

Subject: QuePasaGrecia | Update #4 | April 2026

From: "Don Davis" <editor@quepasagrecia.com>

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Que Pasa Grecia

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Que Pasa Grecia

Update #4

April 2026

What's New in Que Pasa Grecia

Since our last update, we have listings for three SUVs, a solid laurel kitchen cabinet for sale, and Joe Cahill has listed a bunch of miscellaneous items for sale, oh and, his home in Grecia centro is also for sale.

We have a new QPG volunteer lending a new set of eyes to our website and we are in the midst of making a few edits and changes that she has recommended to make it more up-to-date, more consistent, easier to edit, and easier to use. Also a reminder, **we depend on our readers** to make us aware of restaurants, businesses, and services that close, or reopen in new locations, as well as under new ownership, have new hours or other changes. Please let us know when you become aware of such.

Miscellaneous News

Semana Santa Week - The kids are out of school, federal and municipal offices will be closed, some businesses and banks will have reduced hours (BN will be closed Th, Fri, and Sat.). And for families that haven't escaped to the beach, watch out for their kids playing in the street. Ferias took place on Wednesday, and trash pick-ups may happen on different days.

DIMEX, Long Waits and Inconveniences – If your DIMEX renewal is upcoming, make certain that you get an early start by making your appointment months in advance, because receipt of your DIMEX at your nearest Correos office has been taking about four months. Several items are required at your renewal appointment:

- your current DIMEX card;
- your passport;
- a DIMEX payment receipt from any BCR branch (note: the last DIMEX fee was listed at \$130, but due to the unfavorable exchange rate of the dollar, renewal payments now cannot be made any sooner than 24 hours before your renewal appointment);
- proof of an up-to-date paid CAJA account (note: CAJA accounts are cancelled after six-months of non-payment, which can cause some severe ongoing higher expenses in order to be reinstated).

DIMEX renewal appointments can be made at Correos or BCR (the nearest renewal location is in Grecia).



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Once your DIMEX appointment is complete, expect a long wait for your new card to arrive at your nearest Correos. The wait can be extremely problematic for purchase identification, conducting legal business where a current Costa Rica ID is required or if your current driver's license is expiring.

For anyone over 65, there is a way around the renewal delay. Make the two-hour morning commute drive to the Migracion Centro Office in La Uruca M-F between 7:30 am and 9:30 am (closer to 7:30 is better). No appointment is necessary, and you will leave later that morning with your new DIMEX.

Expat Buying Power – A Perfect Storm – The U.S. dollar is having its worst exchange rate against the colon in two decades. Already, expat's buying power is already greatly reduced —down more than 40% from just 30 months ago. Add to that, the negative impacts of tariffs on purchasing power and rising costs for items purchased in the States and forwarded to Costa Rica. Now, the cost of petroleum and natural gas is rising rapidly due to the closing of the Hormuz Strait, which has cut off nearly 20% of the world's oil supply. A barrel of oil was selling for \$70 a month ago.

Now, it's around \$100. Some experts (and the Iranians) are saying it will go to \$200 a barrel before things improve. Costa Rica imports all of its petroleum products and propane. If a barrel of oil does get to \$200, that could convert into as high as the equivalent of nearly \$15/gallon at the pump. That may not happen, but expect to see the cost of driving and maintaining vehicles get much more expensive very soon, unless you drive an EV.

Much of what we buy in Costa Rica is imported, but virtually everything we buy is transported from somewhere other than the place where we buy it. The cost of transporting everything is going to cost much more and that extra cost will get added to the cost of everything we buy. If you are travelling out of the country, the price of jet fuel has doubled. Fuel is 30% of flying a jet. Airline tickets are increasing rapidly, and don't expect ticket costs to start coming down for a long while. Most tourists fly here and tourism in Costa Rica is already far off of its record highs from a couple of years ago. If the cost of flying here continues to increase, we may see even fewer tourists and the tourism industry

[Beautiful cabinet!](#)



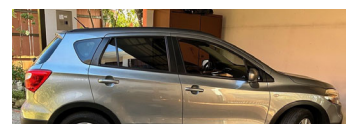
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[New listing of great assorted items in Grecia!](#)



could be brought to its knees. (The tourism ministry and other impacted entities are lobbying the C.R. Central Bank to adjust the exchange disparity to be more favorable to the dollar, which would certainly help those of us here living on dollar-based fixed incomes.)

If the Hormuz Strait remains closed to most countries, the world may experience actual shortages, where no petroleum supplies are available at any cost. Then, we could expect certain products to become undeliverable here, or Costa Rica exports becoming too expensive to sell to our foreign customers. This could be catastrophic for the Costa Rica economy.

These are worst case scenarios and no one knows how long this fuel crisis will last or how severe it will become. However, Costa Rica is a small, lesser affluent country that will have less leverage in negotiating for scarce petroleum supplies or for scarce, expensive products resting on foreign shores or getting our exports sold elsewhere. So, countries like ours are likely to be most impacted until oil prices return to lower levels.

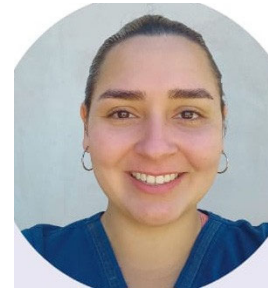
Fighting the Perfect Storm – There is not a great deal to be done to counter rapidly rising fuel and product and service costs in general, but here are few suggestions:

- make a budget (if you follow it, it will help eliminate impulse purchases);
- make a shopping list, stick to it, and avoid the purchase of impulse items;
- cut down on driving (don't drive unless it's necessary, walk instead, carpool with friends and neighbors, package multiple errands together during trips to town, take the most direct route, take the bus —it's free or discounted for seniors);
- give up as many Amazon and eBay purchases as possible and buy locally made or grown products, which won't include as high a transportation cost.

Costa Rica's CECOT-like Prison – Incoming president, Laura Fernandez, said in an interview with a German publication said that she intends to follow President Bukele of El Salvador's imprisonment model. She feels that reform of the criminal justice system, penalties for violent crime and prison reform are required in Costa Rica to address the increase in violence and how convicts are handled. She likes what Bukele is doing to



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combat drug cartel crime in El Salvador. She says (and your editor basically agrees) that criminals here are treated better than victims, and when imprisoned, convicted criminals run their crime organizations from the inside while guests of the state.

Using El Salvador and CECOT as a model for Costa Rica creates reason for concern after observing the legal rights violations and abuses occurring in El Salvador and at its CECOT prison and knowing that a new prison is being constructed in Costa Rica with El Salvador's advice and based on the CECOT prison blueprint. However, Fernandez was adamant that she will make certain the Costa Rica Constitution is followed and the accused retain their rights.

C.R. Road News – Improvements on the “Crocodile Bridge” over the Tárcoles River appear to be almost complete. However, prosecutors are looking into whether the contractor had the proper permit for the new tourist viewing deck on the bridge. The transition overpasses in San Ramon and Grecia are making rapid progress. It seems possible that they may actually make their end-of-2026 completion dates.

Help Save a Baby Manatee! – Thanks! One of our QPG subscribers volunteered to bring back the special food ingredient needed to help save the baby manatee.

Local rainfall:

El Cajon de Grecia (Irina)

YTD: 2.0 cms; 0.79 ins.

San Juan de Sarchi (Tom)

YTD: 1.3 cms; 0.52 ins

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

Foreign Entanglements – With U.S. special envoy Kristi



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Aldair has finished session 7 of 8 intense chemo treatments for leukemia. He will get 10 days off and then the final treatment after Easter. When you support **Romeo's** son **Aldair's** fight against

Noem in attendance, Costa Rica signed on to the Shield for the Americas program. It was formed by the U.S. president to help control drug cartels. As part of the deal, Costa Rica's President Chaves has agreed to accept up to 25 deported U.S. immigrants per week from countries other than Costa Rica. The first planeload arrived in mid-March. Many including Pablo Arrias, former president and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, believe this agreement to accept non-citizen deportees violates Costa Rica's constitution. Film at 11.

leukemia, you support this entire family of artists. We are grateful for your continued support! Read the current update via our [GoFundMe Campaign](#).

Travel – TSA agents in the U.S. got their first pay check in two months, but expect long security check lines to continue for a time as the 600 agents who quit will need to be replaced and we'll need to see if the TSA agents payroll checks continue into subsequent weeks and if they were paid legally. Their ICE agent support is still present at some U.S. airports. Airline ticket costs are skyrocketing due to the rise in oil prices, some international routes taking long detours around the war zone in the Middle East, and some less profitable routes are being cut back or eliminated.

There is some related coverage above in "Expat Buying Power..."

Immigration – There is immigration news as it relates to C.R. See above in "Foreign Entanglements".

Tariffs, Retirement Savings, and the Cost of Living – Coverage above in "Expat Buying Power..."

"Más difícil que hacerle un nudo a un banano"

Literal translation:

Harder than tying a banana in a knot.

Source: From A lo Tico, a book of Tico sayings and expressions by Alf A. Giebler Simonet.

Enjoy staying home in paradise while you make a budget,
D. Davis, editor
Diane Cooner, webmaster





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