

## EXPLORE

# TRAVEL BAG

NEWS, TIPS AND TIDBITS FROM THE WORLD OF ARIZONA TRAVEL — AND BEYOND.

## JUST BACK FROM... OAXACA WITH CHEF BRANDEN LEVINE



Levine tours an agave plantation, grasshoppers (chapulines) at Casa Oaxaca Cafe

and then you select your favorites to have over meat and vegetables for the main course. The recipes at the cozy, casual restaurant are all created by the *abuela* who still chats with patrons at the restaurant. [lospacosoaxaca.com](http://lospacosoaxaca.com)

### CASA OAXACA CAFÉ

This farm-to-table restaurant features a whole-roasted pig and a "killer tableside salsa," Levine says. One of the most surprising protein sources on the menu at this spot, grasshoppers, are also surprisingly delicious. "They fry them up and flavor them with different types of chiles, which adds a lot of umami." [casaoaxacacafe.com](http://casaoaxacacafe.com)

### LOS DANZANTES

This hip restaurant that specializes in modern Oaxacan cuisine was another favorite from Levine's travels. Los Danzantes serves Oaxacan cheeses and vegetables that are grown in the restaurant's garden. And, of course, they have mole. [losdanzantes.com](http://losdanzantes.com)

### FELIX ÁNGELES ARELLANES MEZCAL

Most mezcal is made in Oaxaca, so Levine wanted to see how the agave spirit is made. Master mezcal producer Felix Ángeles Arellanes uses no automated machinery and hand-crushes smoked agave piñas after they are baked in a pit dug into the ground. "We brought back four bottles," Levine says. [magueymelate.com/felixarellanes](http://magueymelate.com/felixarellanes)

— Shaena Montanari

**FOR CHEF BRANDEN LEVINE**, summer vacations aren't just for fun — they're for culinary inspiration. After his most recent trip to Oaxaca with his wife and Sel restaurant co-owner, May, he was inspired to bring home flavors of the region, like a prune mole, which you'll find on his menu. Levine shares some of his favorites in the Oaxaca area.

### LOS PACOS

Oaxaca is known for its moles, and Los Pacos has all seven types of the rich, thick sauce. Levine says you get a "flight" to try

## BAG BITES

► **LEAVE THE GUN, MOVE THE MOUSE:** You'll have to wait a few months for our Las Vegas cover story — slotted for May until the coronavirus outbreak — but one Sin City attraction is still packing them in, albeit virtually. A shrine to organized crime and law enforcement, **The Mob Museum** offers online tours and an app with a fun mobster face-match feature. [themobmuseum.org](http://themobmuseum.org)

► **NO-TRAVEL TRAVEL:** Speaking of virtual travel, it's trending with visitors bureaus as a way to plant seeds for future travel while providing a pastime. The San Diego Tourism

Authority touts **LEGOLAND California** and its new online series ([legoland.com/llcbuildingchallenge](http://legoland.com/llcbuildingchallenge)), and offers virtual neighborhood tours on its website ([sandiego.org](http://sandiego.org)).

► **VIRTUAL VAN GOGH:** The most impressive virtual travel resource we've seen? It could be **Google Arts & Culture**, which partnered with 2,500 museums and galleries worldwide to allow sequestered sight-seekers to peruse their halls. New York's Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art alone has a whopping 201,000 pieces for view online. [artsandculture.google.com](http://artsandculture.google.com)

— Craig Outhier



## SANTA CRUZ

*Spend some time in Santa Cruz, California, the historical birthplace of mainland surfing in the United States.*

### Jack O'Neill Restaurant & Lounge

Named after the surf icon and founder of the O'Neill brand, this restaurant in the Santa Cruz Dream Inn overlooking Cowell Beach is full of photos and memorabilia from Jack O'Neill's life. The restaurant's new chef, Mo L'Esperance, has created a new menu including everything from burgers to poke to tofu. [jackoneillrestaurant.com](http://jackoneillrestaurant.com)

### World's Smallest Bowling Museum

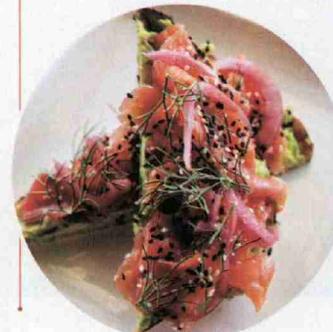
In 1909 there was a four-lane "duckpin" bowling alley along the boardwalk operated by Victor A. Marini. A new exhibit has opened inside the Boardwalk Bowl honoring the bowling history of the city that features a set of antique duckpins and stories and memorabilia from the Santa Cruz bowling community. [boardwalkbowl.com](http://boardwalkbowl.com)

### Chaminade Resort & Spa

The Spanish mission-style Chaminade Resort & Spa, which used to be a private home and later was a Catholic boys' school, is currently being renovated to expand its accommodations and outdoor offerings, like a new restaurant, a fireside lounge and plenty of spaces to relax.

[chaminade.com](http://chaminade.com)

— Angelica Olivas



PHOTOS COURTESY BRANDEN LEVINE, JACK O'NEILL RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

