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## J-Lo to film in Nogales, Son.

**By Lourdes Medrano**  
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NOGALES, Sonora - Residents here are gearing up to roll out the welcome mat for movie star Jennifer Lopez.

The actress will start filming the crime thriller "Bordertown" in early October, when the streets and neighborhoods of this bustling Mexican city will bask in the glow of Hollywood.

"Any way you put it, the fact that Hollywood is making a film here will bring recognition to Nogales," said Eugenio Puebla, Sonora's regional tourism coordinator.

"There is a lot of excitement in the city, and we're getting a lot of calls from surrounding communities," Puebla added.

The film, written and directed by Gregory Nava, will co-star Antonio Banderas.

Filming initially was slated to begin in July, Puebla said, but it was postponed.

Movie sets that went up over the summer may need some touch-up work, he said. Otherwise, beefed-up security, hotels and restaurants are ready to serve the Hollywood guests and any extras they hire.

The film is based on the real-life unexplained killing of hundreds of women in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. But Puebla said it won't convey a negative image of Nogales.

"The movie will explore a very serious problem, and it will get people talking about a possible solution," he said.

Puebla said even "Traffic," a 2001 drug-war movie set in Tijuana but filmed here, brought good exposure and economic benefits to Nogales, which has about 300,000 residents.

Signs of Hollywood already are evident on Calle Elías, the main road leading into the United States Port of Entry, where several movie scenes will be shot. Near the railroad tracks, near the border crossing, several old buildings have been covered in antique paint finishes.

Restaurant El Morro is one of the aging buildings made to look even older. "It looks like it's falling apart," owner Carmelita Cohen Córdova said of her business, and laughed heartily.

The restaurateur said she's looking forward to the movie-making action. She knows from experience that it's good for business.

"It benefits the city as a whole, although not everyone likes the commotion," Cohen Córdova said, alluding to a nearby business owner who didn't allow film crews to paint his building.

But Cohen Córdova, 51, knows what it's like to rub elbows with film-makers. Her restaurant served as a makeshift headquarters for the cast of "Perdita Durango," a dark, 1997 movie also filmed in Nogales. She remembers it as a good experience.

Her daughter, Melissa Peralta, said she can't wait to see Lopez, one of her favorite actresses, set foot in her

hometown.

"I've seen most of her movies. I especially liked her in 'The Wedding Planner,'" said Peralta, 21.

Lopez's impending visit has stirred up quite a bit of excitement among all her friends, she said. More than a few will be seeking an autograph.

"I want to frame it and hang it in the restaurant," she said.

Across the street from El Morro, a tiny convenience store called "Mi Tiendita" has been turned into what once might have been a barber shop.

Store clerk Guadalupe Camacho, 31, said it will be fun to watch the cameras rolling. She just hopes Hollywood will remember to leave the city in its original state.

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