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‘Boca Vieja’ Review: Loving What Does Not Always Love Us Back



BY LIBERTY IMHOFF · AUGUST 12, 2026



From “Boca Vieja”; image courtesy of BlackStar Projects

The citizens of Boca Vieja, a small village in southern Mexico, cherish their land. They are true stewards of “Old Mouth”, which is the English translation for Boca Vieja. They love Mother Nature.

But does Mother Nature love them back?

It's a reasonable question to ask, considering that the world of the people who live here is turned upside down every year when hurricane season comes along and wipes out their crops while laying waste to their homes. But the answer doesn't matter, because the people of Boca Vieja love nature and they put their all into caring for her. Of the sea, the character Maria believes that "she is a woman named Maria." The camera focuses on one gentleman who is raking the sand in order to keep it tidy. The animals are well-tended to as well, with someone seen lovingly washing their horse. However, Boca Vieja residents don't spend all of their time working. In fact, they are a convivial bunch who know how to party — from the littlest of them to the oldest — and do so often enough. They eat great food and enjoy a good beverage.

The land empties as people batten down the hatches and prepare for the storm to come, and what was once a space of joy and pleasure then turns into a ghost town by comparison. On screen, the film audience is treated to a litany of storms whose destructive breadth is matched only by their objective beauty. Yet surely, the people of Boca Vieja couldn't have been thinking of the beauty of the storms; their livelihoods were once again being mowed down by the same force to which they have unceasingly been so endeared. This is the sacrifice that you make when you choose to live in a place where the climate is so chaotic.

That experience is becoming familiar to people in more and more places these days as we move deeper into the climate change era. If one place that you live has an unsettled climate, you could move somewhere else. But how long will it be until that place, too, becomes untenable? Just as the citizens of Boca Vieja have learned to be climate-resilient on the land where they live, many in the rest of the world will have to learn to do the same. "Boca Vieja", whether intentionally or unintentionally, shows us in this documentary what awaits us in our future — and it'd be wise to heed the warning.

Maria asks the sea towards the end of the film, "Are you going to remember me when I die?" With that statement, you could feel the inevitability of humanity's death, but what you couldn't intuit was whether it'd be from climate destruction.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves if we will remember nature before we die.

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