

MEXICO

TURKEY, TINSEL AND TEQUILA: LOS CABOS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

By BEKAH WRIGHT
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One of the best things about holidays? The built-in vacation days that tend to come with them. Which begs the question: Is

it time to start a new tradition this year by escaping to Baja?

During the holidays, the area comes alive with seasonal celebrations that kick off at Thanksgiving and culminate in the New Year. So pack a party hat and

some sunblock and head down to Los Cabos.

Talking Turkey

Just because you happen to be south of the border, that's no reason to miss out on turkey and

pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving, especially with all of the spectacular feasts prepared at Cabo resorts this time of year.

One particularly delectable option is The Restaurant at Esperanza, an Auberge Resort. Executive Chef Sergio Howland cooks up a four-course dinner that unites American classics with Mexican flavors. Among the options: roasted artichoke soup with foie gras gelée and 10-year-old port syrup followed by roasted turkey breast with zinfandel gravy, maple stuffing and stewed cranberries.

A traditional turkey dinner is on tap at The Restaurant at Las Ventanas al Paraíso, a Rosewood Resort. Those looking for a turkey alternative should sample Executive Chef Fabrice Guisset's Cocina del Fuego, or fire cuisine, at the resort's Sea Grill. Clay ovens, wood-fire grills, fine olive oils and fresh organic herbs from the resort's garden make entrees from veal chops to lobster tails flavorful. Missing the bird? The roast free-range Rock Cornish hen with herbs ably fits the bill.

Tinsel Time

During the holidays, Baja takes on a little extra sparkle with fantastic holiday decorations adorning resorts and restaurants



alike. For example, rather than a Christmas tree, Las Ventanas decorates two *torotes* — wrought-iron tree sculptures — with twinkling lights, red hearts and colorful Mexican boxes. Special holiday activities are also featured at this time of year. Daily celebrations, including mariachi concerts, stargazing and special spa treatments, begin at the One&Only Palmilla during the week between Christmas and New Year's. On Christmas Eve, live music at the resort's various venues abounds. In addition, Agua hosts a special set-course dinner. On Christmas, the revelry continues with brunch and live music from mariachi to jazz.

Año Nuevo

New Year's Eve in Baja consists of far more than a soulful mariachi rendition of "Auld Lang Syne." Indeed, on this special night, grand affairs are in full swing. Spectacular theme dinners take center stage at Esperanza, while El Restaurante celebrates the tumultuous relationship of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera with decorations inspired by the two artists, a four-course dinner and music. At La Palapa, an underwater theme is highlighted.

Candlelight sets the mood at Las Ventanas while guests share a special menu prepared by Chef Guisset. As the clock ticks toward midnight, the Wayne Foster Band takes the stage and rocks in the new year. The One&Only Palmilla hosts a party at Agua's Bahia Fireplace, while throughout the resort, live music performances encourage dancing into the night. Better than a disco ball: the light from fireworks exploding above the sea.

Indeed, lest "old acquaintance be forgot," invite them along to Cabo.

Bekah Wright writes regularly about Mexico and Hawaii.