

Que Pasa Grecia
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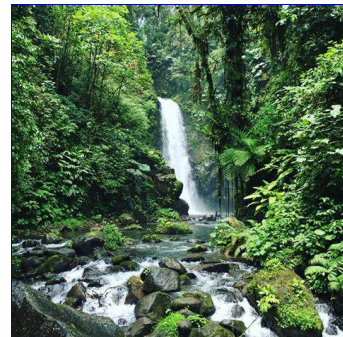
¿Qué Pasa?



Que Pasa Grecia Update #6 June 2025

What's New in *Que Pasa Grecia*

Since our last Update, we've added a full **Canon camera** outfit with everything; a pizza stone and lots of new items from our pal Joe C. [for sale](#). **Non-traditional trash** collection for the Central Grecia District is Monday, 3 June (last pickup for this campaign). [Soulful Journey](#) will perform 60s/70s music at **Beer Designers** Brewery in Los Angeles de Grecia on Saturday, 31 May. **All about pets:** a spay and neuter clinic in San Isidro on 16 June, and one in San Roque



on 30 June; we've gotten a recommendation for a mobile vet service in Grecia; and info on an activated carbon tablet for pets that have ingested toxic materials. Check it all out on [QPG](#).

Miscellaneous

Poás Volcano – Poás is still acting up and the experts don't see evidence of any let up. Japanese volcano emergency experts are here helping municipality personnel prepare and plan for volcano-related emergencies such as mud and ash flows (aka lahars). Seismologists also say that rather than calming the volcanic activity, accumulating rainfall in the crater may be exacerbating the eruptions. Keep your car in the garage or covered to protect the paint and metal from the acidic ash, pack a go-bag, and monitor reports on seismic activity and predictions. Be mindful that the sulfuric gases can also affect your health with symptoms such as headache and upset stomach.

Renewing Your U.S. Passport – U.S. passports expire every ten years, and the U.S. doesn't like you beginning travel anytime within six months of its expiration. If you reside exclusively in Costa Rica, your passport must be renewed online through the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica.

Our family and another QPG subscriber recently experienced having to go through the passport renewal process. Completing form DS-82 is done online and one would think the entire ordeal would be pretty straightforward, and one would be wrong. We found the instructions a bit confusing to implement (in particular, the online payment to Pay.gov) and the payment explanation is a tad incomplete. Follow along here and it should be quite a bit simpler and save you some time and grief.

When you get through getting your new color 2"x2" photo, completing and printing out the online passport renewal of Form DS-82, carefully following the forms instruction for stapling the new photo to the form, paying online (until and if a payment glitch is corrected, online payment will require going to the web location "Overseas U.S. Adult Passport Renewal Fee" DO NOT attempt to get here from the PAY.gov website. Instead. USE THIS URL: <https://www.pay.gov/public/form/start/1156527186>. Print out the payment receipt and include it with the DS-82, and your current passport. Correos de Costa Rica does have a package deal (as is indicated online) for sending the package certified mail to the embassy and the return of your new passport with your old one to the

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!**



Your new hobby awaits!



Almost New Lawnmower - 16"!

address you specify for a bit over 8-mil colones. (It is still unclear whether a self-addressed return envelope is required or not – we included one.) Your new passport (and old one) will be returned to the return address you give on the form in about six weeks or less. If the return address is your Apartado Postal, don't expect to be notified. You'll just have to start checking your P.O. box in about a month.

Protecting Against Lightning Strikes – Your editor's casa is particularly vulnerable to lightning strikes. If you are subject to frequent nearby strikes, I have some suggestions to help prevent lightning damage to your electronic devices. Below are some things I have implemented to minimize big-ticket power-surge damage to all things electronic caused by lightning. First, add surge protectors (some protective devices also add a beneficial power conditioner) between the wall outlet and all electronic devices (anything with a circuit board such as TVs, computers, security systems, Ethernet distribution of household internet, major appliances, video monitors, etc.). Have an experienced electrician add copper alloy lightning rods in the ground at your power source from I.C.E. (where the secondary service comes down to your electric meter. Code specifies a minimum of three rods.). Add a master circuit breaker to your breaker box; confirm you have, or retrofit (if possible), or build out in new construction three-wire neutral wiring. All new wall outlets should be three-wire set ups meant to trip the circuit breaker in the event of a power surge (newer construction should also have outlets with built-in breakers in kitchens and bathrooms (near where water is present to prevent electrical shock). Many Tico-constructed homes and buildings don't add, or at least, don't connect the third wire, so you really need to check. Last, and probably the most important, have an experienced electrician install a master surge protector at the point where power from I.C.E. enters your breaker box.

None of these measures will fully protect against a direct strike, but they should minimize the potential damage, and they should do a pretty good job of deflecting damage from a nearby, non-direct strike. Master surge protectors are about \$100 if you shop around and must be replaced after they receive a direct hit. Surge protectors at the wall outlet may also have to be replaced after they receive a surge exceeding their protection limit. However, it's cheaper than replacing some or all electronic devices in your home.

Diseases and Airborne Viruses – Due to an outbreak in Columbia, a yellow-fever vaccination 10 days prior to exiting Costa Rica for everyone travelling there (citizens, residents,



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Take steps now to mitigate
lightning damage.



For Sale - Beautiful home
on a quiet street, 10 minute
walk to downtown Grecia!



Your bank will NEVER call
asking for your private
information. Neither will
Social Security or the IRS.

and tourists regardless of age) is now mandatory. There is a **new virus** called Oropuche Virus, which is spread by midge bites and bodily fluids. It is beginning to rampage throughout Latin America and becoming more common in CR. It has symptoms similar to dengue and zika.

New C.R. Coins – The government is making a number of changes to the country's coinage. The old brass alloy 500-colones coins will no longer be accepted after 26 July. They are being replaced by a smaller two-metal coin. The 50-colones coin is now a bit smaller and made of a new alloy. (No guidance has been given about the old, slightly larger coin being taken out of circulation.) And, you may have also noticed that the 10-colones are made of a slightly heavier, non-aluminum alloy. And, your editor is seeing fewer and fewer 5-colones coins in circulation, which may be an act of planned obsolescence.

Coffee Tours – The **Espiritu Santo** coffee tour is closing on 30 May. Coopro Naranjo will continue to farm the finca for another café harvest until the end of March 2026, but no public access will be allowed.

We have confirmed that the current tour crew is staying together and will be giving coffee tours at **La Eva** coffee finca in Sarchi. Tour planning and infrastructure begins on Monday, 2 June and we probably will see coffee tours being offered within a month. Details are still a bit sketchy about what the new tour, coffee education and coffee/souvenir sales will look like, but we will post details on QPG as soon as we have them.

Slight DIMEX Cost Increase Through Correos – If you get your DIMEX renewed at the Greca Correos rather than BCR, the fee has been raised from six- to eight-mil colones.

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

Social Security – If you have to contact the SSA by phone for assistance, a new, automated AI-based client-support



Treat yourself to a spa date! You'll thank yourself!



[Blooms invites you to get social!](#) Monthly meetings in the Western Central valley.



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



The crew from Espiritu Santo coffee tour - moving to La Eva in Sarchi in June!

system is being implemented. Initial experiences by folks trying to use the AI assistant are being left frustrated and unserved without their problem or inquiry being resolved or without receiving access to human support personnel. We have no advice to improve your experience if you have to attempt an SSA phone contact. However, since there are no SSA field offices here, call the U.S. Embassy U.S. Citizen Services (2519-2000), which promises to assist.

Tariffs, Retirement Savings, and the Cost of Living –

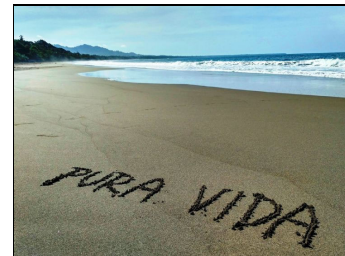
From every report, it will not be long before Americans see the impact of recently implemented tariffs. Tariffs on all Chinese products arriving in the U.S. have now been reduced from 145% to only 30% (10x the rate prior to the regime's recently implemented tariffs), and 25% tariffs for Mexican and Canadian imports to the U.S. Tariffs of 50% for Europe have been put on hold until 7 July, and 25% for incoming Apple products have also been threatened. In addition, we have seen reciprocal tariffs, which will reduce sales by U.S. companies to other nations. We do know that transport ships from China are returning empty containers to the Port of Los Angeles and to other U.S. ports (devoid new products). So, if the tariffs continue, the U.S. should soon expect shortages on products originating from China (and higher prices due to increased demand on fewer products available). This will probably increase prices on sites such as Amazon that resell and ship products made in foreign nations to us in Costa Rica.

As long as greatly increased tariffs exist, corporations traded on the stock market will be impacted to varying degrees reacting to inflation due to higher costs, shortages and likely layoffs due to decreased demand. The stock markets will react, and retirement investments are likely to be adversely impacted to varying degrees.

However, tariff uncertainty, changes in capitol policy, and diminished or eliminated federal services and federal workforce reductions are also influencing the value of U.S. Treasury bonds and the cost of borrowing. In addition, while it is still early in the federal budget process, the budget passed by the House will add about \$4 trillion to the national debt, which further decreases the safety and desirability of U.S. Treasury bonds. Foreign borrowers are the biggest purchasers of Treasury bonds, and they may choose to reduce their investment in U.S. bonds and find other safer, more reliable, and/or more friendly environments to put their money. If so, the U.S.'s longstanding global financial influence and monetary dominance will be reduced and the U.S. economy will experience higher interest rates that will have a



Highlighting **DUO**, a CR non-profit dedicated to education and assistance in suicide prevention. They offer a monthly donation option, making it easy to support their vital work. [Click here to read about](#) their services.



further impact on corporate investment and on inflation, even making the possibility of a recession more likely, which will adversely impact the value of our retirement investments.

Budget Cuts at the UN – Due to major cuts in UN financial support by the current U.S. regime, the UNCHR, the United Nations Refugee Agency, which assists 43.7 million refugees worldwide, has been forced to make a 41% cut in its Costa Rica refugee program creating a \$40.4 million shortfall. The UNCHR program assists Costa Rica in being able to offer health and basic needs support to 203,000 refugees and asylum seekers mostly from Nicaragua. There are another 222,000 asylum-seekers and refugees waiting to be registered, because of staffing and budget deficiencies these awaiting registrants from Nicaragua, Venezuela, and elsewhere, are being forced into Costa Rica's economic shadows in order to survive.

U.S. Air Travel - We are seeing an alarming increase in air-related incidents in the U.S., as well as delays tied to the failure of air-traffic systems, most recently at the airports in Newark and Denver. There have been cuts to air-traffic controllers and now system outages to an air-travel system already under stress. An increase in expenditures to update air-traffic safety infrastructure and personnel is needed, but unlikely to be funded under the current regime. Every conversation overheard of late involves concern about the safety of flying with many folks expressing a reluctance to ever fly again. Flying is the only practical way to travel back and forth to the U.S. and flight safety is a real concern to all of us. In addition, people traveling to and from the States have also witnessed or have even been personally impacted by the behavior of HHS authorities toward travelers at U.S. airports. This has become a further deterrent to air travel to, from, and within the U.S.

"Una golondrina no hace verano"

Literal translation: A person alone doesn't achieve the same results as when they're together with others.

English equivalent: Two heads are better than one.

Thank you, Isabel Arguello, for your continuing

contributions.

Check your quinientos,
D. Davis, editor
Diane Cooner, webmaster

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