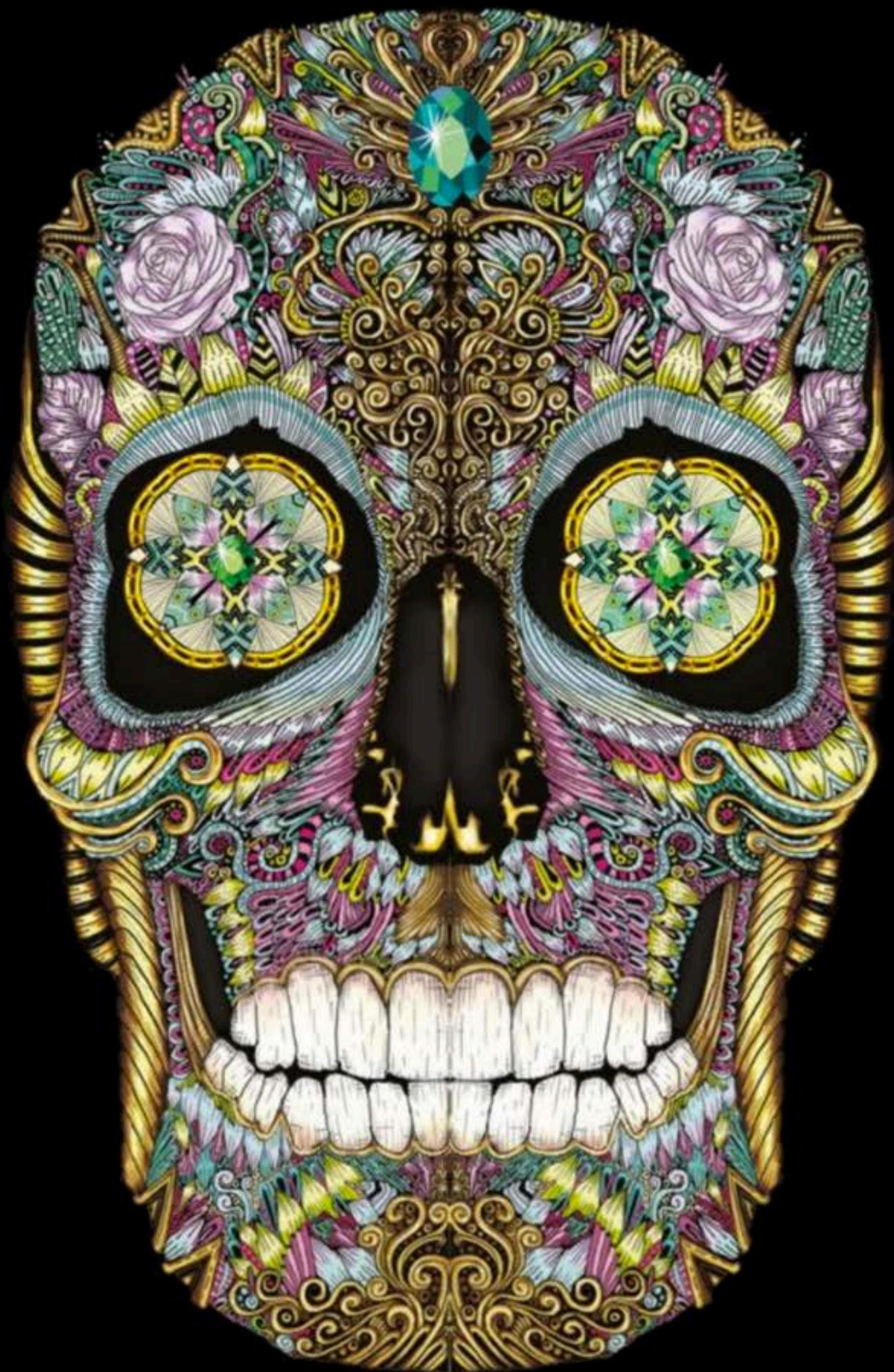




HOLA TULUM

MAGAZINE



OFFERINGS

ALTARS OF MEXICO | THE MESOAMERICAN DOG | MEXICAN TEXTILES

EDITORIAL STAFF

Hola Tulum Magazine
Fourth Issue

Front Cover

Tribute to death: The cover is a tribute to the spiritual plane; I am inspired by the ability of our ancestors to dress death with bright colors and celebrate the unknown through art; hundreds of small details that make us part of a town that lives the tradition.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Each new edition is a unique opportunity to expand our understanding of Quintana Roo and the Mexican Caribbean. We want to thank all the people who made this fourth edition possible. We believe that perseverance is the key to making Tulum an extraordinary destination and we celebrate all those who make our magazine possible.

HOLA TULUM MAGAZINE

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Editor's Note

By: Nicolás Gerardi

This text is an offering to the writer of Apollo, from whom I learned about elegies and iambic, and also about the flower and the song.

Fósforo, as known in the world of cinema, is the favorite sybarite of booksellers from Ancient Greece. The professor of Roberto Bolaño who dined with Moctezuma and Alexander the Great. Aeda of transparency and way of Latin American literature.

Thanks to Alfonso Reyes, Mexico and Greece are brothers, Mexico and poetry, Mexico and the universe become brothers.

The fourth edition of Hola Tulum is an offering. In the following pages, we will celebrate life and death, biodiversity, we will cross the skies with the birds of the region, we will discover secrets about mezcal and we will remember Posada, father of the Catrina. For this reason, we will start the fourth edition with a tribute to Alfonso Reyes by revisiting one of his sonnets.

Visitación

—Soy la Muerte—me dijo. No sabía que tan estrechamente me cercara, al punto de volcarme por la cara su turbadora vaharada fría.

Ya no intento eludir su compañía: mis pasos sigue, transparente y clara y desde entonces no me desampara ni me deja de noche ni de día.

—¡Y pensar —confesé—, que de mil modos quise disimularte con apodos, entre miedos y errores confundida!

«Más tienes de caricia que de pena». Eras alivio y te llamé cadena. Eras la muerte y te llamé la vida.

Alfonso Reyes Ochoa. (1959). Constanza Poética. México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.



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Mezcal, a prehispanic drink?

Drinks are channels, a connection with the unknown and a fundamental part of every offering, especially alcoholic drinks derived from the agave plant. There are two types of drinks derived from agave, classified into two groups: Those produced from the extraction of sugars, after scraping the stem (mead and pulque), and those that come from the cooking of the heads, stems and leaves to obtain distilled beverages, generically called **mezcal**.

The term mezcal has three meanings: 1) a type of agave endemic to Mexico, 2) a food made from the stem and leaves of this agave, and 3) a distilled alcoholic beverage, made from the heart of the maguey (agave). A debate arises around the latter –did Pre-Hispanic technology cultures distill? There are many speculations around this, but thanks to research conducted at UNAM, we can respond to this controversial debate.

Is mezcal a prehispanic drink? The answer to this question has been answered by research carried out by Dr. Mari Carmen Serra Puche and Dr. J. Carlos Lazcano Arce from the Anthropological Research Institute of UNAM. **The project, called "La Ruta del Mezcal" sought to corroborate the hypothesis that at the site of Xochitecatl-Cacaxtla, near Mexico City, during the Formative period 550 BC - 200 AD., the drink that we now know as mezcal was produced.** This theory was verified from finding ovens and pots with clear evidence that there were residues and runoff of maguey.

The evidence enabled us to test the theory through four types of research:

- a) Archaeological
- b) Ethnohistorical
- c) Ethnoarchaeological
- d) Chemical analysis studies

Evidence found in ovens and pots of Xochitecatl-Cacaxtla:

The first data of the **chemical study** showed that, in the ovens at Xochitecatl-Cacaxtla, the pineapples or "maguey heads" were cooked. This was the first food product found: in some current indigenous communities it is known as mezcal - just

like the drink.

Archaeological data demonstrates that remains of maguey were mixed in with the earth coming from the interior of the pots. These remains indicate that they used the pots to ferment the agave. This fermentation demonstrates the process of transformation of the maguey sugars to obtain alcohol, that is, mezcal.

The archaeological information establishes that kilns were also found in other sites, such as those reported by Di Peso in the Paquime site, which were not used to produce ceramics but used to produce mezcal. Other ovens found in La Quemada, Zacatecas or Guachimontones, Jalisco, are also believed to have had the function of cooking the maguey.

To complement the **chemical** and **archaeological** tests, **ethnoarchaeological** evidence was consulted. Today the production of mezcal in indigenous communities is "petitoria (a pray)", to obtain and achieve good harvests, it is a key element in the patronal rituals and is fundamental in the change of indigenous authority, as an offering to the land, etc.

Accompanying the chemical, **archaeological** and **ethnoarchaeological** data, the most significant finding of the **ethnohistorical** review shows that in the sixteenth century, a chronicler named Fernando de Oviedo (1560) states: "The Indians produce a translucent drink with high alcohol content and a few drops produce stinging and great dizziness," clear evidence that he does not refer to the drink of pulque.

The production of mezcal, in its final phase of the distillation process, relies on the separation of two elements; one more volatile than the other, that will later be condensed. This is where controversy arises in regards to determining whether or not there was mezcal in Pre-Hispanic times. Some believe that there was no technology to distill, and others believe the contrary. However, the answer is blunt and final: **Yes, there was.** This statement is justified, not by finding mezcal, but by finding another element that is necessary for distillation: **liquid mercury**, a product obtained from the cinnabar mines and reported in Maya sites such as Lamanai, Teotihuacan



[Photography] Aurora Sánchez @foto_saja



[Photography] Aurora Sánchez @foto_saja

and, in San José Ixtapa, in Querétaro.

The presence of liquid mercury in Pre-Hispanic times, plus **chemical, ethnoarchaeological, and ethnohistorical** evidence, allow us to point out with great credibility that during the Formative period (beginning 550 BC), in the city of Xochitecatl-Cacaxtla, a high alcohol content beverage was produced, this, we now call mezcal.

As a result of the findings of Dr. Carlos Lazcano, and of the latest discoveries of Avto Goguitchaichvill and Juan Morales in the field of pre-Hispanic distillation, the Mayan Riviera is reclaiming Mesoamerican ethylic experiences. Mixologists and bartenders have fixed their attention on the fermented and distillates typical of Mexico to propose a postcolonial cocktail bar. In Mexico, there are approximately 13 distillates, some of which have "designation of origin", such as tequila, mezcal, bacanora, sotol, and others such as raicilla or pox, which are fighting for cultural recognition.

Currently in Tulum we can travel Mexico through its distillates. Places like Prana Boutique Hotel, Encanto Cantina, Arca Tulum, Gitano, Azulik or Todos Santos, just to name a few, offer experiences that combine pre-Cortesian rituals with a classic mixology to vindicate the untold history of Latin America. Some of the ancestral drinks used in Tulum's cocktail bars are:

Pulque: This is the fermented heart of the pulpy agave, mucilage of the Agave salmiana or Agave atrovirens. A treasure hard to find in the Mexican Caribbean.

Poxotl: It is a drink based on corn and cocoa. It is best served very cold. It does not contain alcohol. You can find many street vendors in Tulum that travel the town and the hotel area with their tricycles, selling pozol with corn and cocoa.

Balché: It is made with bark of the balché tree. It is found in different Maya communities, and its consumption is limited to ceremonial use, therefore we will not find it in bars or canteens.

Tepache: A ferment made from the rind and heart of the pineapple. After six days in the open, it achieves its ideal state. It can be prepared with a little ice and sugar.

Pox: Pox is made up of four corns: the white, the yellow, the red and the black, which together represent the four human races. It is considered medicine and still survives thanks to the Tzotziles in Chiapas.

Tuxca: It is the grandfather of all mezcal. It comes from the Nahuatl voice tascahuecomatl (barn impound). It comes from the towns of Zapotitlán de Vadillo, Tolimán, and Tuxcacuesco. To produce tuxca, they use the natural deposits of volcanic rock, where it is left to ferment, covered with ani-

mal skins –it gives it a very particular flavor.

Mezcal: Mezcal is the generic name for beverages distilled from the cooking of agave. Depending on the type of maguey it has different names. Tequila, for example, is a type of mezcal. It is produced by cooking, crushing, fermenting and distilling the agave. It is found throughout Mexico, every "bar" that is proud to be one must have among its options a good mezcal.

Sotol: It is not mezcal, nor tequila, nor pox, nor tuxca. It comes from the states of Durango, Chihuahua, and Coahuila. This drink obtained its denomination of origin in 2002, there are four varieties: white, young, reposado and añejo.

Raicilla: Raicilla is a distilled from Jalisco, the forgotten cousin of tequila. It is made from agave lechuguilla, its flavor is different from mezcal –fresh and herbal. Its name is due to the wit of a tavern owner who baptized it this way to evade the colonial authority that prohibited the production of local alcoholic beverages.

Bacanora: Originally from the state of Sonora. Due to its high alcohol content, it was banned for 77 years from 1915 to 1992. It is distilled from the yaquiana or pacific agaves venerated by the Yaquis in northern Mexico.

Menjurje de Ancho Reyes: The only dried Poblano chili li-

quor in the world, made in Puebla. Since 1927, it has been used as a home remedy, "menjurje" (concoction) for belly pain and a digestive with a strong chili flavor.

Damiana: A liquor prepared with the aromatic damiana flower, typical of southern Baja California. Its origins go back to the Pre-Hispanic period, the guaycurá (waicura) people used it for ceremonial, aphrodisiac and medicinal purposes. It is a digestive and relaxant.

Xtabentún: A drink of anise and melipona honey, typical of the Maya communities of Quintana Roo and Yucatan. This sweet and aniseed flavor was used as a prehispanic preparation to sweeten food, made popular after the conquest. It was combined with an anis base to obtain an alcoholic beverage. It is very common in Mexican cocktails, with many variations, such as huana, a liqueur made from Maya guanabana, and kalani, a dwarf coconut liqueur from the Mayan Riviera.