

Subject: QuePasaGrecia | Update #5 | May 2026

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

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Que Pasa Grecia

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¿Qué Pasa?



Que Pasa Grecia
Update #5
May 2026

What's New in Que Pasa Grecia

Since our last update, there's not much new to report except some redesign on the website that will hopefully make it easier for you to navigate the site. Joe Cahill still has a bunch of items for sale, we have a new listing for a furnished/unfurnished house for sale in La Guacima, and a house for rent in Cajon de Grecia. The Municipalidad of Grecia will be doing non-traditional trash pickups on Thursdays in May (14th, 21st, and 28th). There are new real estate listings for Atenas. Check it all out on the [QPG website](#).

Miscellaneous News

Fernandez Administration – On 8 May, Laura Fernandez will be inaugurated as President of Costa Rica. For the first time in memory, the Nicaraguan president and his wife, the vice president, have been invited as a gesture of goodwill.

While Fernandez is from the same party as her predecessor, Rodrigo Chaves, it is unknown what changes in the administration or its policies will take place. It is typical when an incoming administration is of the same party that most current government policies will remain, but most ministers and senior officers of the various departments, agencies, as well as administration senior staffers must resign. It is possible, even likely, that some who have resigned will be reinstated somewhere in the new administration. We'll keep an eye out for changes that may impact expats.

Expat Buying Power, a Reminder – The U.S. dollar is still experiencing its worst exchange rate against the colon in two decades, greatly reducing expat buying power, which is down over 40% from just 30 months ago. Economists at the Central Bank of Costa Rica say that they expect the U.S. dollar to continue to devalue against the colon. However, there is growing pressure from many of Costa Rica's special interest groups including the tourism industry and importers/exporters to force Costa Rica's Central Bank to step in and adjust the unfavorable exchange rate between the dollar and the colon. 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.



[Things to do in the West Central Valley](#)

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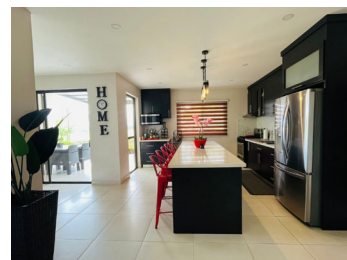
PRECIO: €325,000 MENSUALES | DEPÓSITO: €250,000

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[House for sale in La Guacima, Alajuela](#)

The cost of petroleum and natural gas continues to rise. So, expect to see the cost of driving and maintaining vehicles get much more expensive in the foreseeable future. Also, expect imported goods, and everything that we buy that is transported to increase in price. All of this will put added pressure on those of us on fixed incomes.

Good Bank Scam News – Yes, there is now such a thing. A law has been passed that requires banks to reimburse customers who have lost funds deposited with banks due to online or phone scams where the bank is directly responsible. The only requirement is that customers must report the bank funds scams or fraud to the bank within 30 days of the occurrence and file the necessary paperwork. However, recent bank-responsible fraud victims may also have recourse for restitution as the law is retroactive. **Note:** victims suffering losses by phone or email scams and other fraud not directly initiated by banks are not protected by this new law.

Minimum Balances at Banco Nacional – Beginning 1 May, minimum balances for most BN accounts, excluding seniors, will be set at ₡25,000. A monthly fee of ₡2,500 will be assessed for balances that drop below the ₡25-mil minimum. Our guess is that similar fees may follow at the other two national banks, Banco Popular and Banco de Costa Rica.

Costa Rica 'Welcomes' Deported U.S. Refugees – Costa Rica has been accepting U.S. deportees from Central American nations and from other nations around the world. It seems that weekly flights carrying about 25 deportees have become a regular thing. Where they are going, how they are being treated, what will be their status in Costa Rica, and what kind of arrangements, if any, are being made for their repatriation to home countries are being made is unclear. Your editor finds these unanswered questions troubling. Hopefully, the incoming administration will clarify the answers to these questions.

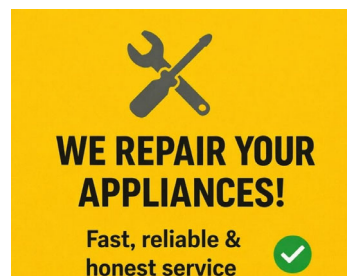
C.R. Road News – Negotiations are well along on letting a \$300 million contract for enlarging Ruta 27, the toll road, for the most-travelled portion of the highway from Escazu to Atenas. Completing Ruta 27 improvements to the Pacific Coast have been put on



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improvements to the Pacific Coast have been put on hold until additional financing can be arranged. In addition, the rumor is that the much-needed and long-delayed expansion of Ruta 1, the Pan-American Highway, from San Jose to San Ramon, is also going to get a green light. The end result will be a commuting benefit. However, those of us who are a bit long in the tooth will mostly just be delayed and inconvenienced during the balance of our driving years while these construction projects are underway.

There are new motorcycle license plates. Unlike the old rectangular plates, these are almost square, larger, easier to read and, at least in 2026, they'll be easier for the traffic police be able to distinguish new, fee-paid plates from non-renewed license plates.

Local rainfall:

El Cajon de Grecia (Irina)

April: 6.6 cms; 2.59 ins.
YTD: 8.6 cms; 3.39 ins.

San Juan de Sarchi (Tom)

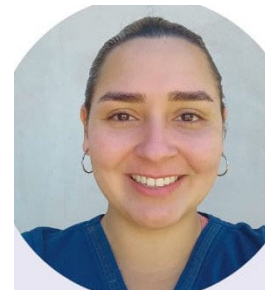
April: 4.7 cms; 1.87 ins.
YTD: 6.1 cms; 2.39 ins.

The national weather service in Costa Rica says the Green Season for the Central Valley should begin by 9 May. There is also a "Super El Niño" predicted for the Pacific Coast of North America that should bring very wet weather there this season. This typically equates to a drier-than-normal wet season in Costa Rica. It is also predicted to be drier here than normal again for the 2027 season meaning aquifers, the source of most of our metered municipal water, may empty early and mandatory water rationing is a possibility in some areas during this dry season and 2027's.

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.



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U.S. Government Changes Impacting Expats

Foreign Entanglements – The War with Iran is unresolved, the Strait of Hormuz remains mostly closed, but the U.S. president is now making comments about regime change in Cuba. Costa Rica maintains diplomatic relations with Cuba. How moves against Cuba may impact C.R.'s relationships with both the U.S. and Cuba are unknown, but it could get complicated. More film at 11.

Immigration – There is immigration news as it relates to C.R. See above in Costa Rica 'Welcomes' Deported U.S. Refugees. Also as of this writing, a budget for DHS has just been passed by the House of Representatives. DHS, which includes I.C.E., Customs and Border Patrol, T.S.A. and the U.S. Coast Guard. How the final DHS budget is distributed may impact immigration and travel, among other things.

Travel – The cost of jet fuel is way up and still rising. Accordingly, since the beginning of the Iran War and the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, the average price for an international airline ticket has risen an average of \$115 and baggage fees have been increased by many airlines. In addition, Spirit Airlines, which has routes to and from Costa Rica, is now in liquidation bankruptcy. Its bankruptcy may impact ticket availability and ticket prices into and out of Costa Rica.

After a 76-day shutdown of DHS funding (see Immigration above), distribution of pending funding may impact the number of T.S.A. agents present at U.S. airports. And another fun fact, to honor America's 250th birthday, a portrait of the president's bust will occupy a page of some new U.S. passports issued. Fortunately, the portrait page will only apply to passports issued in the Washington, D.C. region.

Tariffs, Retirement Savings, and the Cost of Living – In Costa Rica, the dollar is its weakest in over twenty years, at about 460 colones to the dollar. Some U.S. tariffs are still in place. In addition, due to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, petroleum-based fuels and propane are going up here and we can expect them to continue to rise for the foreseeable future. (Much of this section is redundant with information already mentioned in this issue, but worth repeating. Consider



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Aldair is actually starting session 7 of the 8 intense chemo treatments for

mentioned in this issue, but worth repeating. Consider ways to economize.)

"Ser pan comido."
Literal translation: Easy as pie.

Save a buck, cut down on your driving, carpool, and spend more time with a friend,
D. Davis, editor
Diane Cooner, webmaster



leukemia. He had last week and will have this coming week off to rest, and then will return to the hospital. When you support **Romeo's** son **Aldair's** fight against leukemia, you support this entire family of ceramic artists. We are grateful for your continued support!
Read the current update via our [GoFundMe Campaign](#).

If you would like to unsubscribe, please click [here](#).

