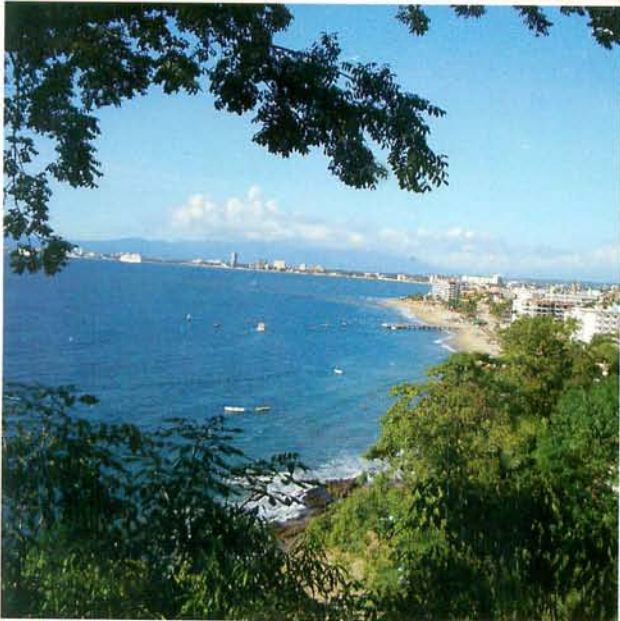
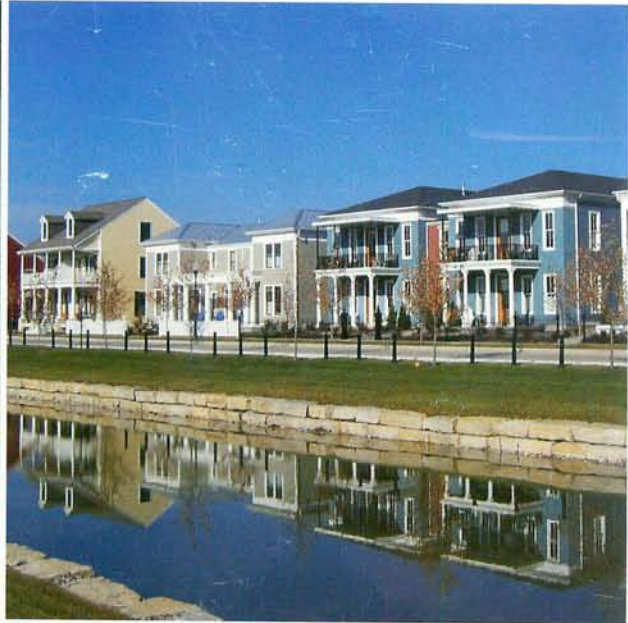


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VIVA VILLA VERANO

A lively group from St. Charles County soaks up the sun in Mexico

By Brenda Grafeman

Villa Verano is a privately owned estate in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The estate is not open to the general public, but available for rental to accommodate one private group at a time.

The estate was built in the late 1960's by Margaret Macy, a descendent of R.H. Macy, founder of the Macy's Department Stores, as a refuge from the hustle of New York. Ideally placed on a mountainside of the Sierra Madre Mountain Range on the Conchas Chinas Beach, it overlooks 34 miles of the coastline of Banderas Bay (Bay of Flags).

The estate was purchased in 1983 by a restaurateur of 27 years from Newport Beach, California as a retirement home. With Puerto Vallarta's average temperatures of 71-83° throughout the year and a mild continuous sea breeze, the current owner could retire in his "bathing suit".

Attracted not only to the climate and tropical setting, the owner fell in love with Puerto Vallarta. The city's economy is based on tourism; hence, public safety is vital. As a result, Puerto Vallarta has an extraordinarily low crime rate. The downtown area of Puerto Vallarta, with endless opportunities for entertainment, shopping, dining and activities, is only a five-minute walk from Villa Verano.

Whereas the quaint beauty and activities in the city of Puerto Vallarta are abundant, you may be challenged to leave the solitude and the beauty of Villa Verano. Villa Verano, a 17,000 square foot estate with 11 bedrooms, is surrounded by ivy-covered walls and tucked into verdant tropical gardens creating a nirvana for its guests. Each guest room is spacious with private marble baths and breathtaking views of the beach and bay from the terrace.

As you retreat into the tranquil and serene surroundings of the Villa the conscientious and delightful staff of 11 will pamper you. Sit back and relax as the two chefs, Jesus



and Felipe, (trained under American standards) prepare your meals. The guests select the menu for each meal. Groceries are purchased at market daily according to the selections and the meals are prepared and then served at an exquisitely set table at one of the four dining venues in the Villa. There is no reason to lift a finger. The housekeepers do your laundry while your snacks and drinks will be served wherever you may be at the time. Angel (On-hel), the Villa's full-

time concierge will make all the arrangements necessary for your activities and entertainment during your stay.

Outdoors, guests enjoy the yard with a large pool, pool bar, and cabanas. You may want to stroll the beach or workout in the open-air fitness room. Spa services and fitness instructions, including manicures, pedicures, massages, or Pilates and yoga, can be arranged for you at the Villa. Available for the guest is a library with reading material, a piano, television, a computer with Internet access, and a phone with unlimited long distance. Gather with friends from your group and play board games, dominoes, or cards in the living room.

Villa Verano's record of a 93% repeat factor, a 95% occupancy rates and approximately a one-year advance notice on bookings, speaks clearly for the quality of service and the exceptional accommodations. The hosts for this group of friends celebrated their third stay at the Villa Verano. During the months of June thru October there is a 7 bedroom for 4 nights minimum stay and for the months of November thru May there is an 8 bedroom for 4 nights minimum stay requirement. The Villa is closed during the month of September to accommodate the staff's vacation and any necessary repairs. **SCM**

To learn more about Villa Verano in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico you may visit www.villaverano.com.

Photos: 1. Sylvia Yarber, Jennifer Kazmaier, Carrie Thornton, Brenda Grafeman and Carie Caskey-Finke 2. Celebrity wall of photos 3. The St. Charles party had been visiting Villa Verano during the World Series, and they brought the staff Cardinal caps 4. Fresh lobster served Caribbean-style 5. Debbie Groeper, Jennifer Kazmaier, Carrie Caskey-Finke, Carrie Thornton and Deb Smith 6. Rick & Kayron Egelhoff, Dee Bax & the gang 7. Greg Smith, Brad Kazmaier, Don Yarber, Gary Grafeman, Matt Thornton and Richard Finke 8. Steve Groeper and Don Yarber 9. Gorgeous sunsets 10. Guests were treated to beautiful table-sets each meal 11. The veranda 12. A banana tree off the veranda 13. A lonely Iguana on a tile roof...how did he ever get up there?? 14. A view from the veranda 15. The interior of Puerta Vallarta's Cathedral located in the city's square 16. A peek at the pool and grounds

