

AD WATCH

Who are the turkeys?

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated each year in the US on the fourth Thursday in November. It is a day for giving thanks for the harvest and other blessings of the year, and typically includes a feast of turkey, stuffing (a bread-based side-dish usually cooked within the turkey), sweet potatoes, cranberries, pumpkin pie, and other delicacies.

Thanksgiving is one of many holidays commonly used by tobacco companies to promote the sale of their products. For example, Thanksgiving and Christmas themes were used to promote Kool cigarettes in youth-oriented advertisements featuring the cartoon character Willy the Penguin.¹

Last November, I was outraged to see a local grocery store chain in Nebraska (Food-4-Less) offering a discount on the price of a Thanksgiving Day turkey if one purchased a carton of cigarettes (figure). Where the heck have these people been for the last decade? I think *they* are the turkeys and someone has discounted their brain cells.

For this year's Thanksgiving, I hope Food-4-Less changes its offer and switches to the purchase of a product that isn't as likely to destroy the health of their shoppers.

If there were a "Stupidity in Marketing" award, this offer would move to the top of the list. The prize could be a turkey dinner, complete with cigarette and chewing tobacco stuffing. Eat it up, gang!

TOM BASSETT
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¹ Tye JB. Willy the Penguin and Joe Camel duke it out for the youth market. *Tobacco Control* 1992; 1: 132-3.



So. 33rd Court & Highway 2 63rd & Havelock 70th & Van Dorn

SAVE \$5.00
ON YOUR THANKSGIVING
TURKEY



WHEN YOU BUY ONE
CARTON OF MARLBORO,
VIRGINIA SLIMS, BENSON
& HEDGES OR MERIT
CIGARETTES

WITH COUPON
BELOW

SURGEON GENERAL'S
WARNING: QUITTING
SMOKING NOW
GREATLY REDUCES
SERIOUS RISKS TO
YOUR HEALTH.

FOOD 4 LESS COUPON PLU.#1000

SAVE \$5



\$5.00 OFF

SAVE \$5



YOUR THANKSGIVING TURKEY, WHEN YOU BUY ONE
CARTON OF MARLBORO, VIRGINIA SLIMS, BENSON &
HEDGES OR MERIT CIGARETTES.

LIMIT ONE COUPON PER CUSTOMER, COUPON EXPIRES 11-26-92

From the Lincoln (Nebraska) Journal-Star, 18 November 1992

Scenes from the Yucatán

Travelling abroad – whether for business or for pleasure – offers rich opportunities to document the scope and nature of tobacco marketing in different corners of the world. The advertising pitch for the American Express credit card, “Don’t leave home without it!”, might well be applied to the camera of the tobacco control advocate.

This past March, I travelled to Mexico’s Yucatán Peninsula. Outdoor cigarette advertising was not as prevalent there as in other Latin American countries I have visited, eg, the Dominican Republic¹, perhaps because television and radio receive 65% of cigarette advertising expenditure in Mexico.² Nevertheless, outdoor, point-of-sale, and print advertising for cigarettes was far from invisible.

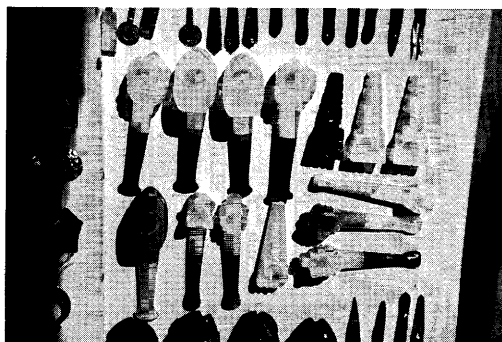
Most of the promotions I saw were for four brands: Marlboro, Raleigh, Montana, and Winston. The market shares for Marlboro, Raleigh, and Montana in Mexico in 1991 were 26.6% (up from 6.5% in 1981), 23.8%, and 8.9%, respectively (the market share for Winston was unavailable).³

Reproduced here are examples of tobacco promotions in the Yucatán. We would encourage readers of *Tobacco Control* to share with us photo essays of their own travels. – ED

- 1 Davis RM. Promotion of cigarettes in developing countries. *JAMA* 1986; 255: 993.
- 2 Maxwell JC. *The Maxwell Consumer Report : International Tobacco 1991 : Part One*. Richmond, Virginia: Wheat, First Securities, Inc, 1992.
- 3 Pan American Health Organization. *Tobacco or Health: Status in the Americas*. Washington, DC: PAHO, 1992. (PAHO Scientific Publication No 536.)



Marlboro and Montana advertised at a shop in Tulum, site of ancient Mayan ruins.



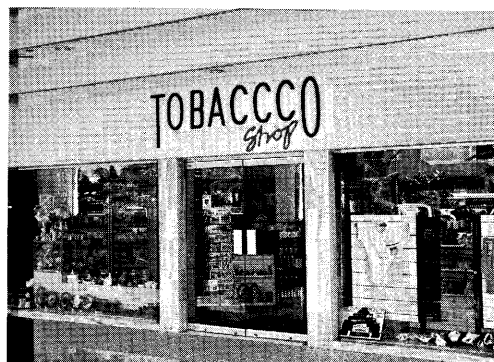
Onyx pipes sold in Tulum.



A large Marlboro billboard at the Cancún airport.



A triple dose of Americana just outside the Cancún airport: the *Jetsons*, *Denny's*, and *Winston* cigarettes.

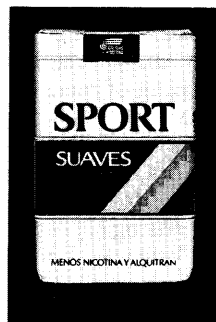


A “Tobacco Shop” at the exclusive Fiesta Americana Coral Beach Hotel in Cancún. Less than 5% of the goods sold in this store are tobacco related. (According to “Frommer’s Travel Guide” for 1993–4, rooms at this hotel are \$316 during high season, and \$230–240 during low season.)



Cover of the 1 March 1993 issues of ERES (“It’s you”), a youth-oriented magazine. This issue also included ads for three brands of jeans (one showing a condom in the pocket), Clearasil medicated soap (for treatment of pimples and acne), Mennen “Teen Spirit” deodorant, and Tampax tampons (“Nothing happens when you use it for the first time”).

Published twice monthly in Mexico, ERES has a domestic circulation of about half a million people (principally 15–25 years old). The “pass-along” rate is five to one (ie, the average purchaser shares the magazine with five other people). US circulation now exceeds 20000, and the publisher plans to expand marketing into other Latin American countries (verbal communication, Andy Schouten, 29 March 1993).



Cigarette brands named “Fiesta” (“party”) and “Sport”, manufactured by La Moderna (a subsidiary of British-American Tobacco), which controlled 57.2% of the Mexican market in 1991. The market shares for Fiesta and Sport that year were 11.2% and 0.3%, respectively.² According to Mexican law, cigarette advertising must not associate smoking with sports.³



Marlboros sold at your local pharmacy in Playa del Carmen.



A sign on the wall of a small store at Puerto Juarez in Cancún, promoting Burley and Virginia tobaccos in Raleigh cigarettes.