

The Insider's Edge

By Gregory R. Gunter

She's quite the salsa...!

Renaissance woman **Patricia Merrill** just added the title "author" to her storied career, 37 years of which were in architecture and regional planning. The San Miguel native—her father came to San Miguel on the G.I. Bill to study art—penned favorite recipes for her new book, *The Buen Provecho Book*, teaching expat-transplant readers her favorite Mexican colloquialisms about food, family, and the follies of living a lifetime in San Miguel. Buyers of her book—autographed at the **Actinver-Lloyd**-hosted event—were heard to repeat "Es mi mero mole!" ("It's just my mole!"). And yes, Patty, we added a dollop of cream to our tacos!



Writers Workshop's Eva Hunter, Consular Agent Ed Clancy, and author Patricia Merrill.



Actinver-Lloyd's José Luis Leija and local manager Fernando González hosted the event.



Mayor Lucy Nuñez and husband Javier Zavala enjoyed the festivities.

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p57

world, not in an overly-protected environment. When Berenice, the eldest girl at Santa Julia, was 18 she was asked by a gathering of adults at *Imagina* what the heck "we," the collective community, were all going to do when the talking was done about family violence. I was dumbstruck by her wizened response: she said, "When you pass the baton to us, we won't use it as a bat!"

My favorite personality in San Miguel? Don't tell, but it's: I confess, you'll begin to sense a theme here when I tell you: it's Madre Superiora María

de Jesús Ortiz Balderas, best known by Santa Julia's 45 girls as Mother Chuy. We like to say she's a little puddle of Zen—she is just an amazingly calm, caring woman. Mother Chuy's motto is "We make family through acceptance, humanity and spirituality," and the girls see it in her actions every day. In addition to working from 5am to midnight daily caring for the health, finances, and spirituality of a small village of girls, she finds the strength to sleep between two babies who are now too sick to sleep alone. In her poem "To Give," she wrote "I can give inspiration to all," and, indeed, she does so daily!

Atención

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