

Que Pasa Grecia
Serving the Expat Community since 2014

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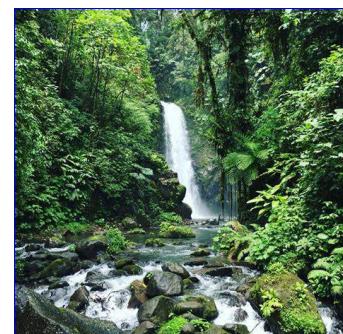
¿Qué Pasa?



Que Pasa Grecia Update #1 January 2026

What's New in Que Pasa Grecia

Since our last update, we have posted listings for a 2016 Rav 4, and two furnished rentals in San Isidro. We also have updated listings for properties in Atenas. On 15 January afternoon, The Lounge Lizards will be performing at the new Andaluz restaurant in downtown Grecia. Also, mark your [calendars](#): The 10th Annual Costa Rica Blues Festival moves to Grecia and be held on 21 February (for more info and tickets go to: costaricablues.com).



A Brief Obit

Please allow your editor a brief departure from *Que Pasa*'s norm. **Roy Alfaro Alfaro** of Sarchi left this earth on 2 January. He was a dear friend of your editor, as he was to literally anyone he met. He was a teacher, mentor and leader and he was both the spark and the rock behind our annual effort to put school uniforms on Sarchi's needy children and get them into class. Gentle and generous he made a profound impact on so many lives. Everyone is better for having known him. Roy was so undeserving of the pain and suffering life handed him, but I never once heard him complain. Goodbye. You will be missed greatly.

A Reminder: We Need to Pay Our 2026 Bills

We're a 100% volunteer operation, but QPG does have some fixed costs that need to be paid at the beginning of every year. We're still short for 2026. *Can you please help?*

Contact Don, Diane or Karen to make your donation in person. If you are inclined to pay online, we've added a PayPal address to accept your donations. (Go to [Upcoming Events](#) for our PayPal info.)

Miscellaneous News

Costa Rica President - Rodrigo Chavez is off the loss-of-immunity hook as the chamber of deputies came up short again in its effort to strip him of his immunity while he's still in office to face fraud and corruption charges.

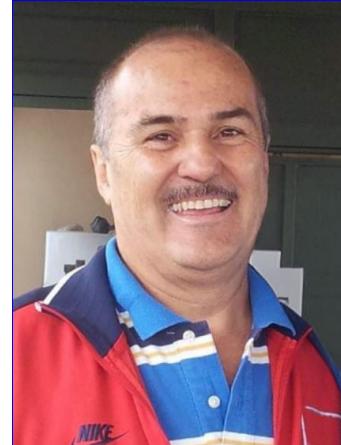
Driving in C.R. - The number of registered vehicles in Costa Rica has doubled in the last decade, while the kilometers of paved roadway have hardly increased enough to register. In several international studies and surveys, Metro San Jose ranks #2 as the worst commute driving in the world behind only Lagos, Nigeria. This is based not only on average kms/hr, but hours of commute congestion, road conditions, traffic volume, and driver stress. Ruta 1 has reopened west of San Ramon. The construction of overpass connectors from Ruta 1 to Ruta 154 south of Grecia still does not appear to have commenced.

Dollar Exchange - The Central Bank said to expect the exchange rate to be between 500 and 510. It ain't a happenin' thing, folks; as of Saturday 3 January 2026, the rate was 497.17 colones = \$1.

Taxes Due - A reminder that the annual *impuesto de Sociedad* (corporate tax) is due to be paid by 31/01/26. (They are now supposed to be paid online using the new system for corporations established by the Hacienda, but that is yet to be confirmed.) If unpaid, a small interest penalty accrues after that date. Property taxes must be paid by the end first quarter at the municipalidad. (Paying in advance for basura pick up for the quarter or the year can

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!



Roy Alfaro Alfaro



Be there or Be Square!



Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo for sale! Great ride!

be paid the same time.)

Scams and Violent Crime Haven't Disappeared – A reminder to exercise caution; phone and internet scams and violent crime are on the rise. (Sadly, homicides during the Chaves administration already exceed 3,000 with Quepos and Parrita, not far from the popular Manuel Antonio National Park, becoming violent cartel hotspots.) Be alert and aware and be careful.

On the Cusp of Summer – Our wet weather is nearly a thing of the past. El vientos de navidad (the Christmas winds) are with us again. Warm or hot afternoons are becoming the norm. Here's the December and YTD rainfall for El Cajon de Grecia and San Juan de Sarchi. Thanks to Irina and Tom.
For annual temps, we only have the average high and low temps for Cajon, and high/low temps for Sarchi. They are not the same measurement, but average temps are similar and hopefully will give you an idea.

Cajon de Grecia (Irina)

December rain: 5.7 cms; 2.2 ins.
YTD: 376 cms; 148.0 ins.

Temperature Range 2025:

Average High: 78.8 F/26 C
Average Low: 64.9 F/18.3 C
Average Temp: 71.8F/21.6 C

San Juan de Sarchi (Tom)

December rain: 9.2 cms; 3.6 ins.
YTD: 301.2 cms; 118.6 ins.

Temperature Range 2025:

Annual High: 93.6 F/34 C
Annual Low: 52.2 F/11 C
Average Temp: 72.9 F/22.7 C

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.



WANTED!
Exercise weights such as dumbbells, kettle bells etc.
Click image to contact.

Blaxit Radio is Back!

"For the best listening experience," find Blaxit Radio on the free Live 365 Radio app! You can download it from the Apple Store or Google Play. Once you're in, search for Blaxit Radio, and add us to your Favorites, "so we're right on your homepage."

PREVENTION IS KEY.

Prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

If you have questions or want to learn more, visit www.pima.gov/covid19 or call (520) 626-6016. Additional info & updates: HEALTH.ARIZONA.EDU

There is a big uptick in flu AND upper respiratory infections. Check your local farmacia for flu and pneumonia shots.



Costa Rica Bird Watching Group wants YOU!

U.S. Government Changes Impacting Expats

Caribbean Armed Conflict Over Oil – First, we saw U.S. warships and troops in Caribbean waters, continued elimination of small craft off the coasts of Venezuela and the Southern Pacific by the U.S. military, then, the boarding and seizure of oil tankers, plus threatened deflagging of renegade tankers by Panama. Those actions have just turned into a U.S. invasion of Venezuela, and the kidnapping and promised prosecution of its leader, Nicolas Maduro, and his wife. Such an incursion is clearly illegal according to both U.S. and international law and is, obvious to your editor, a unilateral act of war, made without consulting or even informing the U.S. Congress. Also clear, it was never about drugs, but a feeling by this administration that Venezuela's oil reserves somehow belonged to U.S. refiners, because three refiners were booted out when Venezuela nationalized its oil industry decades ago.

This is a watershed moment in U.S. history, and if you thought the U.S. military would refuse to follow a clearly illegal order, this incident gives you your answer. While it is too early to know how the world responds or what happens next, the U.S. President has also recently threatened Columbia, Cuba, Mexico, and Panama. On a minor note: the U.S. Coast Guard has been welcomed to Costa Rica ports and territorial waters for drug interdiction.

Mixed Messages on the Economy – The U.S. economy appears to be stronger than most folks expected. The U.S. stock markets ended 2025 at or near record highs. However, the government shutdown was blamed for pulling economic results lower at yearend. Lower interest rates, and mixed reviews on unemployment and new jobs haven't softened American consumer concerns over "affordability." Are there two economies? The rise of U.S. stock markets and business economics do not seem to reflect the increased costs and apprehension of the consumer economy.

Travel – Entry to, travel within, and exit from the U.S. will be experiencing numerous changes beginning 1 January 2026, including biometrics (fingerprints and iris scans) for non-U.S. citizens—most of which are making travel much more complicated and inconvenient for everyone, and with significant negative impact for travelers who aren't prepared to comply. In addition, there are changes for international travel that will impact everyone. Overall, the changes are significant and will affect all travelers of all nationalities. Regarding U.S. travel: the changes are apt to affect travelers coming to the U.S. for the World Cup in 2026 and the Olympics in Los Angeles in 2028. There is too much to cover here, but thanks to William Zastrow for [providing the Youtube link](#) to an excellent 15-minute video explaining most of these travel changes and how to



After spending Christmas Eve and Day in the hospital for treatment, Romeo's son **Aldair** was able to be home for New Years and will be returning to chemo next week. His platelet count continues to increase as do his other test numbers, which is great news. We don't know how long he will be on this more aggressive therapy, but he is responding and in decent spirits. You can help him and his family deal with this by donating to our GoFundMe fundraiser, [just click here](#), or on the photo above.

From Romeo: "Eternal thanks to all my friends," whose support enables him to stay home with his son and family at this time.



ALERTS Section, link located in the main menu at the top of every page in *QuePasaGrecia*.



Great houses in Atenas at every price point!

comply.

Immigration – A new requirement at entry to the U.S. for most non-U.S. citizen travelers is the pending requirement of providing five years of a traveler's social media activity. To your editor, this sounds like a violation of the 1st Amendment and a potential chaotic disaster for visitors to the U.S. if the effort is attempted to implement it.

Tariffs, Retirement Savings, and the Cost of Living – SCOTUS has yet to rule on the legality of the tariffs that have been implemented but expect a ruling as they return to session. Most prognosticators believe that the regime will use established rules to implement new, specific, targeted tariffs.

Caribbean Armed Conflict Over Oil and Drugs on the Verge? – U.S. warships in Caribbean waters, the boarding and seizure of oil tankers, threatened de-flagging of renegade tankers by Panama, continued elimination of small craft off the coasts of Venezuela and the Southern Pacific, threats for a land incursion of Venezuela, and the U.S. Coast Guard welcomed to Costa Rica ports and territorial waters for drug interdiction. We're not sure where this ends or what happens, but tensions are heightened and it will be hard to diffuse the situation before something occurs.



ONGOING PROBLEM

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.



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



Pura Vida!

"Más largo que un domingo sin plata."

Literal translation: *Longer than a Sunday without money.*

English equivalent: A situation that is perceived as extremely boring because it is lacking the essential (e.g. no money to enjoy a day off).

From 'A lo Tico', a great little book by Alf A. Giebler Simonet, full of Tico sayings and expressions.

Have a great 2026, and stay safe,
D. Davis, editor
Diane Cooner, webmaster