




adidas

Thank you Diego + Family
for a wonderful experience
and great time spent together.

Ruud and Renn.

July 2022

Our travel plans are destined for Mexico or more precisely, Río Lagartos, a small sleepy fishery town with 3,500 inhabitants located on the north shore of the Yucatán Peninsula, a 3 hours drive from Cancun. Dad has arranged most of the 10-day trip that we are about to embark upon; he gets up at crack of dawn this Saturday morning in September 2019 to catch the early bird from Copenhagen to London. There I meet him in Gatwick airport where my contribution to the logistics play out on a 10 ½ hours flight with British Airways to Cancun. Back onto Dad's itinerary, we successfully search for our driver and by 9pm we are unpacked and sitting on a terrace above our room, enjoying a meal and the evening breeze. It's still above 30 degrees Celsius. How small the World has become! In 24 short hours we've managed to say farewell to the civilisation as we have come to know it.

How Dad found this remote nature paradise is a long and convoluted story that opens up many untold tales of passion and fearless adventure; those details though deserves their separate telling so here I only offer the shortest of summaries for background purpose:

Dad was once fishing in Belize where he met a fellow Dane Lars Mathiesen. As Lars caught a bone fish, Dad offered him a compliment of 'what a nice fish', only to be told by Lars that it was the smallest bone fish he had ever seen and that on average, in Los Roques they were twice this size. That spurred Dad onto a subsequent trip out to Venezuela to see for himself (and many further trips followed as bone fish soon replaced Sea Trout as his most treasured catch) but importantly for this story, out there he met another Dane Kim Rasmussen who was a fishing enthusiast extraordinaire and besides running a specialist fishing gear shop in Copenhagen, he also arranged fishing tours and trips to all corners of the World.
It was indeed Kim who convinced Dad to join him on a trip to Río Lagartos to experience their infamous tarpon fishing. On his first trip there with Kim, Dad proved the legends true about man-sized tarpon fish dragging large boats miles upon miles before finally succumbing to fierce battles lasting many hours.


Arctic Ocean
Iceland
Norway
Belarus
Turkey
Spain
CUN

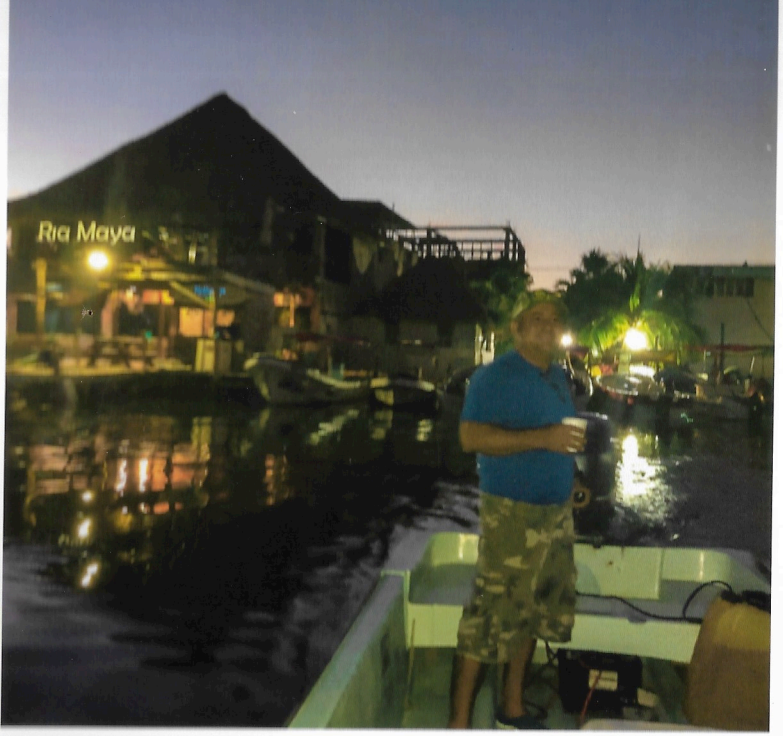




We are staying with a local tour guide operator Diego Nuñez and his family at their restaurant Ría Maya, where rooms and kindness are in amble supply for visiting wildlife enthusiasts and fishing guests. This is Dad's 6th fishing trip to Mexico and his 5th spent with Diego and for that, he is welcomed as one of the family. By association I am also met wi smiles and a mix of Spanish, German and English...and a healthy dose of hand gestures too...yes, we communicate wit ease.

The Spanish named these waters Rio Largatos or translated, Alligator River. It is easy to see how they could be fooled into thinking this was a river but in fact, these waters represents an elaborate fjord. However, when it comes to the alligators, the Spanish called it right!

As for the Nuñez family, though their language is Spanish, their spirit is definitely Maya. Towards the end of the trip w venture to the ancient city of Ek' Balam to learn more about this amazing people and their heritage but for now, the focus will be on catching the renownedly shy tarpon. Here I want to stress that as the tarpon is a protected fish, every catch is returned to sea - by turists like ourselves and by the locals who truly appreciate the beautiful ecosystem that they are part of and what it takes to look after it.







It is the first day of fishing and the jetlag is giving us a helping hand as we set off with Diego (senior) before sunrise. For the next few days we will focus on fishing inside the lagoon where the younger tarpon fish are present, and more importantly, where the weather is sufficently predicable for us to have regular daily excursions. The idea behind the the early rise is that we get to Diego's secret spot just as sunlight breaks through as this, along with sunset, is when the tarpon likes to feed.

The boat journey is 20 minutes of beauty and it doesn't take long to fall in love with the scenary and thriving nature all around us. Whilst we make our way I learn a fun fact about Diego's family; every first-born son is called Diego! Diego's dad is called Diego and has a turist fishing business in a nabouring village. Diego's son is of course also called Diego and he is an incredible guide that we have much success with later in the week. Finally, Diego's son has a











As Diego searches for new places to try, I am getting so excited about the wildlife being unsurfaced around the plentiful mangroves - I may fish at dawn and at dusk, but during the day, I'll be a very happy photographer! Also, I should have said upfront that here on my virgin trip we are not focusing on the fully grown tarpon sea monsters that you find out of the lagoon, rather, we are hunting deep within the mangroves - the tightly woven canals with a water depth never exceeding 2ft and every cast directly at the given younger fish in sight.



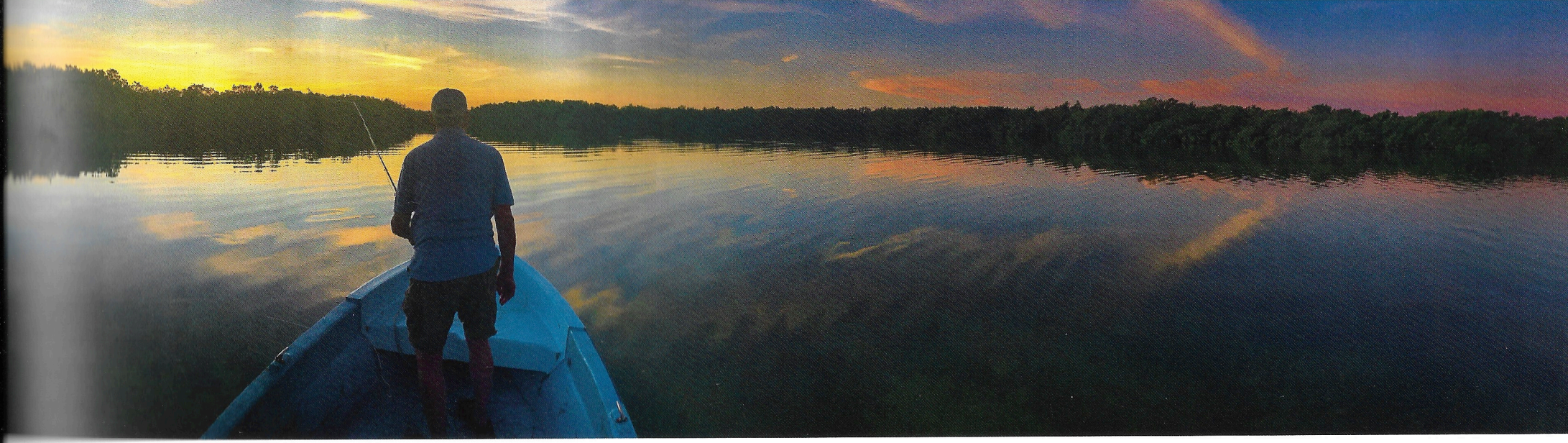


are back and it is time for lunch at Ría Maya. We choose fish of course and though it's not presented gourmet le, we are very happy with our tasty choice :)





It was a truly beutiful evening of fishing and there were lots of tarpon...just none that made it into the boat! We both had fish on, but as I learned quickly, this is only half the batle of catching a tarpon. Not only are they shy, their mouths are so hardy that the fly doesn't take unless you are lighteningly fast in pulling the line firmly at sign of interest. Tomorrow is another day :)



Look at the sky on these two photos here. And the reflections in the water need to be seen to be believed.







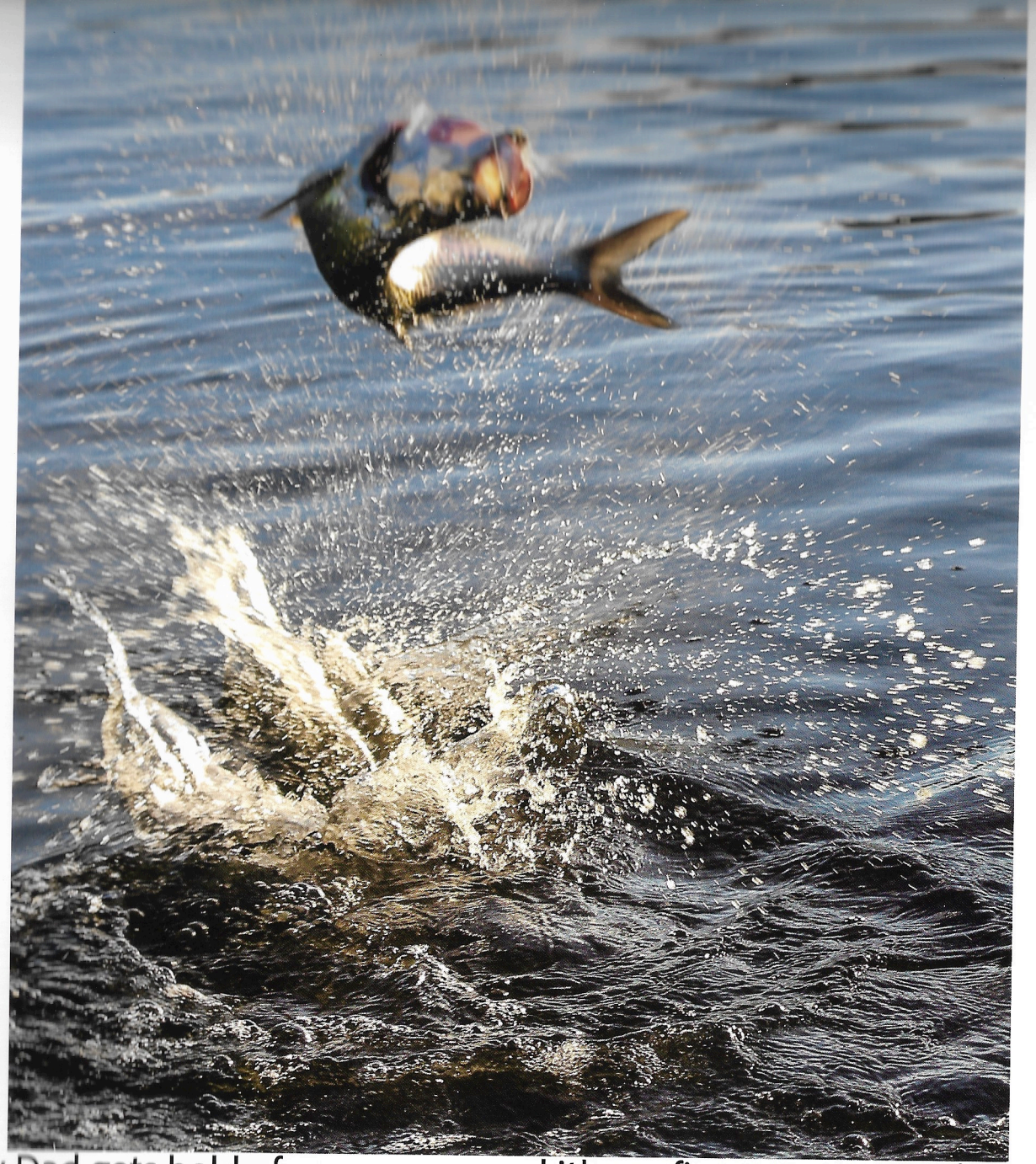


The next morning we head further into the mangroves. The tarpon feels extra shy today as we have to get right under the mangrove overhang to get close enough; this brings other challenges, as can be seen on next page :)













Finally Dad gets hold of one proper, and it's my first experience of a battle between tarpon and man. It soon becomes clear why these fish have become such a renowned catch for the fly fisherman. This little young fish fought as if it was 10x the size and I was pleased to see it being let back into the water without lasting harm done.





On the way back to Ría Maya, we are once again blessed with the wonderfully vibrant birdlife all around. An interesting fact is that there are 395 species of birds here, including the largest flock of flamingos in Mexico, in this 150,000 acre of wildlife refuge that at the moment, we refer to as our backyard.





In the morning Diego is not able to take us out and we have a new guide, Carlos, for the day. Dad is not happy and it doesn't help that we go further out than where he thinks the fish are. These concerns are soon put aside :)



As we come to the afternoon, it finally becomes my turn and though not the biggest tarpon out there, I am delighted with the result. Now I too can wear a relaxed smile.







It's a new day and with yesterday's good fortune, we are pleased to be sticking with Carlos for another day.







What a view for lunch at Ría Maya. At 35 degrees, it's nice with some cover in the shade whilst enjoying a chilled bear before Dad heads for a nap and I walk into the village for some exploring.

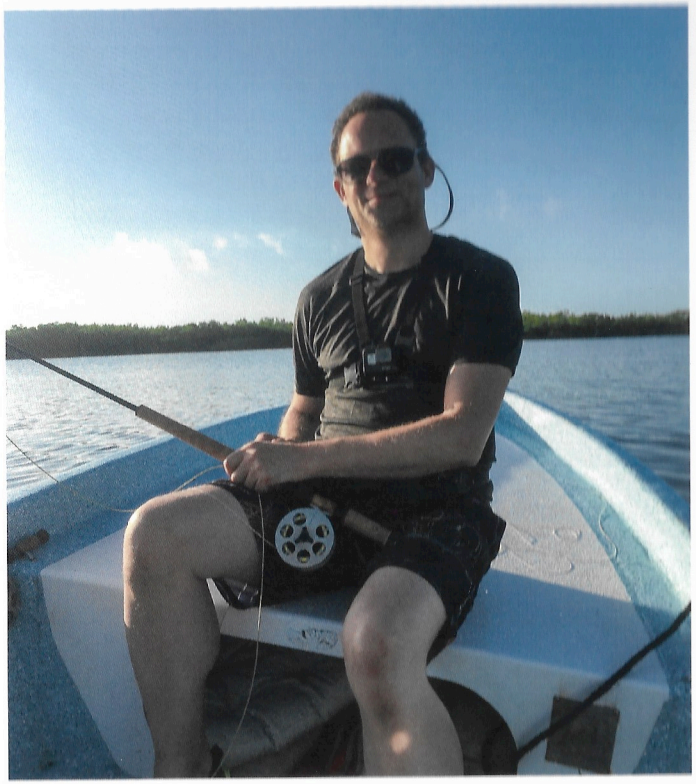


It is a beatiful evening and we are ordering our food with anticipation, not because of the dinner, but because we are going crocodile spotting in the mangroves this evening!

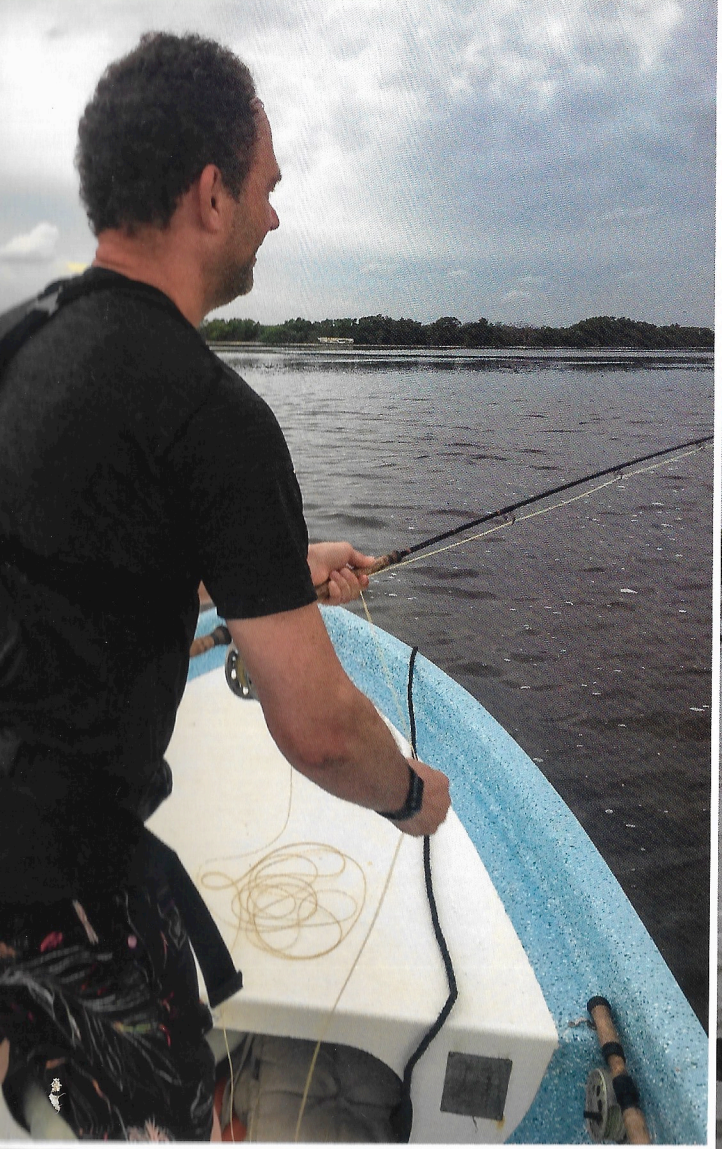


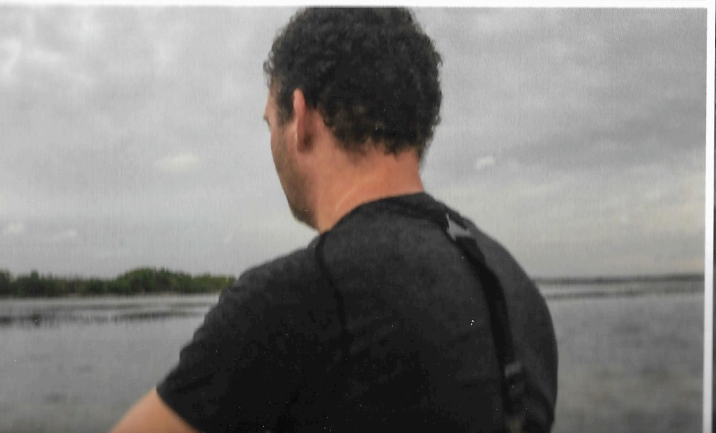






Next morning and we are with Diego (junior). Early on I get a tiny barracuda on the line...the ones we tend to
for dinner here. A ferociously looking thing, it is also one of the fastest predators at sea with its 58km/h pace!



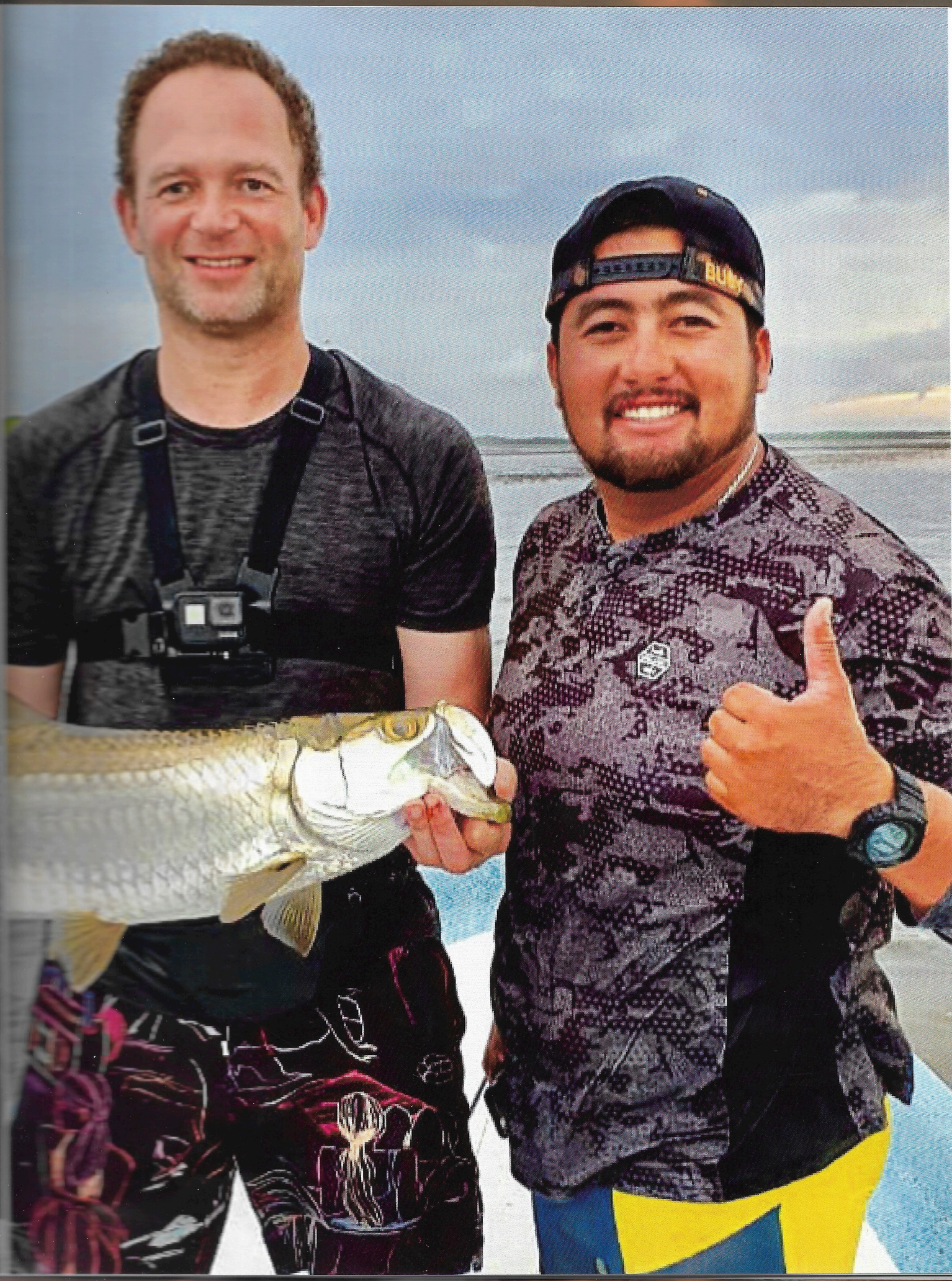
















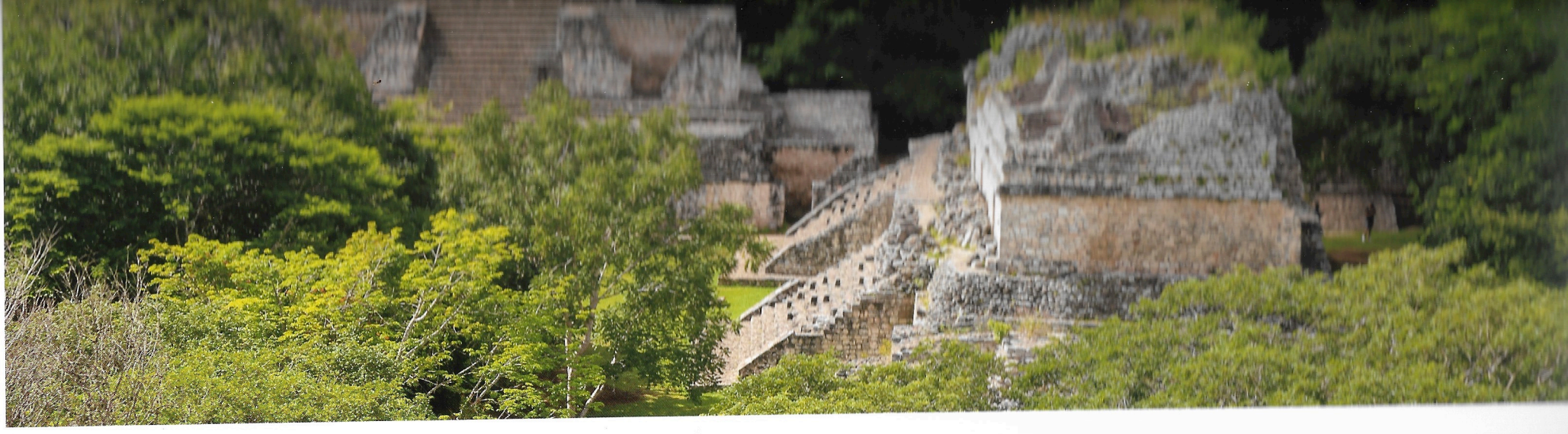
It was a fabulous final day of fishing and yes, I was delighted to have caught a decent size tarpun before we head for Ek' Balam tomorrow as part of our long return to modern-day civilisation - Río Lagartos will be sorely missed.


BIENVENIDOS
A EKBALAM


NFORMACIÓN TURÍSTICA
RUTA DE LA ARQUEOLOGÍA
PARADORES ECOTURÍSTICOS
SIMBOLOGÍA
TAS TURÍSTICAS
Ruta DE LA CULTURA
Ruta COSTA ESMERALDA
Ruta DE LA ARQUEOLOGÍA
Ruta ANILLO DE LOS CENOTES
Ruta FLAMINGO
Ruta PUUC
Ruta AVENTURA EN EL MANGLAR
Ruta SUR EXTREMO
CAMPECHE
TABASCO
GUATEMALA
BELICE
ENTOS TURÍSTICOS
UEOLOGÍA
REUNIONES
SALUD Y BIENESTAR
NATURALEZA
CULTURA
SOL Y PLAYA
SECTUR
YUCATÁN


EK BALAM







The site is known for the tomb of Ukit Kan Tok', a king buried in the side of the largest pyramid there.

