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SHAKIRA'S
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Gabriel Macias

"When the sun shines for one of us, it shines for all of us."

by Ingrid Hart

A favorite expression of Gabriel Macias is "when the sun shines for one of us, it shines for all of us." This gracious attitude of abundance defines what the benevolent Macias values most in life: family and friends. Each of these qualities is present in equal measure at his premier Cabo San Lucas hotel, the Marina Fiesta Resort and Spa.

Macias, who wears a clean-pressed, coral-colored button-down shirt over tan slacks, has dark hair, clear skin and white, straight teeth. He tells the story of the wealthy Italian tourist who years ago, came to Cabo San Lucas on a massive yacht that almost didn't fit into the harbor. He wanted to buy the resort, "I told him no. If I didn't have my beloved hotel, what would I do with my time?" He is quick to smile and passionate about his work.

Coming from a long line of hard-working people, his is a traditional Mexican family. His mother is the 90-year-old matriarch who holds the family together; Macias is the economic glue. The youngest in a family of six children, he currently employs three of his siblings, and five nieces and nephews as architects, engineers, and interior designers.

Macias established his Cabo San Lucas foothold in 1988 when he partnered with a group and opened the popular nightclub and restaurant El Squid Roe. This iconic party establishment is now so famous that the partners opened a separate location just to sell El Squid Roe logo merchandise such as t-shirts, baseball caps and mugs. The nightclub's success encouraged Macias to search for a nearby location to build a hotel where revelers could stay.

In 1991, Macias built the Marina Fiesta Resort and Spa, a 155-room property located in the heart of Cabo San Lucas. "When I first came to the marina, there was nothing here," he said. "My company was the first firm to invest in this area. One of my greatest goals was to make Cabo what it is today, to put Cabo on the map. Give it a little life, a little flair. Now the area is considered the second fastest growing resort destination in all of Mexico. It's fulfilling."

The resort overlooks the marina and features classical Mexican architecture. With two swimming pools, three restaurants and a full-service spa and two gyms. Famous resort guests include Colin Farrell,

Chuck Norris and Dancing with the Stars television show winner Emmett Smith. Macias owns and operates several storefront shops on his property including a Huichol Mexican folk art store, a fine arts cultural gallery and even a museum dedicated to the art of making tequila, a collaboration with famous tequila distiller, José Cuervo. "I don't make much money from these stores," said Macias. "I want to show the history of the area and offer some culture for tourists to learn and understand more about Mexico. It gives me great satisfaction."

Education is important to Macias. He began work on his master's degree at 45-years-old, and was the oldest student in his class. He finished at 50. "No matter how old you are, you have to set the example. I wanted to learn." Macias extends his attitude on learning to his employees, which number nears 400. He has established a scholarship program for his employee's children to attend school. He provides training for his workers to improve their skills. One of his chefs just graduated from the Cordon Bleu culinary school in Mexico.

His other charitable contribution, which he doesn't publicize, is in Guadalajara. He helps support a charity fund in a hospital where patients receive costly organ transplant surgeries. This is something that Macias does from the bottom of his heart. "Life has given me so much, so I want to give something back."

What does the future hold for Macias? For starters, his company Mexico Grand Hotels is developing the Hacienda Encantada Resort and Spa, a five-star resort. The 50-acre property is being built on a cliff with a breathtaking view of the ocean and the Land's End arch along Baja peninsula's famous corridor. The low-density, Mexican pueblo-style structures will spare no cost to luxuriate and pamper their guests. "It is a five-phase approach to construction. The first phase will open in 2007," said Macias. In 2009, Macias hopes to develop another five-star resort at a property he owns in Nuevo Vallarta.

Where does Macias get the focused energy and enthusiasm for all his projects? "Family and friends," said Macias. "I care about people. Creating new jobs and offering opportunities to friends and family is the biggest part of my life."



High Profiles
TRAVELER
MEXICO & PORTS OF CALL
2007-2008

Cynthia & Alejandra Tapia

Following Their Father's Legacy

by Ingrid Hart

Grace. Beauty. Elegance. These words define the architectural creations of a local Cabo San Lucas firm, and also their lead team. Meet Cynthia and Alejandra Tapia, two sisters who, along with their father, form the family-owned company, Tapia Architects.

Cynthia Tapia, 30, is the older of the two. She has wavy, chocolate-brown hair, radiant skin and a beguiling smile. Alejandra Tapia, 28, has long, honey-colored hair, high cheekbones and mesmerizing eyes. Their dress style is straight out of Vogue magazine, complete with contemporary platform shoes.

The Tapia sisters are a winning combination of good looks, intelligence, charm and youthful wisdom. The sisters are self-professed best friends who work and listen to each other up to eight hours a day. Together with their influential father, they collaborate on projects.

"We respect each other and try our best to communicate," said Cynthia. "Our efforts are the conclusion of three minds, hearts and resources. We have passion, ideas and experiences. We unite our forces." The familial union has resulted in the successful design of custom villas, condominiums, and hotel projects throughout the Baja peninsula.

Their father, Próspero, began the architectural firm 30 years ago. The sisters grew up in Cabo San Lucas. As a little girl, Alejandra's dream was to be an architect. For Cynthia, her love was interior design. Both women graduated from Universidad de las Americas, two hours from Mexico City.

"When I got out of school, I wanted to devour the world," said Alejandra. "When I joined the company I wanted everyone to know that there was someone new here with modern ideas. My dad influenced me a lot. He told me once that passion is good, but it is not supposed to drive you crazy. 'Hold on to your passion,' he said, but fulfill the wish of your client. Now I know my dad is right."

Cynthia cites a favorite project she designed and the sense of accomplishment she felt when it was finished. The home in the exclusive community of Pedregal de Cabo San Lucas at the tip of the Baja peninsula, is called Villa Peñasco. This five-bedroom, six-bath home sits high on a cliff overlooking Lands End, where the Sea

of Cortés meets the Pacific Ocean. "I came up with the idea," said Cynthia. "I asked my sister, 'what do you think?' She said yes. I got to work designing it. At the end, my father was impressed and I felt good."

Are there challenges of being young women in business? Alejandra, the younger of the two sisters said that it is difficult because she looks so youthful.

"Sometimes when I meet clients, they don't know I am the architect, she explained. "They are waiting for someone older to arrive. I say, 'I'm your architect and I will take care of you today.' I project confidence. Then I listen to what the clients have to say; it has more meaning than when I speak. I listen to their ideas. I do my best to capture and design their dreams."

Cynthia offers advice to young women starting out in the world. "Learn to listen to yourself more. Go inside and ask questions about your life. Know who you are and respect yourself. In life there is always an opposite: living and dying, smiling and crying, find that balance because that balance is in you."

Alejandra encourages young women to imagine, focus or visualize their goals in life. "If you do that, then you will attract what you want. Do everything that you can to make it real. Picture it. Write it. Believe it. Don't ever let your dreams go." She said that the best part of living in Cabo San Lucas is the natural beauty.

"I love going for a run at sunrise. Cabo is magical. I love swimming, scuba diving and hiking in the mountains." Cynthia gives Alejandra a gentle, playful shove and tells her sister that she has lots of time to do what she wants because she is not married and doesn't have children.

"When I was younger I loved to lie on the beach and get black," said Cynthia. "Now my life is totally different. But I am happy and blessed at this moment to be living in Cabo; being close to my family and working with them. I enjoy life." Cynthia looks at Alejandra and jokes that her sister tries to distract her by taking her outdoors. They look at one another and laugh. Alejandra, with youthful wisdom said, "Being in contact with nature, it fills you with peace."



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TESORO RESORTS

by Ingrid Hart

In Spanish, tesoro means treasure. The management team at Tesoro Resorts, a fast-growing California company based in Newport Beach, is optimistic that their guests will enjoy a tesoro or treasured vacation full of memorable moments with an incredible value in a spectacular setting. The three resorts are located on prime Mexican Resort destinations along the Mexican Pacific Riviera: Los Cabos, Manzanillo and Ixtapa.



Gabriel Igartua

Established in December 2005, the new Tesoro Resorts are well on their way to succeeding in a competitive tourist marketplace. "We have

positioned our new brand and have been very well received by the tourism industry during 2006.

Our challenge now is to consolidate our presence through a sustained and continued presence and support of our partners for 2007," said Gabriel

Igartua, Vice President of Sales and Marketing. "It's been very rewarding." Immediate plans for Tesoro's future include a \$10 million dollar investment in room remodeling, at TESORO LOS CABOS, the addition of 35 rooms in TESORO IXTAPA and a water theme park at TESORO MANZANILLO.

"We are a growing company and committed with investing in our growth in Mexico," said Igartua. "We are looking

in being a successful and profitable, by bringing good and wellness to the communities where we are and will be in the future. We are strengthening our relationship by closely working with all major partners of the tourism industry: tour operators, airlines and travel agents. We are investing and refreshing our properties and bring them up to the standard of what our clients expect, we want them as our slogan states; Gather your treasured moments... and make new ones."

Tesoro Resorts, with new headquarters located in Tijuana, Mexico, is a division of Steadfast Resorts International, a Newport Beach California based company. Steadfast Companies is Tesoro Resorts' parent company. Tesoro Resorts is their first Mexican Endeavor as an all-inclusive resort brand.

"Mexico has so much to offer," said Igartua. "We have beaches, culture, history and religion. People are looking forward to lounging by the beach, but they are also looking for cultural awareness and education."

"Travelers are becoming better educated and more sophisticated. They have many tools now to research the market like the Internet and the travel channel. We have to be prepared to accommodate them. At Tesoro Resorts, we are trying to be a great option and a preferred choice for our guests and it all starts out with great customer service. Our goal is to enhance their vacation by making it a memorable and treasured experience."

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The core values of Steadfast Companies/Tesoro Resorts include: proceed with integrity; value people; embrace opportunities; pursue excellence; and do good as we do well. With over 700 employees at three different locations, Tesoro is planning an aggressive social plan for the community. "We're interested in making an economic profit, but also bringing a social benefit," said Igartua. "The social well-being of the community is important to us. It is a big commitment to our community sustaining work for all these employees. There is a ripple-down effect. We are very aware of our responsibilities. We believe our goodwill will make it feasible for our employees to function at a higher level."

"TRAVELERS ARE BECOMING BETTER EDUCATED AND MORE SOPHISTICATED. THEY HAVE MANY TOOLS NOW TO RESEARCH THE MARKET LIKE THE INTERNET AND THE TRAVEL CHANNEL,"
said Gabriel Igartua.

Tesoro Resorts' logo features three diamonds in gemstone colors of emerald, sapphire and amber symbolizing their three flagship properties. Each resort is in a stunning, picturesque section of Mexico. All three resorts offer an emerging "all inclusive" fee trend. Tesoro's all inclusive programs include room accommodations, meals, drinks, hotel activities, taxes and gratuities at no extra cost. "You don't think about nothin' when you're here," said Tesoro Los Cabos visitor Jeff Brandt from Mississippi. "You always return to the same life you had when you get back. It's good to get away."

Tesoro Los Cabos is at the heart of the sports fishing center of bustling Cabo San Lucas marina, the southernmost tip of Baja California's peninsula. There are 286 rooms and junior suites with balconies or terraces with views of the energetic marina or Sea of Cortés. Nearby there is entertainment, shopping, night life and championship golf courses.

Tesoro Ixtapa, located on the beach, offers Pacific Ocean views near tropical mountains, a marina and golf course. This resort features 205 rooms and junior suites that cater to families, honeymooners and friends seeking tranquil waters, golden shorelines and year round sunshine.

Tesoro Manzanillo rises above the beach at La Audiencia, Manzanillo's most historic cove. This resort features 331 ocean view rooms and suites, first-class amenities and services ideal for romantic getaways, family vacations and group conventions.

For more information on Tesoro Resorts, visit their Web site at: www.tesororesorts.com



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