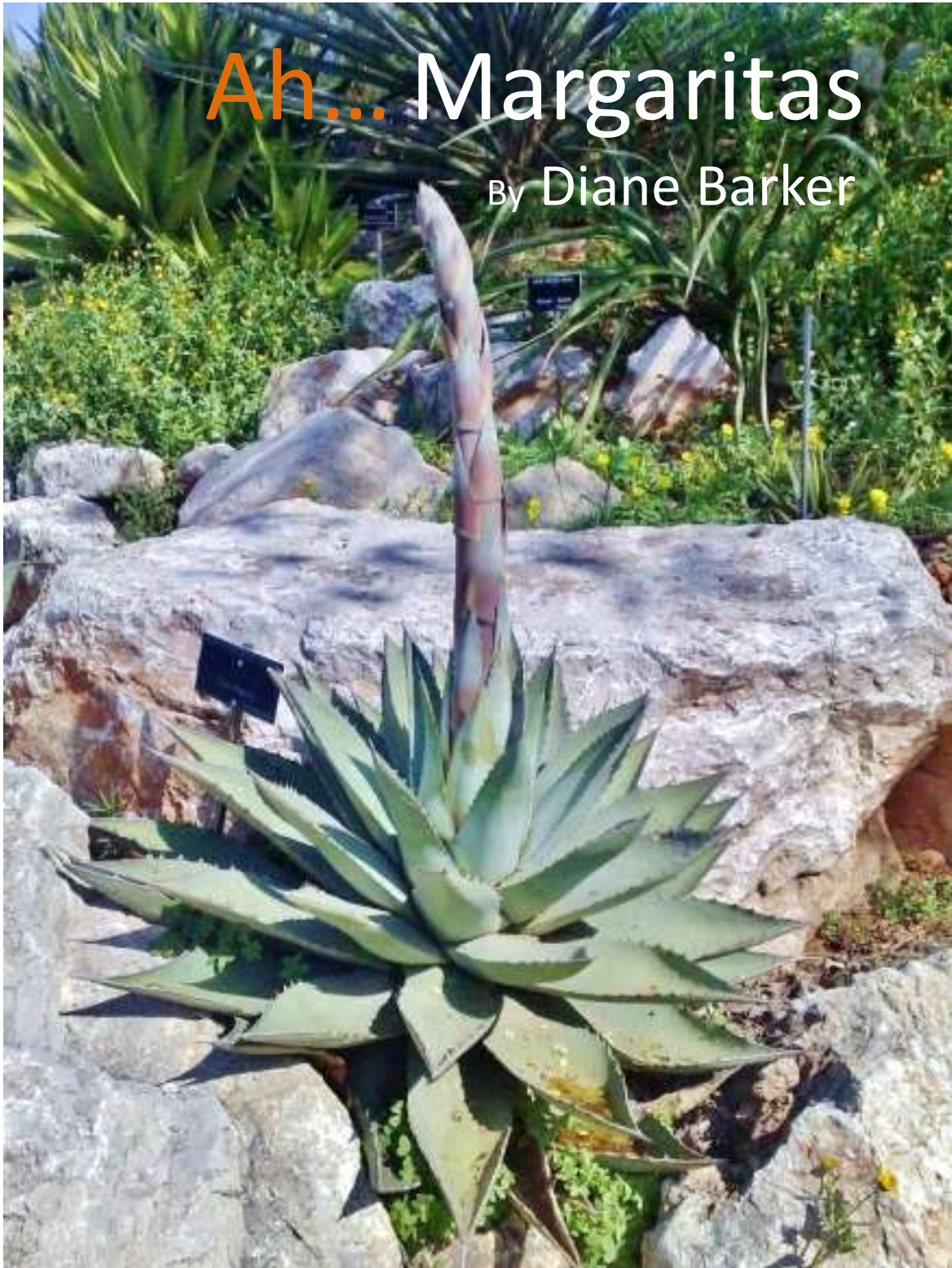


Ah... Margaritas

By Diane Barker



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The word alone brings to mind my favorite margarita. It isn't a strawberry margarita or a Cadillac margarita but of course an *Agave margaritae*. Those that know me are aware that my first love is agaves. I would like to tell you about a beautiful agave called "Agave margarita" a little known agave that grows in Baja Sur on the Isla of Margarita and Isla Magdalena, the only two known natural habitats of this species of agave. The islands are located in Baja Sur just north of the Cape region of Baja, on the Pacific coast. It was first identified and named by botanist Brandegee, famous for naming many Baja species, around 1889.

Agave margaritae is a small agave measuring only about 25 cm in height at maturity. It is a very compact plant with leaves grey to green, it is armed with teeth that are reddish brown in color. The bloom stalk is 2-3 meters in height with yellow flowers located on the narrow, panicle shaped stalk. The plants usually grow in clusters or groupings as does *Agave shawii* located here in La Mision. If you can find this plant in a nursery it would be a beautiful addition to your landscape. It would be well adapted for use in pots on patios or in a small area in your landscape.

I bring this plant to your attention because it is one of Baja's plants known only to grow on our peninsula. We are so fortunate to have so many plants known only to our region of the world: a botanical oasis in our own backyard.

Those of you that own a boat might have the opportunity to see this plant in habitat – how lucky for you. If you need a guide please let me know, I will even bring margaritas for the crew!!!



Diane states: "This photo was found on wikipedia. It was taken at the Nice Botanical Garden. The photo depicts *Agave margaritae* in beginning stage of flowering. The flower stalk is just beginning to emerge from the center of the plant."