



BAJA CONNECTION

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Baja California Sur's ever-growing connection to the mountains of Colorado

By LISA GREEN

special to the daily



Two miles of unspoiled beach in front of the Palm Orchard in Pescadero.

Special to the Daily/Lisa Green

There's a strong, and ever-growing connection between Summit and Eagle Counties and the Mexican Baja. Many familiar mountain faces are down in Baja California Sur: the Los Cabos area, and farther north to Pescadero and Todos Santos.

Jim Brinkerhoff, a developer from Edwards, has already tapped into this market with his beautiful Palm Orchard property. This Pacific ocean-front spot is nearly 20 acres of pristine, specimen palm trees and plants. A stretch of magnificent, nearly private beach extends more than a half-mile north and south, punctuated at each end with world-class surf breaks at San Pedrito and Los Cerritos. As he develops this next-generation, residential resort, he'll be developing a lifestyle as well. He founded his business in 2003, and he's seen the boom.

The weather is perfect every day — sunny, breezy, dry and mild temperatures throughout most of the year. After years of shoveling snow, it's a reward to be able to live here. There are fields of crops and calla lilies. Whales breach and the sun sets right at your feet. There's art, crafts and live music, as well as fresh fish, vegetables, great dining and lots of options for a small town.

And if you want a big city, there are three within the region. An hour or so south is the hoppin' resort Cabo San Lucas, with its many restaurants, hotels and clubs. About 20 minutes beyond, going east along the Sea of Cortez, you can enjoy the quaint, Spanish colonial town of San Jose Del Cabo, and explore the new marina project outside of town heading toward the East Cape.

Just 45 minutes north of Todos Santos on the new four-lane highway is La Paz, the state capital of Baja California Sur. It is a very sophisticated city and governmental center, and it has long been noted as a great, affordable place to retire by Money and Fortune magazines. With the recent declines in economic markets, more and more baby boomers will be considering affordable retirement opportunities in Mexico. There are already many "gringos" here who have paved the way, so the transition will likely be seamless. Welcome to southern Southern California!

So it would seem that Jim Brinkerhoff's Palm Orchard is situated in the middle of paradise. And the real estate office that led him to this magic place is Ricardo Amigo Real Estate of Todos Santos (www.ricardoamigo.com). Owner Richard Friend

"There are still great values to be found here," he said.

Friend also has deep ties to Summit County as a former high school football and wrestling coach, and as a manager of various restaurants.

"There is great compatibility in the mountain and Baja lifestyles," Friend added.

Many Todos Santos locals will long cherish sharing the porch at Shut-Up Frank's bar with their friend — the late Bill Heschke, former manager of The Whale's Tail in Breckenridge. He loved it here. So do many other Summit and Eagle county folks who have made at least a part-time home.

Remember Pazzo's of Vail (and Avon) opened in Cabo San Lucas? Although not the original owners, Pazzo's is still here in the Puerto Paraiso Mall Food Court.