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EL RESIDENTE

May

June

2023

TASTE THE TROPICS:

Chiverre



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

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CONTENTS

Across the Board ARCR Board of Directors	4
Taste the Tropics Alejandro Piercy	6
Out and About Mitzi Stark	11
A Day in the Life Allen Dickinson	15
Legal Update Rómulo Pacheco	19
On the High Seas Christine Monteith	22
From the Embassies US and UK Embassies	28
On the Grid Ivo Henfling	31
Wild Side Ryan Piercy	34
Design Wise Shelagh Duncan	37
Paradise, We Have a Problem Tony Johnson	40
Club Corner	44
Business Directory	46

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Editor's Note

"The Times They Are A-Changin'" Thanks Bob Dylan. This morning my gardener showed up with a new, gas-powered weed eater. Oh, he is still carrying the machete he used to use to trim the grass for many years; it's hanging on his belt right next to his cell phone.

This happened right on the heels of an April 26th announcement by President Rodrigo Chaves-Robles, that he has authorized a plan for the Marchamo (the annual vehicle tax paid by every vehicle in the country every year in December, and that is proven by a small sticker on the windshield) to go digital. Not immediately, but by December 2024.

And just last week I heard that Cedula's are going digital soon too.

I guess I am getting old; all this was a little bit of a shock.

If it stuns you too, rest assured it's safe to go on and read the rest of this issue – it's fairly benign. Enjoy!



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ACROSS THE BOARD

Notes and News from the Board of Directors

HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES These special parking spaces are found everywhere, often identified by the universal blue background with a handicapped parking symbol painted on them, a sign, or both. In other cases, only the street curb is painted blue to indicate the designation. Many persons are unclear on who can legally use those spaces, and actually, there are several classes of persons who are eligible. The Ticos seem to know, but expats are often “in the dark” about the permissibility of their use. Here is a brief summary of what Law 7600 states as the criteria for their use.

When a person has an evident and obvious condition of disability, such as being in a wheelchair, they qualify without question. Some do not know that the privilege is also extended to those who suffer from a temporary disabling condition, such as being on crutches or in a cast.

In addition to disabilities, the law also includes two other categories of persons who can legally use the spaces: 1) A pregnant woman, 2) The law also grants the privilege to use the spaces to seniors, defined those persons 65 years of age and older.

Notes: **A)** Whether the handicap is permanent or temporary, but is not obvious, the law states that the right to use those spaces must be proven with a “certification.” The most common type of certification is having a special license plate or disability parking permit. **B)** The parking privilege is extended not only for a disabled driver, but also includes the driver of a vehicle that is transporting a person with a disability.

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ZIP CODES Many people know that Costa Rica has several postal ZIP codes. However, many don't realize that if something is being sent from the USA, automated USPS mail sorters will read the code as a U.S. ZIP code and route the item to the appropriate U.S. site, where it will be returned or go in the dead letter file. Those shipping an item to Costa Rica via USPS should be informed TO NOT USE the Costarican ZIP code, but should print CENTRAL AMERICA in large, block letters after the county name.

EXPIRED CEDULAS Many expats have had their cedula (Costa Rica National ID Card) expire during or since the pandemic. However, the Costa Rica Immigration Department has encountered extensive delays in processing and issuing replacements and, due to backlogs, have stopped making reservations for renewals at the present time. Residents whose cedula has expired can obtain assistance in obtaining a renewal appointment as soon as Immigration resumes scheduling by calling the ARCR office.



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TASTE THE TROPICS

Alejandro Piercy



Chiverre

What are those large gourd looking things I see at the feria? The ones with the mottled green and white skin? They are Chiverre!

The Chiverre is a large squash, known in the scientific world as *cucurbita ficifolia*. It has many common names in English, which include black-seed squash, cidra, fig-leaf gourd, Malabar gourd, pie melon, sidra, and Thai marrow. (Incidentally, the word “chiverre” is also used in Costa Rican colloquial Spanish to refer to a person’s large, rounded belly.)

Like many varieties of squash, the plant grows as a vine and its tender sprouts help it expand through and within other vegetation. The Chiverre does not require much dedication from farmers; generally, the seeds are dispersed through maize fields and the plants are allowed to grow freely among the other vegetation. As they grow large the fruits become visible in the field.

The mature fruit is large and oval with a characteristic smooth and thick shell and, at its full growth, can weigh up to 5 kilograms (11 lbs.) During the ripening



process the color of the fruit's hard external shell ranges from light or dark green to a cream; its shape and appearance is somewhat like a watermelon. Inside the pulp is white and fleshy and will become stringy when crushed. The large seeds are black and there can be as many as 500.

The plant is original to the Americas; the oldest archaeological records of the squash are found in Peru. Although the place of domestication and the expansion of its edible uses are unclear, linguistic evidence suggests that it started in Mexico because of the wide use of names based on its náhuatl festivity name, *tzilicayotli* (white pumpkin).

In Costa Rica the major producing communities are Zarcero, Sarchí, San Ramón de Alajuela and the south of Cartago. La Feria Nacional del Chiverre (The National Chiverre Fair) has been celebrated since 2003, and the celebration takes place in the town of Laguna de Alfaró Ruiz (Zarcero) with the participation of neighbors, different committees, and institutions. The event, held just before Semana Santa, takes place on Laguna's sports field where visitors can enjoy a wide variety of chiverre products and preparations, such as empanadas, breads,

wine and biscuits, all made with the squash's flesh as a main ingredient. The occasion can extend over nine days and have as many as 30,000 visitors.

Although production is not exclusive to Zarcero, over the years the local farmers in that area, whose plantations can spread for over 20 hectares, have specialized in chiverre production. Many communities of this canton have been dedicated to its production for several decades.

Peak production happens between February and April and for this reason chiverre is readily available for Semana Santa. It is a Costa Rican tradition to prepare the famous "dulce de chiverre" for the confection of breads and other baked goods during the Easter holidays.

The nutritional value of chiverre varies, depending on which part of the plant being used. The seeds are rich in minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, and lipids; the flowers are rich in calcium, phosphorus, and fiber. The fruit, both green and ripe, and the sprouts, are excellent sources of dietary fiber.

As most squashes, the fruit has a relatively neutral taste. For this reason the dulce is a good option to make the most out of the fibery pulp. This culinary technique



was inherited from the colonial Spaniards who came up with different types of preserves made with sugar cane and various spices. Traditional aromatic “secret” ingredients to heighten the flavor of the dulce include tamarindo preserve, fig leaves, cinnamon, cloves, and vanilla extract.

The tender sprouts, flowers, seeds, and fruits are all edible and is a food that has been present in the Costa Rican diet since pre-Columbian times. Nevertheless, current popular knowledge is mostly limited to the use of the ripe fruit to make the traditional “miel de chiverre,” which is a marmalade made from the fruit’s flesh.

Many recipes are available which describe culinary delicacies using the seeds, sprouts, and fruit in stews, soups, meatballs, picadillos, tortillas, cajetas, and turrone. A lot of these recipes go back for generations and some of them are still prepared, others can only be found in childhood memories of older living souls.

The most tedious part of the preparation is the removal of the shell and the crushing of the pulp. The traditional way of removing the shell is to place the

squash over burning coals. The objective is to remove as much water as possible to produce high quality dulce. It also dries the gourd before removing the shell with a sharp knife. Another method of drying the fruit is to leave it out in the sun for several days. After this the seeds are removed and the crushed pulp is placed in a cloth sack which is hung for over 12 hours to drain any remaining liquid.

To make the dulce de chiverre, unrefined whole cane sugar (known in Costa Rica as tapa de dulce) is melted in a large container with water, adding cinnamon, cloves, or other spices to the dried pulp. The mixture is cooked until it becomes the caramel color of the sugarcane.

The Chiverre plays a big role in the Tico psyche. It represents the time of joy and holidays that comes with Semana Santa and the big belly that comes from over eating. It is also a link to the past, to the grandmothers who prepared delicious empanadas to share with their loved ones, and as a link to the times of Costa Rica’s pre-Columbian, permanent residents.



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OUT AND ABOUT

by Mitzi Stark

A Maze and a Macabre Museum



Judging by the recent weather, the rainy season is upon us, and most of us do not want to go out in the rain. But the rain is mainly in the afternoon, leaving gorgeous sunny mornings for exploring, so let's look at a couple of places to go and see that get us home before the rain starts.

How about a **MAZE**? Mazes are puzzles solved by walking through corridors enclosed by high walls of hedges without knowing which is the correct path. (Where the heck is the exit?) Friends trying to be helpful offered suggestions for finding the way out; one was to tie a string to the entrance, and another was leaving a trail of breadcrumbs. (We rejected that one because of what

happened to Hansel and Grettel.) We could have used a hedge cutter though.

I've been intrigued by mazes since seeing one in some old horror movie. Costa Rica has several, but **Laberinto Olivo** in Poasito de Alajuela (a maze is called a *laberinto* in Spanish) is the closest one to my home and is sited right on the highway to the Poas volcano. This road goes right through strawberry and dairy country, whose products are offered in restaurants and souvenir shops along the way.

Laberinto Olivo measures 2,800 square meters, which is enclosed by seven-foot-high hedges of anapolo and olivo

bushes. Prepare for a hike because the walking paths measure from 600 to 1,800 meters, depending on how many wrong turns you make.

We went on a Tuesday morning and although the area has a cool climate, we were hot and sweaty before long. The paths are a challenge, especially when you have to retrace your steps and seek another way out. The goal is the lookout tower, or mirador, in the center which can be seen from all parts of the maze. From the tower, if you make it, you have a view of the surrounding area and the Poas Volcano. The second part of the maze, finding the way out, is much easier and mostly downhill. Overall it was lots of fun but a bit rough.

At the exit there is a mini-farm with guinea hens, turkeys, ducks, and rabbits. From there we walked down to the road and back to the entrance, rather than chance getting swallowed up again in the maze.

On Sundays a food truck is available, but if you are feeling famished after a two-hour trip through the maze, there are several restaurants and souvenir stores with wooden crafts for sale close by. We chose the funky/friendly museum-coffee shop, Cafe Muy Tranquilo, just 100 meters down the road, for coffee, cake, and conversation.

Laberinto Olivo is located about 100 meters beyond the Fresas restaurant, just after the curve in the road, and a sign in the large parking area spells out the name. It is a good idea to check the weather before making the trip; it may be nice and sunny where you live but rainy up in Poasito. The maze is open every day, 9 am – 5 pm, and prices are ₡3000 adults, ₡2500 for children. Call 8713-5462 for information.

There are two other mazes or laberintos listed for Costa Rica; the Katira in Guatuso and La Senda in Santa Rosa, Guanacaste.

Another option is the **Penitentiary Museum**. It is located in the same building as the Children's Museum, on Calle 4, Av. 9, in San Jose, but is in the back and on the right.

The building was once the prison and dates back to 1905. This well-done museum is spooky and educational as it shows how harsh conditions were for crimes big, small, and political. The earliest cells show prison life in 1910 with life-size mannequins and cell furnishings, which make it clear that conditions did not improve much in later years. We saw displays of dishes, bedding, prisoner-made weapons, and learned about sanitation (or lack of) and health problems. There are displays of graffiti and





drawings made by prisoners, and a photo display that compares the areas that are today part of the Children's Museum and shows how they looked when they were a part of the prison. The ample explanations on the cell walls are in Spanish, but entering any of the 14 open cells tells the story.

The museum is open from 8:30 to 4:30 Tuesday to Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Closed Mondays. Tickets are sold at the entrance and allow you to also visit the Children's Museum and the National Art Gallery, which are all in the same building. Admission is ₡3000 for adults, ₡2500 for children. Older adults are free. See [museo penitenciario costa rica](#) on Facebook for more information.

Fairs and festivals (ferias y festejos) are flourishing after their two-year absence, and you are sure to find one or more occurring every weekend. Some are big and include music, traditions and activities for the family, while others specialize. With either type, you can stay all day or just go for a while.

My friend Eli works all week and likes to get away for a few hours on the weekend, so we went to the Pet Fest in La Garita, not too far from where we live. There were demonstrations of pet products, contests for dogs, and a



pet parade as many fair goers brought their dogs. A favorite attraction was that for a donation of any size, you can have your picture taken with a cat from the Markat Cat Rescue Sanctuary. I had mine taken with a Sphinx, a strange-looking breed of hairless cats. This is just one example of a local fair that's fun, not exhausting, and promotes something beneficial, in this case, animal welfare.

In the last few months alone there have been fairs for onions in Santa Ana, chiverries in Zarcero, cat show in Cartago, and more.

Coming up soon will be a coffee fair, May 19 to 21, at the old Aduana Building in San Jose (\$6 entrance). The Chocolate Fair (in June) and the International Book Fair (in August) are just a couple of the more popular ones. There will be many smaller ones. Some charge a fee, but most are free.

You can learn about fairs and other events from several web sites: gamcultural.com, the ministry of culture web site, mcj.go.cr/agenda, and sanjosevolando.com/eventos (gam stands for general area metropolitan) are good places to look. You can also find information about events in your area by Googling “agenda cultural” plus the name of your area. Be sure to include “2023” to make sure you are getting current events.

Mitzi Stark has lived in Costa Rica for several years. She enjoys going to the multitude of one-day fairs and cultural events that are available to the public, particularly those in the Central Valley, and hopes to see you at one soon.



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Ivo's Blog by Godutch Realty

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DAY IN THE LIFE

by Allen Dickinson

Cerveza!

In the last issue, I wrote about something I don't like. If you didn't read it, here's a hint; it's green and can be found in nearly every food dish in Costa Rica. (It was culantro.) But this time I'm going to write about something I do like: Beer. Suds. Brewsky. In the local idiom, Cerveza.

Before I get started, I need to make clear I am not a heavy consumer of the beverage – one or two, maybe three, consumed in a bar during a lively conversation with friends is about my limit. Also, let me clarify that I'm not referring to the "national" brews. They are fine thirst-quenchers to wet your whistle on a hot day, but in the above-described environment, I prefer a craft beer – usually one of the darker varieties, like a Porter or Stout.

You may wonder, where does one get craft beer in Costa Rica? Surprisingly a lot of places nowadays. There are now dozens (yes, dozens) of craft beer breweries in Costa Rica. Many service only their local area, but others have a larger distribution to bars and restaurants. And some have gotten themselves placed in some of the larger chain groceries.

To me, the real way to enjoy a good artisanal brew to its fullest is to go to the source. Most craft breweries have a small bar/restaurant associated with them, a place where you can get their signature brews and some decent food. The advantage of going to one of those, besides the good drinks, is that those places usually have a "better" quality of patrons; you avoid the loud, brash, and sometimes annoying behavior that can erupt at lesser establishments (and the occasional horse.) Not saying that's 100% true all the time, but the likelihood of a more sedate atmosphere is higher in an artisanal brewery bar.

My personal experience has taken me to some local brewery sites. My latest trip was to a semi-out-of-the-way location behind Mega Super in Santa Ana. The beer brand is called Gracia and it comes in several different varieties. The brewery is a small operation which is combined with a nice, clean restaurant named Boca Abierto. Their beers are quite good, and the service is great. The ambiance and food are above average. The brand is gaining popularity, and its products are now available in some bars/restaurants. My recommendation is Mistica, a Porter.



Possibly the most well known is the Costa Rica Craft Brewery in Mora de Brazil, which is close to my home in Ciudad Colon. It is a very professional operation of significant size (though not anywhere as large as Florida Beverages, the makers of Imperial, Pilsen, etc.) where they craft several different varieties of artisanal cervezas, plus some seasonal ones. Like many craft brewing operations, the brewery is combined with a nicely appointed, in-house bar and restaurant (La Planta) that welcomes visitors. You can view the brewing area from the bar, and free tours of their operation are available. Their stout, Malacrianza, is my choice.

Another well-known brand is Treintaycinco. It is also made in Ciudad Colon. Available in some bars and restaurants, I like their Mama Candela, a nutty-flavored tropical stout.

Almost all the craft breweries offer the basic choices of ales, etc., but many go much further with a wider range of special beers. And with so many craft brewing operations going on, the urge to be innovative and have

a unique, stand-out product has led some of the Brew Masters to explore using local ingredients, like pineapple, mango, coconut, and cacao, in their offerings. This can lead to an interesting tasting/drinking experience. All you can do is try them and let your thumb make the decision (up or down.)

If you enjoy a well-made beer and want to see what's available close to your home, it can't hurt to explore the shelves of the larger chain grocery stores; they often carry a small variety of local products in stock. You may have to hunt for them, but small quantities of locally brewed brands are sometimes stocked in among the larger selling and import brands' offerings.

However, if you would rather search them out at their source, a quick Google search for "Craft Breweries in Costa Rica" will give you a plethora of hits of places to try. I'll bet there is one or more close to you, no matter where in the country you live.

Bottoms up!



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LEGAL UPDATE

by Romulo Pacheco



Inactive Corporations – DGT Requires New Form be Filed

What the subject line means is there are some changes in the way inactive corporations make their annual tax statement to the Treasury. (An inactive corporation is one which does not carry out any economic activity, does not issue invoices or receive income, and since they do not generate profits, there is no income tax to pay. This type of corporation is usually formed for the purchase and possession of assets such as a vehicle or residence.) Here is an overview of the changes.

For 2023, the General Directorate of Taxation (DGT) has established a new declaration form, D-195, to be used by inactive corporations in their annual tax filing. Called the Informative Declaration of Inactive Legal Entities, the new form replaces the previous D-101 form.

The DGT will make the D-195 form available to the public on the Ministry of Finance Virtual Tax Administration (ATV) internet platform on April 24, 2023. Go here:

https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cr/Documents/tax/boletin/2023/docs/Anexo2-FormD195-ALCA55_29_03_2023.pdf

For 2023 the deadline for submitting the declaration will be May 31. This is a one-time exception; for 2024 and forward, the deadline will be April 30.

The D-195 document contains some boxes in the header of the form which indicate the period, ID, owner name, and declaration number. These boxes will be completed automatically if the inactive legal entity has previously been entered into the ATV system. Otherwise, the information must be filled in. Be aware that there are specific rules to follow when filling out the form. For example, if there is more than one corporation, the declarations must be listed in chronological order, and, the boxes that ask for financial values must be completed using the national currency (Colones.)

The site guide explains section by section how the questions asked should be completed. Some specific subsections are also required. In the list of assets for your corporation(s), you need to include not only real estate, but also boats, cars, motorcycles, bonds, bank deposits, art, gold, and jewels. If there is more than one corporation, include only the assets held under that corporation's name and make separate declarations for the other corporations.

At the end of the declaration filing process, the ATV system will automatically assign the declaration number, which will be 13 digits. Likewise, the data in the "date and time of receipt of the declaration" box is automatically completed in the form, and the form will be retained in PDF format, which can be consulted in the ATV.

If you are one of those persons who is not a resident and own corporation(s), you will need a TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER to file an inactive corporation tax form. To obtain one, you will need to present yourself at the nearest tax administration office (Tributación Directa) to request one. (Take a Spanish speaker and a lot of patience with you.) You will need to have with you a certification of ownership (PERSONERIA) for all the corporations you own so that they can link them with your Tax Identification Number. This number will allow you to access the ATV website where you can fill out the form D-195 mentioned above.

Of course, Form D-195 and the ATV website is in Spanish. If you are not fluent in Spanish, I strongly suggest you consult with someone who is, and ideally, someone who is familiar with the General Directorate of Taxation (DGT) system. My office can assist you if needed.

A final note: Another required action for corporations is the FINAL BENEFICIARIES OF STOCK DECLARATION. This one has been in existence for several years and, in the past, was due in the month of April. This year, however, is an exception; it is due during the month of May.

For more information, please email or call:

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Attorney at Law, Notary Public

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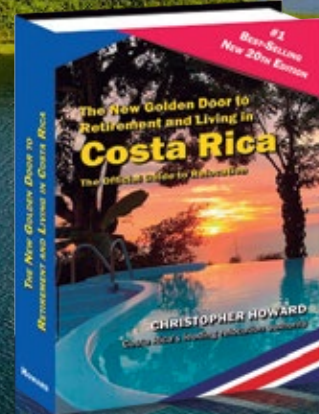
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ON THE HIGH SEAS

by Christine Monteith



A Trip to Corcovado National Park

I saw the dawn sun rising in a dusky-pink sky as we walked across the wet sand, the glowing ball peeking over the ridge where my home sits. This was the first time that I had witnessed a sunrise from the western shore of the Golfo Dulce; I've often sat on our deck watching the sunset where I now stood.

I was excited as I stepped over the stern of the speed boat that would ferry my husband, me, and a group of hikers and tour guides around the tip of the Osa Peninsula and along the Pacific Coast to the La Sirena Ranger Station in the Corcovado National Park. This was to be my

second adventure into a Costa Rican National Park. Over four years ago, my husband and I climbed Chirripó, the highest mountain in Costa Rica. The hike up its 7,000-foot elevation was a huge challenge but was well worth the effort.

Our destination this time was a place that is considered to be one of the world's most bio-diverse wildlife regions. We can see it from our deck, and we had heard enthusiastic reports from many friends, so it has long been on our adventure bucket list. We were to be there for two days. And the place did not disappoint!



After an hour and a half of racing across the light ocean swell, we made a "wet landing" on the sand bar of the Rio Claro. In bare feet, our hiking boots strapped to our backpacks, each passenger had to climb over the boat's stern as the breaking surf jammed the boat up on the beach, then sucked it back into the water. "Quick, quick, quick," the boat-mate shouted as I handed my backpack to him and leaped off into the knee-deep water. Collecting ourselves, we stood on the beach as the boat was manhandled back into deeper water so the huge 300 HP outboards could be lowered to depart.

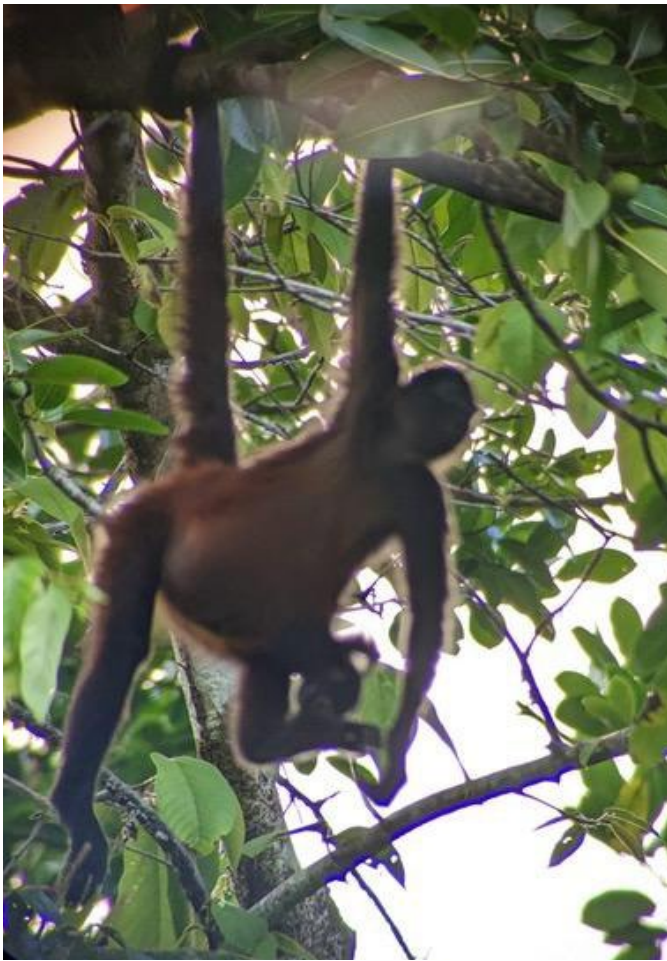
Trudging in the deep sand over to a fallen log, we cleaned our feet and put on our hiking boots. Not 40 feet from the fallen log, we entered a green tunnel through the mangroves where the guide pointed out a slumbering tapir. It was a juvenile but looked pretty big to me. Turns out Tapirs love the beach as much as I do. They are mostly nocturnal and find shady places near the sand to nap during the day.

This was not the first tapir that we'd see. We were lucky enough to later come upon two mature tapirs with a baby, and early in the second morning, as we hiked out, we encountered a young tapir walking towards us on the path. He gave us a quizzical look with his ears twitching forward and back, then lifted his droopy lip and squeaked out a call. He didn't know what to make of us, and although we scooted off the path to let him pass, he decided to circumnavigate us just to play it safe.

On the first day, we hiked with our guide on trails near the La Sirena Ranger Station. Our morning hike found us in a primary forest where the massive trees towered more than 100 feet above us. The Espavel Tree is prevalent, providing upper canopy shade and food for the smaller monkey species. Our guide told us that during Spanish colonial times, the indigenous people would climb them to use as lookouts for their enemies, thus giving rise to the origin of the Spanish word "espave," which was abbreviated for "es para ver," meaning "it is to see."

Unlike the elusive jaguars and the cautious tapirs, the Pizotes are unconcerned with human visitors. Opportunistic as raccoons, we saw one enterprising male stroll along the long line of visitors waiting at the Ranger Inspection Station. The Rangers looked in every bag and backpack for prohibited items, like single-use plastic bottles and food, and I guess that the pizote thought there might be a good snack available later from the confiscated booty.

During our afternoon hike we saw several packs of pizotes. The females and babies were tucked in the crooks of trees while the males snuffled along the ground with their pointed snouts in search of buried crabs. In the high canopy, we witnessed troupes of all four species of monkeys that live in Costa Rica: spider, capuchin, howler, and squirrel. The spider and the squirrel monkeys co-exist in the same zone of trees since they eat different elements of those trees. They would swing from high branch to lower limb, making crashing noises as the leaves shivered with their weight.



Our guide carried a monocular telescope on a tripod. With his experience, he could spot different species of birds and train his scope on them for us to view. There were great curassow birds that looked like a black pheasant with a yellow rubber ducky for a beak. A beautiful tiger heron was resting at the edge of a creek, and when we looked in the lens we saw a vivid image of a bird with a grasshopper clamped in its beak, whacking it against a branch to soften it for a good meal. To record these amazing sights, our guide had an attachment on his telescope, enabling us to take photos with our phones.

As the guides led their different groups of visitors through the many paths around the Station, we'd occasionally cross paths. If one guide had discovered an animal, they'd pass the information along to the next guide. With such a tip, it was late in the afternoon that we were able to see a shy sloth peeking over the edge of his roost to look down as we looked up.

Returning to the Ranger Station, fully satisfied with the sights of the day, we enjoyed a delicious dinner consisting of locally produced, organic food. The



overnight accommodations were basic and clean, and I was happy that we only stayed one night because I was assigned an upper bunk. Its sturdy metal design made it a challenge to get in and out, so once I was in, I was in for the night. Lights out was at 8 pm, when the generator shuts down and the supplemental solar power runs out. Everyone settled into their mosquito net-enclosed bunk bed, knowing that the call time for all visitors was 4:30 am.

I awoke around 3 am and decided to sit on the wide front porch of the station until it was time to pack and leave. A half-moon lit the wide expanse of grass that reaches to a wall of tall trees. I was hoping I might see the flash of jaguar eyes in the tall grass, even though our guide had said that the jaguars stay far from the paths where humans walk.

The second day the 13-mile hike out was my greatest challenge. Though it was mostly flat, we traveled along trails and trudged in deep sand on the beach for long stretches. Part way along, we took a cooling dip in a freshwater forest pool and scrambled around a rocky point in thigh-deep water. That hike had it all. It was



the last four miles when my backpack felt like a ton of bricks and my glutes were screaming that I had a little meltdown. Fortunately, our guide and my hubby were supportive, and we made it to the tiny airstrip in Carate, where an enterprising vendor was selling cold coconut water and beers.

I enjoy walking the trails around our home, where there is a wide variety of flora and fauna. Now, I understand that we are fortunate to live in what could be considered "the suburbs." On our trip, we had the great fortune to witness the metropolis that is Corcovado National Park,

with its towering trees as skyscrapers and the troupes of monkeys swinging through the canopy on their daily "commutes." At the same time, the birds, insects, and small animals live and die in a multi-layered ecosystem below. As human visitors, we tried to be low-impact tourists while we experienced this strange and wondrous world's complexity.

Christine has had the good fortune to live, work, and travel around the world, and now is happily ensconced in tropical tranquility near the Golfo Dulce with one husband, two dogs, and four hens.

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Email: costarica.consulate@fco.gov.uk

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Meters × 3.28 = Feet

Square Meters × 10.764 = Square Feet

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Kilometers × .62 = Miles

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(These are APPROXIMATE factors, NOT EXACT.)

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FROM THE EMBASSIES



ASK ACS

BE PREPARED

Whether you are new to Costa Rica or have lived here for many years, Costa Rica's seasons are very different from our home country and often require some adjustments. One important seasonal difference is the arrival of hurricane season. In Costa Rica, most hurricanes arrive from the Caribbean, but we can also get Pacific Ocean hurricanes. And, no matter where you live, coast, mountains, or valleys, hurricanes can have an impact on your life. Taking a few minutes now to prepare a hurricane plan can make a tremendous difference if you get caught in a storm or its aftermath.

Hurricane Season Begins June 1st

As we approach the upcoming hurricane season, it is important to take necessary precautions to ensure your safety and well-being. Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Impacts from wind and water can be felt hundreds of miles inland, and significant impacts like flooding and landslides can occur regardless of the storm's strength. Counter-intuitively, due to Costa Rica's unique topography, storms based in the Caribbean Sea have resulted in significant rainfall and flooding on Costa Rica's Pacific coast. For 2023, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has predicted an above-average hurricane season, so follow these steps to stay informed and prepared in case a hurricane threatens your area.

Determine Your Risk

Find out today which types of wind and water hazards could happen where you live, and then start preparing how to handle them. Know if you live in an area prone to flooding and if you are safe to remain in your home in the event of a major storm. The first step to prepare for a hurricane is to stay informed about weather conditions. Monitoring local weather reports and alerts from the Costa Rican government can help determine your risk. Review the main and secondary transportation routes in and out of your area. Talk to your family members now

before hurricane season about how to contact one another and where to meet if separated.

Assemble Disaster Supplies

Whether you're evacuating or sheltering-in-place, have the following items on hand to ensure your family's basic comfort and well-being:

Water: at least one gallon per person per day for three to seven days, plus water for pets.

Food: at least enough for three to seven days, including: non-perishable or canned food.

Radio: battery powered with extra batteries.

Blankets, pillows, tarps, etc.

First Aid Kit.

Toiletries.

Flashlight and batteries.

Pet care items.

Strengthen Your Home:

Make sure your home is in good repair and up to local hurricane building code specifications to withstand wind impacts.

Have the proper plywood, steel, or aluminum panels to board up the windows and doors.

If you're a renter, work with your landlord now to prepare your home for a storm.

Help Your Neighbor:

Many people rely on their neighbors before and after a disaster. Start the conversation now with your community about natural disaster preparedness, but remember you may need to adjust your preparedness plans based on the latest health and safety guidelines from local officials. With proper preparation and caution, we can stay safe and resilient during this upcoming hurricane season.

For more information, visit the [National Hurricane Center](#) and follow the advice of local authorities as provided on the [Costa Rican National Committee on the Prevention of Risks and Emergency Attention](#) website or on Twitter.

Also, enroll in our [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security updates.



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When you hear the words “United Kingdom” what comes to mind for you?

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It is precisely because of its reputation for academic excellence and the range of its educational offer that the UK attracts over 600,000 international students each year, who run the gamut from pupils taking English language courses to professionals pursuing their PhDs.

Since 1983, the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Costa Rica has been promoting its Chevening Scholarship Programme in Costa Rica and Nicaragua as an opportunity for aspiring leaders from these countries to do a Master’s programme in the UK, making the most of the experience of living abroad while studying in some of the best universities worldwide.

A Chevening-funded one-year Master's degree includes return airfare, full tuition fees, a monthly stipend for personal expenses and access to healthcare services. It also offers the opportunity for scholars to apply for internships and volunteering opportunities. Most importantly, Chevening boasts a professional network of alumni from around the world. To date, the UK government has awarded over 50,000 scholarships to students from all over the world.

The programme is open to individuals from more than 165 countries. Minimum requirements include a bachelor's degree, two years of work experience and, of course, fluent in English. Unlike other scholarships, the

programme has no age restriction and allows applicants to choose freely their area of specialisation from almost any university within the UK.

The scholarship application cycle operates annually, usually beginning in August and closing around November. This year, we’re proud that Chevening is celebrating its 40th anniversary – four decades dedicated to the professional development of leaders in all areas of study from around the world.

If you, or someone you know is interested in learning more about the programme, please consult www.chevening.org and follow the British Embassy’s social media channels – Instagram, Facebook and Twitter – where we appear as @UKinCostaRica



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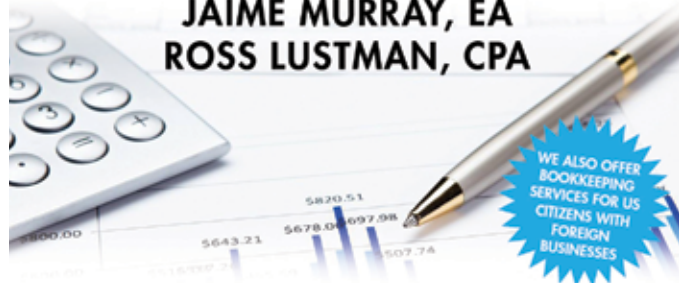


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What are the Property Closing Costs in Costa Rica?

Before buying a property, you should find out how much it will cost you to acquire the property. In general, closing costs are around 4% of the purchase price if you include the necessary services. If you Google "What are the property closing expenses in Costa Rica", you'll see articles that quote from 3% to twice that percentage. How come? It is because they do not take all the expenses involved into account. Therefore, the total can vary depending on the services required and the lawyer used for those services.

When buying a property, the price and closing expenses can deviate depending on what you or your agent negotiate with the seller. For example, in Costa Rica, some of the closing costs are commonly split 50/50 between buyer and seller, but that can be negotiated differently. (Some expenses are the sole responsibility of the buyer. Those costs exclusive to a buyer are noted in the below.) Therefore, you must always ask your attorney/notary public to calculate what your total closing costs will be. Don't ask the realtor because that is not his/her responsibility. For a more complete understanding, it is best to go to the source and do it yourself.

I will keep this short and concise, but you must do your own homework; this article is only meant as a guide so you can do the numbers yourself.

There are two main categories of closing costs: Pre-purchase and Purchase. Let's look at them separately.

PRE-PURCHASE EXPENSES:

Purchase Agreement

Some attorneys will not charge for a purchase agreement, while others might charge a retainer or a fee that's deductible from their fee charged at closing. Some may charge \$500, and others a percentage of the property's purchase price. So there are no surprises, ask your attorney what those fees will be before you do anything.

Survey

It might be necessary to hire a surveyor to check the boundaries of the property. Often, with larger properties, and especially in rural areas, fences might have been moved without the owner's knowledge. (If the property is in a condominium or gated community, it probably is not worth checking because any differences will involve all the members of the community and will already be known.) Checking boundaries can run anywhere between \$250 and \$2,000, depending on the size of the property. In any case, the buyer must pay the cost of checking the boundaries. In the event there are any differences found, the seller must pay for a new survey.

Home Inspection

In Costa Rica, you buy a property "as is," so it is always a good idea to request a home inspection before you make an earnest money deposit; if there is serious damage, you can decide to either walk away or renegotiate. Home inspections are always paid for by the buyer and can cost anywhere between \$350 for a small apartment to \$1,500 for a mansion.

Escrow

If you don't have a bank account in Costa Rica and you want a safe place to put the earnest money deposit, I recommend you use an escrow company. Using an escrow account also makes it easier to show the origin of the funds, and other documentation that is needed, before the closing. Most escrow companies charge 0.25% with a minimum fee of \$900 for each transaction, which is the buyer's responsibility.

Mortgage

It is very difficult to obtain a mortgage in Costa Rica if you're not a resident or citizen. Usually, banks charge a 1.5% administration fee, and the first payment, paid upfront by the buyer. The mortgage registration fee, charged by the attorney/notary public, is 0.50% - 1.25%, also paid by the buyer.

Appraisal

In the case of a mortgage, the lender will require an appraisal. This is paid for by the buyer.

Incorporation

If a buyer wants to incorporate and purchase the property through a Sociedad Anónima or Sociedad de Responsabilidad Limitada corporation, the buyer must pay the cost of doing so. Fees for creating a corporation run anywhere between \$350 and \$1,000. Do your homework on this with your lawyer. (For more information about incorporation, go to https://www.residencycr.com/app/cms/www/index.php?id_menu=2)

If the buyer is not a resident, it's not possible to fulfill the legal obligations of owning a corporation. An excellent service to assist is KeepUp, <https://landcolaw.com/keepup/>. The typical charge for the buyer will be an additional \$850 annually.

Title Insurance

Title insurance does not exist in Costa Rica, so there is zero cost for this item. Anyone can research a property's title in the National Registry's online database and see if there are any judgments or liens (such as a previous mortgage) on the property. Costa Rica follows the doctrine of first in time, first in right, which means that documents that were not recorded against the title at the time of purchase of a property cannot later be charged to a buyer who purchased the property in good faith.

Power of Attorney

A buyer who is not able to be at the closing can give a trusted person special power of attorney to close. Or, if you want your attorney to register the purchase in the Municipality for you (this does not occur automatically), they will need a POA to do that. A POA costs between ₡75,000 (minimum) and \$300, depending on the type, and is paid for by the requesting party, usually the buyer.

There are other services for which a POA might be needed, such as NITE (registration of your corporation in the Tax Register) or ATV (income tax registration), that carry an extra cost.

PURCHASE EXPENSES:

Closing costs

The closing costs for the purchase of a property are the biggest part of the closing expenses. As mentioned

earlier, some closing costs are traditionally split between buyer and seller. Those typically include:

Transfer tax.

National Registry stamps such as documentary, agrarian, fiscal, national archives, bar association, and municipal stamps.

Attorney/Notary Public fees + 13% VAT.

The total of these closing costs is, more or less, 3.6% of the purchase price. You can use this calculator to get a good idea of how much they will be: <https://costaricalaw.com/calculators/closingcosts.htm> (Be aware that when using that website, you must change the exchange rate at the top to the current rate and add 13% VAT to the notary public fees.)

A couple of tips

1. If you are buying a property that is registered in the National Register for an amount higher than what you're paying for it, you will have to pay the transfer taxes and stamps based on the higher amount. For example, if you purchase a property where the house burned down, and the house no longer has any value, you will still have to pay the transfer tax as if the house existed.
2. A country lawyer who does everything (civil law, real estate law, family law, etc.) may charge much less than a lawyer who specializes in real estate. Choose the right lawyer from the start, even though it might be more expensive, and in the end you'll save money and a lot of heartburn.
3. Shop around to get a good overview of your property closing expenses, and check on recommendations for lawyers specializing in real estate law. I have often had to work with an attorney who didn't speak the buyer's language, did not know how to write up a purchase-sale agreement, or what escrow was. Your real estate agent can probably recommend the right professionals. (If you don't use one, you're making a mistake.)

A final word of advice: Don't do this on your own; it will be a lot more expensive.

Ivo Henfling is an English speaking Dutch expat who has lived in Costa Rica for forty years. He founded the American-European Real Estate Group, the first functioning MLS with affiliate agents from coast to coast, in 1999. He is the broker/owner of GoDutch Realty and can be reached at (506) 2289-5125 or (506) 8834-4515 or email to: ivo@american-european.net

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WILD SIDE

by Ryan Piercy



Masked Duck

Apparently somewhat scarce, or at least hard to locate, the Masked Duck is not named for its superhero status but for the male's unusual markings of a black "mask" that covers its cheeks and crown.

Scientifically known as *Nomonyx dominicus*, the Masked Duck is, in fact, the only member of its genus, *Oxyurinae*. The bird has long, stiff tail feathers which are erected when they are at rest, and relatively large, swollen bills, so they are occasionally considered to be within the genus of stiff-ailed ducks. Some taxonomic authorities, however, say

they appear to be closer to swans and true geese than to typical ducks.

A tropical bird, Masked Ducks can be spotted from Southern Texas to South America and the Caribbean. Not truly migratory, they are usually spotted in Costa Rica for only about six months of the year; it is unknown where they disappear for the rest of the time. It is thought that they may travel mostly at night and wander unpredictably.

Perhaps the reason they are so rarely sighted is due to their preference for habitat. They are found from sea level to 800 meters in swampland and mangroves with dense vegetation and very heavy tree cover. In those locations, they stay mainly in the shallows, hiding like spies amongst the vegetation. Or maybe it is their mask that helps disguise them in the marshes.

The breed feeds by diving for food, consisting mainly of aquatic plant leaves, roots, stems, and seeds, as well as some aquatic insects and crustaceans. At an average of 13 inches, and 375 grams, they are smaller than the Ruddy Duck and able to take flight from the water easily. They are usually silent but sometimes make low grunts and whistling calls.

The males are easily identified (aside from the black masks) by their bright blue bills. Breeding adult males have a rust-colored bodies with mottled wings. Adult females, winter males, and juveniles have barred brownish-gray bodies with two horizontal, dark-colored stripes running through their buff-colored faces. Nesting, they normally lay 4 to 6 eggs, though as many as 18 have been reported. Incubation takes about 28 days.



They may be seen between August and November in the southern zone, near Ciudad Neily. Other sites to view them include CaZo Negro, and the Maquenque Refuge in the North. Though very secretive, the species is not rare and not considered threatened under the IUCN.


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DESIGN WISE

by Shelagh Duncan



How To Save Your Sanity During Home Building

Building your new home is a unique experience filled with stories you will never forget, especially when it is in a different country with a different climate, culture, and language! It will be a challenge and an adventure; almost everyone who has built their home in Costa Rica feels they could write a book about it; some even do!

Always keep in mind that you may one day want to sell your house, so resale should always be considered when making decisions along the way. Stay away from current fads or trendy finishes; keep those for the furniture and décor, and remember to leave money in the budget for the pool, outdoor kitchen, and other landscaping needs.

Hopefully, the following tips will help you keep your sanity and actually enjoy the creation of your new home in paradise!

DOCUMENT THE HOME BUILDING PROCESS

There will be important information you need to remember when you build, even after you settle in. Whether it's for your family or for future renovations, documenting your build is an important part of the process. Keeping track of your documents and ensuring your family stays in the loop can help you stay organized and remember everything about your build.



KEEP FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN THE LOOP WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

The home-building process is exciting, and your friends and family will want to be included. In fact, you'll probably find that your new home has become a popular conversation topic. You don't need to personally keep everyone in the loop; you can find ways to keep everyone connected online. Whether you start a blog for pictures, advice, and stories or document all of your progress on Instagram, your friends will appreciate the simple way to stay involved in the process.

ORGANIZE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

The home-building process comes with a lot of paperwork. You can keep all of your documents and permits in a file folder, but those aren't always easy to store or search through. Luckily, there are plenty of digital ways to document and track things like expenses and materials. Try using these apps and approaches to keep up with all your important documents.

- Use an app like ScannerPro to scan documents – like receipts and contracts – with your phone. You can then create a filing system on your phone or computer to put every paper in its place.

- Snap a picture to document your materials and finish choices. That way, when it comes time to touch up your paint, you can easily find a match. This also helps you find replacement parts like light bulbs and hardware. Take pictures of fixture SKUs in case you require repairs or replacements in the future.
- Keep paper copies of any signed contracts, especially those between you and the lender and you and your contractor. Scan them for easy access or if you have a quick question, but always retain the hard copies in a file for future reference.
- Keep a set of house plans on your phone. They won't be to scale and they aren't for use in building, but you can reference them when you're walking through your unfinished home.
- Take pictures of your home at the grey building stage, before they finish the walls. You can reduce pricey demolition in the future if you know the location of major electrical and plumbing hookups.

PRESERVE MEMORIES

Documenting the home-building process isn't just about business. While tracking receipts and recording SKUs can help you stay organized, documenting the process will help you connect to your new home. The home-building



process can be stressful for sure, but also meaningful. Take progress pictures and journal about the experience so you can share your story with family and friends for years to come. Create an album of pictures and stories you can refer back to at any time.

FURNISHING YOUR NEW HOME

Furnishing your new home is the next chapter. You may decide to go with a pre-designed Home Furniture Package that takes the stress out of finding all the pieces yourself. These run from basic to luxury, and you can also find Appliances Packages and Outdoor Furniture Packages too. This helps with the finances as you will already know the total cost and can budget for them.

However, if you want to find all the pieces yourself, it will be a process similar to building. As you did for the house, you will have to make a budget for furniture, so do your research during the build and source out where you can find suitable furniture. Remember to document your finds. Take photos of the items together with the store information and make notes about the important features like the comfort level, color options, or delivery time. Many furniture buying decisions will need to be made, so this is a reference for you and for the store if you have questions or want to refer back to different products later. If you use the

store's designer, they will keep all the notes of your visits and will work with you to make sure everything is pulled together well and with style.

It is not usually a good idea to bring furniture from back home. It will always be more costly than you expect, and there may be breakages or other 'losses.' Plus, the fabrics and finishes will probably not work as well with the local climate and our more casual lifestyle here. Probably best to start fresh and look on it as an opportunity to unclutter and live more simply.

Whether you're just starting your build or are currently in the thick of it, know that your build will become part of your family's story. Your adventures along the way will make fun reads in later years. And, as you meet new people and learn new things, you can preserve your memories as your own New Home story.

Until next time

Shelagh Duncan

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PARADISE, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

by Tony Johnson



Hawking On. Helplessness

The U.S. is a mess and getting worse, leaving many feeling worried and helpless. Such realities as rising crime, safety concerns, retailers bankrupted by pervasive theft, homelessness and rampant drug abuse, inflation, rising prices, crumbling infrastructure, school shootings, and the planet in danger create much anxiety about the stability and security of society. Factor in leaders who are clearly lost, and we begin to feel helpless and hopeless. And there's little or nothing we can do ourselves to solve these overwhelming problems.

We can, however, better manage the problems and anxieties in our personal lives. We can find some peace and security in our small part of the world if we have a

clearer understanding of the nature and function of anxiety. Like totally paralyzed, renowned cosmologist Stephen Hawking says, "However difficult life may seem, there's always something we can do and succeed at."

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

"Stress," or anxiety, is what we FEEL, how we REACT to the PERCEPTION OF DANGER and the PERCEPTION OF OUR HAVING INADEQUATE COPING SKILLS. In other words, we're anxious when we face a danger that we feel is beyond our abilities. Each of those capitalized words is important because they provide insights into how to better manage

anxiety. So, anxiety is an emotional reaction to a situation seen as dangerous. It's NOT all “in our head”. It's a dynamic interaction between a condition and our understanding of the dangers there. Neither the situation nor the perception alone creates the anxiety.

What kind of perception produces anxiety? To repeat, the perception of danger. AND the perception of that danger being beyond our coping skills. Those perceptions both explain our anxiety and offer opportunities to better manage that emotion.

Our REACTION is physical, emotional, and mental. These aspects represent opportunities to reduce that emotion. PHYSICALLY we're tense, “on edge”. Why? Because the danger has increased our energy level to protect ourselves. And we experience that extra energy as jitteriness, restlessness. EMOTIONALLY we feel at risk, unsafe. Why? To motivate us to FIGHT or FLEE the danger. MENTALLY we worry, ruminate on the problem. Why? To search for a way to feel safe.

Note, perception does not mean “wrong”. It covers a range of possibilities from completely wrong to completely right, or some mixture of right and wrong. Why the focus on perception? Because that's the part we have the most control over.

Hawking had NO control over the fatal and progressively paralyzing disease he suffered. It was so bad that he was expected to die quickly. To incorrectly see it as something he would recover from would have increased his risk—he may have foolishly refused treatment. And to incorrectly see it as something he could do absolutely nothing about would have doomed him to a life of hopelessness, helplessness, fear, and meaningless.

Hawking chose to focus instead on the reality that “there's always something we can do.” He refused to accept that he was entirely helpless, that there was nothing he could do to give his life meaning. More and more paralyzed, what could he possibly do? What strengths could he possibly utilize in that complete paralysis? Simple, his intellect, his discipline, and his drive to solve some of



the most Herculean problems in physics. Deprived of all physical strength, he fully employed his remarkable mind and gave us deep insights into physical reality.

BUT I'M NOT STEPHAN HAWKING!

We can “always do something” about our perceptions and the worrisome reality. Translating these ideas into practical responses to our worries, let's examine a common danger in Costa Rica: venomous snakes. Enjoying our morning coffee while awaiting sunrise on our deck, we catch some movement out of the corner of our eye. We look more carefully and quickly recognize a fer-de-lance, Costa Rica's most dangerous snake slithering closer and closer to us. Instantly we go from

calm contentment to panic. Our mind is racing, we feel light headed, and helpless.

Our heart starts to pound, all our muscles tense and we leap to our feet to get as far as we can from the serpent. But it continues to move toward us. “It’s after me. I’m going to be killed by this damn thing.” Panic is the extreme end of anxiety— an over-the-top level of fear. How has a two-foot long, 3 inch around creature paralyzed us? Because we have **CATROPHIZED** the risks. We’ve seen an “end of the world” level of danger and personal helplessness. Our extreme reaction results from our perception of extreme danger **AND** extreme dismissal of our capabilities. Seeing the snake as unstoppable and ourselves as totally incapable of self-protection, we panic.

We have created an all-powerful, invincible antagonist. A lightning-fast, unstoppable predator intending to strike and fatally poison us. Simultaneously, we have rendered ourselves as completely defenseless, powerless, totally vulnerable, and we freeze. Our level of fear **SEEMS** to confirm the perceived extreme danger. We wouldn’t be so terrified if it wasn’t so dangerous, right? Wrong?

One power we always have is to ask, “Have I perceived the situation and my abilities correctly?” **NO!** Our misperception of the danger and our “weakness” explains our fear, not the actual danger.

The snake is indeed very dangerous. But **IS IT** really invincible? Of course not. How many dead snakes do you see on the road? They have their own weaknesses and vulnerabilities. And we have our own, currently overlooked, strengths and capabilities. In the snake’s eyes, we’re huge and dangerous. And we have the edge. Are you starting to reduce the danger to a more accurate level and increase your strengths to a reassuring degree?

And that right there is the **KEY** to effective anxiety management: re-evaluate the perceived danger and our perceived weakness. When the seen danger declines and our perceived strengths increase, anxiety

is reduced. **CHALLENGE** the catastrophic view of the danger and our “total helplessness.” And like Hawking, we take control of what we can.

A REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES MENTIONED HERE

1. **IDENTIFY** the danger seen. “The snake is invincible. There’s nothing I can do to protect myself”.
2. **CHALLENGE** that perception. “Is that **REALLY** true? Does the snake indeed have all the power and I have none?”



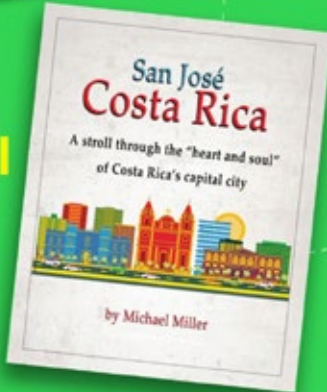
3. BRING THE REAL DANGER IN LINE WITH YOUR REAL STRENGTHS. “The snake IS dangerous. But not all-powerful. AND, I have some power to undo its danger; I am NOT helpless.” And, in so doing, we reduce our emotional and physical arousal. We become calmer and more confident.
4. Take EFFECTIVE ACTION to eliminate or reduce the danger. Like Hawking, there IS something you can do to protect yourself. “Where’s that broom and dustpan?”
5. No one can protect themselves from all danger, but you’ve just demonstrated that you’re more capable than you thought.

The world is a scary place now. But we can bring more calm and safety to our personal lives by using these ideas to manage anxiety.

Tony Johnson actually confronted a ‘fer’ after he had written this article, giving him a chance to effectively implement these techniques. Email me at: johnson.tony4536@gmail.com

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CLUB CORNER

Due to the pandemic, many groups and clubs previously listed in this section have suspended meetings or have dissolved. We have attempted to contact each one, but due to a lack of response some listings were removed. If any correctcions are needed, or your club or group is missing, please contact us with the name, a description of the group, and meeting and contact data, and we will include you in the next issue. Send the information to: [service@arcr.cr/Subject](mailto:service@arcr.cr); El Residente Club Corner,

▶ Alcoholics Anonymous

Groups meet daily throughout the country; times and places change frequently. Schedules for meetings and their locations can be found at: www.costaricaaa.com.

▶ Al-Anon

English language meetings open to anyone whose life has been/is affected by someone else's problem with alcohol. Meeting information can be found at: www.costaricaaa.com

▶ American Legion Post 10-Escazú

Meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 12 noon at the Tap House, Escazú Village, Escazú. If you wish to attend please call: 4034-0788, or email: commander@alcr10.org or visit our website at: www.alcr10.org

▶ American Legion Post 12-Golfito

Currently inactive. For information contact Mel Goldberg at 8870-6756

▶ Amigos of Costa Rica

A US-based non-profit organization established in 1999. Amigos of Costa Rica has the mission of connecting global resources to Costa Rican Organizations. Amigos currently works with over 120 Costa Rican nonprofits and is happy to connect with donors who wish to explore how they can contribute to Costa Rica. U.S. Government tax-payers donations are deductible. For more information go to: www.amigosofcostarica.org or email to: admin@amigosofcostarica.org

▶ Birding Club Costa Rica

A private group that travels around Costa Rica to observe and identify the 900+ species of birds found here, learn about different parts of the country, and enjoy the company of like-minded and interested people. For more information, visit the website: www.birdingclubcr.org or email to: info@birdingclubcr.org.

▶ Canadian Club

Canadian Club welcomes everyone to join us for our monthly luncheons and at our special annual events. No passport required. There are no fees or dues to pay, just sign up with your email address and we will keep you informed of Canadian events. For information and to sign up, email Renée-Claude at: canadianclubcr@gmail.com.

▶ Central Valley Golf Association

Meets every Tuesday morning between 6-7 a.m. at the Valle Del Sol golf course in Santa Ana. Both individual and two person events with different formats every week. We invite all men and woman with all handicaps to join us and enjoy golf on a picturesque course. No membership required. For more information, contact: Larry Goldman 8933-3333, or email to: nylarryg@yahoo.com.

▶ Costa Rica Writers Group

Writers, authors, and anyone who would like to write can benefit from this group. Members read and evaluate or critique each other's work, or present what they write. Any aspect of writing can be discussed. We have access to resources for editing, publishing, and the whole writing process. We meet by ZOOM on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 11:30 a.m. For more information contact Edie Bakker at: edierainforest@yahoo.com

► Democrats Abroad Costa Rica

Provides information about voting in the US and voting issues of interest to US citizens living in Costa Rica. For more information or to join email: or visit our website at: www.democratsabroad.org/cr Register to vote absentee at: votefromabroad.org

► Marine Corps League

Meets the second Saturday of the month at 11 a.m. at the Tap House in City Place Mall in Santa Ana. We are looking for new members. Former Marines and Navy Corpsmen can be regular members. All other service members are welcome to join as associate members. For information call Andy Pucek at: 8721-6636 or email: andy@marinecorpsleaguecr.com andypucek@live.com

► Newcomers Club of Costa Rica

(For Women) The Club, in existence since 1980, promotes friendship and support among members, mostly expats in Costa Rica, through conducting a variety of social and recreational activities. Meetings are held from September to May, interest groups meet year-round. For more information go to our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/newcomers.org/> or email to: newcomersclub.costarica@gmail.com

► Pérez Zeledón International Women's Club

Formed in November 2009 to promote friendship between English speaking women in Pérez Zeledón and, through friendship, to make a positive contribution to our local community. The Club meets for lunch on the second Tuesday of each month in different restaurants around the canton. We also host a Ramblers group, a Games group and currently have a team working in the Municipal gardens. For more information, please send an email to: pzwomansclub@gmail.com or visit our web site at: www.pziwc.org.

► Professional Women's Network

PWN provides its members with opportunities to network with other professional women with the goal of aiding personal and professional development of entrepreneurs, students, and professionals. PWN sponsors service and outreach programs to "give back" to the community. Meeting schedules vary. For info on the speaker for the month and to register, call Sarah

Joy at 8868-6990 or email us at info@pwn-cr.com The PWN website is: <http://www.pwn-cr.com>

► San Vito Bird Club

A community based birding/nature group centered in the diverse southern zone of Costa Rica. We also facilitate nature education to local elementary schools through Cornell University's Bird Sleuth program. Twice monthly bird walks through the Wilson Botanical Garden and other sites are open to all; binoculars available as needed. Please visit our website: www.sanvitobirdclub.org or email: eltangaral@gmail.com for more information.

► Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Open to men too. We work on peace issues and against violence. The Spanish speaking group in San José works through ZOOM but new members can be accommodated in English. The San Ramon group is also active. Contact itzstar@gmail.com or call Mitzi at 2433-7078 for information.

NOTICE: Club officers should review the contact information for their clubs and make sure it is up to date.

Send any changes or corrections to: service@arcr.cr subject line; Club Corner, and post them on the the ARCR Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/ARCR123.



BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Important dates in Costa Rica:

1 May, Monday

Labor Day / May Day
National holiday

18 June, Sunday

Father's Day
Observance

NATIONAL HOLIDAY:

Non-essential businesses will be closed. These are paid holidays for Costa Rican workers. A worker who is required to work on a national holiday must, by law, be paid double wages.

OBSERVANCE:

If the date falls on a weekday, it is a paid day off for Costa Rican workers.

June 22 and 23.

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