

El Gato Negro *Bookstore and Coffeehouse*

Feel The Love!!!



Kelly Ann and Rob Thomas - Proprietors

General Manager - Celia

Kitchen Manager - Ana Cecelia

Senior Staff - Iveth & Roxana

Supporting Staff - Dareysa, Gloria & Francys

Coffee Roaster - Jose

Supporting Ambience Actors:

Vanessa Pattison - **Resident Yogi**

Pablo Yurkievich - **In-house Spanish Instructor**

Regulars of Repute:

Kelvin

Backhoe Pete

Buzz

Simon

Johnny G

Sean

Lee

Will

Eliezer

Josh

Ryan

Jeff G

Special blessings to our friends at Pachamama in San Juanillo, Costa Rica, who come here often and over the years have inspired much of the menu, book, superfood selection and vibe at El Gato Negro. And muchísimas gracias to the staff at the Manatee County Goodwill Bookstore on Tara Road.

"Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for."

"No estropee lo que usted tiene deseando lo que usted no tiene; recuerde que qué usted ahora tiene estaba una vez entre las cosas que usted esperaba solamente."

- Epicurus

"The essence of all beautiful art, all great art, is gratitude."

"La esencia de toda hermosa arte, todo gran arte, es gratitud."

-Friedrich Nietzsche-

"Great Spirit, help us stay in the way of the truth; and keep our families and our tribe in balance with Mother Earth. Give us strong spiritual energy of mind and body to help us guide all our young on your righteous path. Bring peace to the entire world. Above all, we thank you for the daily morning sun, and the moon and stars at night. We accept and thank you for the four weather seasons, for you know why we need these changes. We thank you with our prayers for the soil of Mother Earth which brings us good crops of grass for our four leggeds and winged friends; healthy unpolluted water and food for all peoples of the world."

"Gran Espíritu, nos ayuda permanecemos en la manera de la verdad; y mantenemos nuestras familias y nuestro tribu en el equilibrio con Madre Tierra. Denos energía espiritual fuerte de la mente y el cuerpo a ayudarnos indicamos a todos nuestros jóvenes en su sendero justo. Traiga la paz al mundo entero. Sobre todo, nosotros los gracias por el sol diario de mañana, y por la luna y estrella de noche. Aceptamos y gracias por las cuatro temporadas de tiempo, puesto que sabe por qué nosotros necesitamos estos cambios. Nosotros gracias con nuestras oraciones para la tierra de Madre Tierra que nos trae cosechas buenas de pasto para nuestro cuatro leggeds y amigos alados; agua y alimento no contaminados sanos para todos los pueblos del mundo."

"Love all of God's creation, the whole of it and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you have perceived it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day, and you will come at last to love the world with an all-embracing love."

- Fyodor Dostoyevski

"A human being is part of the whole called by us universe ... We experience ourselves, our thoughts and feelings as something separate from the rest. A kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. The true value of a human being is determined by the measure and the sense in which they have obtained liberation from the self. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive." - Albert Einstein

Coffee and Drinks - Café y Bebidas

We serve only organic, shade grown, Nicaraguan estate coffees from our own farm and those of friends we know and trust. We roast these beans every day or two in our roaster here at El Gato Negro, grind the fresh coffee daily, and sell our roasted beans in bags.

Nosotros servimos solo cafés organicos, estatales Nicaraguenses, crecidos en la sombra, de nuestra finca y de fincas de amigos. Tostamos los granos cada dos dias en nuestro tostador in El Gato Negro, molimos el café fresco, y vendemos café tostado en bolsas.

House Coffee - Café de la casa (free refills*)	40
Espresso	40
Cappuccino or Latte - Regular	65
Cappuccino or Latte Small - Pequeno	55
Specialty Latte**	75
Iced Latte - Latte frio	70
Iced Specialty Latte	80
Frozen Latte - Latte helado	75
Americano	40
Red Eye/Ojo rojo	40
Cafe Vienna	55
Iced Coffee/Café frio	45
Iced Tea/Te helado	45
Hot Tea - Te caliente**	40
Juices - Jugos – Check the blackboard - Chequea la pizara	40
Italian Soda - Soda Italianas	65
Coconut Water - Agua de Coco	50
Kefir	50

Smoothies - Batidos See Smoothie Page - Chequea la pagina de batidos

Create your own Latte! We have many syrups including: chocolate, caramel, vanilla, amaretto, Irish cream, toffee nut, hazelnut, almond, peppermint, cinnamon, raspberry, cherry, strawberry, lemon, grapefruit, pomegranate, peach, pineapple, black currant, and blackberry.

All syrups are sweetened with pure cane sugar, not High Fructose Corn Syrup.
Todos los siropes estan hechos con puro azucar de cana – No hay azucar de maiz.

* Two free refills and then you need to buy another cup.

** See the Tea page for selections

Specialty Lattes

Mork and Minty

Mint and Chocolate

Raspberry Cheesecake Latte

Vanilla, Irish Cream, Raspberry, and Almond Syrup

Aztec Mocha

Chocolate, Vanilla and Cinnamon

The Milky Way - Eric Slater Way

Caramel, Chocolate, and Vanilla

Tuscan Afternoon

Vanilla and Almond

Irish Mocha

Chocolate and Irish Cream

Amaretto Bean Latte

Amaretto and Vanilla

Loco Rolo

Chocolate and Caramel (Remember Rolos?)

Nutty Irish Woman

Hazelnut, Irish Cream, and Cherry Syrup

Sin Times Two

Chocolate and Raspberry

Italian Dream

Chocolate Amaretto Mocha

Chocolate Covered Cherry

Strawberry Shortcake

Strawberry and Amaretto

Raspberry Creme Royale

Raspberry and Amaretto

Black Cat

Chocolate and Toffee

Chocolate Amaretto Mocha

Tea Time

"Coffee is not my cup of tea." ~Author Unknown

English Breakfast * Earl Gray * Black (Lipton) * Green Tea * Jasmine * China Oolong
Prince of Whales * Chai * Chai Decaf * Sweet Coconut Thai Chai * White Tea
Chamomile * Mint Green Ginger * Cinnamon * Black Cherry Berry * Lemongrass
Tazo Passion * Pomegranate * Mango Peach * Tazo Rest * Pumpkin Spice
Crimson Blossom Herbal Green * Pomegranate White Tea * Ruby Red Chai
Raspberry Zinger * Blueberry * Honeybush, Mandarin & Orange * Red Goji and
Raspberry Green * Apple * India Spice * Red Rooibos * Wildberry Zinger
Moroccan Pomegranate Rooibos * Cinnamon Apple Spice * Blackberry Sage
Pineapple Ginger * ChocoLatte Red Tea * ChocoLatte Black Tea * Acai Mango
African Tunda * Brazil * Masala * Fusion Green and White * Wild Sweet Orange *
Cucumber White * French Vanilla

(Brands: Twinings, Tazo, The Republic of Tea, Stash, Bigelow, Celestial Seasonings, Lipton)

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: "You can never get a cup of tea large :
: e enough or a book long enough to suit me." C.S. Lewis :
:
.....

Tea contains antioxidants. Tea's antioxidants protect your body from the ravages of aging and the effects of pollution.

Tea has less caffeine than coffee. Coffee has two to three times the caffeine of tea.

Tea may reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke. A 5-year study from the Netherlands found a 70 percent lower risk of fatal heart attack in people who drank at least two to three cups of black tea daily compared to non-tea drinkers.

Tea protects your bones. One study that compared tea drinkers with non-drinkers, found that people who drank tea for 10 or more years had the strongest bones, even after adjusting for age, body weight, exercise, smoking and other risk factors.

Tea gives you a sweet smile. One look at the grimy grin of Austin Powers and you may not think drinking tea is good for your teeth, but think again. It's the sugar added to it that's likely to blame for England's bad dental record.

Tea bolsters your immune defenses. When 21 volunteers drank either five cups of tea or coffee each day for four weeks, researchers saw higher immune system activity in the blood of the tea drinkers.

Tea protects against cancer. Thank the polyphenols, the antioxidants found in tea, once again for their cancer-fighting effects.

Tea helps keep you hydrated. Recent research has shown that the caffeine really doesn't matter -- tea and other caffeinated beverages definitely contribute to our fluid needs. Caffeine only becomes a problem as far as fluid is concerned is when you drink more than five or six cups of a caffeinated beverage at one time.

Tea is calorie-free. Tea doesn't have any calories, unless you add sweetener or milk. Consuming even 250 fewer calories per day can result in losing one pound per week.

Tea increases your metabolism. Green tea has been shown to actually increase metabolic rate so that you can burn 70 to 80 additional calories by drinking just five cups of green tea per day.

Breakfast - Desayuno

SERVED ALL DAY - SERVIMOS TODO EL DIA

"I went to a restaurant that serves 'breakfast at any time'. So I ordered French Toast during the Renaissance." - Steven Wright

Banana Raita 105

Homemade bio-active yogurt with banana, honey, mint, cardamom, cinnamon, and nutmeg drizzled over fresh fruit and topped with granola.

Yogur cremoso hecho a mano y bio-activo, con banano, miel, menta, cardamom, canela, y nuez moscada, sobre fruta fresca y granola.

Cinnamon French Toast/Tostada Francesa con Canela 135

Sliced homemade cinnamon roll dipped in vanilla custard topped with Granny Smith apples sautéed in a brown sugar – butter sauce. A diabetic nightmare.

Un roll de canela casero, reposado en custard de vainilla y servido con una manzana de Granny Smith, sauteada con una salsa de mantequilla y azucar moreno. Una pesadilla diabetica!

Caramel Apple French Toast 135

Our Cinnamon French Toast covered with sautéed apples, caramel and whipped cream.

Nuestra Tostada de la Canela cubrió con manzanas salteadas, el caramelo y la crema batida.

Banana Chocolate Chip Pancakes - Panqueques de Banano y Chocolate 105

Blueberry Banana Pancakes - Panqueques de Banano y Arandanos 135

Miss Piggy - Señorita Cerdita 110

Sliced bacon, egg, and Provolone cheese on a toasted bagel.

Tocino en trozos, huevo, y queso Provolone en un bagel tostado.

The Vampire - El Vampiro 95

Sundried tomato and roasted garlic cream cheese with egg on a toasted bagel.

Queso crema con ajo y tomate secado del sol, con huevo en un bagel tostado.

Breakfast Sandwich - Sandwich Desayuno 105

Canadian bacon, egg, and provolone cheese on a toasted bagel.

Tocino Canadiense, huevo, queso Provolone en un bagel tostado.

All prices **include** 15% Sales Tax - Todos precios **incluyen** 15 % IVA

The Maui Wowie 120
Locally smoked ham, pineapple, and avocado-egg salad with honey cream cheese on a toasted bagel.

Jamon ahumado, piña, y ensalada de aguacate y huevos con queso crema miel en un bagel tostado.

The California - El California 115
Avocado, tomato, onion, egg, and provolone cheese on a toasted bagel.

Aguacate, tomate, cebolla, huevo, y queso Provolone en un bagel tostado.

Fruit Plate - Plato de Frutas 60
An assortment of seasonal fruits.

Un surtido de frutas de la temporada.

Greek Yogurt - Yogur griego 65
Thick, creamy homemade Greek yogurt with honey and a banana.

Yogur griego cremoso a casero con miel y banano.

We also sell Nellie's homemade Greek yogurt (plain) as takeout in an 8 oz. bag.

Nosotros vendemos el yogur griego de Nellie (plano) para llevar en una bolsa de 8 oz. oz.

"When you wake up in the morning, Pooh," said Piglet at last, "what's the first thing you say to yourself?"

"What's for breakfast?" said Pooh. "What do you say, Piglet?"

"I say, I wonder what's going to happen exciting today?" said Piglet.

Pooh nodded thoughtfully. "It's the same thing," he said.

— A.A. Milne

¿"Cuando usted se despierta en la mañana, Pu," dijo Chanchito por fin, "qué es la primera cosa que usted dice a usted mismo"?

"Qué es para el desayuno"? dijo Pu. ¿"Qué dice usted, el Chanchito"?

"Digo, me pregunto qué sucederá emocionante hoy"? dijo Chanchito.

Pu cabeceó amablemente. "Es la misma cosa," dijo.

Sandwiches

Veggie Sandwich/Sandwich Vegetariano 125

Avocado, tomato, onion, cucumber, lettuce, and melted cheese, served on toasted wheat bread and served with a salad of organic baby greens.

Aguacate, tomate, cebolla, pepino, lechuga, y queso fundido servido en pan integral tostado, y acompañado de una ensalada organica.

Avocado Salad Sandwich - Ensalada de Aguacate 105

Avocado mashed with hard boiled egg, topped with tomato and a little salt and pepper, spread over toasted whole wheat bread. Served with fresh fruit or small green salad.

Aguacate con huevos , con tomate, sal y pimienta negra en pan tostado y acompañado de una ensalada organica pequena o frutas.

Turkey Club - Club de Pavo 200

Imported smoked turkey breast, thick cut smoked bacon, avocado, cucumber, tomato, onion, and garlic cream cheese on a toasted bagel, served with fruit or green salad.

Pechuga de pavo ahumada importada, tocino, aguacate, pepino, tomate, cebolla, y queso crema con ajo, en un bagel tostado, servido con frutas o ensalada.

The Zippy Hippie 75

Tomato, onion, cream cheese and lemon pepper on a toasted bagel.

Tomate, cebolla, queso crema y pimienta limon en un bagel tostado.

The Not Exactly Kosher Bagel 125

Pelon Mark's smoked Ham, Swiss cheese and honey mustard on a toasted bagel.

Jamon ahumado de Pelon Mark y queso suizo y mostaza miel en un bagel tostado.

The Vanderbilt 125

Named in honor of our former turkey-loving calico cat, she would certainly approve of smoked turkey breast, Swiss cheese, avocado, cucumbers and honey mustard.

En memoria de nuestro pavo-amando gato calico, un bagel con pavo ahumado, queso suizo, aguacate, pepino y mostaza de miel.

The Johnny G 100

Homemade Hummus, tomato, shredded carrots, green peppers, lettuce, salt, pepper and honey-mustard on a toasted bagel.

Hummus cassero, tomate, zanahoria, lechuga, chilitomas, sal, ipmienta negra, y mostaza miel aquacate en un bagel tostado.

Sunny Vibe 100

Hummus, honey mustard, cucumber, lettuce, avocado and onion on a toasted bagel.

Hummus, mostaza de miel, pepino, lechuga, aguacate y cebolla en un bagel tostado.

La Vanessa* **125**

The ultimate BLT created for one of my best friends and customers. Thick cut bacon, avocado, tomato, lettuce and garlic cream cheese on a toasted bagel.

El mejor BLT, creado para una de mis mejores amigas y clientes. Tocino, aguacate, tomate, lechuga y queso ajo en una bagel tostada.

** Vanessa owns Zen Yoga (across from Mauricio's Pizza by the park) and encourages people to eat a healthy, sustainable diet and do lots of yoga. It's not a vegetarian sandwich, but the Dali Lama eats meat, too, so don't feel like you are racking up bad karma if you eat bacon.*

The Greek **115**

Hummus, feta cheese, lettuce, olives, tomatoes, onion, hot pepper and Greek yogurt on a toasted bagel.

Hummus, queso feta, lechuga, aceitunas negros, tomate, cebolla, chile caliente y yogurt griego en un bagel tostado.

Smoked Salmon Bagel - Bagel con Salmon Ahumado **200**

Imported smoked salmon (Chile), cream cheese, capers, tomatoes and onions on a toasted bagel. Served with green salad or fresh fruit.

Salmon ahumado importado (Chile), queso crema, alcaparras, tomate y cebolla en un bagel tostado. Acompañado de una ensalada orgánica o frutas.

The Tiger - El Tigre **175**

The bane of the militant vegan, domestic cats and local thugs, The Tiger is a meat lovers dream. Smoked ham, turkey and bacon, Swiss cheese, tomato and lettuce with your choice of Dijon mustard, honey mustard or garlic cream cheese. Served on a toasted bagel.

La plaga del vegetariano militante, gatos domesticados y ladrones, el tigre esto es un sueño de amantes de carne. El jamón ahumado, el pavo y el tocino, queso de suizos, el tomate y la lechuga con su elección de mostaza de Dijon, mostaza de miel o queso crema de en un bagel tostado.

The Trevor **80**

Homemade hummus, tomato, lettuce and avocado on a toasted bagel.

Hummus cassera, tomate, lechuga y aguacate en un bagel tostado.

Mono del Sur **70**

A bagel with natural peanut butter, bananas, and honey.

Un bagel con mantequilla de mani natural, bananos y miel.

Bagel with Cream Cheese - Bagel con Queso Crema **65**

Your choice of a Plain, Whole Wheat, Sesame, Onion, or Everything Bagel.

Su elección de un bagel Plano, Integral, Ajonjolí, Cebolla, o Mixto.

"One can never pay in gratitude; one can only pay 'in kind' somewhere else in life."

— Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Salads - Ensaladas

Cheeky Chicky 125

Chickpeas, celery, onion, garlic, dill, lemon and mayonnaise over a bed of lettuce topped with tomatoes, cucumbers and Greek yogurt.

Frijoles garbanzos, apio, cebolla, ajo, eneldo, limon y mayonesa con tomates, pepinos, y yogurt griega ensima.

Zen Platter* 165

Puree of garbanzo beans, lemon juice, olive oil, cumin, and garlic. Served with pita bread, tomato salad, black olives, feta cheese, and organic baby greens.

*Formerly the boringly named Hummus Plate, renamed in honor of Vanessa's pride and joy, Zen Yoga, located by the park.

Pure de garbanzo, limon, aceite de oliva, comino, y ajo. Servido con pan de pita, ensalada de tomate, aceitunas negras, queso feta y ensalada organica.

"Health is a state of complete harmony of the body, mind and spirit. When one is free from physical disabilities and mental distractions, the gates of the soul open." ~B.K.S. Iyengar

Soup and Salad - Sopa y Ensalada 140

A cup of carrot-ginger soup, cooked in coconut milk, served with a small organic salad of lettuce, cucumber, and pineapple, with a coconut-honey-lime vinaigrette.

Una copa de sopa de zanahoria-jenjebre preparada en leche de coco, servida con una ensalada organica con lechuga pepino, y piña, con una salsa de coco-limon-miel.

Large Organic Salad - Ensalada organica grande 130

Mixed baby field greens, tomato, cucumber, carrots and onion with extra virgin cold pressed olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Lechugas organicas, tomate, cebolla, pepino, zanahoria, y cebolla, con aceite oliva y vinagre balsamico.

Add salmon - con salmon 230

Greek Salad - Ensalada griega 175

Mixed greens, tomato, black olives, cucumber, onion, pepperoncini, green peppers and feta cheese with lemon vinaigrette.

Lechugas organicas, tomate, pepino, cebolla, aceitunas negras, chile pepperoncini, chiltomas y queso feta con vinagreta de limon.

Feta-Watermelon Salad - Ensalada de queso feta y sandia 180

Watermelon, feta cheese, cucumber, onion, black olives and fresh mint tossed in a balsamic vinaigrette.

Sandia, queso feta, pepino, cebolla, aceitunas negras y hierba buena, mezclada en vinagreta balsamico.

We sell fresh-picked organic salad greens by the bag.
Vendemos ensalada organica en una bolsa.

Sweet Treats - Dulces

Cinnamon Roll

Rol de Canela

50

Banana Chocolate Chip Muffins

Muffins de Banano y Chocolate

35

Carrot Raisin Muffins

Muffins de Zanahoria y Pasas

40

Biscotti

30

Espresso Fudge Brownies

Brownies de Café Espresso y Chocolate

Four kinds of chocolate and lots of espresso coffee. Some say these are the best brownies in the world!

Cuatro tipos de chocolate y mucho café espresso. Dicen que son los mejores brownies del mundo!

60

Check the blackboard and display case for special sweet treats like artisan chocolates, Red Velvet Cupcakes and Peanut Butter Fudge Cake, depending upon Kelly's whims and sweet cravings on any given day. All of our desserts are homemade, either here or in Kelly's kitchen.

Chequea la pizara y la vitrina para los dulces especiales como chocolates artesano o torta mantequilla de maní con chocolate, dependiendo de los caprichos y dulce anhela de Kelly en algún día dado. Todos nuestros postres son caseros.

"Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity." - John F. Kennedy

If you eat too many muffins, get a great workout at the GYMNASIO, located next to the Hotel Royal Chateau.

All prices **include** 15% Sales Tax - Todos precios **incluyen** 15 % IVA

Rich and Creamy Smoothies

Create your own basic smoothie with a combination of three fresh fruits, and fresh juice, homemade yogurt or milk as a base. Add healthy berries, coconut milk and superfoods from the list below.

Crea un batido basico con una combinacion de tres frutas, y un jugo, jogur casero, or leche como el base. Aumenta tu batido con berries saludables y superfoods de la lista abajo.

65 cordobas

Juice Base

Mango
Passion Fruit - Calala
Orange _ Naranja
Carrot - Zanahoria
Homemade Yogurt - Yogur Cassero
Milk - Leche
Jamaica Tea
Coconut Water - Agua de Coco
Coconut Milk (10 cordobas extra)

Fruit

Banana
Papaya
Mango
Watermelon - Sandia
Cantaloupe - Melon
Pineapple - Piña
Mint - Hierba buena/Menta
Ginger - Jengibre

Extras:

10 cordobas	Cacao
15 cordobas	Avocado - Aguacate
	Chia
	Ojoche
	Coconut oil - Aceite de coco
	Flax Seed - Linaza molida
	Spirulina
	Wheat Germ - Germen de trigo
	Cashews - Marañones
	Moringa
20 cordobas	Almonds - Almendras
	Walnuts
25 cordobas	Bee Pollen
30 cordobas	Mixed Berries
	Maca
	Goji Berries
	Golden Berries
	Protein Powder (soy based) - Proteína de soya
35 cordobas	Blueberries - Arandandos

Note that smoothies are custom made and can be time-consuming to make, especially when 15 people walk in at once and order 15 different smoothies, so please be patient if it backs up. They are worth the wait.

Superfood Smoothies

While there is no agreed upon definition of Superfoods, they are basically fruits, vegetables, roots, mushrooms, nuts, berries, herbs, cactus, algae, etc, that contain incredibly high levels of essential nutrients, minerals, disease-fighting vitamins, omega fatty acids, antioxidants, and other healthy substances. These foods help build our immune systems, fight disease, enhance energy, improve moods, improve cellular function, improve memory, repair organ damage, improve skin health, and can even help your sex life! These “Superfoods” were a large part of the diets of our ancient ancestors for millions of years, helping them survive and flourish without organized agriculture.

El Gato Negro uses the best available superfood ingredients in its smoothies in their natural state whenever possible.

Choose a smoothie based upon your purpose at the moment. Do you want nutrition, cleansing, chocolate overload, sweet berries, improved intelligence, or higher sex drive?

The Elvis

Natural peanut butter, banana, chocolate and milk. In theory, these are all powerful superfoods, but we add maca to give the metabolism a boost.

90

Tropical Buzz

Papaya, banana, carrot, mango, ginger, lime, mint, coconut oil, maca and chia will keep you buzzing all day.

100

The Dali Lama

Why not name a smoothie after the man? Pineapple, avocado, mint, coconut water, spirulina, maca and golden berries will help open the Third Eye.

120

Olas Verdes/Green Waves

Handle the big waves with this nutritious concoction of fresh avocado, banana, homemade passion fruit juice, organic cashews, maca powder, spirulina, bee pollen, and soy protein powder.

110

Detox Bomb

Have you partied a little too hard lately?? Need to clean out the cells and tune up the mind? This bomb has what you need, including lime, turmeric, chili powder, coconut milk, papaya, sea salt, honey, and blueberries. Feel the cleanse!! (Warning: this doesn't taste good, but it's very good for you!)

130

Emergen-C

Powdered Vitamin C. Excellent for a quick immune system boost or after a long night of drinking Flor de Cana.

40

Happy Monkey

Chocolate and more chocolate. Taste the organic Nicaraguan cacao powder, organic honey, fresh avocado, organic cashews, and goji berries. Cacao is a natural stimulant to give you a shot a energy for your day. Choose milk or homemade yogurt as a base.

110

Crackhead Monkey

The Happy Monkey on Crack.....oops, I mean a double shot of espresso added!

120

Berry Berry Nice

This recipe is adapted from the PachaMama community in Costa Rica. Brighten your day with a combination of strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, avocado, goji berries, banana, flax seed, honey, and bee pollen in a base of Red Hibiscus Tea (Jamaica).

125

Einstein's Brain Boost

Maybe you need a little clarity after too much sun and too much rum! This blend of blueberries, avocado, cacao, almonds, walnuts, rhodiola, ginkgo blioba, L-carnitine, ginseng, gotu koa, chia, and green tea are foods that boost neural activity.

155

Buddha Blue Belly

Buddha would not have had a belly had he eaten blueberries. The anthocyanins in blueberries specifically reduce belly fat. This delicious combination of green tea, blueberries, banana, maca, flax seed, mesquite, ojoche, chia, and coconut oil (a necessary fat which allows the absorption of vitamins) will provide the majority of your daily nutritional requirements, increase your metabolism, and stave off food cravings!

150

The Love Potion

Feel the power of Love after drinking this creamy concoction of almonds, honey, strawberries, avocado, raw cacao, banana, nutmeg, cinnamon, flax seed, maca, bee pollen, and coconut water, with a scoop of herbal aphrodisiacs! The "scoop" changes with the availability of aphrodisiacs. It does have an effect, but the herbs can make the smoothie a little bitter. Just a forewarning - it's not like drinking melted Godiva chocolate. Herbs and supplements contained in this smoothie (some not always available at all times) include: Ashwagandha; Marshmallow; Tribulus Extract; Holy Basil; Guarana; Black Cohosh; Muira Puama; Damiana; Pomegranate; Fo Ti; Asparagus; Red Clover; Licorice; L-Arginine; Passion Flower; Panex Ginseng; Vitex; Eleuthero; ; Sarsaparilla; Rhodiola; Wild Yam Root; DHEA; Astragalus; Oat Seed; Wormwood; Goji; Horny Goat Weed; Acai; Yarrow and more.

180

For an extra boost of "energy" add a spoon full of yohimbe for an extra 40 cordobas. Note: Yohimbe can speed up you heart rate and increase your blood pressure. If you have any heart, circulatory, or blood pressure issues, please avoid yohimbe. Also, avoid if you are pregnant.

"Happiness is when what you think and what you say and what you feel are in harmony." - Mahatma Gandhi.

Superfoods Glossary

Bee Pollen: Bee Pollen is a rich source of vitamins, minerals, proteins, amino acids, hormones, enzymes and fats, and contains quantities of natural antibiotics.

Blueberries: This is a natural brain booster and enemy of cancer. Helps your eyesight, reduces inflammation, aids cardiovascular health, and can reduce belly fat.

Cacao: This seed from the cacao fruit was used as currency in Mexico and Central America. Anthropologists think that Nicaragua may have been an important trading link between South America and Mexico due to location and cultivation of cacao. This amazing bean contain healthy fats, magnesium, theobromine, and dopamine (a neurotransmitter that makes you feel happy!), as well as dozens of other healthy substances.

Calala (Passion Fruit): In South America, passion fruit is used to remedy pain, headaches, menstrual cramps, and muscle spasms. It is also a reliever of depression and anxiety, a tranquilizer, diuretic, and has been showed to help control hyperactivity in children. Also, it is good for the libido.

Chia: Chia seed was a staple in the Mayan and Aztec diets. It is said that a tablespoon of chia could sustain an Aztec warrior for 24 hours! The Mayan word for chia is “strength”. Also can improve endurance.

Chia is rich in omega 3 fatty acids. Two tablespoons contain 7 grams of fiber, 4 grams of protein, 205 milligrams of calcium, and contain phosphorus, magnesium, manganese, copper, molybdenum, niacin, and zinc. Chia contains more antioxidants than blueberries and has twice the iron content of liver and spinach. It also absorbs up to 12 times its weight in water, helping the body to maintain hydration.

Coconut Oil: This cold-pressed, non-heated oil is 64% medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs), which burned as energy quickly and is not stored as belly fat, unlike the long-chain fatty acids found in other oils. MCFAs help rev up the metabolism, and therefore help one lose weight. Also has been shown to reduce food cravings.

The main component of coconut milk is lauric acid, the powerful antimicrobial, and immune function compound found in mother’s breast milk.

There is so much to say about his and as such, I am giving you a little nutritional rundown regarding saturated fats.

All fats are not created equal. For decades coconut oil has had a bad rap due to fear-mongering by the US vegetable oil industry (including the American Soybean Association), which saw cheaper (and healthier) oils like coconut and palm as fierce competition in their markets.

Some saturated fats like coconut and palm oil occur naturally. Coconut oil is highly stable and resists oxidation. Unstable fats manipulated into a saturated states are hydrogenated oils, created by the addition of hydrogen atoms during the heating process, which produces a thick, rancid substance that remains solid at warm temperatures and increases shelf life of a food product. This might good for mass manufacturers of junk food, but it has horrible effects upon the human body. Hydrogenated oil alters the flexibility and structure of cell membranes throughout the body, weakening the immune system and preventing proper cell renewal, creating conditions for heart and liver disease, Alzheimer’s, obesity, diabetes, high blood

pressure and cholesterol, infertility and birth defects. It impairs cognitive functions, creativity and clarity of thought. Ironically, the saturated fats in coconut oil have been proven to improve heart health, boost the thyroid, aids digestion and increase metabolism, repair cell membrane walls, increase physical performance and stamina, and support the immune system.

Coconut oil is a medium-chain fatty acid while most vegetable oils are long-chain fatty acids. LCFAs are large molecules that are difficult to break down and stored as fat. MCFAs are smaller molecules that are easily digested and provides an instant boost of energy by the liver. The MCFAs in coconut oil boost the metabolism, promoting a lean body and weight loss. During the Depression of the 1930's, cattle and pig farmers added coconut oil to the feed to fatten the animals. Instead, the oil made the animals trim, lean - and hungry!

Coconut oil is 45 percent lauric acid, an essential fatty acid found in breast milk. (Cow's milk contains only 2 percent lauric acid.) When ingested, lauric acid is transformed into monolaurin, an antiviral and antibacterial compound that disrupts and destroys the lipid membranes of viruses, bacteria, fungi and other toxic microorganisms living in the human body. Coconut oil is an excellent anti-parasite treatment, too.

Published studies in medical journals show that coconut, in one form or another, may provide a wide range of health benefits. The CoconutResearchCenter.org has summarized a few of these benefits below:

- Kills viruses that cause influenza, herpes, measles, hepatitis C, SARS, AIDS, and other illnesses.
- Kills bacteria that cause ulcers, throat infections, urinary tract infections, gum disease and cavities, pneumonia, and gonorrhea, and other diseases.
- Kills fungi and yeasts that cause candidiasis, ringworm, athlete's foot, thrush, diaper rash, and other infections.
- Expels or kills tapeworms, lice, giardia, and other parasites.
- Provides a nutritional source of quick energy. Boosts energy and endurance, enhancing physical and athletic performance. Improves digestion and absorption of other nutrients including vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. Improves insulin secretion and utilization of blood glucose.
- Helps relieve symptoms and reduce health risks associated with diabetes.
- Helps relieve symptoms associated with gallbladder disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and stomach ulcers. Improves digestion and bowel function.
- Reduces inflammation. Supports tissue healing and repair.
- Supports and aids immune system function.
- Helps protect the body from breast, colon, and other cancers.
- Is heart healthy; improves cholesterol ratio reducing risk of heart disease. Protects arteries from injury that causes atherosclerosis and thus protects against heart disease.
- Helps prevent periodontal disease and tooth decay.
- Functions as a protective antioxidant. Helps to protect the body from harmful free radicals that promote premature aging and degenerative disease. Does not deplete the body's antioxidant reserves like other oils do.
- Helps protect against kidney disease and bladder infections. Dissolves kidney stones.
- Helps prevent liver disease.
- Is lower in calories than all other fats. Promotes loss of excess weight by increasing metabolic rate. Is utilized by the body to produce energy in

preference to being stored as body fat like other dietary fats, helping to prevent obesity and overweight problems.

- Applied topically helps to form a chemical barrier on the skin to ward off infection. Reduces symptoms associated with psoriasis, eczema, and dermatitis. Supports the natural chemical balance of the skin. Softens skin and helps relieve dryness and flaking. Prevents wrinkles, sagging skin, and age spots.
- Promotes healthy looking hair and complexion. Helps control dandruff.
- Provides protection from damaging effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun.
- Does not form harmful by-products when heated to normal cooking temperature like other vegetable oils do.
- Has no harmful or discomforting side effects and is completely non-toxic to humans.

We use extra virgin, cold pressed coconut oil from the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. It is available for sale at El Gato Negro, too.

Coconut Water: Nothing is a thirst-quencher as a glass of coconut water. It increases energy, boosts metabolism, controls blood sugar spikes, and rehydrates the body, providing the perfect balance of electrolytes. It helps fight viruses, too.

Coconut water stops all kinds of adverse drug reactions when administered orally. It can help mitigate the damages done to the body from antibiotics. Coconut water helps break down and eliminate the formation of kidney and bladder stones. It is a natural oral rehydration therapy, as well as reducing fevers, nervousness and emotional imbalances. Coconut water flushes the liver, making it an excellent choice after a night of drinking Nicaragua's famous rum. It is a detoxifying agent and one of the strongest antidotes to any poison infusion inside the body.

Our coconut water is prepared from fresh coconuts delivered each morning via an eco-friendly bicycle or push cart.

Flax Seed: King Charlamagne was such a fan of this seed that he passed a law requiring his subjects to consume it. Flax is high in fiber and omega 3 fatty acids. The regular consumption of flax can help reduce risk of diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Flax also increases testosterone in men.

Goji Berry: The King of Berries contains 19 amino acids and 21 trace minerals, B vitamins, more vitamin C than oranges, more antioxidants than any other fruit, helps control cholesterol levels, and is used in Chinese Medicine to treat impotence.

Honey: The nectar of the gods contains 181 known substances which are anti-viral, antioxidant, and reduce cholesterol. The original Olympians used figs and honey to enhance athletic performance.

Our honey comes from an area in Nicaragua devoid of agricultural farming for hundreds of miles. It is organic, raw (unpasteurized and full of nutrients) and comes in recycled bottles without a label. It sells for half the price of honey in the US. By the way, 72 percent of all honey sold in US supermarkets is not actually honey. Google it.

Maca: This Peruvian root vegetable has been used for thousands of years in South America to increase energy levels, sexual desire, and fertility. A shot of maca before exercise or other fun activities is a natural way to boost your performance.

Spirulina: This algae-like aquatic plant has provided nutrition for humans for thousands of years. The Aztecs of Mexico grew and harvested it in lakes to feed their urban centers. This green stuff is packed with antioxidants, relieves inflammation, has more

protein than beef, tons of vitamin A for healthy skin, iron, and protective phytochemicals.

Moringa: Moringa Oleifera is known as the Miracle Tree and the ultimate superfood, containing over 90 different vitamins, minerals and nutrients that not only provide you with nutrition, but contribute to overall health as well. Moringa contains 46 types of anti-oxidants, 36 anti-inflammatory compounds, and 18 amino acids, including the eight essential ones. Ounce for ounce, Moringa has three times the iron of spinach, seven times the Vitamin C of an orange, four times the calcium in milk, four times the vitamin A in carrots, two times the protein in milk and three times the potassium in bananas. The benefits of moringa leaves including lower blood pressure, improved mood, improved digestion, improved immune system function, protects stomach lining, treats stomach ulcers, controls cholesterol, and boosts energy levels. It stimulates milk production in lactating mothers. Moringa increases energy and metabolism and it suppresses the appetite, making it an excellent weight loss tool. It improves sleep and heightens mental clarity. It is an excellent chelation agent for detoxification.

Moringa is also a water purifier. Moringa seeds placed in contaminated water will absorb the impurities. Moringa acts in a similar way in the body, absorbing toxins from the blood and excreting toxic build up. Moringa balances hormones, blood sugar and Ph levels. There is so much to say about this plant and not enough space in this menu. Please do more research on this powerful superfood and see why it should become a staple in your diet. Moringa has no side effects. However, as with all dark green leafy greens, Moringa leaves thicken the blood in large doses. Consult your doctor if you are on blood-thinning medication.

We use dried, organic moringa leaves from San Juan del Sur in our smoothies.

Ojoche: Also known as the Maya Nut, Ramon, and Breadnut, ojoche is 100% organic, non-GMO forest product that grows wild in Nicaragua. High in fiber, vitamin C, potassium, folic acid, iron, zinc, protein, antioxidants, ojoche was a staple of the pre-Columbian Maya, though today is considered a 'famine' food.

"I remember when I was a child, there was a terrible famine. It lasted for 5 years. We had no food, so the families went to the forest to gather Maya Nut to eat. We ate almost nothing but Maya Nut for 5 years and no one in the village died or even got sick. It was a miracle. Maya Nut saved our lives." Jose Lira, Chinandega, Nicaragua.

Spirulina: This algae-like aquatic plant has provided nutrition for humans for thousands of years. The Aztecs of Mexico grew and harvested it in lakes to feed their urban centers. This green stuff is packed with antioxidants, relieves inflammation, has more protein than beef, tons of vitamin A for healthy skin, iron, and protective phytochemicals.

Wheat Germ: Not really wheat, but the kernel that is removed before grain is turned to flour. This nutritionally dense food is high in fiber and vitamins B5, B6, and E, and in calcium, iron, protein, and omega 3 fatty acids. The phytosterols in wheat germ have been shown to lower cholesterol and promote heart health.

While it is true that many people simply can't afford to pay more for food, either in money or time or both, many more of us can. After all, just in the last decade or two we've somehow found the time in the day to spend several hours on the internet and the money in the budget not only to pay for broadband service, but to cover a second phone bill and a new monthly bill for television, formerly free. For the majority of Americans, spending more for better food is less a matter of ability than priority. p.187"

— Michael Pollan, In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto

The Omnivore's Dilemma by Michael Pollan is a fascinating book that details the changing eating habits of Americans. I can't recommend it highly enough. It explains how, over the last 30 years, we have become a nation that eats vast quantities of corn – much more so than Mexicans, the original "corn people."

Most folks assume that a chicken nugget is just a piece of fried chicken, right? Wrong! Did you know, for example, that a McDonald's Chicken McNugget is 56% corn?

What else is in a McDonald's Chicken McNugget? Besides corn, and to a lesser extent, chicken, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* describes all of the thirty-eight ingredients that make up a McNugget – one of which I'll bet you'll never guess. During this part of the book, the author has just ordered a meal from McDonald's with his family and taken one of the flyers available at McDonald's called "A Full Serving of Nutrition Facts: Choose the Best Meal for You."

These paragraphs are taken directly from **The Omnivore's Dilemma**:

"The ingredients listed in the flyer suggest a lot of thought goes into a nugget, that and a lot of corn. Of the thirty-eight ingredients it takes to make a McNugget, I counted thirteen that can be derived from corn: the corn-fed chicken itself; modified cornstarch (to bind the pulverized chicken meat); mono-, tri-, and diglycerides (emulsifiers, which keep the fats and water from separating); dextrose; lecithin (another emulsifier); chicken broth (to restore some of the flavor that processing leeches out); yellow corn flour and more modified cornstarch (for the batter); cornstarch (a filler); vegetable shortening; partially hydrogenated corn oil; and citric acid as a preservative. A couple of other plants take part in the nugget: There's some wheat in the batter, and on any given day the hydrogenated oil could come from soybeans, canola, or cotton rather than corn, depending on the market price and availability.

According to the handout, McNuggets also contain several completely synthetic ingredients, quiescent substances that ultimately come not from a corn or soybean field but from a petroleum refinery or chemical plant. These chemicals are what make modern processed food possible, by keeping the organic materials in them from going bad or looking strange after months in the freezer or on the road. Listed first are the "leavening agents": sodium aluminum phosphate, mono-calcium phosphate, sodium acid pyrophosphate, and calcium lactate. These are antioxidants added to keep the various animal and vegetable fats involved in a nugget from turning rancid. Then there are "anti-foaming agents" like dimethylpolysiloxane, added to the cooking oil to keep the starches from binding to air molecules, so as to produce foam during the fry. The problem is evidently grave enough to warrant adding a toxic chemical to the food: According to the Handbook of Food Additives, dimethylpolysiloxane is a suspected carcinogen and an established mutagen, tumorigen, and reproductive effector; it's also flammable.

But perhaps the most alarming ingredient in a Chicken McNugget is tertiary butylhydroquinone, or TBHQ, an antioxidant derived from petroleum that is either sprayed directly on the nugget or the inside of the box it comes in to "help preserve freshness." According to A Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives, TBHQ is a form of butane (i.e. lighter fluid) the FDA allows processors to use sparingly in our food: It can comprise no more than 0.02 percent of the oil in a nugget. Which is probably just as well, considering that ingesting a single gram of TBHQ can cause "nausea, vomiting, ringing in the ears, delirium, a sense of suffocation, and collapse." Ingesting five grams of TBHQ can kill."

Bet you never thought that was in your chicken McNuggets!

MSG is a naturally occurring by-product of High Fructose Corn Syrup and thus does not have to be labeled as an additive in food.

Hidden Sources Of MSG In Foods

From the book 'Excitotoxins - The Taste That Kills' by Dr. Russell Blaylock, MD

What if someone were to tell you that a chemical (MSG) added to food could cause brain damage in your children, and that this chemical could effect how your children's nervous systems formed during development so that in later years they may have learning or emotional difficulties?

What if there was scientific evidence that these chemicals could permanently damage a critical part of the brain known to control hormones so that later in life your child might have endocrine problems? How would you feel?

Suppose evidence was presented to you strongly suggesting that the artificial sweetener in your diet soft drink may cause brain tumors to develop, and that the number of brain tumors reported since the introduction of this widespread introduction of this artificial sweetener has risen dramatically? Would that affect your decision to drink these products and especially to allow your children to drink them? What if you could be shown overwhelming evidence that one of the main ingredients in this sweetener (aspartate) could cause the same brain lesions as MSG? Would that affect your buying decisions?

And finally, what if it could be demonstrated that all of these types of chemicals, called excitotoxins, could possibly aggravate or even precipitate many of today's epidemic neurodegenerative brain diseases such as Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, ALS, and Alzheimer's disease? Would you be concerned if you knew that these excitotoxin food additives are a particular risk if you have diabetes, or have ever had a stroke, brain injury, brain tumor, seizure, or have suffered from hypertension, meningitis, or viral encephalitis?

Would you also be upset to learn that many of the brain lesions caused by these products in your children are irreversible and can result from a SINGLE exposure of these products in sufficient concentration?

How would you feel when you learn the food industry hides and disguises these excitotoxin additives (MSG and Aspartate) so they can't be recognized? Incredulous? Enraged? The fact is many foods are labeled as having "No MSG" but in fact not only contain MSG but also are laced with other excitotoxins of equal potency and danger.

All of the above are true. And all of these well known brain toxins are poured into our food and drink by the thousands of tons to boost sales. These additives have NO OTHER purpose other than to enhance to TASTE of food and the SWEETNESS of various diet products.

Hidden Sources Of MSG

As discussed previously, the glutamate (MSG) manufacturers and the processed food industries are always on a quest to disguise the MSG added to food. Below is a partial list of the most common names for disguised MSG. Remember also that the powerful excitotoxins, aspartate and L-cystine, are frequently added to foods and according to FDA rules require NO LABELING AT ALL.

* Food Additives that ALWAYS contain MSG *

Monosodium Glutamate
Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein
Hydrolyzed Protein
Hydrolyzed Plant Protein
Plant Protein Extract
Sodium Caseinate
Calcium Caseinate
Yeast Extract

Textured Protein (Including TVP)
Autolyzed Yeast
Hydrolyzed Oat Flour
Whey protein
Soy protein
Corn Oil
Soy Sauce
Gelatin

* Food Additives That FREQUENTLY Contain MSG *

Malt Extract
Malt Flavoring
Bouillon
Broth
Stock
Flavoring
Natural Flavors/Flavoring
Natural Beef Or Chicken Flavoring
Seasoning
Spices

* Food Additives That MAY Contain MSG Or Excitotoxins *

Carrageenan
Enzymes
Soy Protein Concentrate
Soy Protein Isolate
Whey Protein Concentrate

Also: Protease Enzymes of various sources can release excitotoxin amino acids from food proteins.

Aspartame - An Intense Source Of Excitotoxins

Aspartame is a sweetener made from two amino acids, phenylalanine and the excitotoxin aspartate. It should be avoided at all costs. Aspartame complaints accounts for approximately 70% of ALL complaints to the FDA. It is implicated in everything from blindness to headaches to convulsions. Sold under dozens of brand names such as NutraSweet and Equal, aspartame breaks down within 20 minutes at room temperature into several primary toxic and dangerous ingredients:

1. DKP (diketopiperazine) (When ingested, converts to a near duplicate of a powerful brain tumor causing agent)
2. Formic Acid (ant venom)
3. Formaldehyde (embalming fluid)
4. Methanol (causes blindness...extremely dangerous substance)

Common Examples:

Diet soft drinks, sugar free gums, sugar free Kool Aid, Crystal Light, childrens' medications, and thousands of other products claiming to be 'low calorie', 'diet', or 'sugar free'.

A Final Note...

Dr. Blaylock recounted a meeting with a senior executive in the food additive industry who told him point blank that these excitotoxins are going to be in our food no matter how many name changes are necessary...

“Out of trillions of organisms that were alive at the beginning of time, are alive now and will be alive at the end of time, only one tampers with its food. You do not want to bet against those kinds of odds.” - David Wolfe

Unas pocas notas acerca de nuestra operacion y comida:

Nuestro café viene de nuestra finca cerca de la frontera con Honduras. Es organico y tostado en la tienda tostado cada dos días,. Nuestra finca esta en las montanas a una altura de 1,300 metro, donde las plantas disfrutan los temperaturas frescas y much precipitacion. Nosotros no utilizamos sustancias quimicas, ni tampoco cortamos los arboles en la finca. De hecho, tenemos luz de un systeme solar, no hay conecion al "Grid", y no tenemos un vehiculo, solo humanos y caballos!

Servimos otros cafes tambien, de fincas pequenas de amigos.

Usamos los ingredients mas frescos posibles, siempre compramos localmente y organico si es posible. No utilizamos cosa artificiales en nuestra comida, o glutamato monosodio, o tampoco sirope de maiz de fructosa alta.

El Gato Negro solo use agua y hielo purificados. Pruebe nuestra miel organico y local en su te. Tambien, disfrute de la succulenta lechuga organica del la finca de nuestro amigo Steve (tambien disponible para la compra en bolsas).

Nosotros no servimo bebidas en tazas desechables por muchas razones. Primero, no hay razon para que la mayoria de las personas no pueden encontrar cinco minutos para disfrutar de un café. Los estadounidenses consumen el 20 por ciento de su comida en al carro! Esto no es bueno Tomando una bebida de café al manejar o como pasajero en un vehiculo es una receta para un desastre. A los pocos minutos, las baches, carritos de buey, peatones rebeldes, ciclistas locos o motociclistas ciegos crearan oportunidades par alas obscenidades que fluiran cuando usted derrame algo en su carro o su ropa. Incluso, aun si usted puede navegar ocasionalmente sin derramar el liquiovalioso sobre usted mismo, hay muchos razones ambientales para no utilizar tazas desechables.

Nosotros no le sermonearemos sobre los peligros del poliestireno que suelta biosphenol A (BPA) en su café proveniente del calor del agua/café. Los vasos del carton son forrados con plastic, tamfien. Los vertederos inhiben descomposicion, asi que un vaso de carton todavia sera un vaso de carton de aqui a veinte anos. Un vaso de carton utiliza tanto petroleo en produccion como una taza de poliestireno y utiliza pulpa de madera. Un vaso de carton consume 12 veces tanto vapor, 26 veces tanta electricidad, y dos veces tanto agua de refrigeracion como la taza plastic. Tam bien cuesta 2,5 veces mas que una taza plastic. Sientese y disfrute su café en una taza ceramic. Rellene gratuitamente su taza con nuestro café del la casa.

Todos los precios incluyen el 15 por ciento de IVA. Pero su factura presente los valores del la comida sin IVA primero. En la penultima linea del la facture hay el IVA del su compra.

Nosotros nos disculplamos por cualquier demora en el servicio de alimento en la temporada alta. Nuestra cocina solia ser un armario. Nuestra intencion fue nunca de llegar a ser un restaurant, y como tal hacemos cuanto podemos in 18 pies cuadrados de espacio de trabajo.

The New Official El Gato Negro F.A.Q.

What happened to the old FAQ?

A few people had problems with it, namely the Swiss, who, despite their access to gold and chocolate, often lack a sense of humor and thus were not happy about the term Book Nazi (as were the remaining 11 people in the world who have not seen the famous episode of Seinfeld's Soup Nazi); three travel guide writers with inferiority complexes; and the criminally negligent people who think it is okay to read books without paying for said books. We (meaning Kelly) have updated the FAQ to not offend the Swiss. We are still going to remind people that El Gato Negro is not a library and you cannot read 40 pages of a book (why read 40 pages of a book when you can read a 36 page menu?) that you have no intention of purchasing from us, but we'll get to that part later. Much later because as you may have noticed from the size of this section, we get a lot of questions from our customers.

Why do the prices on my bill appear to be different than on the menu?

No one wants to get a bill with 25 percent on the top for tax and tip, so we include the mandatory 15 percent sales tax in the sales price on the menu. The government makes it more complicated, requiring us to back out the tax per item and include it on a separate line, which also makes writing the facturas a lengthy process. Sorry about that. We allow our staff to add 10 percent voluntary propina (tip) to the bills, as is customary in Nicaragua.

There is no sales tax on books in Nicaragua.

Why are your books so cheap?

Well, actually only a few savvy people have said that. The rest, including two men working on their MBAs, cannot understand that there are significant costs associated with the procurement of quality selection of new and used books, all of which are shipped from the United States.

Why is the price of a new book higher than the printed price on the cover?

Some of you might have noticed that the cover price is listed "US". A few may have keenly observed that the price of books often includes a Canadian/British/Australian price which is slightly higher than the country of origin due to the cost of shipping a book overseas. We do not get the free shipping and 90 day credit that a traditional bookstore receives in the United states and it costs more to bring books to Nicaragua

To those who have nothing better to do with their time then whine about the cost of a new book, don't forget that you pay an average of \$1.20 in tax for a new \$15 softcover in most US states.

Why don't you accept credit cards?

There are a number of reasons. (This is long because many people have no idea how costly it is to accept credit cards anywhere in the world.)

- Because if you cannot afford a bagel and a book without using a charge card, you should probably not be on vacation right now.

- Because every charge you make means the bank has created money out of thin air and expects you to pay interest on this fictitious money before paying principle. The banking cabal has stolen enough money.

- If a client uses a miles/rewards/cash back card, the vendor pays a higher fee. (It is in the fine print.)

- Debit cards include a swipe fee. A \$2.50 bagel on a debit card would cost us \$.70 cents in processing fees, which is about 27 percent of the cost of the sale and our entire profit margin. If you have a debit card, you can get cash from one of five ATMs in San Juan del Sur.

- Accepting and processing credit cards costs money, from the call to the credit card processing fees and chargebacks. Credit cards add an average 10 percent cost to the merchant. Many fine restaurants in the United States do not accept credit cards.

- Credit card companies charge a swipe fee **and** a percentage of the charge. The average take from the CC companies in the US is 5 percent, but higher in Nicaragua.

- If a card is unreadable, the MSP charges more for manually entering the number into the machine, usually an **extra** 2 1/2 percent.

- Then there is the unqualified card, which means the merchant pays a higher rate. This often applies to business cards, international cards, reward cards, and accounts with the wrong billing address. This fee is often 5 1/2 percent on top of other fees.

- It can take weeks and months to receive payment from the credit card companies.

We do not believe it is right to charge higher prices to everyone to make up for those who want to use a card for a \$5 transaction. Subvert the dominant paradigm. Use cash. There are five ATMS in town. Use them.

Why are your prices in dollars if you dislike the fiat currency?

Thanks to the IMF, the value of the cordoba decreases five percent a year against the US dollar. It is too time-consuming to put book prices in cordobas and have to change the prices every few months to make up for the decline in the cordoba.

You may pay in tungsten-free gold and silver bullion, though.

Do you take Costa Rican currency?

Sometimes, depending on whether we have a trip to Costa Rica in the works or friends coming up for an exchange. You may have noticed that you cannot exchange your Costa Rican currency at most banks and the one that does take it charges (reportedly) 20 percent. We try to be flexible because we do make many trips to Costa Rica and have many customers from Costa Rica here on their visa trips.

If you are headed to Costa Rica and need to exchange dollars or cordobas for Costa Rican, we may have some on hand.

Why won't any businesses accept my damaged dollars?

The banks in Nicaragua do not accept torn US bills. Well, there is one, but they charge a 20 percent commission. Even the US Embassy refuses to accept torn bills, despite their easy access to the diplomatic pouch. Unless it is grossly torn or marred, we are fairly

flexible about accepting imperfect bills (though not torn \$100s). If you are about to return to the US and want to exchange cordobas or pretty dollars for our ugly ones, we would greatly appreciate it.

Where does your coffee come from?

El Gato Negro only serves 100% arabica bean coffee, chemical-free, hand-picked, and grown in the shade. We own a small coffee farm near the Honduran border which supplies us with an amazing bean grown at high altitude (1300m.) in the rainforest. In addition, we buy coffee from friends who treat their coffee and workers well. Arabica is considered to be the finest species of coffee, which grows slowly (only one harvest per year) and has a smooth, sometimes chocolaty finish, and low in acid.

We roast all of our own coffee in the store (look over at that strange looking red machine), to a level of roast we have perfected over the years. We think that we have the best cup of coffee in Nicaragua, because, unlike any other cafe in this country, we control the entire process from planting the coffee, harvest, roast, all the way to proper preparation. Enjoy!

Why don't you serve take-out coffee?

Sometimes we call the pink plastic bag the national flower of Nicaragua. There is so much trash everywhere - and for what? Why do people need to walk around with a beverage in a plastic cup that will take 25,000 years to break down? What is so important that one cannot spend five minutes drinking a cup of coffee?

- 65% of Americans drink coffee.
- The paper cups used at places like Starbucks are not recyclable.
- The average coffee drinker throws away 250 cups per year, so we throw away 58 billion cups per year.
- It takes 20 million trees and 12 billion gallons of water to produce the paper for the cups.

Talk about the law of unintended consequences. The amount of landfill space consumed by 58 billion cups is staggering, because generally the used cups are put into plastic garbage bags full-size, and then those bags are dropped into the landfill. If for the sake of simplicity you assume a cup consumes 100 cubic inches of landfill space, that's 3.35 billion cubic feet of space consumed. You could fill Michigan stadium – the largest football stadium in the world and able to seat over 100,000 people – full of coffee cups 50 or so times each year.

We recycle glass jars and use them as to go containers and newspaper for the paper sleeve, when available.

Some people have gone onto ratings sites and call us sanctimonious because we won't support the energy companies in their desire to frack, poke, and prod the depths of the earth in the name of cheap plastic cups. We don't want to see our cups floating along the shore, littering our beach and our home. We choose not to support the on-the-go consumption of coffee, but just about every other place has no problem creating trash that will last for 500 generations so you have other options if you don't travel with your own to go container.

Do you use purified water?

We use purified water for all of our beverages and for cooking. We refill water bottles, too.

Where do you buy your food?

Our Canadian bacon and smoked turkey breast is imported from the US, as are the cheeses, berries and bagels. (Nicaraguan-sourced bagels have a different taste because the bakers use a yeast more suitable to the tropics, but without as much flavor in the dough.) The bacon and ham come from our friend Pelon Mark, who smokes a pig or two every week. You can buy his bacon, ribs, and sausage (which we sometimes use for Biscuits and Gravy) at the Farmer's Market each Saturday at Big Wave Dave's across the street, next to Aurora Realty. We get our many of our superfoods (hemp seed, cacao butter, spirulina, maca, lucuma) from our friends in the Pachamama in Costa Rica, while we supply them with ojoche, chia, cacao and coffee. Our organic salad greens and honey come from Steve in Rivas. Nellie (from Finland) makes our yogurt and kefir. Our coconut oil comes from Jim and Scotty, two local extranjero purveyors of this liquid gold. Our cacao comes from Nicaragua. The cacao for the chocolates is milled for 24 hours and comes from Scotty at the Bonnie Lassie Spa (Casa Marina beachfront). Our bread and cinnamon rolls are baked daily by Anna, a local Nicaraguan woman, who has been baking for us for almost eight years. Rob makes a killer habanero hot sauce. There is usually some on hand. Ask for it if you want to try the heat.

We use Mediterranean sea salt, extra virgin cold pressed olive oil, and aged balsamic vinegar as condiments. The salmon comes from Chile, which has the cleanest water for salmon fishing anywhere in the world. US salmon is contaminated from the military testing and fallout from Fukushima. Farm salmon in the US is also a GMO.

Why are the bathrooms closed?

Unfortunately, there is not always water in this tourist town. There are problems with the water pipeline from the lake to San Juan del Sur that require the frequent shutdown of the system. The old water system in town is fragile and designed to handle a fraction of the the water needed for the exponential expansion of residents, visitors and businesses over the past few years.

Why don't you have a generator?

During power outages we make "Cowboy Coffee" or known as "Pour Over Coffee" which is all the rage in Manhattan these days. Some say it is much better coffee because the brewing time is longer.

Where is the black cat?

Nicky doesn't like the commute to work, so he stays home with his cat siblings. Most days we should be called el perro negro, with the occasional appearance of a monkey, sloth, ocelot, parrot, chicken or goose thrown in for good measure. And speaking of chicken and geese, the ones in the backyard belong to our landlord, even if they occasionally attempt to nest inside the cafe.

What's the deal with the Tarot cards?

There are several open decks on the satined glass table, along with a book on how to interpret the cards. There are tarot cards for sale along the wall by the coffee and postcard display, and new and used books on tarot in the Spirituality section. My personal favorite is the VisionQuest set. I also have the Osho Zen tarot, Medicine Cards, and Power Animals that I pull from, too. I have not seen all of the decks that are for sale, but they all come highly rated.

Trust your instincts and choose the deck with your left hand.

Why do you allow vendors in the store?

It's a touchy and sometimes annoying subject. We have known most of the vendors that we permit in the store for many years (a few strays sneak in here and there), watching many of them grow up and who now have children of their own.

Door to door vendors are common in this part of the world, so we try to respect the cultural traditions for the most part. The men selling sunglasses and pottery work really hard and on many days did not earn enough to cover their bus fare home. A couple of years ago a friend had his cellphone stolen. A street vendor (not one normally in SJDS) bragged about swiping the phone from someone at gato negro. One sunglass salesman took the phone from him and returned it to us. He told the vendor that they would all be kicked out because of the stolen phone. We have had no problems since then.

They look out for us and we let certain ones in our store. They can be annoying and on several occasions we stop them from entering when it becomes too chaotic. However, [people seem to want their products, as they sell a lot of sunglasses and pottery to our clients.

Who created the lovely stained glass table?

Okay, shameless self-promotion here because many people only notice the table after I ask them to take their feet off of the table. I spent 59 hours hunched over laying the glass. I didn't have my glass cutter, so I dropped the glass on the floor to break it into smaller pieces. The glass was leftover from art projects in my former life in the US that I shipped down here with my goods. Meaning I cannot replace it, so please don't break it and to avoid breaking it you must not put your dirty, disgusting (or even pretty and clean) feet on the table. It is a piece of very expensive art. It is also a place for dining. The occupants eating do not want to see your feet as they eat their food. The next occupant does not want the crud deposited from your shoes on the table.

Obviously it is a sore point and the segue wasn't smooth, as I am the artist and the business owner who grosses out when she sees feet on the table. Be present. This is not your home. Please treat El gato Negro with respect, including the books and furnishings. My friends (who are all guilty of this and have all had the unfortunate experience to witness and hear my reaction to their most egregious behavior (one is afraid to sit on the couch now) say I should have a sign that says no feet, but I won't succumb to having to put a sign up to remind people of their bad manners. Besides, they won't even notice the sign. This is why many hours have been spent on the non-lethal option. Please keep your feet off the table so I can keep my karma intact.

Who are the artists?

We like to support independent artists. The beautiful clay/earth goddesses, bird and turtles are creations Gwendolyn Beachy, an artist from New Mexico who has lived in Nicaragua for more than five years. The lovely watercolors are creations of Karn Knutsen, a transplanted artist and author from the States. (We also sell Karn's book "Break in the Heat" - look for it in the fiction section.) Karn and Kelly share a studio (that looks like it was destroyed by a paint/yarn bomb) that they call The Black Cat/ White Dog to emphasize their differences. The beautiful art cards are creations of our dear friend Shakti. Antonio and Kelly are responsible for the postcards. Our friends Icann (Nick) Nessie and Mira are incredible musicians and have their CDs for sale at our store. We have everything on the iPod if you want to hear the music before you buy the CD.

Why are you closed in the evening?

So we can enjoy the sunsets. No one needs a 15-hour work day. That's one of the reasons why we left our native country.

Do you have wi-fi?

Yes, but the most important thing to note is Rule Number One - **El Gato Negro is NOT an internet cafe**. We generously share our private internet connection with our customers. We do not advertise wifi, so please do not go onto WhineAdvisor and complain about our internet speed or connectivity issues, especially since it is not something we promote or something that you have paid for. If you need to use the internet for hours on end (and you wouldn't need the internet to fill up your time if you were reading a good book), there are several internet cafes in town that would like to have your business.

Rule 2: Internet is for customers only. Do not ask what the password is before ordering your food. If your internet connection is that urgent, there is an internet cafe across the street. Of course, having reached this late point in the menu, it is likely you have abandoned your need to like something on Facebook or check into the 4-square thing for people with too much time on their hands and too much willingness to surrender what last bit of privacy they have by submitting their every last move to the fascist system that is The Matrix. (And in case you don't get that far into the menu to get to the list of Kelly's favorite books, I suggest "Brandwashed" by Martin Lindquist, but I don't have time to explain why in this section.)

Sorry for that almost Ted Kazinsky-like rant. I digress, as I sometimes do.

Rule 3: Skype is not appropriate for restaurants, cafes, bars or any other public gathering place. Please use a call center, internet cafe or your hotel room for conversations with someone not in your physical presence.

Rule 4: No downloading music or movies. YouTube is not a fundamental human right. There is no need to watch anything on YouTube while you are in a bookstore. Please refrain from wasting bandwidth for video.

Rule 5: Maximum 30 minutes of internet per customer. If you need internet services for more than 30 minutes, you should be at an internet cafe.

There is nothing worse for the human condition than staring at a roomful of people zoning out to their electronic devices, liking Facebook photos of their aunt's next door neighbor's cousin's hairstylist's son's second birthday party while they are in the middle of a bookstore/coffeehouse filled with so many interesting people, books, and ideas and long winded-FAQs on the world's longest menu.

Speaking of Facebook, just in case you skipped over the last part of Rule #2, the owner of El Gato Negro who succumbed to the peer pressure of superficial social media started the El Gato Negro Facebook page invites you to like El Gato Negro on Facebook if you are so inclined. The other owner who has not sold out her privacy, freedom of expression and individuality and who has obviously taken editorial control of this menu is not offended if you do not like us on Facebook. She assumes you Love us and don't want to sell out by hitting something as boring as a "Like" button. *pyāra aura śānti*. She would prefer you to ~~commit Facebook suicide~~ and go to www.enenews.com and see what is happening with Fukushima, the giant sinkhole in Louisiana and the ongoing oil seeping from the floor by BP's Macondo Well in the Gulf of Mexico. Rob really wants you to like us on Facebook, though. El Gato Negro likes enenews, too.

Do you buy books?

Sometimes, but much of what comes through is unacceptable in terms of content or book condition. We 35 to 50 percent of what we can resell the book for, depending on the title, author, condition, book exchange stamp, inventory and subject interest by our customers. We occasionally repurchase a book that we sold to a customer, but there are no guarantees.

Which books do you recommend?

(If you want the quick version, skip three pages to go the Book Recommendations. If you are bored and waiting for your food, take the long route, please!

“Always read something that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.” – P.J. O’Rourke

Normally I loathe giving recommendations for books, something odd for a bookstore owner to say. I want to spread my hands at the 3,500 books on the shelves and say here are my recommendations, except for the crappy books that people still want to buy (like 50 Shades of Pathetically Boring Characters) that we have to sell or people will complain that this is not a real bookstore, and a few genres that don’t interest me much that I have to carry because I want to make money off the people with bad taste in books, too.

There are certain authors (Tom Robbins, Richard Russo, Milan Kundera, Kurt Vonnegut, Tom Wolfe, Tim Dorsey, Carl Hiaasen) and genres (Florida satire, shamanism and sacred plant medicines, travel and cultural experiences, homesteading and survival) that I love, but they’re not for everyone. My taste in books is a bit quirky. Oprah and I do not share the same favorite authors for the most part. (I have found that the majority of our book customers are not big fans of the some of her selections, either.) What separates El Gato Negro from other bookstores is the quality and selection of the books (many of which Oprah likes), something that is hard to appreciate because of the limited space we have to display books. If we were a traditional bookstore, we would have three times the shelving and every fourth or fifth book would display the cover. Truthfully, we could sell a lot more that way, but here is only so much space and I would rather have an amazing collection of authors and titles than half the inventory on the shelves. We have more than 3,500 unique titles and you would be hard-pressed to find many of these titles in large bookstores in the US, Canada and Europe.

“After years of practice, I can walk into a bookstore and understand its layout in a few seconds. I can glance at the spine of a book and make a good guess at its content from a number of signs.”

Umberto Eco

Books are expensive in your home country. I have been a good patron of bookstores for my entire adult life, even planning an around the world trip based upon the availability of English bookstores on every continent. I have spent \$100 for four soft cover books at the Globe Bookstore in Prague - and their selection is not nearly as good as our selection of titles and authors. Soft-covers in new Zealand and Australia are about \$22. A new softcover in the US is \$16 to \$20 after sales tax is included, yet some people complain because we may sell a once-read copy by a Man Booker Prize-winning author for \$10.

About half of the books on our shelves are previously read. If we sold new copies only, we would have to sell for \$5 over the US price to cover the cost of shipping, making the average price around \$20 - and we would make the same profit as a \$10 once-read book. It makes sense for everyone to have a good selection of used books, but finding good books in good condition at an affordable price so that we can resell them is a challenge. (Keeping them in salable condition after being manhandled by people who decided not to buy the book - and who probably knew they weren't going to buy the book when they thumbed through it and jammed it back into the wrong shelf with the spine facing out, is another on-going source of contention, but that rant is for later.)

Sometimes we get lucky and an almost new, high-quality book appears as a gift for us to resell. Thank you so very much for those gifts, especially Tim and Jo. We are one of the few business where our customers buy our books and gift us the books to resell. (We do good things with the profits. Painting over the custom free-hand pin-striping on the car has obviously not been one of them.) On occasion random travelers appear with good books, but quite honestly, that doesn't happen frequently. Oh, they frequently appear with books, but something worthy of reading and in condition to resell, not really. Check out the hostel book exchanges to see how bad it is.

The used books come mostly from charity shops and Goodwill on the Gulf Coast of Florida where my family lives and my sister graciously gives me my own room. New books come from publishers or Amazon. I would prefer not to use Amazon, but there are a lot of book titles that I cannot order from publishers because I do not meet the minimum requirements for ordering because, quite frankly, many don't offer enough books worth ordering. I like that the used book purchases fund charities.

Along my carefully developed route of thrift stores in the Bradenton/Sarasota area is the Goodwill crusher. All of the last call items are tossed (literally) into bins and stacked on long rows of tables where people squeeze by, randomly tossing books from one bin to the other.

Ninety percent of the books deserve their date with the dumpster, but there are always a few good books to be found amongst the collection of leftover mysteries in my shopping cart. It's like Black Friday at Walmart, with the Haitian immigrants tossing copies of **Windows 3.1 for Dummies** and **Chicken Soup for the Soul Volume # 587** into other bins with wild abandon. I feel like I am at the pound when I am there, wanting to rescue the most sacred of the books from the clutches of the crusher and the selfish person who tossed an encyclopedia onto brand new copy of **Life of Pi**, bending the cover of the book, not the dated and worthless encyclopedia. Usually I pick up the murder mystery books there, but even at last call before the dumpster they are more expensive than one would expect.

What I am trying to say in a long-winded manner is that yes, you can get books cheaper in the US if you want to take your chances at the Goodwill crusher or pay \$4 plus the cost of a book from an Amazon reseller. My island vacation is two weeks of driving hundreds of miles for books, heavy lifting (with no help), pricing and sorting purchases, and packing and repacking in what looks like a wing of the NY Public Library crashed onto a teenage girl's bedroom off the garage. (I like clothes almost as much as books.) Considering the cost of travel, shopping, packing (what a nightmare!), shipping, legal and accounting, tips/bribes at the airport (try shipping fourteen overweight boxes of books on an airplane from the US to Nicaragua or convincing the ~~targeted~~ ~~prey~~ innocent man standing next to me on the plane to help me navigate a 40 pound carry-on bag crammed with books into the overhead compartment before he realizes that it is a **40 pound bag** as I hide behind my praying mantis smile) and profit for the person who might be, thanks to her Amazon shopping cart, considered a grave threat to the US for selling every kind of survival guide book, copies of "The Motorcycle Diaries",

and books on psychedelic shamanism, the price of books at El Gato Negro is **an exceptional value**. (You can cut and paste that into Trip Advisor. Well, not really, but feel free to type in that phrase if you do go there.)

As you can see, there is a lot that goes into the selection of books for sale at our store and thus the reason why I sometimes freak out when I see someone taking a new book and BENDING THE SPINE! While no doubt my reaction amuses my friends, with their imitations providing hours of comic relief over the years as they discuss non-lethal weapons I could potentially use on my customers when they abuse my books, I would prefer to not have to freak out, so please don't bend the spine of a book until you have paid for it. Then you are free to destroy it.

"A book is a fragile creature, it suffers the wear of time, it fears rodents, the elements and clumsy hands. so the librarian protects the books not only against mankind but also against nature and devotes his life to this war with the forces of oblivion." - Umberto Eco

Some people are confused by our no reading the books policy. This doesn't mean that you cannot browse a few pages and see if the book is for you; it means that you cannot sit on the sofa for an hour and read a book on DMT or an expensive, out-of-print book on Nicaraguan history for free. If you are traveling through Central America in a backpack, you are not going to be traveling with The Encyclopedia of Surfing, so just don't touch it if there is no chance that you are going to buy the book in the here and now. I don't care that you have the book at home because it was too heavy for your luggage, but could not wait to get home to look up every bird you saw on vacation in our guidebooks. You cannot use the **501 Spanish Verbs** book to do your homework. I don't care that you want to read a chapter so that you know whether you are going to order it on Amazon when you return home. Seriously, far more than one person has said this. El Gato Negro is a bookstore, not a library, and Dog forbid don't dare call it a book exchange unless you want to make an appearance in the Revised Edition of the Gato Negro FAQ.

Well, you have made it this far and are probably anxiously awaiting my book recommendations that I loathe making not only because I haven't read nearly enough fiction to make the proper suggestions (despite my amazing ability to select and purchase books), but because as soon as I hype a book, I sell it in quantity (which is a good thing), leaving so many other great books on the shelf.

In general, I recommend that everyone have several good survival books on hand. Forget Kindle. When TSHTF and you cannot recharge your Kindle or Amazon has mysteriously erased your account without cause, you will not have access to any survival books. Do not buy any survival books that are only offered on Kindle. It's a waste of time and money.

We offer several good ones in my Survival (or How to live in Nicaragua) section. "When Technology Fails" and "Self-Sufficiency on a 1/4 acre" are two good ones. Everyone, especially twenty-somethings who know more about video games than real life (the average 18 year old has spent 10,000 hours in front of a video console - and that is just video), should have a copy of the SAS Survival Guide. It will make you look cool. Skip the US Army version.

"The most technologically efficient machine that man has ever invented is the book." -Northrop Frye

In no particular order, here are some of Kelly's favorites:

A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole. One of the few good books I have ever found at a book exchange. The man who gave John Kennedy Toole the name for the title (from a Jonathan Swift poem) was one of our first customers. He recommended the book and it miraculously appeared at a book exchange the next week.

A Fraction of the Whole by Steve Toltz. Set in Australia and I was sure that it was a fictionalized account of a true story. I was wrong. Hilarious. Short listed for the Man Booker, but should have won.

Fierce Invalids from Hot Climates by Tom Robbins. Switzer is one of my all-time favorite protagonists.

The Journey Is the Destination: The Journals of Dan Eldon. In another life I dreamed of being a reporter/photojournalist covering the same war zones that ended in Dan Eldon's death at the age of 22. Too nice of a book for here (mostly pictures), but beautiful, powerful and full of life.

The Dice Man by Luke Rhinehart. My introduction to this novel in Ireland was almost as bizarre as the book.

Love Freedom, Aloneness: The Koan of Relationships by Osho. This was my first introduction to Osho. It took me 29 days to read because every three pages or so I put it down to contemplate. He states many of the things I have always believed in my core but never had the courage to express, even to myself.

Fame, Fortune, Ambition by Osho. Let go of the idea that there is no eternal joy if you are not a millionaire celebrity by the time you die in this life.

Seven Days in May by Fletcher Knebel and Charles W. Bailey

Innocence by Jane Mendelsohn

Swamplandia by Karen Russell

The Secret History by Donna Tartt

Blue Angel by Francine Prose. David Sedaris introduced me to this book. Scary how much control the lies of a coed can have on a professor.

Mating by Norman Rush

Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov

Nude Men by Amanda Fillipachi. I liked it even more than "Lolita".

What is What? by David Eggers

Empire Falls by Richard Russo. This reminds me so much of the mill town on Vermont where I grew up. I love Russo's style of writing.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

The Unbearable Lightness of Being by Milan Kundera. I was Sabine in another lifetime.

Chaos by James Gleick

Native Son by Richard Wright

Revolutionary Road by Richard Yates. Bittersweet. I have never read such an accurate account of a marriage.

Tantra: the Supreme Understanding by Osho

Soul Sex Tantra for Two by Pala Copeland and Al Link

State of Fear by Michael Crichton. The first fiction book every footnoted by Crichton. You will look at Global Warming in a whole new way.

The Art of War by Sun Tzu

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe. This was my first introduction to African literature and part of my inspiration for an unpursued PhD in Zimbabwe.

The Sex Lives of Cannibals by J Martin Troost. Makes living in Nicaragua seem like a piece of cake!

The Zahir by Paulo Coelho. I resonate with the wife of the protagonist. I am her.

Man in Full by Tom Wolfe. More relevant today than when it was published a decade ago. I read it on vacation in Nicaragua in 2003.

The Country under my Skin by Gioconda Belli. I have a girl crush on Gioconda. I adore her.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Zorba the Greek by Nikos Kazantzakis

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett. Beautiful.

The Brief Wonderous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Diaz

My Antonia by Willa Cather.

Animal Farm by George Orwell

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon

The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy

The Portrait of a Lady by Henry James

On the Beach by Nevil Shute

The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

The Celestine Prophecy by James Redfield. The ending is a little corny, but I have used many of these energy techniques for years.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel. I wanted to believe.

A Man without a Country by Kurt Vonnegut

Wormhole by John Fowles

El dia que Pigasso conocio a Muutisse by Nina Laden. A very cool children's book.

Napi by Antonio Ramirez. The most beautiful children's book I have ever come across. I have given this as a gift several times. It's too nice to display here, but worth searching for on your own.

Brandwashed by Martin Lindstrom. Everyone on the planet should read this book. You won't believe the extent that you are controlled and manipulated.

Freakonomics by Steven Levitt and Steven J. Dubner. Worth it for the chapter "why Drug dealers still live with their mothers".

Confessions of an Economic Hit Man by John Perkins. A must-read if you want to know how the world really works.

The Shock Doctrine by Naomi Klein. "Confessions of an Economic Hit Man" put into action.

Collapse by Jared Diamond. Read it now.

Guns, Germs and Steel by Jared Diamond

Wampeters, Foma and Granfalloon by Kurt Vonnegut. My favorite collection of Vonnegut's writing.

The Trial by Fraz Kafka

The Unknown Terrorist by Richard Flannigan. Set in Australia, a woman is falsely accused of being a terrorist. It could happen anywhere.

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley.

Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell

The Imperfectionists by Tom Rachman

Blood of Brothers by Stephen Kinzer. An account of the Nicaraguan revolution and civil war that reads like a spy thriller.

The Naked and the Dead by Norman Mailer

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A natural history of four meals by Michal Pollan

The Botany of Desire by Michael Pollan

The Kite Runner and **A Thousand Splendid Suns** by Khaled Hosseini

Singing to the Plants by Stephan Beyer. My favorite ayahuasca book.

DMT: The Spirit Molecule by Dr. Rick Strassman. A good introduction to understanding how sacred plant medicines work.

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Water for Elephants by Sarah Gruen. Have tissues nearby.

Holy Cow by Sarah Macdonald. It gave me a new appreciation of India.

Girl, 20 by Kingsley Amis

The Double by Jose Saramago

Disgrace by J.M. Coetzee

We receive numerous recommendations for books to stock for our customers. In no particular order, here are some of their favorites:

The Temple of My Familiar by Alice Walker
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Travels by Michael Crichton
Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides
Overthrow by Stephen Kinzer
The Russian Debutante's Handbook by Gary Shteyngart
Let the Dog Drive by David Bowman
Underworld by Dom DeLillo
Caesar by Colleen McCullough
Jennifer Government by Max Barry
On the Road by Jack Kerouac
The Electric Michelangelo by Sarah Hall
Another Roadside Attraction by Tom Robbins
Skinny Legs and All by Tom Robbins
Even Cowgirls Get the Blues by Tom Robbins
Chasing Cezanne by Peter Mayle
A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry
The Emperor of Ocean Park by Stephen L. Carter
American Wife by Curtis Sittenfeld
Seven Types of Ambiguity by Elliot Perlman
Mister Posterior and the Genius Child by Emily Jenkins
1776 by David McCullough
Focus by Arthur Miller
Venus Envy by Shannon McKelden
Hocus Pocus by Kurt Vonnegut
Swimming in the Volcano by Bob Shacochs
The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks by Robertson Davies
Renato's Luck by Jeff Shapiro
In Search of Captain Zero by A.C. Weisbecker
Cosmic Banditos by A.C. Weisbecker
DooDaaa by Ralph Steadman
A Russian Journal by John Steinbeck
What's Wrong with Dorfman? by John Blumenthal
The Secret History by Donna Tart
The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy
The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
The Red Tent by Anita Diamante
Darwin's Theory of Evolution by Charles Darwin
Venus on a Half Shell by Killgore Trout
Way of the Peaceful Warrior by Dan Millman
Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand
The Traitor by Guy Walters
Mother Night by Kurt Vonnegut
Into the Wild by Jack Kaokauer
Dune by Frank Herbert
Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
Tourist Season by Carl Hiaasen
Consciousness Explained by Daniel Dennett
Prague by Arthur Phillips
Killing Pablo by Mark Bowden
The Godfather by Mario Puzo

The Tao of Pooh by Benjamin Hoff
Fall on Your Knees by Anne Macdonald
A Prayer for Owen Meanie by John Irving
One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
The Tapping of the Source by Kem Nunn
The Power of One by Bryce Courtney
The Crossing by Cormac McCarthy
Eva Luna by Isabel Allende
The Magus by Jon Fowles
44 by Peter Sheridan
Paddy Clark Ha Ha Ha by Roddy Doyle
Confederate Generals from Big Sur by Richard Broudighan
Snow by Orhan Pamuk
A Thousand Years of Good Prayers by Yi Yun Li
Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Dai Sijie
Kodo by Kensho Furaya
Waiting by Ha Jin
Them Lovely Bones by Alice Seibold
An Unquiet Mind by Kay Redfield-Jamison
Shipkiller by Justin Scott
Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver
Island by Aldous Huxley
The Deptford Trilogy by Robert Davies
Shantaram by Phillip Gregory Roberts
Candide by Voltaire
Atonement by Ian McEwan
A Complicated Kindness by Miriam Toews

The Last Resort (The Eagles)

She came from Providence,
the one in Rhode Island
Where the old world shadows hang
heavy in the air
She packed her hopes and dreams
like a refugee
Just as her father came across the sea

She heard about a place people were smilin'
They spoke about the red man's way,
and how they loved the land
And they came from everywhere
to the Great Divide
Seeking a place to stand
or a place to hide

Down in the crowded bars,
out for a good time,
Can't wait to tell you all,
what it's like up there
And they called it paradise
I don't know why
Somebody laid the mountains low
while the town got high

Then the chilly winds blew down
Across the desert
through the canyons of the coast,
to the Malibu
Where the pretty people play,
hungry for power
to light their neon way
and give them things to do

Some rich men came and raped the land,
Nobody caught 'em
Put up a bunch of ugly boxes,
and Jesus people bought 'em
And they called it paradise
The place to be
They watched the hazy sun, sinking in the sea

You can leave it all behind
and sail to Lahaina
just like the missionaries did, so many years ago
They even brought a neon sign said "Jesus is coming"
Brought the white man's burden down
Brought the white man's reign

Who will provide the grand design?
What is yours and what is mine?
'Cause there is no more new frontier
We have got to make it here

We satisfy our endless needs and justify our bloody deeds,
in the name of destiny and in the name of God

Madre Selva

(Grupo Putumayo)

Madre tierra madre tierra yo te alabo yo te alabo
Porque eres el origen de la vida (bis)
En tus selvas en tus selvas tu montañas
Donde habita el espíritu divino (bis)

Madre selva madre selva yo te alabo yo te alabo
Porque eres el origen de la vida (bis)
En tus selvas en tus selvas tus montañas
Donde nace el aire puro que respiro
En tus selvas en tus selvas y a tus ríos
Donde nace el agua pura que bebemos

Danos fuerza, danos fuerza madre tierra
Danos fuerza Ilumina ilumina nuestro camino (bis)
Ilumina ilumina nuestro camino, con tu espíritu tu espíritu divino (bis)

Yo te alabo yo te alabo madre selva, porque eres el origen de la vida (bis)
En tus selvas en tus selva tus montañas
Donde crece, crece y crece el yatecito (bis)

Mama cocha con tus aguas cristalinas
Limpia, purifica cuerpo, el espíritu del hombre (bis)
Al que pide sanación, paz y armonía
Al que Havre su corazón a la alegría.

Yo te alabo yo te alabo madre selva
Porque eres el origen de la vida
En tus selvas en tus selvas tus montañas
donde crece, crece y crece el yatecito
En tus selvas en tus selvas tus montañas donde crece, crece y crece el
yatecito....