



Left: A coastal view from a house above Sayulita. Above: Alycia Cavadi, author Majka Burhardt and Elizabeth O'Neill.



BREAK AWAY

Surfing in Sayulita

A professional climber and filmmaker takes a break by riding some breaks.

BY MAJKA BURHARDT

I've spent seven of the past 12 months on the road, climbing granite spires in Norway, speaking about Ethiopian coffee in the Netherlands and producing an adventure, science and conservation film project in Mozambique. My travels take me many places, but hardly ever to the beach. So in December I stuffed four bikinis into a carry-on and booked a trip with friends to Sayulita, a surfing village half an hour northwest of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Elizabeth, a Coloradan, and I have been friends for more than eight years. We're former housemates and equally devoted to our canine companions. Alycia is from New Hampshire, where I just moved from Colorado—we're new friends, but already tightly connected by our time shared in the mountains of New England.

The three of us each have our own businesses, and we all needed to take a break from the hustle and had the flexibility to head out on a five-day trip with three weeks' notice. That Elizabeth and Alycia didn't know each other—or that I'd never been on a trip with either

of them—didn't worry me in the slightest. What's better than tossing new and old friendships together in the waves of the Pacific?

Our life in Sayulita centered around three things: surfing (we grabbed rides to nearby breaks, boards and more from WildMex), eating (Terra Viva and the churro stand at Avenue Revolución and Pelicanos Street were our favorites) and sleeping (at the Hotel Vogue and Villa Amor). We became an easy threesome, trading surfing tips as well as stories about business and family. In the beginning, I was the common denominator. By the end, our relationship was three-dimensional.

My life is based on movement, and my challenge is to make home wherever I am. I didn't plan for Sayulita to be anything other than a break with good waves. It ended up being the most important travel I did all year. Remember the children's song, "Make New friends but Keep the Old"? I've added a new verse: "Put them together and get real richness." It doesn't rhyme, but that's not the point. ▼