

Subject: Que Pasa Grecia Update #8, August 2025

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Que Pasa Grecia

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¿Qué Pasa?

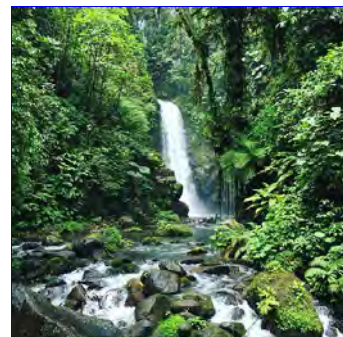


Que Pasa Grecia Update #8 August 2025

What's New in Que Pasa Grecia

First, with apologies for the longest update in our history, but there was a lot to communicate this month.

Since our last update, we've got a listing for a large propane BBQ, there's a new eldercare business in the area, and we also have added a **new section** under the **For Sale tab** called ["Opportunities"](#) where we have a new listing for a **real estate partnership-investor business opportunity**. Our calendar is suddenly very busy, including the Democrats Abroad Grecia



meeting on 19 August. Check out the new listings in Atenas real estate. For more details on it all, go to QuePasaGrecia.com.

Miscellaneous

Mother's Day, Friday, 15 August, is a national holiday. All Federal and local government offices will be closed, as well as banks and some businesses. For the holiday, the Grecia feria will move from its regular Friday-Saturday days to **Thursday, 14 August**. The Sarchi feria will be held as usual on Friday, 15 August.

Sarchi Furniture Fair – The semi-annual Sarchi Furniture Fair will be held for two weekends Friday-Sunday, 8-10 and 15-17 August in the farmer's market space in Sarchi. Furniture and artisan items from the area will be on display and for sale. (Many vendors there will also be available to take custom orders.)

Starting NOW - Grecia is finally lending a helping hand to their local **entrepreneurs/ craftspeople** and starting **Monday August 4** there will be a rotating slate of sellers in the "Little Houses" located in Elenica Park (next to the correos/post office). This is a new project and will be happening daily now through at least November. Friend of QPG **Rasta Miguel** is in the first weeks' lineup and **will also be DJ'ing an assortment of musical genres** for everyone's enjoyment.

Change Is Coming to Grecia – The new Evolution industrial park on Ruta 1 and the enormous residential development planned for the other side of the highway come with the addition of as many as 30,000 new jobs and residents. The downside includes more congestion on Ruta 1 headed toward San Jose and traffic congestion in and around Grecia due to construction delays and many more residents. The changing demographics do have upsides: a new overpass at the juncture of Ruta 154 and Ruta 1 is getting ready to be built, which should make traffic merging at that dangerous intersection much safer and faster; there is an AutoMercado (construction beginning in December) next to the Montezuma residential development; and, if you believe in well-placed rumors, land has already been purchased for a new PriceSmart in Grecia.

Poás Volcano – The government has reopened Poas Volcano tourism visits with restrictions. Reservations are still required.

La Eva Coffee Tour Opens – *Beneficio La Eva* is now giving coffee tours and offering a special quality coffee blend for sale

Que Pasa offers articles on local places to go, helpful how-to's, and general observations of life in the Grecia/Sarchi area. **Click on the photo to visit our site!**



CharBroil 3-burner propane BBQ



DeVilbiss 5-liter Oxygen Concentrator



New in the **Articles** section of QPG: Passport Renewal, making an appointment with DEKRA, renewing your cedula/ DIMEX identification; and how to donate your remains to the Costa Rica Medical School.

at their coffee processing facility in Sarchi Norte. The old team from *Espíritu Santo* is giving the tour, so you know it will be informative and entertaining. Contact them at: 6088-2292; coffetour@laeva.net; or view them on Facebook at *La Eva Coffee Tour*.

Virus Vaccines - The “razorblade throat” COVID variant is in Costa Rica and in the U.S. We understand some readers have received vaccinations in Palmares, but the availability of vaccines for COVID and other respiratory viruses is sporadic. We have heard there were vaccinations being given at the Mercado Central in Grecia and the Grecia hospital, but we have been unable to confirm that info. If you feel that you need or want one, you'll have to check with your local CAJA Ebais clinic.

Bad Economic News for C.R. - Three technology and medical firms, Intel, Pfizer and Qorvo, are closing facilities or reducing their presence here citing an unfriendly permitting and approval process, high costs, crime, and an unfavorable exchange rate with the dollar. There will immediately be a loss of jobs, and if departures of foreign businesses become a trend, it will have a measurable negative impact on Costa Rica's economy.

Will President Chaves Resign? - President Rodrigo Chaves had considered resigning the presidency in order to run for the Chamber of Deputies in 2026. He had to make the decision by 31 July and on 30 July, he announced that he wouldn't be resigning. So, we will have Chaves running the show until a new president is inaugurated next year, but a number of his ministers have recently resigned and are in the process of being replaced.

Little Summer & Rainfall to Date - The kids are back in school after the “little summer of San Juan” two-week break, and even though the C.R. weather service said there would be no break in the rain this year, we had one—guess we'll have to credit history and tradition rather than meteorologists. Since we are publishing this issue after the end of the month, here's where stand for July and YTD rainfall for El Cajon de Grecia and San Juan de Sarchi. Thanks to Irina and Tom.

El Cajon de Grecia (Irina)

July: 17.6 cms; 6.9 ins.

YTD: 190.5 cms; 75.0 ins.

San Juan de Sarchi (Tom)



Starting August 4, join local entrepreneurs at the Little Houses in Elenica Park next to the correos.



Our newest import - the latest variant of COVID.



Special Mother's Day Offer from Cali Bakery - who will now take orders and deliver to you on Fridays at the feria in Grecia!



Treat yourself to a spa date!
You'll thank yourself!
NOW AVAILABLE - Gift Certificates! What better way to treat a Friend than with a 90-minute facial!

July: 18.1 cms; 7.1 ins.

YTD: 148.7 cms; 58.5 ins.

Costa Rica Civics 101 Cont'd.

For everyone new to Costa Rica or who has lived here for some time but is not as well informed as they would like to be, here is your civics lesson on cantons. (Thank you, Brad Ross, for your contributions to this article.) We will be publishing this on the QPG website in its entirety in the Very Near Future.

Cantons - The Local Government

In Costa Rica, a "canton" exists as the next-level administrative and governing division below the national federal government. Think of a canton as a mix somewhere between a county and an incorporated city or township. Cantons in Costa Rica vary greatly in area and population, but every canton is the same in that has its own local government called a "municipalidad." Every canton is divided into formal districts or, in Spanish, "distritos." (There are currently a total of 488 distritos in Costa Rica within the country's 84 cantons.) Informally, cantons have smaller communities within them known as "barrios," but for elections, government recognition, and classification, the canton's "distritos" are federally recognized. Each canton is governed by elected officials: a mayor - an "alcalde" (m), or "alcaldesa" (f), and a canton council, "concejo municipal," who are elected from their respective "distritos." These local elected officials stand for election every four years. (The next national municipal elections will be in early 2028.) Unlike Costa Rica's president, the mayor can be re-elected, but like the president if he/she decides to stand for re-election, he/she must resign six months before the election so as not to use their office to have undue influence, impede other mayoral candidates, use their official platform to communicate political messages, or gain an authoritative advantage among the electorate. If the mayor decides to run again, then the canton's chief executive responsibilities will fall to the vice-mayor selected by the concejo municipal. These local governments handle everything: garbage collection, non-national road maintenance, make canton-specific laws, establish local-specific building codes, issue building permits, inspect construction, manage recycling, resolve disputes or complaints between residents and businesses, and in some cantons, such as Sarchi, also manage and administer water and drainage systems. In addition, they also organize cultural events, collect revenues, and manage any number of other public services.



[Municipalidad de Grecia](https://www.grecia.go.cr/)
<https://www.grecia.go.cr/>

The municipality of Grecia has just introduced a powerful new website. It is well-designed and packed with useful info. For English, simply scroll to the very bottom of the home page, and next to the 2025 copyright you will see a globe with IDIOMA where you can change site language to English.



All day educational event
coming Sept 13 at the Parque
Central in Grecia



[Caribe Sinfónico asks for your support!](#)



Great houses in Atenas at
every price point!

Why Cantons Work

The canton system allows Costa Rica to decentralize governance, give local communities a voice, and foster local development. It's one of the many reasons the country ranks so high in happiness, stability, and quality of life!

How Were the Cantons Formed?

The division of cantons began in the 19th century, soon after Costa Rica gained independence from Spain. As the country developed, the government recognized the need for localized administrative structures. The first few cantons were created based on population centers, economic importance, and natural geographic divisions like rivers, mountain ranges, and transportation access.

Over the years, new cantons were carved out of larger ones due to population growth; civic and political pressure from local communities; natural (geographic) barriers or divisions (a recent example is Rio Cuarto, which was part of Grecia canton until 2017 when it achieved its own status - it is located on the other side of Poas volcano, a very long way from Grecia); and the need for better delivery of services. Each time a new canton is proposed, it must go through legislative approval, including a detailed study by government commissions. It's a very democratic process!

A Few Representative Canton Examples

San José, the capital province, has cantons like Escazú (upscale and modern), Desamparados (densely populated and mostly low income), and Santa Ana (middle and upper-middle class and one of the favorite residency choices among expats). The province of Alajuela boasts the charming canton of Grecia (famous for its metallic church and friendly people); Sarchi, the furniture- and souvenir-manufacturing capitol of Costa Rica (also filled with friendly, artistic folks); and Naranjo (famous for its award-winning coffee production). Limón Province includes the canton of Talamanca, known for its vibrant Afro-Caribbean culture and proximity to beautiful beaches in and around the distrito of Puerto Viejo.

So, next time you're sipping coffee in a quaint little Costa Rica town, remember—you're probably in a proud canton that runs its own show, makes its own cultural contributions, and adds a beautiful thread to the tapestry of the Pura Vida lifestyle!

Here is the current number of cantons in each province: San José 20; Alajuela 16; Cartago 8; Heredia 10; Puntarenas 11; Guanacaste 13; and Limón 6



Your bank will NEVER call asking for your private information. Neither will Social Security or the IRS. **Don't get duped!** Better to hang up and call your bank than to get your accounts cleaned out.



Note to Readers: The following section, U.S. Government Changes Impacting Expats, is accurate at the time of writing, but may contain information, conclusions, and/or suggestions with which some readers may disagree, cause discomfort, or find objectionable. For those individuals, we recommend that you finish your Que Pasa Grecia update reading here and skip to the Costa Rican saying. For the rest of our readers, we hope you find value in reading the section below.

U.S. Government Changes Impacting Expats

Tariffs, Retirement Savings, and the Cost of Living – Several new agreements set tariffs for Vietnam, E.U., Japan, Switzerland and South Korea as well as new unnegotiated tariffs ranging all from 19 to 50% for India, Canada, Taiwan, Brazil, and Indonesia for products coming to the U.S. with tariffs for most of the rest of the world at 10%. Prior to when the current regime came to power, the average effective U.S. tariff rate for all countries products was under 3%. The tariff issue appears to be a moving target, but if the new tariff rates remain in place, they will ultimately cause higher U.S. prices for many, if not most, products and components, which will mean that the prices for impacted products will cost us more when they arrive here from the U.S. Additionally, there's still a threatened 12 August deadline for implementing additional tariffs on many other nations.

The just-approved federal budget for the 2026 fiscal year eliminates or makes cuts in many, many areas including research in health and the environment, as well as foreign aid. We will have to see if or how these cuts impact us residing in Costa Rica. On a small upside the bill provides U.S. seniors with an increased deduction of \$6,000/per person for the next two years, which could leave a few extra tax dollars in our pockets for a bit. In addition, the Fed just left interest rates unchanged for two more months, but it was also just reported that U.S. economy was down for the first half of 2025 - both are likely to have some indirect, but minor, impact on U.S. expats and the Costa Rica economy.

We can still expect a higher cost of living here due to the impact of U.S. tariffs and the poor exchange rate of the dollar to the colon. However, the NYSE and NASDAQ stock markets are still on the way up and are at or near all-time highs. So far, they are apparently little effected by tariffs, interest rates, or the new federal budget, which means, at the moment, some of your retirement investments may be gaining value.

Immigration - Since our last issue, there are no new public

developments on immigration as it would impact Costa Rica. However, with the constitutional court ruling preventing acceptance of further third-country immigrants from the U.S. and the very negative federal report on the treatment of the first batch, do not expect this country to be taking in immigrants from the U.S. anytime soon. Unfortunately, we have heard some disturbing stories of how Venezuelans were treated while imprisoned in CECOT in El Salvador, but as far as we can tell, these details do not directly impact Costa Rica.

Social Security – The Treasury Secretary has said that the newborn savings bonus introduced in the new budget provides a backdoor entrance to be able to privatize Social Security. If this is true, it would probably take years to implement and likely won't affect any of us who are already collecting Social Security benefits, but it would likely impact our children and grandchildren. If you need to access the SSA, first attempt to call the U.S. Embassy U.S. Citizen Services (2519-2000), which promises to assist.

Health – The U.S. Health and Human Services Administration appears to be taking a broad anti-vaccination position. How this impacts the availability and affordability of vaccines from the U.S. for Costa Rica is uncertain, but it is certain that the cost of such U.S. vaccines and drugs will no longer be subsidized for third-world nations.

Pending U.N. Financial Crisis – The current regime has just announced the U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO, effective in 2026. The U.N. is still facing a large deficit, primarily from previous U.S. cuts to its funding. Other than the previously noted 41% cut to Costa Rica refugee aid, the impact to us in Costa Rica is momentarily unclear.

U.S. Travel – Nothing new on this front directly affecting U.S. citizens, but *non-citizen* travel to the U.S. will include an additional \$250 "Visa Integrity Fee" (the effective date is supposed to be 1 October). It is essentially a refundable "compliance bond" that is intended to prevent visit "overstays" in the U.S. When added to the other visa fees, it does initially increase the cost of U.S. visits. Combined with tightened travel screening and random detainments of travelers entering and leaving the U.S., it does appear that all non-citizen tourism travel to the U.S. is being discouraged. In the coming weeks and months, your editor will be watching the impact of this unfriendly entry attitude and added expenses for U.S. tourism on the U.S. as it is scheduled to be co-hosting the FIFA World

Cup games in 2026 and hosting the Olympic Games scheduled for Los Angeles in the summer of 2028.

“Haz bien y no mires a quién”

Literal translation: Doing good in the world
benefits us, too.

Thank you Isabel Arguello for your continuing
contributions.

Dust off your sombrillas, “little summer” will be leaving soon,
D. Davis, editor
Diane Cooner, webmaster

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