

WHEN PIGS SWIM

ENCOUNTER UNLIKELY
SEA LIFE ▶ OFF THE
COAST OF THE **BAHAMAS**



+ **JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL** MARKS A MILESTONE / SPEND A LONG WEEKEND IN **BARCELONA, SPAIN**

› SEPTEMBER 01, 2013

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(pg. 12)



Love Is All Around Me

moment, I remembered a story we had featured in this magazine in our Dec. 15, 2012, issue called “Dinner for One.”

You see, when I’m on the road alone, I eat horribly, if at all. I was on the road alone — literally — having flown to Phoenix the night before, catching a few hours of garbage sleep, then loading my mom’s Hyundai Sonata for a solo drive back to Dallas. My mom was moving to Dallas, and she was scheduled to fly to her new home two nights later. I was responsible for getting her car and her accumulated knickknacks across 1,100 miles of desert. And I was certainly up to the challenge. But right after I pulled out of Phoenix and right before turning the car south to I-10, I made the mental decision to drive all the way back on state highways instead of interstates. I wanted to see parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas that I’d never seen.

Instead of going through El Paso as my Day One stopping point, I went through Santa Fe. I wasn’t just going to muscle through this trip and take the route of least resistance — I needed some time to reflect on where I’ve been and where I’m going. I just turned 37, and I haven’t really considered these things. I hadn’t been ready.

I also couldn’t believe that my mom was actually making this move. For close to a decade, I’ve been trying to get her to move to Dallas and be near her grandchildren. For most of that time, her reply was, “When pigs fly.” I never gave up hope, electing instead to make more subtle suggestions as time went by rather than blatant, almost belligerent ones. I may be 37, but I still have a bad tendency to act out when I become overwhelmed with emotion. It comes from a place of love, but it’s not often received that way. I needed a few days for the desert to holistically work on me.

The Sonata wasn’t built for speed. Truth be told, it wasn’t built for comfort after Hour Eight either, but it had a satellite radio, and I listened to ‘60s on 6 for mile after state-highway mile. When The Troggs’ “Love Is All Around” came on, I turned that factory radio all the way up. And I sang real darn loud: “You know I love you, I always will/My mind’s made up by the way that I feel.” It instantly put me in a good mood.

And I was humming that song when Craig approached me at Terra restaurant, housed in the Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado Santa Fe. Don’t

know if it was the song or my ragged, road-weary appearance, but something made Craig smile.

Evoking the message from our “Dinner for One” story, I put my book down, closed my menu and smiled back at Craig. “What do you recommend?” I asked.

“Do you trust me?” Craig asked without missing a beat.

“Absolutely,” I replied.

“Do you have any food allergies?”

“Negative.”

With that, Craig took my menu and walked off. I picked my paperback back up. First he brought griddled crab-and-corn cakes with puttanesca sauce and caper mayonnaise. Then he brought seared sea scallops atop spinach and Romano cheese. The finale was slow-braised beef, rosemary potatoes, stewed tomatoes and green beans.

Nary a word was spoken over dinner. I noticed Craig checking on me from afar from time to time, but the seasoned waiter undoubtedly recognized a weary but happy traveler. He could tell I was fine; he left me alone.

I retreated to my room after dinner and read some more. I’d take breaks to walk the grounds late into the night and listen to the sounds of the high desert, which is akin to listening to the sounds of nothingness. When I hit the road the next morning, I still had that smile from dinner and that Troggs song in my head. I was just so happy that the next 10 hours flew by. But not before some more literal introspection. That song is 46 years old, and still, the meaning couldn’t be clearer. When I picked my mom up at the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport — in her car — two days after she bade me farewell in the desert, the hug she gave me said it all: You know I love you, I always will.

My mom is a Texan now. No pigs took flight to make this happen. But a couple of them did swim (page 52).



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MY WAITER’S NAME was Craig, and he approached me with one part dutiful inquiry and one part curiosity. I was alone, but that wasn’t what made him curious. Before he greeted me, Craig observed my demeanor and mannerisms and could tell that this would be the first meal I’d eaten all day.

He was an experienced waiter. Of that I was sure. He had a debonair manner and an acute eye for detail, which, as an experienced eater, I immediately recognized. We studied each other for a moment. I regarded him in his pressed white shirt, black tie, black vest and blue jeans, his hair combed back ever so elegantly, his goatee trimmed ever so neatly. And he regarded me, my shirt wrinkled, my shorts similarly crinkly.

“Good evening,” he began. “Welcome to Terra. Can I start you off with a cocktail or a glass of wine?”

I just sat there, menu wide open, puzzled look on my face, Frederick Forsyth paperback in my hand.

“Do you need a minute?” Craig asked. In that



LIFE IS A HIGHWAY: Though blurry-eyed from lots of driving, Adam had an on-the-road-again experience that made every mile worth it.