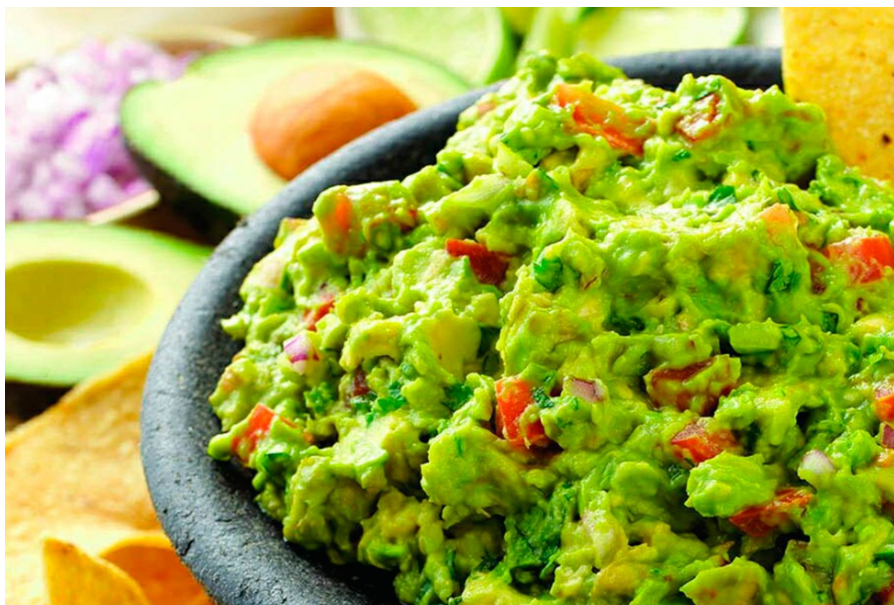
## EMBAMEX SWEDEN FEBRUARY/MARCH NEWSLETTER

### MEXICO, LARGEST EXPORTER OF AVOCADOES IN THE WORLD

Mexico is the main producer and exporter of avocados in the world.

Avocado production in Mexico represents over 30% of the global harvest.

- Mexico exports avocado to various countries; mainly China, Chile and Australia.
- The United States is the largest importer of Mexican avocados, followed by France, Japan and Canada.
- Michoacán is the Mexican state that produces the most avocados; it provides four-fifths of the total national production of this fruit.
- There are more than 400 varieties of avocado in the world, and they vary according to the climate in which they are grown; they bear fruit with differing shapes, flavors, textures, colors and smells. The Hass avocado is the most consumed variety in the world.
- The Association of Avocado Producers, Exporters and Packers of Michoacán (APEAM) reported that 95,000 tons of avocados were mobilized for the 50<sup>th</sup> Super Bowl, which positioned this fruit as one of the protagonists of the sporting event.



*Source: Ministry of Finance, Mexico (Secretaría de Economía)*

## EMBAMEX SWEDEN FEBRUARY/MARCH NEWSLETTER

### BLUE FLAG CERTIFICATION FOR MEXICAN BEACHES

Mexico is committed to the sustainability of the Mexican beaches that have been “Blue Flag” certified for their high quality over the last four years.



**B**lue Flag is an international certification of beaches and marinas throughout the world which promotes sustainable management of coastal destinations and recognizes those who achieve excellence. To receive recognition, a national and an international jury analyze and evaluate their excellence in the areas of: water quality, environmental education, environmental management, safety and services. Blue Flag has standardized protocols and a strict selection, verification and monitoring process.

Internationally, there are 4,154 Blue Flag beaches and marinas in 49 countries. Out of these, 20 beaches and a marina are in Mexico, and seven more national beaches requested enrollment into the program this year. These seven beaches will be assessed by a national jury headed by the Ministry of Tourism, the Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat), Communications and Transport (SCT), the Mexican Navy, the Ministry of Health, and the National Water Commission (CONAGUA). The results of the assessments will be released on July this year.

The beaches and marinas participating in the program receive benefits such as improved management of the beaches and marinas, a greater regulation of coastal processes, the recovery and restoration of coastal ecosystems, monitoring of coastal and marine areas, increased knowledge of the habitat and the implementation of programs for environmental education. In addition, participants beaches have monthly monitoring of clean beaches and water quality.

The Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risk (COFEPRIS) and the National Fund for Tourism Development (Fonatur); the Mario Molina Center; the Mexican Center for Environmental Law and CONCANACO-SERVYTUR are also involved with the National Jury for the purpose of evaluating the environmental performance of the beaches in four areas: water quality, environmental education, environmental management, safety and services.



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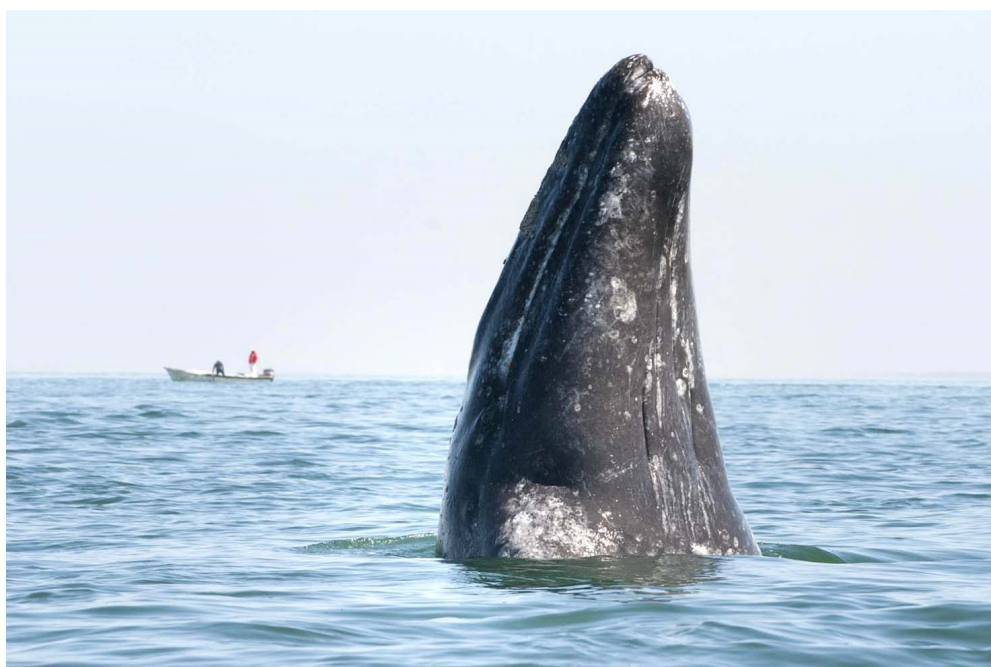
### RECORD NUMBERS OF GRAY WHALES IN MEXICO

Mexico is home to at least 9 species of whale, out of which 7 have a regular or permanent presence around the coasts of the states of Baja California Sur, Nayarit, Jalisco and Sinaloa. Whales have found the right conditions in Mexico to rest, reproduce, and give birth to their calves.

During the first week of February, the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) posted figures for the previous 20 years, during which they have recorded the presence of gray whales in Ojo de Liebre Lagoon, in Baja California Sur.

According to the fifth census of the season, there are 992 thousand specimens of gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*) in the Ojo de Liebre lagoons in the Biosphere Reserve of El Vizcaino, of which 175 of are adults and 817 are calves.

CONANP stated that these figures are the highest numbers of gray whales recorded in the past 20 years, and thus a strong recovery of one of the largest species of marine life.



## EMBAMEX SWEDEN FEBRUARY/MARCH NEWSLETTER

### MEXICAN TALENT TRIUMPHS AT THE OSCARS AGAIN

This past Sunday, February 28, Emmanuel Lubezki won his third consecutive Oscar for Best Cinematography; while director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu won the statuette for Best Director. Both of them were awarded this prestigious recognition for their work in Inarritu's 2015 film "The Revenant."

We are pleased to congratulate these very talented Mexican connationals for their remarkable achievements.

President Enrique Peña Nieto also congratulated both filmmakers via Twitter.



*Left: to right: Mexican cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki and Mexican director Alejandro González Iñárritu.*

*Photo credit: [www.gob.mx](http://www.gob.mx)*