

Baja Dreams

Sportfishing, Golf & More is One Man's Magical Mexico

Baja Larry – aka Larry Hahn of Santa Teresa, NM – is a flying-fishing-pig roasting kind of guy who has squawked-in with his honey of a fly-in favorite: Loreto, Mexico. “Been goin’ for 20 years and it’s just a super place to hang-out,” he says. Gorgeous golf at Campo de Golf Loreto, possibly the least crowded coastal course in North America; phenomenal sportfishing along a Sea of Cortez section considered one



of Baja’s hottest; and R&R that’s “really really nice” at the friendly, family-run Oasis Hotel. Baja Larry and his wife, Val, often hop in the turbo’d twin-engine Aztec for the trip he claims is “just a no brainer.” “First off,” he enthuses, “you don’t need to speak Spanish. With all operators, all towers, etc., English is the way to go.” What you do need pre-trip is your paperwork in order. Baja Larry doesn’t like to say “I told you so” to anyone heading to Loreto who finds trouble at the Mexican border, so he’s going to be emphatic: “The insurance deal is extremely important,” he says of the requisite PL & PD coverage your aircraft best carry. (“I get mine at Gateway Insurance Co. in Chula Vista, CA, 619.422.2671”) Pilot’s license, current medical and proof of citizenship are also required to enter Mexico. [Pilot Michael suggests consulting www.pilotmichael.com/destinations/ “Mexico Made Easy” for detailed flight requirements.] Outfit yourself with two Baja maps – the CH-22 and CH-23

(WAC chart), check weather (Baja Larry loves www.bajalife.com for its in-depth forecasts), be accurate in your ETA so customs will be up from *siesta* in time, and whether you enter from California or Texas, Loreto will be waiting to wow you.

“I reserve our room and tee times on the same website (www.oasishotel.com) so as soon as we arrive we’re off and runnin’,” says the Baja insider. “You’re gonna love the golf course; it’s built right on the beach and there are a couple of shots off a hill across the water that are unbelievable.” Also super to Baja Larry’s mind are the fishing *pangas* that fetch you directly from the Oasis patio. “These boats bring the guide *and* the cold beer; you just jump in” for seven hours of outsize angling adventure, he says. Loreto dates from 1697 and is the oldest settlement on the Baja peninsula, it’s a laid-back, palm-shaded town where offshore the dorado, snapper, sailfish, marlin,

grouper, tuna, snapper, cabrilla (in summer), yellowtail and sierra (in winter) run in abundance. 200 species of tropical fish, 40-foot whale sharks, dolphins, turtles and sea lions add to the magic of this Sea of Cortez charmer where a number of small islands – Montserrat, Santa Catalina – make for diving and kayaking as magnificent as the sportfishing. Shoreside the

old *Mission Nuestra Señora de Loreto* houses the famous wooden *Virgen de Loreto*, said to possess miraculous healing power, as well as a museum of antique weaponry. At Café Olé are *huevos rancheros* to shout *ay carumba!* for; at restaurant El Taste, T-bone steaks, lobster casserole and out-of-this-world fish *mole*. Romance your *enamorado* with a nightcap at pretty pink Hotel Posades de las Flores (or squire her to July’s yearly fly-in pig roast), and you’ll be in on the Baja good times of the Baja Larry kind. As he squawks-out: “Hope to see you there soon!” *amigos*. ✕

