

1.13.2023

Susan and Rich are here!

Suasan Rich and I started their visit at a restaurant called Catedral, high end and honestly.too coiffed. Mostly gringos like us.



I do not know how in the world this happened, but Susan and Rich ended up a couple of blocks away from me by total coincidence! We walked to the Zocolo (town square) for breakfast. The Zocolo is a 2 block squared area with grass, flowers and sidewalk in the middle surrounded by 4 rows of generic Mexican restaurants. It is always packed.... People sitting and drinking coffee and people watching, street musicians, venders etc right around the corner is 20 de Noviembre market. Pictured here is 'pasillo de humo' or 'little passage of smoke' an alley lined with meat of all kinds. You select your meat and they cook it in front of you...many open fires and smells.



Next the market. We all bought the most incredible mole to cook at home. I think the best I have ever had. We saw lots of fred grasshoppers and worms for sale. Next, the walking street no cars and lots of people. We looked at textiles for ideas knowing that in the afternoon we would go to the village that is known for making those same textiles. Stopped at the Del Maguey tasting room for a sip of mezcal and walked and walked and walked.



In the mid afternoon we grabbed a taxi for Teotitlan del Valle (most of the non-spanish names are Zapotec). There is a history of Aztec and Mayan, but the Zapotecs have the longest history and biggest presence here. The town is about 30 minutes away and charming as can be. There is a textile market in the middle of town with gorgeous things for sale, but we were all looking for an experience and we DID find one!!!! Below the market we found a



boring little shop. We looked around a bit and asked one simple question and it felt like the world opened up. We asked the slightly bored young woman where they get the wool and did they dye it themselves. Her eyes lit up and she took us to the courtyard. Turns out they had an entire family run industry. She said they go to the mountains for the wool. The shepherders provide them with cut wool and they bring it back and do everything else. It is staggering to see what becomes of the wool. The young woman's passion is mixing colors. We had a delightful, educational lesson in color mixing. Their products are all colors, vibrant and varied, yet they only use three natural products; cochineal (a bug), indigo (a plant) and a yellow flowering plant (can't remember name). Photo is of Susan Rich and the woman who made what they purchased (the husband's mom, Francisca). We went back to Oaxaca with our minds full of wonder and gratitude for the experience.



By the time we got back we were hungry. I suggested a local place that I knew had good food. Our GPS systems were whacked. Rich suggested we just stop at one of the hole in the walls and OMG! So much yummiier! Pozole (one of my favorite

foods) tacos and tostadas. Then home, a wonderful exhausting day!