

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

# BON APPÉTIT

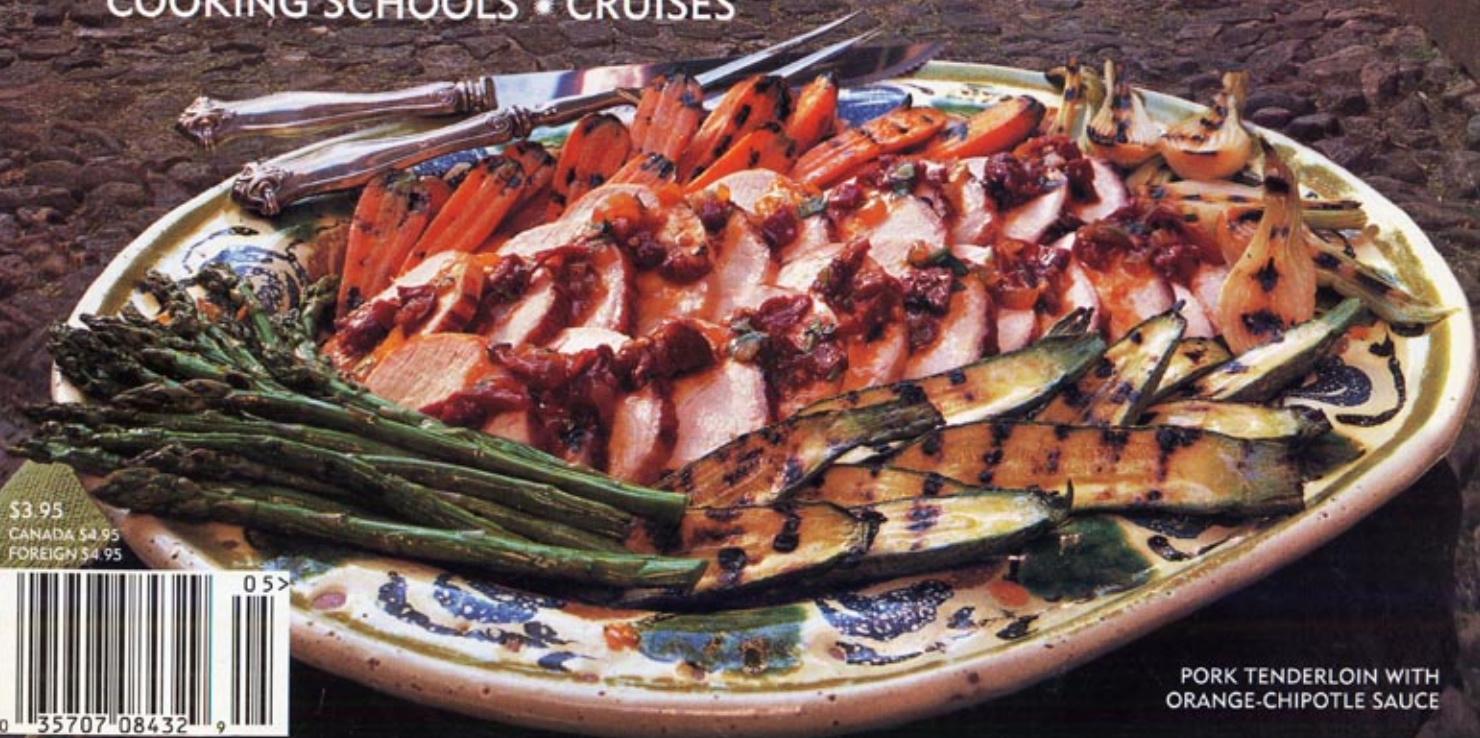
MAY 2003

AMERICA'S FOOD AND ENTERTAINING MAGAZINE

## *The Soul of* **MEXICO**

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PORK TENDERLOIN WITH  
ORANGE-CHIPOTLE SAUCE



# Poolside in Puerto Vallarta

When a young couple invites friends for lunch, the day's catch and local ingredients star on the menu, the Margaritas flow, and the view of the bay is spectacular

AFTER LUNCH, THE DAY WINDS DOWN—AND SHOES COME OFF—IN THE OPEN-AIR LIVING ROOM OF JUAN CARLOS YAMIN (FAR RIGHT, WITH GIRLFRIEND CARLA DE LA MORA).

## MENU FOR 8

HIBISCUS FLOWER MARGARITAS  
TOSTADITAS WITH SCALLOP AND  
CRAB CEVICHE

SHRIMP- AND SQUID-STUFFED  
MAHI-MAHI WITH POBLANO SAUCE

SAFFRON RICE

SAUTÉED CHAYOTE AND CARROTS

TOMATO, AVOCADO, AND  
QUESO FRESCO SALAD

MONTE XANIC 1997 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

MONTE XANIC 1999 CHARDONNAY

CAJETA-ALMOND TART WITH  
MEXICAN CHOCOLATE SAUCE

TEQUILA

COFFEE

RECIPES BEGIN ON PAGE 164.

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CARLA AND JUAN CARLOS GREET THEIR GUESTS WITH LOCAL WINES. TODAY THEY'RE POURING A CHARDONNAY AND A CABERNET SAUVIGNON FROM BAJA.



Perched on a hillside overlooking the bustle of Puerto Vallarta is the lush community of Conchas Chinas. It is here, on the western edge of central Mexico, that Juan Carlos Yamin built his dream getaway, Ventanas al Mar ("Windows to the Sea"), last year.

"I work all week in Guadalajara," says Juan Carlos, a transportation and real estate entrepreneur. "But I try to get to Puerto Vallarta by Friday. We usually invite people over for dinner on Saturday. But it's not really 'dinner,' more comida—a late lunch."

Juan Carlos's home feels as though it is floating free, an aerie of peace and plenty, with Mexican tiled floors, low comfortable furnishings, and a view of the piercing blue sea from every window. "The first thing that happens when you walk in is you

relax," he says. "It's five minutes from downtown Puerto Vallarta, and yet you feel as though it's three hours away. You see nothing, and you hear nothing but swaying palm trees—and the sea."

On this glorious May morning, Juan Carlos and his girlfriend, Carla de la Mora, leave their hilltop sanctuary to shop for provisions in town. "We go to the fishermen at the docks. It's very, very fresh, literally catch of the day," says Juan Carlos, who buys scallops, shrimp, and mahi-mahi. He'll prepare it all with guest and friend Juan Pablo Rodríguez, who also brings along some of his favorite recipes today.

"I have a cooking school in Guadalajara," says Juan Pablo, a graduate of The Culinary Institute of America, as he chars chiles over the flame in Juan Carlos's open kitchen. "I cook what is very typical of Puerto Vallarta, especially the ceviche tostaditas. And I like to cook in this kitchen because the view is so nice," he says, nodding at a cerulean swimming pool that seems to flow right into the sea.

As Juan Carlos and Carla set the table with simple beige-and-white stoneware, the guests begin to arrive and take seats around the pool. "The ceviche tostaditas we eat in our laps," says Carla, biting into a crunchy little tostada topped with crabmeat, scallops, and avocado. Juan Carlos pours Margaritas colored pink by hibiscus flower syrup as guests dip their toes in the water.

After a move to the table, Juan Pablo presents fillets of mahi-mahi stuffed with shrimp and squid, over which he has spooned a cream-rich poblano sauce. Saffron rice and sautéed chayote and carrots make for vibrant accompaniments.

Juan Carlos plays sommelier. "Most of the good wine in Mexico comes from Valle de Guadalupe, near Ensenada in Baja," he says as he pours Monte Xanic Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay from that region. "¡Salud!"

By nine o'clock, the sun is down and dishes put away. "Now it is time to go out to the clubs in Puerto Vallarta," says Juan Carlos. He relishes being able to offer his guests—and himself—both realities.

"They come to Puerto Vallarta to do fun stuff—scuba, play golf, go out—but they can also have the peace of this place," he says as a balmy breeze sweeps through Ventanas al Mar. "It's a place that, if you really want to rest, you can do it. And that's a hard and lovely thing to find these days." ➤



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CEVICHE TOSTADITAS AND HIBISCUS FLOWER MARGARITAS BY THE POOL (RECIPES ON PAGE 164); SHRIMP- AND SQUID-STUFFED MAHI-MAHI WITH POBLANO SAUCE, SAFFRON RICE, AND SAUTÉED CHAYOTE AND CARROTS (RECIPES BEGIN ON PAGE 164); A SIMPLE TABLE WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW; JULIAN SILVA AND GIRLFRIEND MARTA SAENZ.

