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C A R I B B E A N & M E X I C A N L U X U R Y

## Mexican Artists

ACAPULCO'S PAL KEPENYES  
CANCUN'S LOCAL ART SCENE

## Acapulco Getaway

CLIFF DIVING  
ACAFEST 2003

## British Virgin Islands

ROYAL RETREAT

## Trendy Toys

PORSCHE 911, COUPE & CABRIOLET

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# IN THE PINK

HEALTHY NEWS FOR PEOPLE ON THE GO

BY BONNIE CARROLL

*It's often not easy to travel and eat well, or, remember what products are out there to keep you fit between flights, running to an appointment, or just enjoying a few days of rest and relaxation. Organic products, which seemed to be the mantra of happy hippies in the 70's, have become household necessities, and, the big "O" on products is now considered certifiably chic. According to recent research by Spins/AC Nielson, at a time when total all-outlet grocery food sales have been declining, sales of organic foods are up 24%. The following represent some of the hot new items for trendsetters seeking organic opulence:*

## PROTECTIVE PAMPERING

*Squeeze 'n Shave* by Hok2 is the ultimate in healthy hair removal, and comes in blue colored ocean scent, green colored garden scent, and caramel colored soothing vanilla tang scent. These easy on the skin travel razors come three-in-a-box with disposal razor heads. Hok2 also makes stylized razors for use in the shower, with a fog proof mirror or stand alone razors for use at the sink.

See [www.Hok2.com](http://www.Hok2.com).

*Kiss My Face* has a wonderful line of sun protection skin care products, and a complete new line of organic skin products. This product is historic in the healthy skin scheme of things. They have been around a long time, and continue to develop and improve their products. They also offer a special line of kid's skin products for sun protection, as well as a natural bug repellent.

See [www.kissmyface.com](http://www.kissmyface.com).

*Santa Barbara Botanicals* has introduced individual travel packages - Indulge Your Senses - natural moisturizing home-style soaps in nine different scents. The products are made with natural ingredients and fragrances and provide a luxurious lather, with an uplifting scent. They also offer Clean Cream, a delightful lavender cream soap in a tube that moisturizes as it cleans and is great for shaving.

See [www.santabarbarabotanicals.com](http://www.santabarbarabotanicals.com).



The coastline of Quintana Roo has its feet in many worlds. At 860 kilometers long, it is the second longest coastline in the Caribbean (after Cuba) and simultaneously part of the Caribbean, Mexican and Maya World.

Its coral reef ecosystem is the longest in America and the second longest in the world. At 500 kilometers long, and between 100 and 250 kilometers wide at the northern end and 3,000 meters wide at the southern end, the reef extends practically the entire length of the state's coastline, from Punta Nizuc in Cancún to the Bay of Honduras.

Along this Great Barrier Reef, the Mexican Government and the private sector have established different types of protected areas to guarantee the preservation and sustainable use of its natural resources. The Isla Mujeres West Coast, Punta Cancún and Punta Nizuc Underwater Park is located at the northern end of the reef system; just to the south is the Puerto Morelos Reef Park and the Solidaridad District and Southern Underwater Ecological Reserve; in the center is the Sian Ka'an Reefs Biosphere Reserve; and at the extreme south is the Xcalak Reefs National Park. The Cozumel Underwater National Park is singularly beautiful and is visited by nearly one-half million people each year.

Development of the barrier reef is varied and depends, just like any other ecosystem, on physical conditions such as water in which the temperature never goes below an average of 20°C, clear water, with little organic material in suspension to allow sun rays to penetrate up to 50 meters and superficial substrates at a depth of between 15 and 100 meters. Underwater topography allows growth of barrier reefs in several different ways: in the north, the continental ridge is very wide, so coral reefs are less developed in the deep parts, where their structures are covered by marine algae. At shallow depths, on the reef crest and backside, they are better developed and coral grows in abundance. On Isla Mujeres' western coast, reefs are found in patches or spots, which are ideal for diving to maximum depths of 15 meters. They are surrounded by beds of sea grass, which team with marine life that loves to graze on the pastures. From the north of Playa del Carmen to Puerto Aventuras, the strong current of the Cozumel Channel limits growth and coral development is isolated to colonies on sandy platforms. The splendid live coral barrier reef extends from Tulum to the Belize border in a practically continuous line with few breaks and has huge coral mountains, medium to high relief channels. This is where coral formations reach their maximum development.

The organisms responsible for this incredible underwater world are tiny animals that are the size of a pinhead, called polyps. They are classified as Anthozoa and use the minerals dissolved in water (such as calcium carbonate) to build their houses (exoskeletons). Once these are empty, they form the base for new generations of polyps, building this enormous

Mexican barrier coral reef over a 20,000-year period. In general, polyps form two very distinct types of corals that are easily identified by divers.

Soft corals, or gorgonians, come in different shapes: fans, sea plumes or plants. Some 41 species have been identified in the Mexican Caribbean, including the famous black coral.

Hard or scleractinian coral are those that truly form the barrier reef and are identified in different ways, their names usually alluding to their characteristics. To date, up to 45 species have been registered in certain areas



of the coral reef. The polyps forming the hard coral live in harmony with algae called zooxanthella, which supply the polyps with nutrients and are the source of the showy colors on the reef.

The reason a coral reef is compared to a tropical jungle is simple: the great diversity. The Great Maya Reef is home to nearly 100 species of coral, 72 species of micro-algae from the plant kingdom, other microscopic animals and 30 species of sponges. 164 species of reef-dwelling fish have been identified near the reef (and 60 percent are a valuable food source for humans). However, all the species are incredibly beautiful and are enormously valuable as an attraction for tourists. Sea anemones, tube worms, crustaceans like crabs and lobster, mollusks such as conch and sea cucumbers and echinoderms like seaurchins and starfish are just some of the thousands of species of marine life found in this underwater jungle.



## ENERGY AS YOU GO

*Balance Bar* has expanded its flavor horizons with three new flavors, including Strawberry Cheesecake, Cookie Dough, and Cookies n' Crème. Balance bars are based on the 40-30-30 nutrition philosophy - a diet rich in protein with moderate carbohydrates for lasting energy. They are designed to prevent the dreaded energy crash, and provide complete nutrition. This is another easy to carry option for travelers.

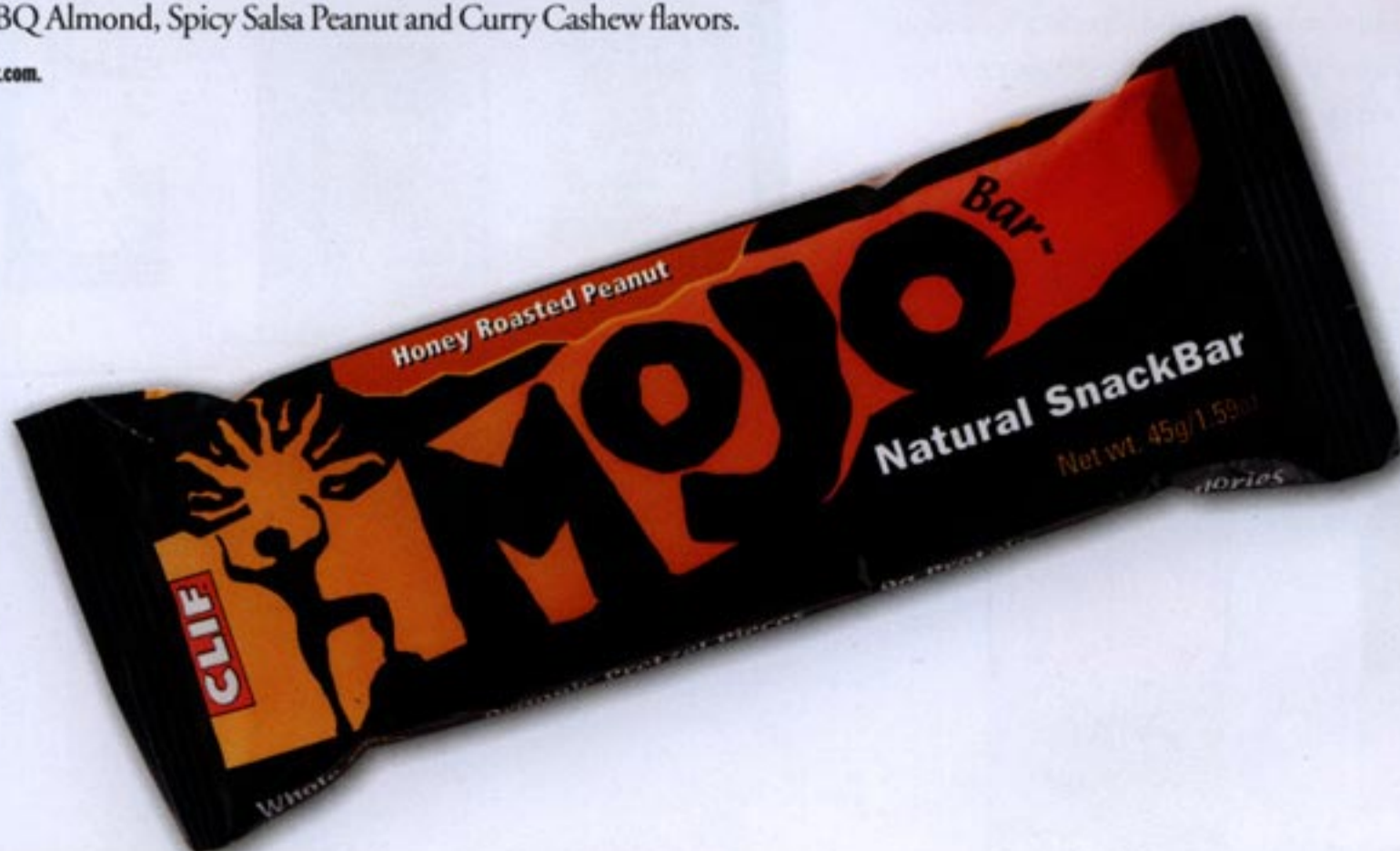
See [www.balance.com](http://www.balance.com).

Savvy parents, who are really snack wise, the natural way, are introducing their kids to *Stretch Island Fruit Bars*. They are made of 100% fruit with only 45 calories and no sugar. This is a healthy, fat free kosher snack that comes in nine great fruit flavors, and any adult or child can carry in them in their pocket or include as a part of their lunch menu. They have been approved for the National School Lunch Program.

See [www.stretch-island.com](http://www.stretch-island.com).

*Clif Bar* recently introduced the *MOJO Bar*, a first of its kind snack bar. It combines popular salty snack flavors and sound nutrition in a convenient, portable bar that meets the needs of on-the-go snackers. The new Mojo comes in Honey Roasted Peanut, Mixed Nuts, Honey BBQ Almond, Spicy Salsa Peanut and Curry Cashew flavors.

See [www.clifbar.com](http://www.clifbar.com).



## JUST FOR KIDS

*Annie's Naturals*, a new line of organic salad dressing just for kids, are also a hit with adults. With names like Tutti Fruitti, Pizza Pie and Zoom, the dressings come in lively colors, are gluten free, sugar free and kids think they make eating salad fun.

See [www.anniesnaturals.com](http://www.anniesnaturals.com).

*Miss Meringue Cookies* has introduced a new Coconut Orange Cookie to its already deliciously versatile line. Along with Coconut Orange, they also have Chocolate Mint and Chocolate Chip now available. They live up to the name and are light, fluffy and full of flavor that is simply wonderful.

See [www.MissMeringue.com](http://www.MissMeringue.com).

## BENEFICIAL BEVERAGES

*Silk Soymilk* recently announced that Starbucks would offer Silk, America's top-selling soymilk, in 4,000 North American Locations. The new, exclusive formula is specifically designed to compliment Starbucks signature espresso roast and Tazo Chi, and is non-GMO, organic and kosher.

See [www.SilkSoy.com](http://www.SilkSoy.com).

*Boyd's Coffee* recently announced that its new Cafe Rojas, a double-certified blend of organic coffee would soon be widely available in hotels. According to Randy Layton, Boyd's Coffee Company coffee master and vice president of coffee operations, "for some time we have been looking to bring this type of high quality product to hotels, and our partnership with the Rainforest Alliance has enabled us to take this step." Café Rojas is a rich dark roast, sweet coffee with a smooth finish.

For information go to [www.boydscoffee.com](http://www.boydscoffee.com)

*Amé*, a sophisticated new nonalcoholic substitute for champagne or table wine, has the healthy set waiting in line. With no sodium, fat, cholesterol, sugar, artificial sweetener or artificial coloring, the beverage is considered chic by health-conscious consumers, and is perfect for people on the go. The name is derived from the Japanese word for 'gentle rain', and the sparkling juices have been praised by wine connoisseurs.

See [customerservice@naturalgroup.net](mailto:customerservice@naturalgroup.net).

