

La Paz, the capital city of southern Baja and home to approximately 250,000 residents, has always been a closely guarded secret.

BY ENRIOUE VARGA

T 471-YEARS YOUNG, THE CITY retains an unhurried and tranquil pace blessed with temperate weather, a casual ambiance and warm hospitality with unlimited outdoor activities to be enjoyed in an unspoiled environment. A big attraction is its beaches, all of them possessing beautiful white, soft sand. The most ideal swimming beaches are those located on the scenic road to Pichilingue, traversing the coastline to the east of the downtown area. Puerto Balandra, home to the famous "mushroom rock", is a shallow, saltwater lagoon that boasts eight unspoiled bays with gorgeous tourmaline beaches. Tecolote is one of the largest beaches in the area and faces Espíritu Santo Island. Most beaches possess amenities ranging from palapas, restrooms and showers to restaurants, bars and watersports rental equipment outfitters. La Paz is primarily a nautical community, attracting yachtsmen and watersports enthusiasts from around the world. A trip to the nearby offshore islands rewards travelers with excellent sport fishing, diving, kayaking and liveaboard adventures.

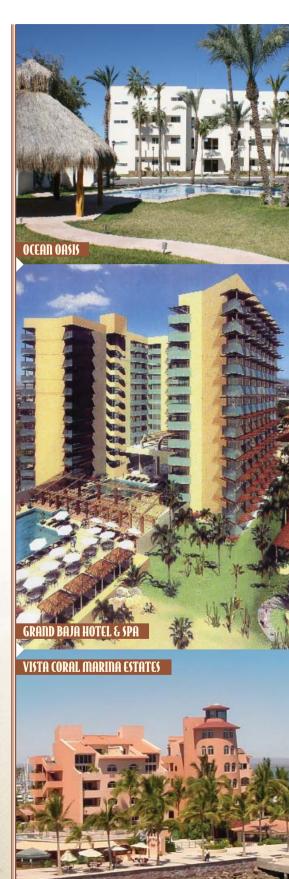
The center of shipping and commerce due to the only deep-water port in southern Baja, La Paz receives a variety of goods from around the world. The city with almost 250,000 residents, is unique in that it maintains the charm of a small Mexican town, yet offers the modern conveniences and services found in most major cities, including excellent medical care. With the glitzy mega resorts of Los Cabos residing to the south, La Paz has become a pleasant alternative to the high energy and high prices found in the Cape region. For those seeking greater value, traditional Mexican

hospitality and a place to experience the beauty of Baja at a slower pace, La Paz offers a fine solution. Over the last three years, property values have escalated and a surge in local resort development indicates the secret of La Paz has finally been discovered.

From the hills of El Centenario on the northwest side of the bay to Balandra and Tecolote's beaches on the northeast side of the bay, new developments are breaking ground, offering a wide range of residence options and a variety of services and amenities. Closest to the downtown area of La Paz, there are a number of new developments both planned and currently under construction aimed at the more upscale American and Canadian market. All of these developments offer waterfront or beachfront locations.

At *Ocean Oasis*, towering palms reach for the sky from a grassy poolside area offering a relaxed lifestyle by the sea. Ocean Oasis is an intimate development located a short block from the La Paz waterfront and malecon. Here you are minutes from leaving your footprints in the sand, with the marina, shopping and restaurants just a short stroll away.

This private gated community is beautifully landscaped and designed with comfort in mind, offering eleven two- and three-bedroom private residential villas ranging from 1,191 sq. ft. to 1,614 sq. ft., priced from \$179,000 to \$255,000 USD. Topside, there are five penthouses with approximately 2,300 sq. ft. priced from \$344,000 to \$370,000 USD. Developed by Megapark using modern construction methods and materials, the residences at Ocean Oasis provide strong investment value.



BAJA LIFE ISSUE TWENTY TWO 2007



The massive building that was once the Gran Baja Hotel is currently being transformed into the Grand Baja & Spa, representing a total renovation of the former hotel into luxury condominium units. Construction began in April 2006 and will eventually provide over 120 one, two, and three-bedroom luxury view condominium units priced from the low \$200,000's up to \$400,000 USD. Future plans include two additional towers next to the original building. The beachfront location will include tennis courts, swimming pools, beachfront activities and a spa. Pre-construction reservations are currently being accepted for units in this complex.

The existing Vista Coral condominium building, located just off the malecon (boardwalk) will be joined by an additional 28-unit, five-story structure called *Vista* Coral Marina Estates. Experienced developers Valerio Gonzalez and Genaro Ruiz, enjoying previous development success in the Los Cabos area, intend to transform the southwest end of the malecon with their totally new Vista Coral project. Phase 1 is sold out and the second phase is now in the final stages of design and permit approvals with construction expected to begin in March. Two and three-bedroom units with unbeatable views of the Bahia de La Paz and the downtown waterfront are available, priced from the low \$400K's. The Vista Coral sales office is located on the new boardwalk.

Atalanta Condominiums, located in the marina at Marina Palmira, was developed by local entrepreneur and developer Lito Gonzalez. It's a great option for those who have a boat or prefer living on the marina waterfront. There are 2-bedroom/2-bath units ranging in price from \$300,000 to \$420,000 USD and size from 1,281 sq. ft. to 1,636 square feet. A 3-bedroom/3-bath penthouse with 2,938 sq. ft. sells for \$1,000,000 USD.

On the hillside overlooking the north end of the malecon, you'll find *Colina Del Sol*, a new condominium complex offering 16

exclusive units with magnificent views of the City and the Bay of La Paz. Amenities include a gym, controlled gate access, swimming pool, covered parking, Jacuzzi and a grill area. All units are air-conditioned and feature custom wood cabinetry, marble counter tops and covered terraces. One and two-bedroom units ranging from 979 sq. ft to 1,239 sq. ft. are priced from \$192,000 USD.

Adjacent to the La Concha Beach Hotel are the *La Concha Pearl* luxury condominiums, a new seven-story, 33-unit complex located on one of the best beaches in La Paz. The development team of Robert Hefner and Dan shore arrived in La Paz with substantial experience both in the U.S. as well as Baja California. The La Concha Pearl will be built with state-of-the-art "cast in place" concrete using the Quad Lock Foam product. Possessing superb insulation characteristics, the "green" building material delivers a 40-60% energy savings and provides excellent soundproofing as well.

Having just broken ground, the La Concha Pearl will feature studios, one, two and three bedroom condos plus extremely luxurious penthouses from 3,800 to more than 5,000 sq. ft. with prices from \$299,000 up to \$1.5 Million USD. The beachfront site was selected because of its proximity to the downtown and it is perfect for swimming, snorkeling and kayaking. The La Concha Pearl features large kitchens and baths, granite countertops using elegant stone and tiles, all designed to set a new standard of excellence in La Paz. Every residence offers unobstructed ocean views from which to savor La Paz's legendary, fiery red sunsets and city lights. A two-tiered infinity pool, spas, BBQ and palapa areas with lush landscaping are included as part of the amenities.

Just to the north of the La Concha Pearl, you'll find the new site for the luxury condominium development of *Playa de La Paz* located four miles from the heart of La Paz on a 5-acre site with 835 feet of pristine beachfront. Having broken ground in December, 2006, this very high-end development will

offer a total of 60 condominium units including spectacular one, two and threebedroom condos and penthouse dwellings set into a multi-million dollar architectural plan. The developer, Jeffrey Curtiss, is an international entrepreneur with a successful business and development history. With Curtiss the main driving force leading a consortium of international investors, the team brings a passion for quality and the desire to create a new standard of resort living to La Paz. Renowned architect Gerardo Ulate of Guadalajara, Mexico was selected to design Plava de La Paz. The firm is well-known for its work on high-end, luxury developments in both Costa Careyes and Puerto Vallarta.

The condominiums and penthouses range from 1,918 square feet to 5,988 square feet and feature the finest appointments and amenities including concierge and valet service, business center, party and children's room, a fitness center and Spa, restaurant and pool deck. The condominiums and lobby will feature exotic wood finishes, imported marble floors and high end details. All units enjoy spectacular sunset views, with the residences priced from \$750,000 USD to over \$2.5 million USD.

Maravia Country Club Estates, the newest master-planned, gated golf community in La Paz, is now under construction. The first 156 homes offered in Phase I are nearly sold-out and Phase II will be opening soon. Situated on a very large parcel with spectacular elevations, all of Maravia's lots have spectacular ocean and mountain views of Tecolote Beach, Espiritu Santo Island and the future 18-hole Maravia Championship Golf Course. You may choose from over twelve residence models depending on your choice of lot starting at \$49,000 USD. Finished homes featuring tropical palapas, outdoor terraces and a fully integrated solar power system start at just \$98,000 USD. First American Title Insurance Company offers 100% coverage of your land and home investment, making this development one of the best investment values in La Paz.

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To make an appointment to tour any of these properties, please contact Sean Bagg at Land's End Realty in La Paz at www.landsendrealty.com.

For more information about the destination of La Paz and the real estate opportunities, please visit www.vivalapaz.com.

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