

## Document Citation

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**Asalto En Tijuana**  
(Assault On Tijuana)  
(MEXICAN-U.S.-COLOR)

A Filmadora S.A. coproduction with Metropolitan Million Dollar Prods. Produced by Abe Glazer. Directed by Alfredo Gurrola. Stars Mario Almada, Rozenda Bernal. Executive producer, Miguel Kahan; screenplay, Jorge Patino, Glazer; camera (color), Luis Medina. Reviewed at Cine I, N.Y., Oct. 2, 1984. Running time: 85 MINS.

Felipe .....	Mario Almada
Sonia .....	Rozenda Bernal
Osaka .....	Noe Murayama
Pablito .....	Paquito Cuevas
Joe .....	Jorge Patino
Santino .....	Victor Junco
Raul .....	Humberto Luna
Pepe Lemok .....	Luis Accineli
Bruno .....	Toño Infante
Killer .....	Ruben Recio

A fast-paced, intermittently gory Spanish-language actioner, "Asalto En Tijuana" was released in May at Hispanic cinemas in coproducer Metropolitan Theaters' Southern California exhibition chain. Brisk initial boxoffice results in the Cal-Mex market prompted talk of dubbing "Asalto" into English, but those plans since have been wisely shelved. Nevertheless, this caper pic about the theft of a world class racehorse from Tijuana's Caliente racetrack has excellent theatrical playoff potential for Latin American territories and prospects for a reasonable afterlife on U.S. Hispanic tv.

Plot centers around a scheme by a cabal of slithery, San Diego-based gangsters to steal "Excalibur," a \$10,000,000 European racehorse which is due to make its Tijuana debut. From their lavish Stateside hacienda headquarters (complete with a swimming pool stocked with bilingual bimbo starlets) silver-haired villains Bruno (Toño Infante) and Killer (Ruben Recio) decide there's only one man for the job — Ensenada rancher and horse trainer, Felipe (Mario Almada), who's also a commando veteran of the Korean war. Because Felipe is happily married to buxom cantina singer Sonia (Rozenda Bernal) and generally enjoying life on the rancho with his wife and son, Pablito, the hoods dispatch their chief hitman, Osaka (veteran Mexican film villain Noe Murayama) to exercise a little unfriendly persuasion.

Osaka and a bunch of thugs proceed to kidnap Pablito (beating Felipe's right-hand man, Raul, to a crimson pulp in the process before blowing off his leg for good measure) and thus blackmail Felipe into participating. To demonstrate that there's honor among thieves, the gangsters offer the stoic hero \$500,000 to organize the job.

Felipe heads for a Tijuana scrapyard where his old army buddy Joe is working and drinking the day away. Played with comic gusto by Jorge Patino, Joe leaps at the chance to make \$50,000, agrees to stop boozing and reluctantly locates a third Korean vet, helicopter pilot Pepe Lemok (Luis Accineli) who's kicking heroin cold turkey in a Tijuana slum shanty. The team assembles and begins rehearsing its audacious plan to snatch the horse off the track with a helicopter *in mid-race*.

Osaka ensures the jockey's cooperation by (what else) kidnaping his wife, and all goes well until Pepe gets rehooked on junk. No problema — Felipe knows a little bit about flying copters himself and the daring, if cockeyed and credibility-straining, horse heist is made.

Street-smart Felipe is not about to hand over the priceless nag until he gets his son back. However, a slight breach of contract leads to a blood-gusher denouement which is positively Jacobean in drilling home the message that crime, in any language, does not pay.

For a low-budget (around \$300,-

000) production, the camerawork does justice to the Mexico and California locations. Alfredo Gurrola's direction, like the performances, is sturdy and workmanlike. One hokey touch is a musical finale, loosely ripped-off from the "Chariots Of Fire" theme.—*Rich.*