



Things to Know Before You Go

Following is a collection of information and ideas gathered over time by yoga students visiting Casa Lalita. Most of the contributors are from the Twin Cities area in Minnesota, so that's the perspective from which this is written. A lot is covered, but this is not meant to take the place of a guide book, especially for the first-time traveler. Enjoy!

- * **Puerto Morelos** is a small fishing village on the Caribbean Sea, along the eastern coastline of the Yucatan Peninsula, aka the Mayan Riviera, 22 miles [36 KM] south of Cancún. It is in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo.
- * **Casa Lalita** is a dwelling with six double-occupancy rooms with bathrooms and small fridges on the main floor. Faye Berton, the proprietor's living quarters are on the second and the Teaching Space and Teacher's Room on the third. It's across the street from the beach.
- * Currently, you must have a **passport** or a **certified birth certificate and driver's license to travel to Mexico**, though we hear this is being relaxed. Please check with your travel agent or airline representative or the website www.TSATravelTips.us regarding the ever-changing **rules of flying**.
- * There are two **terminals** at the Cancún airport, one for charters and one for regularly scheduled flights.
- * Especially if you are new to the area, current **guidebooks** on the Yucatan Peninsula have helpful information. You can also check www.puertomorelos.com.mx. If you don't speak Spanish, a pocket **phrase book** is useful. Although you can get by with English, some effort will often be appreciated. A good many Mexicans you will encounter do not speak English.
- * Last we checked, no **shots** are absolutely necessary for this area of Mexico. There are Travel Clinics in the Twin Cities if you're concerned. FYI, after you've been to this part of Mexico, you cannot donate blood for one year.
- * If you plan to call the US from Mexico, check with your **long distance** carrier and/or cell phone company to find out what the process is. Or you can purchase a phone card in Puerto Morelos or at home [36-50 cents/minute]. You may also want to call your **health insurance** provider to find out proper procedure for medical emergencies in foreign countries.
- * There are **no public phones** at Casa Lalita, so you'll need to make other arrangements once in town if people need to contact you. You can receive faxes [011-52-998-871-0361] and emails at the internet cafe CompuTips {5} or at @ {21}*. In case of family **emergency**, Faye can be contacted at 011-52-998-871-0284. Please, for emergencies only!
- * One way to make life a little easier in case of **loss or theft** is to make two copies of your identification and any credit or cash cards. Leave one copy in the States with someone you can call and pack the other in your carry-on bag. If you bring two sets of credit cards and ID, you can use one and hide the other set as a back up.
- * **Travelers cheques** and/or **cash** seem to be the legal tender of choice. You, in no way, need Mexican currency [called NP, New Peso] until you are in Puerto Morelos, and even there US dollars are accepted. Generally, **credit cards are not**. There are two **money-changing** venues {\$} around the town square, open until 9 or 10pm, no fees. Don't accept damaged bills – they will not be accepted by shopkeepers. There are two ATM machines {14, 36}, numerations are in pesos! Don't rely solely on your cash card, as ATMs can be out-of-service for days. Your bank may charge higher fees for international withdrawals and some limit how much can be withdrawn in a certain time period. Bring US cash for transportation to Puerto Morelos [see next page] and have some singles handy for tipping in the Cancún airport.
- * In the winter, Puerto Morelos is generally in the 80's. Weather can also be cool and windy [you can check the **weather** by going to www.weather.com]. The sun is strong: **pack** sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses. The moist air is a powerful force against things like cough drops, gel caps, leather and bandaids. Things do not dry quickly, so if you plan to swim a lot, bring two bathing suits and beach towels [Casa Lalita provides bath towels, but not beach towels]. Or you can buy yourself a colorful **pareo**, like a sarong, \$9. It's not a bad idea to bring extras of critical items, like prescription glasses, or copies of written prescriptions. Some other possibly useful items: disposable poncho; bug repellent for visits to ruins; ear plugs if you sleep lightly; plastic zip bags for shells and wet suits. If you're bringing **food**, be forewarned that it's illegal to bring vegetables, seeds or fruit into Mexico. If you're bringing a **laptop**, we suggest a surge protector. **Current** is AC as in the US. In case your bags are lost, pack necessities and anything valuable in your carry-on, such as medications, jewelry and anything you'll need in the first 24 hours of your visit.
- * Carry your ticket and identification in an accessible place – you'll be pulling them out frequently during your trip.

* Numbers in brackets {20} indicate position on map on last page

You're Off to Mexico!

- * Before you land, the flight attendants will give you two forms to complete: a **customs declaration form** and a **Mexican Tourist Card** [immigration form]. On the latter, your "Main Destination" is Casa Lalita, "city" is Puerto Morelos, "State" is Q Roo. When you finish filling these forms out, put them with your identification. The first is about your *stuff*, the second is about *you*. You will need to present them after landing.
- * After you deplane, follow signs to **immigration** ["Migracion"]. You will be somewhat herded. At the booth, present your identification and your Mexican Tourist Card. They will check everything and hand back all but their copy of the tourist card. Keep your copy. You'll need it when you're leaving Mexico.
- * After immigration, follow the signs to the **baggage** area and get your luggage. You might need your claim ticket. If you have a lot of bags, carts can be found for \$1 US, or about 10 pesos. [Note: Mexico uses the dollar sign to indicate pesos, so \$10 can be either *dollars* or *pesos*. Ask if it's not obvious.]
- * You can take a **taxi** to Casa Lalita. In the **Charter Terminal**, there are kiosks in the baggage area where the workers speak English. It's \$30-40 US *per taxi* and you can pay with US dollars. They will give you a ticket to give to the taxi driver. If you can find a bunch of people going to the same place, you can share the cost of the taxi or a van, which can be around \$70 US *total*.
- * After baggage, you go through **customs**. You will need your customs declaration form. Look for the miniature stoplights [or surging crowd], where you will press a button. A green light [more common] lets you go through; a red light means they will probably inspect your luggage. If you have indicated you have food or other forbidden items on the customs form, they may inspect your bags even if you get a green light. Customs keeps the declaration form.
- * Once past customs, proceed to the **exit** to your taxi. Expect mostly Spanish and a little hustle bustle. In the **Main Terminal**, before you get outside, you may want to hire service people to take your bags and get you to a cab. Or you can do it yourself outside: \$30-40 US for a cab, \$70 US for a van. \$2 US tip per person is fine. **Other options** for the more adventurous include a \$15 US Playa del Carmen **shuttle** — you need to offer an additional 20 pesos for door to door service to Puerto Morelos [Playa is south of PM]. There is often **bus** service to Puerto Morelos, though this is not great for the luggage laden. Look for "autobus" signs. It's about \$4-5 US for a ticket to PM. You'll get dropped on the highway at the PM exit {33}. Proceed across the highway to the taxi stand {34} and get a cab to Casa Lalita.
- * The cab driver will know the way to **Puerto Morelos**. If you are renting a car, follow signs to PM [also Playa del Carmen, Tulum], *not* Cancún [Cancún is north of the airport]. It's about 15 miles south of the airport on highway 307. You'll get to a sign for PM at a stoplight and turn left [east] on Blvd. Jose Maria Morelos. You'll travel 1 and a half miles. The first road you encounter that outlines the town plaza is **Ave. Rojo Gomez** {15, 18}. Ask the driver to turn **left**, north, and check the odometer. Casa Lalita {30} is **exactly one kilometer** [$\frac{6}{10}$ ths of a mile] or **6 blocks**, counting discernible cross-streets on the left. Rojo Gomez is a divided road. The **three-storied Casa Lalita** is on a **corner** lot on the left and features many **arches**. You'll see a break in the divide as you're just past the house where you make a left **U-turn**. Take the **next right** to the south side of the house and pull up to the **iron gate**. [If you get to a dead end on Gomez, you've gone a block too far. If you're totally lost, find a PM taxi driver {16}.] Some guide books say you don't need to tip drivers; decide for yourself. Ring the **bell** and someone will show you to your room. The stairs just inside the gate go to a Faye Berton's flat. The stairs by the kitchen go to the Teacher's Room and Teaching Space on the third floor.
- * Puerto Morelos is in the same **time zone** as Central Standard time in the US.



Welcome to Casa Lalita.

Here are a few things you need to know while you're here. *Numbers in brackets {20} indicate position on accompanying map.*

- * **Check-in** time is 3pm. If you arrive early you can leave your luggage in the courtyard until your room is ready.
- * For the comfort and health of all guests, there is **no smoking** at Casa Lalita.
- * Do not drink or brush your teeth with water from the tap. **Drinkable water** is supplied in a 5-gallon bottle in the outdoor kitchen. If water is running low, go ahead and load up a fresh bottle [stored under the bench by the front gate], or let the caretaker know. You can shower and wash dishes in tap water. Air or hand-drying makes dishes once again safe.
- * **It is very important that you put all toilet paper in the waste basket, not in the bowl.** This prevents ecological problems, keeps the toilets from plugging and helps our delicate septic system. This is a practice throughout the area.
- * When using the **shower**, it is important that you turn off not only the hot and cold water handles but also the shower handle. Otherwise, the hot water continues to run and will drain the water heater! The tile over the shower drain is there to block visits from members of the insect family. Please keep it over the drain when not in use.
- * You may see many **creatures** here, including geckos and scorpions. Geckos are harmless lizards. If you step on a scorpion, it will sting you, feeling like a bee sting. It is as afraid of you as you may be of it. So awareness, as usual, is your pal. Leave your shoes outside your room, leaning against the wall. Don't leave things on the floor that will create a cozy place for them. In the kitchen, go into the cabinets mindfully [there's usually a small flashlight available if it's dark, and it's not a bad idea to bring your own]. If you find a scorpion in your room, you can shoo it out the door and *out to the street* with a broom you'll find in the closet. If pain from a sting persists, seek advice. And with all that said, even *seeing* a scorpion is not a common experience!
- * The outdoor **kitchen** is for anyone staying at Casa Lalita. An outdoor kitchen is akin to camping and the sea air corrodes metal before your eyes. That is why you will find no toaster there. Dig around and make yourself at home, you'll find dishes, pots and pans, a blender and coffee maker and basic tools. This is a communal kitchen. **You must clean up after yourself** – food left out will attract bugs quickly. Put garbage in the covered trash can.
- * If you need to remove **trash** before Lucia, the housekeeper, arrives, there is a can outside the gate to your right.
- * If you need to do **laundry**, there are a couple *lavanderias*, {4 & 20}, the latter is full service. If you are sensitive to fragrances, you'll want to bring your own soap and stay away from the dryers and full service. You may hang any hand-washing or wet swim suits, etc. on the clothesline in the back corner by the kitchen.
- * There are several **hammocks** around the grounds for your enjoyment. The **roof** has a great view, stairs are by the Teaching Space. There is a communal **bathroom** with a shower on the third floor [this can be used if your schedule does not coincide with check-in and -out times]. The hammocks are not to be moved from their location.
- * To get to the **beach**, the closest access is {31} on the map. Once on the beach: to your left is a bit more quiet; to your right, on the way to town, there are more people and hotels. Beaches by hotels will be more populated and more groomed. The beach is public; you can settle in most any where you like. Don't walk on the seaweed that accumulates on the beach. The bugs that live in it can create quite an itch.
- * As at home, use your **common sense** regarding walking alone in isolated areas and at night.
- * Please rinse the **sand** from your feet when coming back from the beach. There's a hose inside the gate for that purpose. Please pull the hose either to the garden or the street so the sand does not accumulate in the entryway.
- * There is a bulletin board by the gate where **messages** for house guests will be posted.
- * At the end of your stay, leaving a **tip** for the housekeeper is much appreciated. Check out is 11am.

Getting Around Puerto Morelos

According to Fodor's Travel Guide, this port was once a point of departure for Mayan women making pilgrimages by canoe to Cozumel, the sacred isle of the fertility goddess. Puerto Morelos is a growing little village, prospering from the boom of the "Mayan Riviera." Along with the sounds of the Sea, the birds and the breeze, you'll hear sounds of new buildings going up, the gas man and the fruit truck man advertising their wares and the every day activities of Mexican life – plus the sounds of many other languages being spoken. Most people, Mexicans and Mayans, will give you a big smile but don't speak English. Here is some information and a few observations collected over time from some of Casa Lalita's visitors.

YOUR BEARINGS

Walking “into town,” you’re headed **south**. The water is to your left, **east**. The walk to the town plaza is one kilometer [.62 miles]. The road from Casa Lalita to town is called **Rojo Gomez**. The road parallel to it, one block west, is called **Ave Niños Heroes**. The **Crossroads** [la Crucera] is where you turned east towards Puerto Morelos from the highway.

MONEY

Mexico uses the **dollar sign** to indicate pesos, so \$10 can be either *dollars* or *pesos*. There are two **money changing** places around the square {\$. They’re open till 9 or 10pm, seven days a week, no English. You can’t change Travelers Cheques for US dollars, just pesos, so **save some dollars** for your trip home. There’s a **cash machine** next to the grocery store {14} and one out at the Crossroads {36}. ATM dollar amounts are in *pesos*! The machines are frequently out of order. The closest **banks** are in Cancun or Playa del Carmen. The **exchange rate** as of February 2006 was 10.2%. To figure exchange rate: US money (x) exchange rate = pesos. So \$1 US = 10.2 pesos. \$10 US = 102 pesos. Some merchants will shun **orn money** but they can only refuse it legally if any part is torn *off*. **Credit cards** are not accepted but in some places, US dollars are.

EATING OUT

A word about eating and drinking in Mexico. You’ve probably heard of *turista* or **Montezuma’s Revenge**, essentially a wretched case of diarrhea. This comes from drinking tap water, eating ice, un-purified fresh fruit or vegetables and bad shellfish. You can eat fruits and veggies you can *peel and not contaminate while doing so* [see next section about eating “in”].

Puerto Morelos offers a wide range of dining experiences. Most all restaurants cater to tourists, so you can drink the water, and eat ice and fruits and veggies in these places without worries. Many restaurants close Sundays or Mondays. Here’s a sampling of eateries. [Codes: E=English spoken; V=vegetarian possibilities; \$=inexpensive; \$\$=medium; \$\$\$=high end]

* **Las Petitas** {12}. Off the beaten path and down low from the street is one of those places your tourist brain warns you to stay away from. But the fish is so moist and delicious, you have to look again to see tourists, ex-pats and villagers all eating here together. The menu is limited but the ceviche is sooooo good... [\$\$\$]

* **Le Marlin Bleu** {8}. Shrimp tacos and salad w/potatoes were immensely enjoyed here and also crepes with cajeta* – caramel made from goat’s milk, not quite as sweet, just as yummy. Dinners were just excellent. Owner Eric retains his fabulous French accent and speaks English. [some E; V; \$\$]

* **Nisha's** {15 upstairs}. Nisha is Goyo's daughter. He designed the place and it's the best perch in town. She lords over the kitchen and you can get a special of pork tacos, salad and a *liquado* - fruit water - for just 50 pesos. The liquados include chaya, a great leafy green full of healthy stuff. Check out the salsa bar. [E; V; \$]

* **Pelicanos** {10} got flattened in the hurricane but is busy re-building and has a temporary location just a few doors south. They still have the most sensational toes-in-the-sand beach location – a favorite for a first margarita and plate full of guacamole. Or try a pitcher of *jamaica* juice [ha-my-ka, hibiscus flower]. [E; V; \$\$]

* **Tio's** {13}, blue & white striped awning. It’s a tiny place, great for a big bowl of intensely flavorful chicken soup, complete with avocado and rice and tostadas on the side, just 30 pesos. Homemade stock at it’s finest! No English spoken at Tio’s. [E; V; \$]

* **El Pirata** {15} kind of like a drive-in without the cars. The stately Azucena makes this place more festive every year. The vegetable soup is delicious [and a blessing if you’re needing fiber]. Pirata salad, guac and sopes are yummy. The sangria is killer! Juan [Senior Zinfandel] gets the Most Entertaining Waiter award this year. [E; V; \$\$]

* **Caffetto** {8}. This place serves, among other things, Mediterranean food and has a sister location in Minneapolis. Good options for vegetarians. Try a fresh pineapple juice in their great glassware. Some English [some E; V; \$\$]

* **Mama's Bakery** {25} across the field. You’ll see the sandwich board on the sidewalk. Wonderful eggs and coffee for breakfast and sandwiches and soup for lunch, great desserts. This is American food, so especially good if you’re homesick. You can also order baked goods to go, loaves of bread, cakes and the like. [E; V; \$\$]

* **Tuna** {31}. This was a favorite last year, can't get any closer – it got washed away by Wilma. They are rebuilding and we look very much forward to their re-opening. Antonio is the chef and everything was top-notch. [some E; V; \$\$]

* **Posada Amor** {5} is a restaurant and hotel. Try the scrumptious grilled fish and chicken mole. You’ll find a wide variety of items at the breakfast buffet, served until 11am. [some E; V; \$\$]

* **Hola Asia** {8} serves Thai, Chinese and Japanese food. Sorry to say, it has suffered from the departure of the chef after the hurricane. Pad Thai is good.... [E; V; \$\$\$]

*You can try *cajeta* in the form of *Obleas Las Sevillanas*, *cajeta* between round wafers, at the candy counter in Casa Martin grocery store.

IF YOU WANT TO COOK FOR YOURSELF

You won't find the endless variety available in American stores, especially ones that carry what we call "health food." Between the **grocery stores** {8, 14} and the **Farmers' Market** {7} you'll find basic items. **Casa Martin** {14} is like a rural general store. The **gourmet deli** {8} offers a narrow selection of things like good coffee, cheeses, rice milk and bee pollen. The Farmers' Market is *Wednesdays only*, you'll find the best selection of fruit and veggies there. Get there by 8-ish, it goes fast. **Walmart**, in Cancún, very, very sorry to say, has the largest variety.

You can eat fruits and veggies you can *peel and not contaminate while doing so*. Other food has to be soaked in a **purifier**. You'll see a little blue bottle of it in the kitchen and/or at the grocery store. You must use this if you're preparing your own food [dilute the purifier, essentially iodine, in bottled, not tap water].

You can buy fish from the fishermen! About 2:30-3:30, the fishermen come in with the catch of the day. They go to a cement block garage {15}, set back from the street, iron gates: Sociedad Coopertiva de Produccion Pesquera. It transforms into quite a scene when the catch comes in. There's no English spoken. You will be amidst fishermen arriving and weighing in. The fish are thrown into giant coolers. You, as a retail customer, are secondary to the primary business going on. NOTE: this building is under construction; you'll find the fishermen on the pier by the lighthouse.

Don't miss the fresh tortillas at the Tortillaria {23}. Bring a dish towel to carry them in and separate them when you get to the casa. They'll still be warm when you get them. There's a convenience store north of the Tortillaria – you'll find eggs in a basket on the counter and they're really fresh.

ODDS & ENDS

You can arrange for a **taxi** at the little wooden house {16} on the plaza. Prices are posted at the stand. Varying levels of English are spoken by cabbies, from none to pretty darn good. You can also take the **bus** out of town, which is quite economical, but it is *not* geared to tourists. Helps to speak the language. The bus stops are out at the Crossroads {33, 34}.

You can rent a **bike** or a **car** at the **Travel Agencies** {6, 20}. Richard Kimmel at Posada el Moro {19} is very helpful.

For **phone calls**, try any of the TelMex pay phones. You can use your long distance company phone card or a credit card [expensive]. You can buy a Telmex/Latadel phone card in town (\$ or Casa Martin, 14, behind the counter; insert and hit ABC for English), 50 cents a minute. Or check out Pixan for intractable phone situations {20}.

You can find a **mail box** on the wall of the gift shop on the NW corner of the square {15}, to your right as you enter.

There are weekly **AA** meetings held at Mama's {25}. Drop by for schedule.

Internet cafés {5, 21} are now a staple of Puerto Morelos. It's around 20 pesos for an hour on-line, just walk in, nod to the clerk, check the time and find an open spot. CompuTips {5} has **fax**, the number is 011-52-998-871-0361. Printers too. Not much English. Note: the @ symbol is different – often posted on the wall [alt Q, alt 2, alt 64, good luck].

We've had root canals and CAT scans in Cancún and been happy with the results. There's a **medical clinic** in Puerto Morelos {2} and a **dentist** in Cancún. Fernando Mendoza {28}, a dear friend of Casa Lalita's, formerly a doctor, now a massage therapist, is really helpful. Puerto Morelos has no coop or health food stores, so any supplements, herbs, homeopathic remedies, etc. that you're used to, you'll have to bring from the States.

THINGS TO DO

* Go **sight-seeing**. Your guidebook will have thorough information – Casa Lalita visitors have enjoyed the ruins at Chichén Itzá and the incredible underground water spring Cenote Dzitnup outside of Valladolid. Ruins and iguanas at Tulum. The beaches north of Tulum are beautiful and less travelled. Cobá is a jungle ruin site. You can snorkel in quieter, although more crowded waters at Akumal, "Place of the Turtle." Or swim with dolphins at Xcaret. Sian Ka'an ["where the sky is born"] Bioserve and Isla Holbox on the Gulf of Mexico provide gorgeous views of the water, one turquoise Caribbean, the other sea green Gulf. You can ride around Isla Mujeres in a golf cart and visit the turtles. There are guidebooks and information at the travel agencies {6, 20} and check out the bookstore {8}. If you arrive at heavily travelled areas before 11am, you'll beat the tour buses. When travelling, you need your passport with you.

* Go **snorkeling**. You can rent equipment, get a guide and a boat ride at various places on the plaza, the pier and the beach. Juaquin is family of Goyo's, speaks English and is good with tourists. Call him on his cell 044-998-259-0602 or find him through Goyo. If you have your own snorkeling gear, bring it along. You can snorkel along the shore [but with a flag!]. You need a guide to go out to the coral reef, the second largest barrier reef in the world. You can also arrange to go **fishing** or rent a **kayak**.

* Numbers in brackets {20} indicate position on map on last page

- * Just south of Ojo de Agua {24} there are nice coral heads if you don't want to go all the way out to the reef. On the map, you'll see a water spring or "**cenote**" [*underwater river rising to the surface*] offshore from Ojo; this is the *literal* "Ojo de Agua" – in English, "Eye of the Water."
- * Go **windsurfing**. Tom runs a little kiosk on the beach called Koko Dogz, just south of Ojo de Agua {24}. He can give you lessons and he's from New Hampshire, so he'll know what you mean by "Help!"
- * Go **swimming**. There's two kinds of beaches, ones with reef and ones without. Puerto Morelos has the advantage of the reef for those who want to swim in calmer waters and snorkel. Beaches without reef are like postcards – the waves are big and turquoise, white sand for miles, shells to pick – like Magic Beach south of town and beaches north of Tulum. Playa del Carmen beaches have tons of tourists, but just north is Punta Bete, a gorgeous spot [ask Faye how to get there]. Reality check: when exploring isolated areas, please use common sense and don't do it alone. This area is generally very safe but over the years, a few serious crimes have been reported. And sadly, some beaches are periodically plagued with illegally dumped trash. But, typically, your travels will bring you to some breathtaking views and fun, salt-water swimming.
- * **Hang out** at cafe d'Amancia {8} and have a cappuccino frio or saunter up to the ice cream shop {8} and try the coconut.
- * Go **shopping**. There are many little places around and radiating out from Puerto Morelos' town plaza. Tatich {9} has nice clothes and art work as does Artisolito {20, open evenings}. There is a cooperative Handicraft Art Center {3} where you can buy hammocks – look for our friend Mauricio who speaks English – and other crafts. Eighteen families cleaned up a garbage dump to create this place where the local artisans can make their art and sell directly to the public. There's a "pet" crocodile in the back you may be lucky to meet. Mayan Handicrafts {19} features crafts by local Mayan women who are part of a local project that distributes sewing machines for families whose men were put out of work by the advent of synthetic gum! [See the following entry.] Bring home some Mayan chocolate from Tesoros Mayas {6}. There are tourist places all up and down the coast.
- * Go to the **Botanical Garden** {32}. Take a cab, it's a mile or so south of the Crossroads on highway 307. Lots of exotic plants are all meticulously labeled – there's endangered species such as spider monkeys swinging around and an amazing lookout tower to climb. Also reproductions of a chiclero [old fashioned gum collector] and a Mayan house.
- * Go to the **zoo**. There's a crocodile farm called Croco-Cun run by biologists offering a tour with tons of information about most of the animals and reptiles indigenous to the area. It's just north of Puerto Morelos off highway 307.
- * Don't miss the expat Goyo and **Goyo's Jungle Adventures**. You'll find him at his daughter's place, Nisha's {15}. Tell him you're staying at Casa Lalita and he'll take good care of you. He offers jungle tours and sweat lodges [temazcal]. The lodge structure is based on the Mayan style with a gentle ceremony good for first timers. He's been in town for some 25 years — he's a terrific resource if you want a massage or a reading, to know about the Mayans or how to open a coconut.
- * Take a **Spanish lesson** with beautiful old soul Rosario. Faye will draw you a map; Rosario is usually home, she has a schedule posted you can plug yourself into.
- * There's always someone around to give you a **massage**. Fernando Mendoza, who lives around the corner {28}, is a kind spirit and a generous heart, a great sense of humor and gentle hands. He'll bring his massage table to you.
- * Get a **pedicure** at Lety's {22}. Very reasonable!
- * Check out the used **bookstore** {8}. Alma Libre Books is owned by two ex-television professional expats Ron and Joanne. They are hugely helpful, a great resource, as is their website, www.almalibrebooks.com. Closed Monday and Tuesdays, and other days don't try going there during siesta.

Going Home

Check-out time is 11am. A **tip** for Lucia, the housekeeper, is much appreciated.

You can squeeze three people with an average amount of luggage in one **cab** for about 250 pesos [plus tip]. Ask for a wagon if you need more space.

You'll go through **Immigration** in the States at your first point of entry. That'll take 30 to 120 minutes, depending on the crowds. On the airplane, you'll fill out a **customs** declaration about your purchases [no immigration form if you're a citizen]. Items not allowed to be brought into the US include meat, fruit/veggies, plant life, Cuban cigars, anything illegal, etc.

Especially if you're flying a charter, not a bad idea to check to see if your flight is **on time** before you leave Puerto Morelos.

The Crossroads (la crucera)

There are so many places to visit in Puerto Morelos -- here are a few we've found and needed or enjoyed.

RESTAURANTS

- 8 Café d'Amancia
- 8 Caffetto
- 20 Chicken BBQ
- 15 El Pirata
- 8 Le Marlin Bleu
- 12 Las Petitas
- 6 Los Gauchos
- 8 Hola Asia
- 19 Juice Stand
- 25 Mama's Bakery
- 15 Nisha's
- 10 Pelicano's
- 8 Porto Bello
- 5 Posada Amor
- 13 Tio's
- 31 Tuna

GIFT SHOPS

- 15 Fish Coop
- 33 Gas Station - Pemex
- 15 Goyo's Jungle Adventures
- 14 --Casa Martin
- 8 --Monchi's Gourmet Deli
- 15 --Mini Market Delicatessen
- 5 Hardware Store
- 21 Internet Cafe - @
- 5 Internet Cafe - Computips
- 4 Laundry (La Lavenderia)
- 20 Laundry - full service
- 5 Liquor Store
- 15 Mail Box
- 28 Massage - Fernando Mendoza
- 2 Medical Clinic
- 5 Money Changing
- 5 Office & Art Supplies - Computips
- 17 Pharmacy (Farmacia)
- 35 Pharmacy - Crossroads
- Phone Booths (closest Telmex's)
- 20 Pixan Long Distance Service
- 18 Police Station
- 22 Salon - Letty's (Estetica)

RESTAURANTS

- 16 Taxi Stand
- 34 Taxi Stand - Crossroads
- 23 Tortilleria
- Travel Agency/Bike Rental:
- 6 --Marand
- 20 --Posada el Moro

HOTELS/RETREAT CENTERS

- 30 Casa Lalita
- 27 Casita del Mar

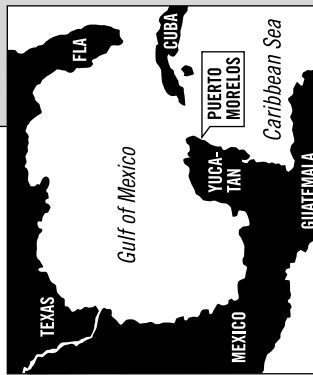
SITES

- 32 Botanical Garden
- 31 Beach Entrance (closest)

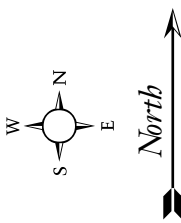
STORES/SERVICES

- 14 ATM - Town Square
- 36 ATM - Crossroads
- 8 Bookstore - Alma Libre
- 33 Bus Stop south bound
- 34 Bus Stop north bound
- 7 Farmer's Market
- {Wednesday am only}

February 2006
Puerto Morelos
State of Quintana Roo (QRoo), Yucatan Peninsula
MEXICO



One Quarter Kilometer
(One Kilometer = .62 Miles)



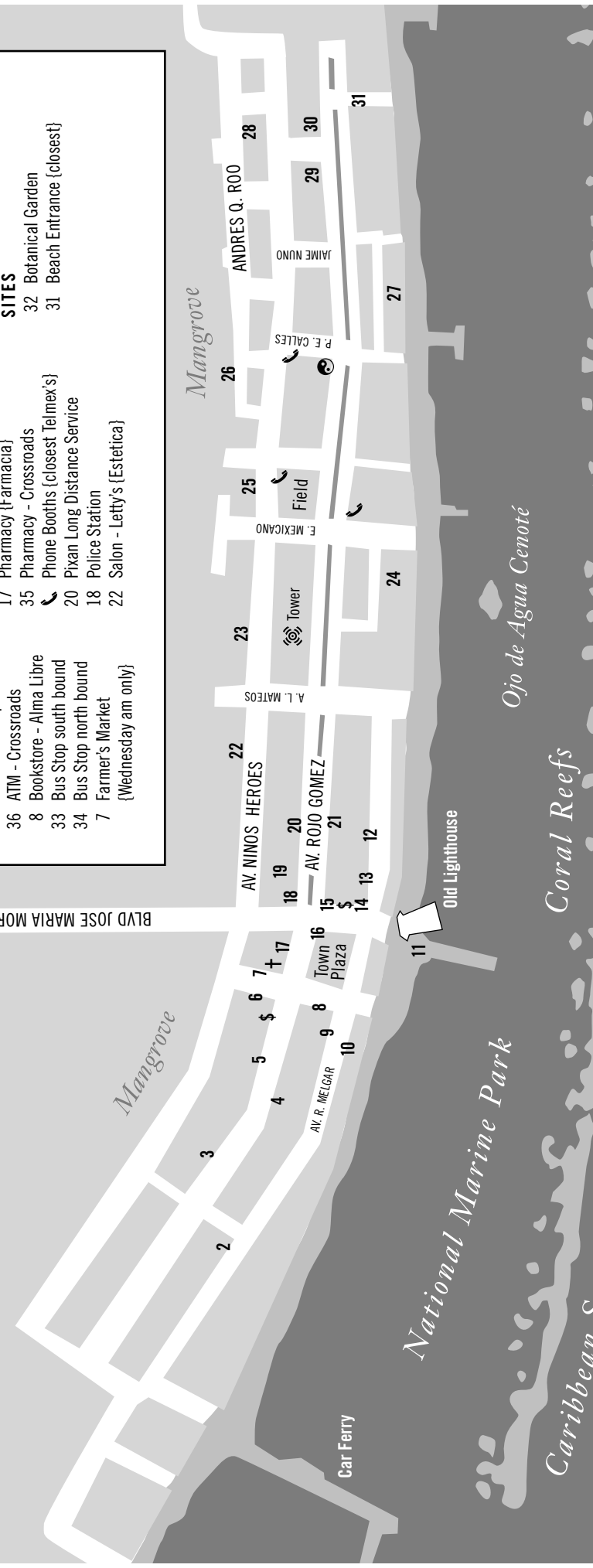
To Playa del Carmen 32 KM;
to Tulum 89 KM

2.5 KM from HIGHWAY to PLAZA
BLVD JOSE MARIA MORELOS

33
34



32





Specific Notes for Yoga Retreaters

Trip Preparation —

- * **Pack** a yoga mat, if you have one [mark it so you know which one's yours]. A foam pad is helpful if your knees are tender; the floor in the studio is made of handmade [so not perfectly even] terra cotta tile.
- * No perfumes or **scents** of any kind in the classroom, please.

Once in Mexico —

- * If you are a **meditator**, or have other practices, feel free to use the **Studio** when not in use. You get to the Studio via the staircase by the kitchen. Honoring the yoga tradition that Casa Lalita grew from, as well as maintaining its comfort as a teaching space, we ask that **no shoes** be worn in the Studio. On arrival day you may use it after 10:30am; on departure day it can be used until 8:30am.
- * There is a collection of **books** and **tapes** that can be made available to you – please ask Faye.
- * If you have been doing intensive practice, give yourself time once you get home to make the **transition** back to life as you knew it!