

NEWS YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEED

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Our Recent Trip to San Miguel de Allende - Carla Cotropia

San Miguel de Allende, Mexico is such a beautiful -easy to get to- colonial town. It is the

perfect trip for a long weekend. Over the July 4th holiday, we flew into Queretaro Mexico- only a two-hour flight from Houston-and was picked up by our hotel for a short one hour trip into San Miguel. This trip we decided to stay at Hotel Amparo.

Hotel Amparo is owned and run by Mariana Barran de Goodall, a cute-as-can-be young woman whose personality can only be described as effervescent. Mariana was born in Monterrey Mexico and has worked in Houston where she now also has a shop, Hibiscus Linens. Mariana said she attended a convent and the nuns taught her how to do traditional stitchery and embroidery. Hibiscus Linens sells her beautiful linens and all the linens, towels in the Hotel Amparo are hand embroidered and from her store. Every time you have a coffee or drink, it comes with a little linen cocktail napkin, hand embroidered.

Hotel Amparo is truly a luxury hotel and deserves this distinction. It was formerly the mayor's residence and has only 5 beautiful rooms. Here is a picture of Mariana and the beautiful courtyard where you have your breakfast, included with the room, every day.



Check out the hotel's website <https://hotelamparo.com> to see pictures of the beautiful rooms. We stayed in the Rey room and it could not have been better.

Every day at cocktail hour, we had a free drink, courtesy of Hotel Amparo specially prepared by our bartender, Gabriel. Hotel Amparo is close to the Jardin or square. I love seeing the ones selling balloons.



Mariana was a wealth of good information, especially for the shopper in me. The weather in San Miguel is perfect, 50s or 60s in the morning and getting into the 80s during the day. Low humidity makes it a welcome relief from Houston. San Miguel is 6234 feet in altitude so the sun can get hot during the day. I packed all wrong with jeans and black tee-shirts and that packing mistake gave me the perfect excuse to go shopping for alternatives. Mariana gave me several good tips. One shop was Mixta where I hit the shopping payload with several cute dresses all at a very reasonable price. Tom was extremely patient and enjoyed the patio while I shopped. The merchants take pride in their shops and even clean the sidewalks in front.



Mariana's recommendations for dinner included a very nice meal at the Hotel Amparo restaurant on the rooftop as well as the Buenos Aires Bistro. At the Buenos Aires Bistro, I had grilled romaine (a small attempt to curve the margarita calories) and other delicious tapas. Speaking of margaritas, the Los Milagro bar was my favorite. Here, I had a margarita, Tom a wine, and free peanuts all for \$13. The Los Milagro bar has several informative phrases on the walls such as "Para Todo Mal Mezcal & Para Todo Bien

Tambien" meaning "For Everything Bad That Happens, There's Mezcal, And For Everything Good, There's Still Mezcal." Another wall says, "Los Duendes de la Vida Despiertan Con Mezcal" meaning The Goblins of Life Wake Up With Mezcal." Not sure if this is true or even profound but here are the walls.



Tom finally hit the shopping wall with me on day five. (His only purchase was a shoeshine.) I can certainly understand his overload. San Miguel is a shopper's paradise. No matter where we are in the world, I always have to go to the local market. San Miguel was no different. I found huaraches, beaded jewelry for friends and goodies for my nieces and nephews. I love the smell of corn tortillas on the grill and all the fruits and vegetables. Actually, I just love being with all the hustle and bustle of the market and haven't seen a tchotchke I didn't want to buy. My pesos seems to constantly be diminishing even though everything still seems very cheap, or should I say reasonable. The most important is the items are made by the people there and not from CHINA.





Mariana's Hotel Amparo is a special place not only because it is small and beautiful but because of Mariana's attention to detail. There seems to be more wait staff and servers than guests and everyone is so eager to please. This includes Carla requesting chocolate at night, even though Hotel Amparo always leaves a desert in your room. When we got back from dinner, there was a miniature lava chocolate cake on a small plate with a delicate linen napkin.

The bed linens are so soft and comfy I had a hard time getting up in the morning but the thought of breakfast got me up and moving. My order was always Huevos Mexicana with homemade corn tortillas, coffee, and agua mineral. If I seem to be obsessing on the food and the Hotel Amparo, you are right!!.

Have You Ever Cried at Work? - Carla Cotropia

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal said it is ok to occasionally cry at work as long as you don't make a habit of it. According to the author, Tim Herrera, a 2016 survey found that 75 percent of C.F.O.'s thought crying ever so often was "normal". News Flash!!! I find this hard to believe. Maybe what they were really saying was if you shed a few tears alone in your office with the door shut or closeted in the bathroom stall, that was ok, but really I have a hard time believing that CFOs thought it ok or normal at work to cry.

First of all, most CFOs in my opinion, and I know this is a generalization, are pretty stoic

nonemotional type people. They have emotions but they don't show them easily. Unlike my Italian crazy self, I had to work super hard when I was a baby lawyer to not cry at work. My baby lawyer self would get so mad at the situation that I would have tears of anger. Those were not tears of sadness or grief. Oh no, those were tears of being super pissed off. The downside was once the faucet was turned on, it was extremely hard to turn it off. In the 1980s, there were not many female lawyers. If you didn't want to look weak or ridiculous, you didn't cry. So of course, I did. Once I got so mad in a partners meeting that I burst into tears, got up and left the room. Clearly, that was NOT the way to gain respect or power. I learned later that some of the partners actually laughed!

So I had to toughen myself up to not cry when I got mad. It was like getting a wound and scabbing over it, then getting another wound on top of it and scabbing over and on and on until you have a very tough exterior over the wound. And that is what I did.

I remember one time I made a mistake in the middle of a trial. I went back to my office and closed the door. My partner at the time, John Eckel, opened the door and peered in. I was on the floor, slowly thumping my head against the wall. Every time I thumped my head on the wall, I said out loud: "I could have been a teacher", thumping of my head-"I could have been a scientist"-thumping of my head-"I could have been an artist"-and on and on and on.

John, not knowing what to say I am sure, merely looked in, asked me if I was ok, and when the thumping continued with no other verbal response, quickly made his exit.

But I didn't cry and my head survived.

What's Your Temperament? Take a Test and Find Out! - Carla Cotropia

I love psychology and understanding people better. Plus, I love to take those personality type tests where there isn't a right and wrong answer. (No test anxiety for me.). Recently I found an article in the Wall Street Journal that talked about the temperament types according to the Greek physician Hippocrates. Hippocrates' theories on temperament were not accurate for forecasting medical problems but according to the article they are helpful in time management issues. And who doesn't need help with time management?

There is a quiz you can take, www.temperamentquiz.com, that lets you know your temperament type. Your temperament is something you really can't change although you can temper it.

The four temperament types are sanguines, choleric, melancholics and phlegmatics. The test identifies your type. I took the test and I am a sanguine/choleric combo. The characteristics of a sanguine is one that gets excited easily and has a strong reaction. However, the strong reaction only lasts a short period of time. This type is enthusiastic but loses interest easily. A sanguine can have 20 projects but never complete any of them. The time management advice is to make a list of the "exciting projects" but "park them while you work on current projects." The code word for sanguines is "Excited!"

The Choleric have strong reactions that can last a long time. Once they put their minds to it, nothing will get in their way. On the down side, once they start a project, they will push forward determined to conclude it even if it means mowing down people in the progress. Their time management advice is to learn patience and to slow down. It's ok to not have a big to-do list every weekend. Carla are you listening to this? The code word for Choleric is "Committed!"

The Melancholics take a long time to decide how to proceed on a project or goal. Once they do get started, they will work tirelessly to bring perfection. They don't want to settle for anything less and will work on it day and night before they start something else. The issue is the Melancholics can take a long time to start while they research and ponder the

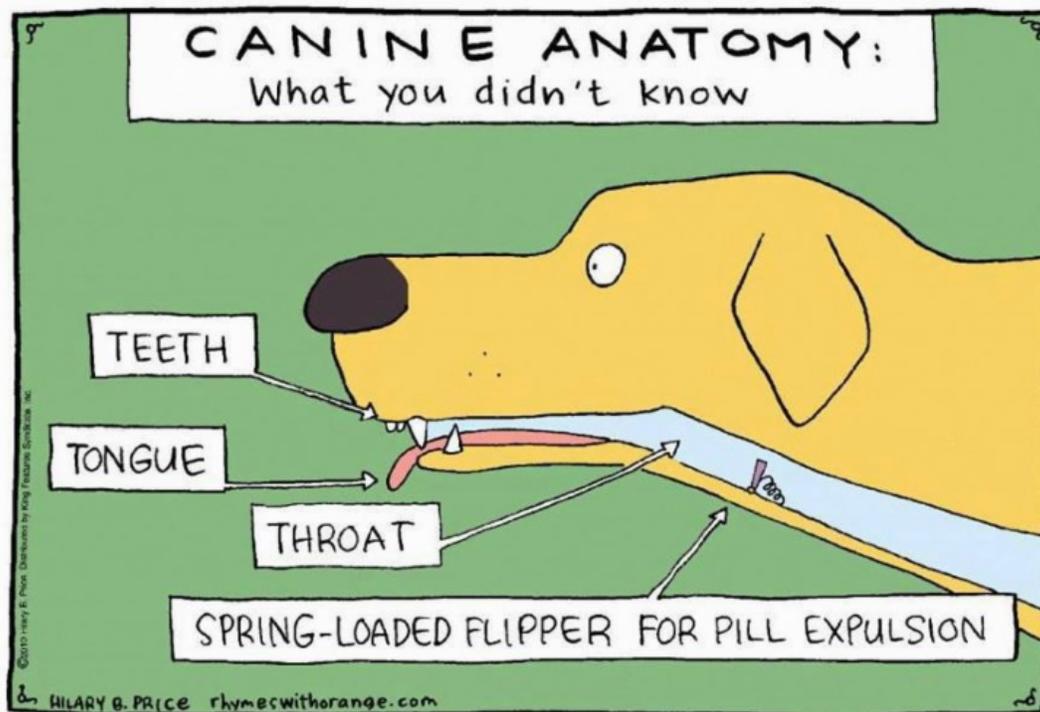
issues. They also have a hard time calling a project "finished". My sister Kimla may shoot me for saying this and she hasn't taken the test, but I know she has a lot of Melancholic in her. Why? I remember once when she was preparing for a speech, I noticed she had compiled a giant amount of research. I marveled at the time that I could make 5 speeches out of that much material, and she looked at me like I was crazy.

Time management experts recommend Melancholics put a time limit on the number of hours they will spend "getting ready" for a project. In order to finish a project, they recommend, instead of focusing on perfecting each part of the project, to push to finish and if there is some time left, to then go back and refine the details. And they have to learn that it is ok to finish even if it isn't perfect-at least in their mind. The code word for Melancholics is "Scrupulous!"

The Phlegmatics take a long time to start a project and lose momentum relatively easily. The good news because they move slow with quick to fade reactions, they don't irritate others and don't have that obnoxious intensity that others have. According to time management experts, this means it is difficult for Phlegmatics to get inspired or motivated internally. Their time management strategy is to partner with other temperament types. Since they work well with others, they are good team members and the overachievers on the team will be a positive influence. The code word for Phlegmatics is "Peaceful".

Take the test and see where you land.

Dog Information - Carla Cotropia





Taking Steps To Settle Cases 2 Sneakers @ A Time

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