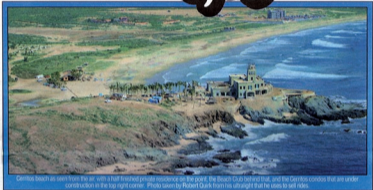


GRINGO Gazette

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Cabo beach as seen from the air, with a half finished private residence on the point, the Beach Club hotel and that, and the Gringos condos that are under construction in the background. Photo courtesy Robert Clark from the Gringo Gazette.

Rodeo Drive Is Open For Business

■ Here called Luxury Ave

BY BILL LONEY

Luxury Avenue, the brainchild of company Grupo Ultramarine (owners of the trendy zones Ultramarine and Ultravioleta), opened its glass doors to the masses on December 20th, just in the nick of time for Christmas.

The small, new talk and canceling leaves and chattering ordinary stores and restaurants to the back of the bus

to make room for what they want to present as a sort of Rodeo Drive, or Fifth Ave. A collection of ultra expensive, very snooty stores.

Nor all the stores are there yet, and while the massive marina front portion of the upscale boutique department stores look great, it's not all finished. For example, work-

rooms were still facing with the



Luxury Avenue, the Rodeo Dr. for tourists in Mexico, opened its shiny new facade on the Cabo marina right before the new year.

planning for what looks like a fountain-out front.

The boutiques that are open include Coach, Fendi, Tiesy, Ultrajewelz, Ultramarine and Veldtranz. The Montblanc, Swarovski, Carolina Herrera and Fendi stores look pretty much finished, except the shelves were empty. The stores that are open are pretty impressive, being all about high-end, upscale, professional-looking stuff, serious security, and lots of high-end super-expensive bags, purses, jewelry and perfume, in case anybody has any money to buy these toys.

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Amnesty For Foreigners In Mexico

■ A push to regularize illegal aliens in Mexico might be useful for aliens who are here without visas

BY DORIS OPEN

As of November 12th, the Mexican Department of Immigration (INM) has created an amnesty program of sorts, allowing foreigners who meet certain criteria to fast-track their way to an FM-3 even if they have been here illegally, without visas. But there are hitches to this program; they need to meet certain criteria.

Charlene Ramos, of Rosen Law firm, explained that this is part of the "2008

Immigration Regularization Program," and it was just approved by INM. All foreigners are eligible now for amnesty if they have an "irregular" immigration status in Mexico—e.g., someone with an expired FM-3, or an ancient tourist visa, or no visa at all.

If they qualify, they get an FM-3—which is the status that's on the path to becoming a permanent resident. And

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swap, and the group is even calling for cash from Palmlila's developers to finance the public recreational area they envision. Our state governor Narciso Aguduez has vowed to support the Mexicans trying to get their beach back. The architects' association is working on the project plans, which will in turn be available for bids under the supervision of the engineers association. That is, if the Supreme Court does not rule in favor of Palmlila developers. Stay tuned. ➤

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this is now possible even if the foreigner never had a proper FM-3 in the first place.

To qualify you must: 1. have entered Mexico on or before December 31, 2006 and remain you will need to remain in the country until the amnesty application is granted, and 2. Show proof of holding down either a job (or have a job offer) in

swap, and the group is even calling for cash from Palmlila's developers to finance the public recreational area they envision. Our state governor Narciso Aguduez has vowed to support the Mexicans trying to get their beach back. The architects' association is working on the project plans, which will in turn be available for bids under the supervision of the engineers association. That is, if the Supreme Court does not rule in favor of Palmlila developers. Stay tuned. ➤

Mexico, or have a Mexican relative (spouse or common-law spouse, parent or child); or have a foreign relative (spouse or common-law spouse, parent or child) who has valid immigration documents. 3. Have a valid passport; and finally, 4. Pay a possible fine which may range between US \$100 and \$500.

Ramos says that the program is a breakthrough, because, although INM has had amnesty programs before, the criteria were usually even more selective and often the terms of amnesty were only extended to certain nationalities. That's because these programs are usually designed to help Mexico regulate the workers who pour into its underground economy, e.g., the many Guatemalans working illegally here in Mexico. But since the program doesn't have restrictions on nationalities, it looks like finally Gringos can take advantage of a program

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gration violation.

As an added incentive for foreigners to apply, the program expressly prohibits immigration officials from detaining and/or attempting to deport any foreigner who approaches the authorities to regularize his/her immigration status in Mexico. That's a novelty, and another major change from past practice. It doesn't mean you can't get deported. It just means that if you fit this criteria and try to make your status right again, you are protected.

The new program went into effect on November 12, and will remain in force until May 11, 2011. Charlene Ramos, a partner in Rosen Law and the head of immigration practice there, is vol-

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to get on a normalization path, as well.

INM promises the processing time will be shorter than usual—only about two months. And they say they will only deny an applicant who meets all of those criteria in "extreme" cases, like if the foreigner was convicted of a crime or a severe immi-

gration violation.



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amenities include:

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- o equipped kitchens, hurricane
- o utility, covered two-car

unteering her assistance to anyone who wants to take advantage of the program. She can be reached at cramos@rosenlaw.com.mx.