



SAVORY SPOON
CULINARY TRAVEL

VILLA BONITA – A TRUE CULINARY DESTINATION

FEBRUARY 15TH - FEBRUARY 22ND, 2026

EACH YEAR I AM FORTUNATE TO TAKE A SMALL GROUP OF 8 TO MEXICO AND I HAVE CHOSEN AN AUTHENTIC VILLAGE AND AN OUTSTANDING COOKING SCHOOL AS OUR DESTINATION. I HAVE EVEN HAD SEVERAL GUESTS COME BACK A SECOND YEAR WITH ME.

La Villa Bonita, in Tepoztlan, Mexico is a true culinary destination, complete with pool carved out of volcanic rock, organic citrus orchard and vegetable gardens, as well as specially designed open air kitchen with a stunning view of the Tepoztlan valley. The foothills of the Tepozteco mountains in Tepoztlan, the original “Pueblo Magico” in Mexico are sensationally beautiful. Because of its history, culture, and preservation of its traditions, Tepoztlan was named the first Pueblo Magico in Mexico. It is also the birthplace of the plumed serpent god, Quetzalcoyotl. Because of its surrounding rock formations and beauty, it is considered the “Sedona” of Mexico.

Each day is full of delicious moments and meals! Chef Ana’s famous Margarita’s made with her own Calamondine Orange liquor and Refino (the local Tequila) can range from watermelon, jalapeno or cucumber. Variety is the spice of life on this informative and educational trip that will help you fall in love with all the rich flavors and cultures of the area.





Our Daily Itinerary is full of delicious moments and meals!

Sunday, February 15th

Guests arrive at MEX (Benito Juarez Mexico City International) with airport pickup. The trip takes 1.5 hours from Mexico City to La Villa Bonita and guests will be greeted upon arrival with a delicious homemade cocktail such as Chef Ana's famous Margarita made with her own Calamondine Orange liquor and Refino (the local Tequila).

Later that afternoon/evening guests will enjoy Chef Ana's 4 course gourmet dinner made from primarily local ingredients grown in the garden or from local providers. Dinner is served within our ample open-air kitchen with view of the valley below or above our kitchen in the elevated dining area with 360 degree view of the mountains. Chef Ana will explain her dishes to the guests and also discuss how the week will unfold.

Monday, February 16th

The day begins with Chef Ana's famous big breakfast with fresh fruit, biscuits, homemade jams and jellies along with a new traditional Mexican main dish each morning. Guest will go to the local Tepoztlan market to select the best ingredients from Chef Ana's local providers and bring these ingredients back for the cooking session in the open-air kitchen.

An example of dishes that may be created that day are Mole Colorado with Chicken, Pork in Pipian sauce (Mole Verde), Refried Beans, Classic Red Rice with Vegetables, and Vanilla Flan. Mole technique is an important part of Mexican cooking and guests will learn from a pro. Cooking is from 11 to 2:30 in the afternoon with lunch of dishes prepared in the open air kitchen or the elevated terrace with wine and beer service as well as coffee or tea with dessert. An agua fresca made with fruit or horchata, Jamaica, or tamarindo accompanies each lunch. Learn to make your own tortillas and place them on the comal with native





women such as Mari your “ama de llaves” or mayordomo during your stay at La Villa Bonita

Tuesday, February 17th

The day begins as always with a fabulous breakfast and a trip to the market to select ingredients and to meet the local butcher and cheese vendor. Guest return to LVB to cook up a storm. An example of dishes on this day may be fillings or “guisados” for classic Morelos quesadillas such as squash blossoms, huitlacoche, fresh pork rinds in a green tomatillos salsa, potatoes and chile poblano strips. Learn how to use white, blue, or red masa produced from ancient corn varieties grown locally. Guests enjoy lunch of dishes prepared with drink service in the open air kitchen or the elevated terrace. After late lunch, guests will have an opportunity to take a walk into the downtown, relax around the pool with a good book or take a peaceful nap! You are on vacation, it is up to you!



Wednesday, February 18th

Breakfast starts the day before our tour to the Garden City of Cuernavaca with our guide Ludovic Pech. We will visit two of the most famous and best museums accompanied by his expertise and the Jardin Borda. We will visit the Cathedrals as well as the Palace of Cortes, built in 1526. From there we will travel to one of the oldest and most recognized garden Restaurants in the city. White peacocks roam the grounds as we sip on a chilled mescal mule. Tableside guacamole is always a treat as is mole dishes and service beyond mention. One more margarita as we return home will give you sweet dreams.





Thursday, February 19th

After a hearty breakfast, guests will dedicate the day to the production and use of masa with a trip to the Masa Mill to produce our own masa from corn grown locally. The original “to go” packet in pre-columbian times was the Tamale in corn or banana leaf husks. This easy to carry and nutritious meal could be put in a bag or satchel and carried for sustenance on long journeys to neighboring villages. Learn how to make this Mexican classic as families have done for generations with squash and corn, shrimp, pork tamales in red sauce as well as delicious dessert tamales such as pineapple and pecan, or strawberry. Mmmmmm! Delicious! You will never look at the tamale in the same way again!



Tonight guests will have the pleasure of tasting a variety of pulques, mezcales, and tequilas from across Mexico along with the local version of tequila called “Refino.” Join a lively discussion of their origins, production, and distinctions of the different liquors in the open air kitchen.

Friday, February 20th

We start with a fabulous breakfast as usual and begin our preparations to enjoy the grandeur of the poblano chile. Options include use of the dried as well as the fresh chile stuffed with picadillo, cheese and corn with white sauce, or the famous Chiles en Nogada -- the national dish of Mexico representing the colors of the Mexican flag. Guests will learn the proper technique for blistering and preparing fresh poblanos as well as the dried version.





Depending on the option chosen, side dishes may include claypot beans, classic white rice, and the sinfully delicious Tres Leches Cake.

Saturday, February 21st

After your delicious breakfast, you have a day to enjoy on your own. Take a hike, enjoy the weekend artisan market, go out for lunch or just relax. Today is a day to do whatever your heart desires . . .



In the evening enjoy your farewell dinner with Chef Ana as she prepares a 4 course chef's table dinner. Feel free to come up to the kitchen as Chef Ana prepares the gourmet meal and enjoy a glass of wine as you reminisce about the week you had at La Villa Bonita.

Sunday, February 22nd

After breakfast, we will organize our return to the Mexico City airport and count the days until we see each other again for a new culinary adventure.

Your special and memorable week in Tepoztlan will include:

- Airport pickup and return to MEX (Mexico City Benito Juarez International Airport)
- All evening meals created by Chef Ana made from primarily ingredients in the garden or from local providers, served in the elevated dining area with 360 degree view of the mountains and valley below.
- All meals included



- 4 Hands-On cooking classes of traditional, time-honored family recipes with Chef Ana in the open air kitchen. Lunch of dishes prepared in the elevated terrace with wine and beer service. Dishes include time-honored classics such as Chiles en Nogada, Mole Colorado, a variety of fabulous tamales made with local corn, and other local seasonal main dishes, side dishes, soups, drinks and desserts, Tequila, Pulque, and Mezcal tasting.
- 7 nights' accommodation in Chef Ana Garcia's specially designed culinary hotel in the foothills of the Tepozteco mountains in Tepoztlan, the original "Pueblo Magico" in Mexico.
- Participate in the process to make tortilla and other masa-based dishes from ancient corn varieties grown in Tepoztlan. Learn the technique to make what have been describes as "Mexico's best corn tortillas."
- Excursions to meet local providers such as the butcher, strawberry provider, tortilla mill, baker, and cheese provider. Trips to the local market to select ingredients for the cooking session.
- Trip to pottery town of Tlayacapan to see how traditional lead-free pottery is made with local artisans.
- Trip with guide to the Garden City of Cuernavaca.
- Hike (very athletic) up to the Tepozteco pyramid to view the town from the top of the mountains.
- Famous big breakfast every morning with a new main dish every day.
- PDF Manual with Chef Ana's family recipes and background information about the ingredients and Tepoztlan
- Free High Speed Wireless Internet

Booking Conditions

- We invite you to join us, and invite your best friend or partner. This trip is half full presently, so book right away if you are interested.
- Room styles are given on a first sign up preference.
- Due to unforeseeable circumstances, it may sometimes be necessary to alter the scheduled activities or itinerary. All efforts will be made to keep any changes to a minimum and, where they are necessary, to make alternative arrangements which are of an equally high quality.
- Savory Spoon Culinary Travel and Janice Thomas are not responsible for any injury, loss or damage to person or property while guests are in route to and from or while on this culinary trip or participating in any of our activities.
- Bring comfortable shoes since we will be walking in ancient villages
- Dress is casual with the temperate temperatures.

Price: Double \$4,000, Single \$4,700

\$1000 deposit by November 15th, 2025

Balance due December 5th, 2025

Cancellation Policy

No cancellations are accepted. Substitutions are accepted.

We highly recommend Travel Insurance, which is valuable planning. Ask your travel agent when planning your flight:

- www.travelguard.com
- www.globaltravelinsurance.com
- www.travelex-insurance.com

MedJet Assist: MedjetAssist is a membership program that arranges air-medical transport to the member's hospital of choice within their home country.

Checks written to Savory Spoon Culinary Travel

Send your deposit checks to:
Savory Spoon Culinary Travel
P.O. Box 423
Ellison Bay, WI 54210

All questions will be answered at savoryspoon@aol.com or 920-421-0936

Janice Thomas

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Chef Janice Thomas has 40 years in the food industry. In addition to operating four restaurants and a catering company for 20 years, Janice has been teaching cooking classes in Arizona, Oregon and Wisconsin since 2003. Since 2004 Janice has owned and operated the highly successful Savory Spoon Cooking School in Ellison Bay, Door County Wisconsin. Studies at the renowned Cordon Bleu in Paris and with well respected chefs in France, Italy, Sicily, Mexico, and China, have enhanced Janice's repertoire in food. Extensive travel in Mexico afforded Janice the opportunity to cook with a wide variety of chefs where she developed her love for the distinctive flavors of the southwest. Thus, was born Janice's specialty in many different food fusions. Janice likes to say "Combining the flavors of many cultures results in an explosion of taste delights."

Janice and her husband, Michael, raised their family in Tucson and continue to enjoy spending winters in Arizona

