

\$6.95 USD | Free for members | ARCR's English Language Magazine

# EL RESIDENTE

March

April

2024

TASTE THE TROPICS:

## Cas

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Viva los Viveros

Understanding Ticos

The Indigenous Games

Casting my Ballot

CELEBRATING  
MORE THAN

25  
YEARS

ARCR  
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS - COLOMBIA - REAL ESTATE



Celebrating more than

# 25 years

of doing things **RIGHT!**

**Providing Information, Residency, Legal  
Service, Seminars, Magazine, Discounts, and  
more to expats from around the world.**

**ARCR**  
RETIREMENT - RELOCATION - RESIDENCY

**Here yesterday, today,  
and tomorrow**

**Association of Residents of Costa Rica  
[www.arcr.cr](http://www.arcr.cr) email: [service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr)  
[www.facebook.com/ARCR123](https://www.facebook.com/ARCR123) (506) 4052 4052  
San Pedro, Mall San Pedro, Ofimall, 3rd floor, San Jose**



# CONTENTS

<b>Across the Board</b> ARCR Board of Directors	<b>4</b>
<b>Official Holidays, Observances, and Days Off in Costa Rica (* modified)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Taste the Tropics</b> El Residente Staff	<b>6</b>
<b>Out and About</b> Mitzi Stark	<b>9</b>
<b>Understanding Ticos</b> Edie Bakker	<b>15</b>
<b>Giving Back to Our Community</b> ARCR Staff	<b>19</b>
<b>A Day in The Life</b> Allen Dickinson	<b>21</b>
<b>Cocina Tip</b> April Primero	<b>24</b>
<b>Legal Update</b> Rómulo Pacheco	<b>27</b>
<b>From the Embassies</b> US and UK Embassies	<b>30</b>
<b>Off the High Seas</b> Christine Monteith	<b>33</b>
<b>On the Grid</b> Ivo Henfling	<b>35</b>
<b>Design Wise</b> Shelagh Duncan	<b>39</b>
<b>Wild Side</b> Ryan Piercy	<b>42</b>
<b>Club Corner</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Business Directory</b>	<b>47</b>

This magazine has been published every two months since 1995 as the official communications media of ARCR Administration. Our organization provides service to thousands of foreigners who have chosen Costa Rica to reside for short periods or for permanent residence.

Since 1984 we have been offering reliable **services, information and advocacy** to Costa Rica's foreign residents. We have the experience and ability to help you with your residency application, immigration, business and financial management, real estate purchases and rentals, property management, insurance, pet importation and much more.

If you wish to place an ad in El Residente, please contact the Advertising and Publicity desk in the ARCR Administration Office or at the email address listed in the masthead. Goods & services offered are paid advertisements. Neither ARCR Administration nor El Residente research the companies and take no responsibility for the quality of such goods and services. Some articles published in El Residente may have been written by non-professionals. El Residente attempts to check all facts included, but takes no responsibility for their accuracy.

## Editor's Note

As you turn the pages of this issue you may notice that we have again published the calendar of *Costa Rica's Official Holidays, Observances, and Days Off*. Why would we do that? Because we are in Costa Rica and, as we all know, sometimes things we don't expect will change, do. The calendar is an example. In January 2024 the Costa Rican legislature made three changes to the official calendar and eliminated three "observance" days and added another celebration day. The calendar you find in this issue has been corrected to reflect those changes. (The modified dates are preceded by a \*.)



Check our blog on our Facebook site.

## Contact Information

<b>Published by:</b>	ARCR CR Corp. S.A.
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:service@arcr.cr">service@arcr.cr</a>
<b>Managing Director:</b>	Rómulo Pacheco
<b>Editor-in-Chief:</b>	Allen Dickinson
<b>Graphic Design and Advertising graphics:</b>	Eduardo González
<b>Advertising Sales:</b>	Hayley Babb
<b>Office hours:</b>	Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
<b>Main office:</b>	Mall San Pedro. Ofimall, 3rd floor, San Pedro, Costa Rica
<b>Telephone:</b>	(506) 4052-4052
<b>WhatsApp:</b>	8935-2444

<b>Advertising and Publicity:</b>	<a href="mailto:service@arcr.cr">service@arcr.cr</a>
<b>Insurance Office:</b>	<a href="mailto:insurance@arcr.cr">insurance@arcr.cr</a>
<b>General information:</b>	<a href="mailto:legal@arcr.cr">legal@arcr.cr</a>
<b>Caja account info:</b>	<a href="mailto:service@arcr.cr">service@arcr.cr</a>
<b>Residency info:</b>	<a href="mailto:legal@arcr.cr">legal@arcr.cr</a>
<b>Facebook page:</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ARCR123">www.facebook.com/ARCR123</a>
<b>ARCR Webpage:</b>	<a href="http://www.arcr.cr">www.arcr.cr</a>
<b>Instagram:</b>	<a href="https://residencycr.com">residencycr.com</a>

Cover photo credit: Stock photo

# ACROSS THE BOARD

## Notes and News from the Board of Directors

**CORRECTION** The calendar of Costa Rica's Official Holidays, Observances, and Days Off, published in the January/February issue of El Residente, has received some changes. Three days of observance and one day of celebration have been added/deleted/changed. A revised calendar is included in this issue. Changed dates are noted by an \*.

**INDIGENOUS GAMES UPDATE** The dates for the Indigenous games have been set; the games will begin on Friday, April 26th, with the main activities taking place on Saturday, April 27th and Sunday the 28th. B&B accommodations are available for those caring to spend more than a single day. See the article on page 19 for more information.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT LETTERS**

Recently there has been some confusion about the U.S. Embassy's October announcement that the Federal Benefit Unit will no longer issue verification letters for Social Security or other benefits paid by U.S. Government agencies. These letters are necessary for proving income in applications for, or renewal of, Costarican residency. If you need such a letter, there is a simple on-line procedure for obtaining one on-line. If you need instructions, ARCR has a free hand-out which details all the steps to take. Just ask for the "US Federal Benefits (income verification) letter."

### **NEW/OLD SOCIAL GROUP FORMED**

The Umbrella Club of Costa Rica, formerly the Newcomers Club of CR, has announced its

formation and first meeting. The group was designed to give English-speaking women living in Costa Rica a common platform to share experiences, ideas, similar interests, and to promote fellowship among members.

After the pandemic many members of the original group realized that they had, over time, formed a close-knit community that shared many interests. They wanted to preserve those relationships but realized that they had become longtime residents of Costa Rica and were, technically, no longer "newcomers." So they decided to revive the club, but as a less formally structured organization; thus the new name, The Umbrella Club of Costa Rica, a name which signifies the social group covers and unites all the members of its various interest groups.

After extensive planning, on February 1, 2024, the Umbrella Club of Costa Rica held its first meeting with over 40 members gathering to celebrate with a champagne toast. The new organization follows the lead of the old Newcomers Club and is comprised of multiple interest groups including: Art, Book, Cinema, Happy Hour Mingle, Lunch Bunch, Symphony, Newcomers, and three Cooking groups. Each group has leaders who coordinate the activities, but all members share the responsibilities of the monthly meetings.

For more information on the group and how to become a member, see the Umbrella Club listing in the Club Corner section of this issue.

# 2024 Official Holidays, Observances, and Days Off in Costa Rica (\*modified)

DATE	DAY	NAME	TYPE
1 Jan	Monday	New Year's Day	National Holiday
*10 Mar	Sunday	Dia del Boyero	Celebration
19 Mar	Tuesday	Saint Joseph's Day	Observance
*15 Apr	Monday	Battle of Rivas Day	National Holiday
1 May	Monday	Labor Day / May Day	National Holiday
29 May	Friday	Good Friday	National Holiday
16 Jun	Sunday	Father's Day	Observance
*29 Jul	Monday	Annexation of Guanacaste Day	National Holiday
2 Aug	Friday	Day of Our Lady of Los Ángeles	Non-Compulsory Payment Holiday
*15 Aug	Thursday	Mother's Day	Observance
24 Aug	Saturday	National Parks Day	Observance
9 Sep	Monday	Children's Day	Observance
15 Sep	Sunday	Independence Day	National Holiday
2 Nov	Saturday	All Soul's Day	Observance
22 Nov	Friday	Teacher's Day	Observance
1 Dec	Sunday	Day of Abolition of the Army	Non-Compulsory Payment Holiday
25 Dec	Wednesday	Christmas Day	National Holiday
31 Dec	Tuesday	New Year's Eve	Observance

## DEFINITIONS OF HOLIDAY TERMS

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

**NATIONAL HOLIDAYS:** 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.

**NON-COMPULSORY PAYMENT HOLIDAYS:** These are official holidays, however the employer is not required to pay their employees double if they are required to work that day.

SOURCE: <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/costa-rica/2024>



# TASTE THE TROPICS

by El Residente Staff



## Cas

One day you stop by a little soda to grab a snack, maybe a cheese empanada, and the person behind the counter asks you what you want to drink; a "natural" maybe? You ask what is available and they say, "Pina, Mora, y Cas." You know that Pina is pineapple and Mora is blackberry, but what is Cas? You think it is probably good, but will you like it? It's unfamiliar, and you don't feel adventurous, so, to be safe, you say, "Coca Cola." Ah, that's a big mistake. All are delightful and refreshing drinks, but Cas has a very special kind of flavor and shouldn't be passed up.

Cas, the fruit, is from the guava tree (*Psidium friedrichsthalianum*), which is a species of guava found mostly in Costa Rica. Known throughout Central

America, Cas goes by many names, such as guayaba ácida, guayaba agria, guayaba de danto, and guayaba de agua. The fruit is plum-sized with green to yellow skin and creamy flesh. The fruit, which the trees produce multiple times throughout the year, is very high in Vitamin C. (Mottling or brown spotting of the skin is normal and does not indicate disease or over-ripeness.)

Ticos refer to guavas as guayabas, which is the same as the scientific name for the genus of fruit trees. Guava is the English name for guayaba and should not be confused with guaba, the "ice-cream bean." (See the January/February 2023 issue of El Residente to learn more about the Ice Cream Bean.) In any case, the Cas fruit is commonly used to prepare a sweetly-tart,



delicious drink by mixing the fruit's juice with sugar and water. Often, a little milk is added for body.

The Cas tree is a durable, wild fruit tree that grows well in all types of tropical soil, reaching up to 10 meters in height. It prospers in mild weather and can grow from sea level to intermediate

altitudes. Cas was first described by Otto Berg, a German botanist and pharmacist in 1893. The tree can be propagated by seed and can produce fruit in 3-5 years, requiring no special attention. The trees have been successfully grown in California.

Because of its acidity, the fruit is mostly used for making sweetened fruit drinks. Sometimes, however, it is used for jellies, jams, or pie filling. To make a fruit drink, in a blender put four or five peeled Cas fruits with a liter of water (leaving the peels on for more flavor is optional.) Use a slow blender speed to pulverize the fruits but not grind the seeds. Strain the juice from the pulp, add milk and sweetener to taste. Best served cold.



# LEARN SPANISH

with our **five-finger system**

the easiest, fastest, and effective way to learn Spanish



**ONLINE  
SESSIONS**



**FACE-TO-FACE  
SESSIONS**



**GROUPS OR  
PRIVATE SESSIONS**

**We speak  
Spanish**  
your Spanish School—



**(506) 7076-8283**

**WeSpeakSpanish-CR.com**





[www.nursinghomescostarica.com](http://www.nursinghomescostarica.com)



## What We Do?



### Specialized Alzheimer's Care

Specializing in personalized, compassionate Alzheimer's care in a safe, enriching environment to enhance overall quality of life.

### Assisted Living

Promoting independence and quality of life through assisted living, offering support as needed.



24/7 medical attention specialized in senior care, with a focus on comprehensive support and dignity for our residents.

### Geriatric Residence Services

A comfortable and supportive long-term residence for seniors, fostering a sense of community and belonging.



+(506) 8920 6849  
Villalegria@gmail.com  
@nursinghomescostarica

# Security!

**We've had your back for more than 25 years**



**Here yesterday, today, and tomorrow**

**- Information - Residency - Legal Service - Seminars - Magazine - Discounts, and more.  
Serving expatriates from around the world!**

Association of Residents of Costa Rica. - San Pedro, Mall San Pedro,  
Ofimall, 3rd floor, San Jose, Costa Rica (506) 4052 4052 - Email: [service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr)  
Website: [www.arcr.cr](http://www.arcr.cr) - [www.facebook.com/ARCR123](https://www.facebook.com/ARCR123)



# OUT AND ABOUT

by Mitzi Stark



## Viva los Viveros

**T**he rainy season is coming in a few weeks (if it is on its normal schedule), and if you are thinking of planting something, or even if you're not, a visit to a garden center (vivero in Spanish) can be a great excursion. Even if you just have an apartment or a temporary place here, a few houseplants or potted herbs in the kitchen can be a great addition to your home.

There are all sorts of viveros. Some specialize in fruit trees or agricultural plants, some sell just seeds, and some sell plants online. But if you want to decorate your home or just

want to see the variety of plants and flowers in Costa Rica, visit a vivero that sells house plants.

Visiting a major garden center is a walk through a botanical treasure. Some mostly carry the more common "garden variety" of plants, the kind you see in everybody's yard. But others are so colorful you almost need sunglasses to visit them, and seeing all the beautiful colors in person is an experience that can't be matched. A side benefit is that at those places you can also find attractive and unique yard ornaments, pottery





planters, and those floppy flamingos that dip and dive in the wind.

Viveros are seen all over the country, but some areas specialize in them. La Garita in Alajuela, on the way to Atenas, is considered to have the "best climate in the world," and the viveros, with brightly colored plants and pots, line the road from Barrio San Jose de Alajuela to the Highway 1 intersection at Monolo's. (Highway 1 is also called the Pan American Highway or the Bernardo Soto Pista. Take your pick.)

The area around Zoo Ave. on Highway 1 is a roadside spectacular as neighboring viveros set out blooming plants and colorful pots (macetas) to entice passers-by. The biggest and brightest is Vivero Central, which lies right at the intersection of Highway 1. You can reach it by taking the highway to the Monolo's exit and turn right, or from barrio San Jose just west of Alajuela, follow the road to Atenas. Buses run on both routes.

Nobody knows exactly how big Vivero Central is, just that "it's pretty big," according to those who work there. The employees know the plants well and will tell you their

names, whether they like shade, sun, lots of water or a little, and how big they'll grow. There's no pressure or need to buy to enjoy the visit; walking the grounds and learning about the plants that thrive in Costa Rica is like a free hike in a botanical garden. Take an afternoon and enjoy a few hours among the extensive variety of Costa Rica's colorful flowers and plants. Their hours of operation are 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays.

Seen enough plants and flowers? Ready for a coffee break? Coffee and refreshments are available in a nearby grotto surrounded by leafy plants.

Here are some other activities that can get you out in the sun and enjoying the good weather.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8 is observed in Costa Rica with a march and activities. Many communities will also have events. No details were available at press time. Check with your local Oficina de la Mujer, or Google Dia Internacional de Mujer Costa Rica and the name of your city.





## OX CART DRIVERS' DAY

The second Sunday in March (March 10th this year) is el Día del Boyero, a day dedicated to the men (boyeros) who traditionally worked the land with oxen and carts, hauled coffee to the receiving depots, or carried firewood or cargo or people, among other things. "I could fit six Señoras in my cart," said one boyero talking about the old days when he drove his oxen and cart to the market.

Today, few farmers work with oxen and carts, but some keep up the tradition as a hobby. Each year on this special day they proudly parade their intricately decorated carts, along with matched pairs of oxen so nearly identical you would suspect they are clones, with great pride. The parade is a sight to behold with as many as 300 pairs of oxen, some so large a tall man cannot



see over them, pulling the beautifully painted carts. The carts were originally designed to go through muddy roads and mountain terrain but are now decorated in bright colors and different patterns reflecting the owner's tastes. The carts and their decorations, by the





way, are unique to Costa Rica and were proclaimed a historical heritage by UNESCO in 2005.

El Dia del Boyero is celebrated in several locations, but the biggest and best takes place in Escazu San Antonio, the community located the highest up the hill of the three Escazus (Escazu San Raphael - "lower Escazu," Escazu Central, and Escazu San Antonio - "upper Escazu") A grand procession of carts and drivers from all over the country will take place in a parade that starts lower down the mountain and ends in the plaza in front of the San Antonio church. There, you can walk around for a close-up view of the different teams and colorful carts, take photos, and maybe get to mount a cart for a selfie or two.

March 10th will be hot and sunny, so be sure to bring sunscreen and wear a hat. There will be traditional food, games, and, of course, crowds. The parking can drive you crazy, but this is a great way to see the real Costa Rica. Buses to/from San Antonio run regularly from "lower" Escazu and San Jose.

## PET FEST

March 24th in La Garita de Alajuela is a day-long event with all kinds of information and activities concerning cats and dogs. It's free and you can take your canines and maybe win prizes in the events. (My friend's Chihuahua won the fattest dog award last year.) The Market cat sanctuary's crew will let you take selfies with a Sphinx (a hairless breed) cat for a slight fee, which is used to help them care for several hundred cats. Besides contests in several categories, there will be shows of pet products, talks on pet care, and samples of some products. Food trucks will be available for people and pets. Stay the day or just drop in; it's fun and it's free. The entrance is across from the church of La Garita, next to the American outlet store, and diagonal from the popular Fiesta de Maiz restaurant on the La Garita road to Atenas. (Between Highway 1 and Atenas.)

## HOLY WEEK (SEMANA SANTA)

The last week in March this year. It is vacation time for many businesses and government offices will be closed for part of, or all of, the week. But it is also a week of traditional religious practices culminating in "Easter Sunday." Throughout the time there are solemn processions in the streets portraying the Way of the Cross and the passion of Christ, with local parishioners taking the roles of Christ, the apostles, Mary, Veronica, and a host of Roman soldiers. These processions give a good glimpse of Costa Rican culture. Each church will set its own schedule, so check with the closest parish church or office, or ask your neighbors about times and routes.



The processions are taken seriously, but sometimes the unexpected happens to lighten up the day. One year my community put on the Way of the Cross on the soccer field with the 14 stations of the cross, each one made up by a different family. The crowd moved together from one to the other while the priest led the prayers. All went well except when Jesus, a very handsome local lad whose role was to lie still in the "tomb" the whole time, thought it was over and sat up and stretched. And that's when some stragglers came along. An embarrassed Jesus smiled and returned to the tomb.

## JUAN SANTAMARIA DAY

This day acknowledges the anniversary of the Battle of Rivas in 1856. The celebration begins in the morning of April 15th in Alajuela with the President and all the dignitaries present. The major part of the event is a parade of students from the high schools and technical schools marching to a drum beat in their uniforms. The parade circles around the city and takes up the whole morning. Following the official ceremonies, it is a party day for Alajuela.

A good way to find out "what's going on" is to look up (Goggle) "agenda cultural" and the name of your city. For example, "agenda cultural atenas costa rica 2024", or check "agendaculturalgam"

Summer is a time for 'fests' and ferias. Some are held to raise money for a church or a community, some to introduce new products, and some to test your skills and have fun. Aproveche the summer weather before the rainy season kicks in.

*Mitzi Stark*

[mitzstar@gmail.com](mailto:mitzstar@gmail.com)



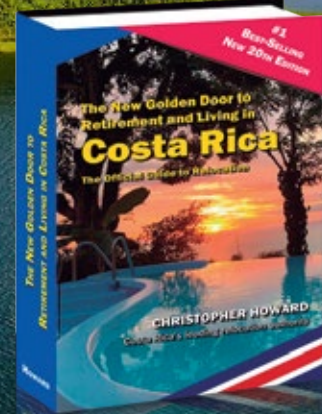
**Discover why so many people move to Costa Rica  
"THE JEWEL OF CENTRAL AND LATIN AMERICA"**

## Christopher Howard's Relocation & Retirement Tours to Costa Rica

**Recommended by the ARCR**

**Take the FIRST logical CHOICE  
before you make the move..**

**Contact us!**  
**877-884-2502 / 506 8849-0081**  
**[www.liveincostarica.com](http://www.liveincostarica.com)**



**AVAILABLE THROUGH**  
**[WWW.COSTARICABOOKS.COM](http://WWW.COSTARICABOOKS.COM)**  
**[AMAZON.COM](http://AMAZON.COM)**

# Join Costa Rica Social Security (CCSS) Through ARCR

- Get **COMPETITIVE RATES** through ARCR's group health insurance plan and save money!
- Automatic payment option available.
- Joining CCSS is mandatory for residency in Costa Rica.

**Call the office at 4052-4052 or send an email to [service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr) to arrange your appointment.**



[www.facebook.com/ARCR123](https://www.facebook.com/ARCR123)



## Experience Distinction in Geriatric Care at Villa Alegría

Welcome to Villa Alegría, your specialized home in the heart of Costa Rica! Our mission is to offer unparalleled care and unwavering love to residents from all corners of the world. At Villa Alegría, we take pride in providing highly specialized service that caters to every stage of your golden years. We guarantee all necessary services at each stage without the need to change residences as you progress through life, providing you with a sense of absolute security.

### We Offer Wide Range Of Geriatric Services

- Physiotherapy
- Post-Surgery Care
- Alzheimer's Care
- Recreational Activities
- Assisted Living
- Independent Living

@nursinghomescostarica

[www.nursinghomescostarica.com](http://www.nursinghomescostarica.com)



# UNDERSTANDING TICOS

by Edie Bakker



## Part Four: Courtesy and Values

*Editor's Note: Costa Rica, like every country and society, has its own culture. This is the fourth article in a series about the cultural differences between Costa Rican society and that of other countries. To help us better understand some of the differences we may encounter, Edie Bakker has created a list of some of the variations and explained them to us. Hopefully, knowing them can make our time here a little more tranquil. By its very nature, this series may contain generalizations and its contents will not apply to every situation.*

**B**efore beginning, one must first recognize that Costa Rica has three main layers of society: The "Upper Class," the "Middle Class," and "All the Rest". Like any culture, there may be a considerable divergence in values and everyday views between the members of the different classes. It would be impossible to go into all the permutations here, and because it is this last group that we have the most contact with (the grocery store workers, fruit stand vendors, maids,

gardeners, bus and taxi drivers, waitresses, gas station attendants, beauty shop attendants, farmers, factory workers, etc.) this series is focused on that group.

### INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. The very first and most important thing we need to remember is that this is **THEIR** country; it is **NOT** North America's playground! We are guests here. Keep

that in mind in all your affairs and you will do well. Respecting cultural differences, even those parts we do not understand or agree with, is a prerequisite to a comfortable life here.

2. Be friendly. Ticos almost always are, even in difficult or awkward situations. It is customary. For many of us, it is one of the reasons we came here.

3. It is customary to start a conversation with Ticos with "Buenos días. Como esta" (Good day. How are you?) before saying anything else. They will reply with something along the lines of, "Muy bien, gracias a Dios." (Very good, thank God) and may ask you the same thing. They may even ask how your parents, children, or spouse is, along with their greeting to you. If you are the second person, you should reply the same way, even if things are going terribly. Then you can go on and explain how terrible things are. Do this for them. Also, do this when writing or texting.

4. Don't knock on their doors. Instead, clear your throat and call out, "Hola" or "Upe". Or just call them on the phone and say that you have arrived. If there is a doorbell, you may use it. (This custom of not knocking is common around the world.)

5. Some Ticos seem as if they aren't polite and don't say "Please or Thank You" like we are used to; they will often start a request with what sounds like a demand. They are not being rude or ungrateful, it is just part of their culture.

6. Part of the Pura Vida lifestyle you came to enjoy is a relaxed attitude about time. Allow for lateness. Workers who can't afford a car or a motorcycle must use a bus, possibly multiple buses, or a taxi, to get to you. And all have to deal with unpredictable traffic patterns. There is a slow, general move towards adopting the North American/European concept of punctuality, but it is happening mostly in the business arena, not so much on the personal or social levels.

7. One good deed, or gift, deserves another. Ticos exchange favors more than us. If they do something extra for you, you are expected to try and return the favor in some way. It can be totally unrelated to what you were given. For example, they might bring fruit from their garden and you might give them a ride. Just try to keep things relatively even.

8. Ticos feel that their ways of doing things are the best way. This happens to be true about every culture, it is just human nature. Honestly consider whether this is

also true for you, and then show acceptance and respect when they do something their way. If you want them to do something a different way, make it a suggestion and explain why you prefer it done that way. In other words, convince them rather than expect that they would see things your way "if they were smart."

9. Respect their Catholic traditions, even if you're not a Catholic and even if they don't seem very devout. Unless they have changed their religion completely, it's important to them. Catholicism is part of the foundation of their culture, just as religious traditions are integral to your culture, even though many may not be religious. Celebrating Christmas and Easter are examples of this, as are funerals and weddings in church. Many here have changed to become Evangelical, Bahai, Atheist, or taken on another belief system, but their culture is still fundamentally Catholic.

10. Casual sex outside of marriage is generally accepted in Costa Rica, even though it is seen as against the teaching of the church. Premarital sex does not necessarily mean someone is not religious. And single-motherhood here is considered a norm.

11. Something to keep in mind is that Ticos, in general, do not have as much driving experience as Gringos do. Many Tico drivers today are operating the very first car they, or anyone in their family, has ever owned. In part, we expats learned about driving by "osmosis," as children riding around in a car with our parents and observing them and others. Ticos haven't had the luxury of that experience, thus many of them tend to make up the "rules of the road" as they go. This requires more alertness and patience than we may be used to.

12. Drivers frequently honk their horns here. In many countries, it generally signals danger, but here it can mean a lot of other things. For example, a long horn at someone's house can mean that a ride has arrived and is waiting, and two short toots at an intersection or a traffic jam, may mean "Go ahead and pass." Keep an ear out for what the sound of a horn may mean rather than expecting danger every time you hear a honk.

13. Don't slam car doors, even in taxis. It is extremely offensive to Ticos: always close doors softly.

14. Ticos have few restraints when it comes to noise. They love to turn their music up loud, make their motorcycles extra loud, let their dogs bark incessantly, and turn their TVs up. They will get up early and use the weed-eater on their lawn without thinking anything of it. (I mean early, like at dawn.) Asking them to be



quiet is sometimes seen as an offense, even an insult, to their culture. Thankfully, they are usually quiet after 9:00 pm (except for the dogs.)

15. If you find an "uncared for" dog or cat loose in the street, don't assume it is lost and "rescue" it without doing a thorough search for its owner and waiting to see if it goes home. It may be a beloved pet. Some Ticos know how to take care of their animals, others don't, but still love them. Many Ticos don't value pets the way Gringos do, and sometimes, in our eyes, they mistreat them. Some see pets as a valued family member, while others don't recognize that animals have feelings and view them more as a commodity. It can be very frustrating listening to a dog cry in a cage or seeing them thin and mangy. There are laws in the country regarding animal cruelty, but sometimes you have to accept their way of doing things even if their values aren't yours. Don't take their pets. We don't like it when our pets are taken.

## A CLOSING COMMENT

There are hundreds of other little differences to keep an eye out for that were not listed in these articles. If you find anything frustrating, realize that there may be a

hidden cultural difference. As an example, my husband and I have taken Ticos out to restaurants and been frustrated that they ordered much more than we did. Then I remembered that when I first came to the U.S. (I grew up overseas), I had to be told not to order more than the host did. It's an unspoken American rule. We, and they, all have hundreds of often unspoken rules like that. We say, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." But in today's cross-cultural world, it's much more complex than that. Being aware that other people were raised differently than you and that their ways are not worse, just different, can make you a more graceful person, even within your own culture.

*Edie Bakker has a degree in anthropology. She has lived all over the world and written for National Geographic. Author of a book about American culture, she is sensitive to how misunderstandings often cause cultures to collide.*



**Nature Smile**   
DENTAL CENTER

**SAVE FROM  
40% TO 60%**

**COSMETIC AND RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY**

- Implants • Dental whitening • Dental Veneers
- Crowns and dental Bridges

☎ Costa Rica (506) 4052-5050      ✉ patientcoordinator@naresmilecr.com  
☎ Toll free number +1(305) 728-8666    ♣ San José, Escazú, Plaza Colonial

[www.naturesmilecr.com](http://www.naturesmilecr.com)



# Deportes y juegos Ancestrales de los pueblos indígenas de Costa Rica

Abril  
26-28  
2024

Talamanca  
Cabécar



Kabata Konana  
Defensoras de la Montaña

ARCR is a proud sponsor of the Indigenous Games





# GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY

by ARCR Staff

## The Indigenous Games

When Tribal Elders recognized that many of their young indigenous members had a poor perception of their future and had few or no goals, a solution was sought. It was from that exploration that the Asociación De Mujeres Indígenas Del Territorio Cabécar Talamanca gave birth to The Ancestral Sports And Games Of Los Indigenous Peoples of Costa Rica, aka the “Indigenous Games.”

Begun in 2018, the Indigenous Games were instantly successful with the youth. The annual event quickly grew in popularity and in 2019 over 150 participants came from tribes from across Costa Rica and Panama. Then, unfortunately, COVID-19 came along and the 2021 - 2123 festivities had to be canceled for health reasons.

Happily, in 2024 the Kábata Kōnana organization has resumed the Indigenous Games and they will take place on April 26th, 27th, and 28th at the Gavilán Canta community in the Cabécar Talamanca territory.

The Games are an unparalleled event which is greatly anticipated by participants and spectators alike. Exciting contests will be held in eighteen different indigenous sports and competitions, among them: Bow and arrow (moving target and distance), Javelin and Cerbaraba throw, Log load racing, Jala de mecate, Wood sink, Open water swim, Leaf knitting competition, plus many more dynamic and ancestral games. Competitors from more than 20 tribes will be vying for prizes over the two-plus day period.

These Games are a one-of-a-kind experience available only in Costa Rica. Expats living here have the unique



opportunity to be a part of something they will always remember and, in the process, contribute to the positive future of a special culture.

For inquiries or more information for groups needing a formal invitation, contact 8877-0228 or write an email to: [juegosindigenaskabata@gmail.com](mailto:juegosindigenaskabata@gmail.com)

For information on how to spend a night or two at an indigenous Bed and Breakfast, email Martha Rollins at: [martha\\_rollins@yahoo.com](mailto:martha_rollins@yahoo.com), or call her on WhatsApp at: (506) 8407-7127

ARCR proudly supports this important event and accepts donations from our members on its behalf. There are four ways in which donations can be made; call the office at 4052-4052 for details.





**Jeannette Varela**  
Medical Billing Specialist

**TRICARE & VA  
BILLING  
SERVICES**

ADDITIONALLY, WE OFFER  
BILLING SERVICES FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
INSURANCE PHYSICIAN  
AND CLINICS.

**SCAN HERE!**



**LIC. JEANNETTE VARELA G.  
MEDICAL BILLING SPECIALIST**

TEL: (506) 8382-5533  
USA TEL: (530) 6618845  
jvarelains@hotmail.com

FOR MORE INFO



**Advertise your business to  
10,000 readers**

for as little as **\$99.00** per issue!

Contact us at  
service@arcr.cr or by phone at  
(506) 4052-4052 for information.  
www.facebook/arcr123



Working, moving, or investing in Costa Rica?

Enjoy paradise and leave the  
paperwork to the experts in  
document procurement  
and authentication.

**INTERNATIONAL  
DOCUMENTS**



info@internationaldocuments.com (202) 856-9830



# A DAY IN THE LIFE

by Allen Dickinson

## Is it just me?



Sometimes, it seems like I must be on somebody's s\_\_\_list because some unnecessarily difficult thing is always complicating my life. It seems like any time I encounter something that could be simply resolved by anyone else, it takes me at least a dozen extra steps to accomplish it. Is Rod Serling's ghost lurking somewhere close by? Have I been cursed by a tribe of pygmies for crossing some invisible culture line? Does being born with a head full of lustrous red hair (well, not anymore) come with a lifelong repayment price? Or, is it just that in my later years the gawds have taken a dislike to me. A case in point:

In November 2023, I received a letter from the dreaded US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). It seems they were

writing me because in 2021, after waiting several months for my refund, I had mailed in a second copy of my 2020 income tax return. Now, three-plus years later, the IRS had become concerned that I had sent in two copies of my tax return. (Let me explain here that the reason I had submitted a paper return that year was because I had to renew my wife's ITIN - Individual Taxpayer's Identification Number - something that replaces a Social Security Number for foreign persons ineligible for one), which couldn't be done electronically. I thought I had avoided any misunderstanding with the second tax return because I had included a cover letter telling them that, what with Covid going on, I thought, possibly, my first submission had been misplaced/lost/destroyed/etc., and

to please process this second one in its stead. I thought all had gone well because shortly thereafter my refund was deposited in my bank account.

The following years I submitted my 2021 and 2022 tax returns and received the refunds in reasonable amounts of time. I assumed all was well between the IRS and I.

No, it wasn't. The November letter made that clear.

As near as I can determine, at some point in 2023 someone (or some thing) in the IRS system noticed that I had submitted two 2020 tax returns. They must not have read my cover letter because they had become concerned that maybe someone had used my name to fraudulently try to collect the \$2,400 refund. So they "promptly" sent me the letter requiring me to verify that I was me. I appreciate their concern for my financial well-being, but it seems like the cover letter I had sent, plus two years of subsequent tax returns and refunds having gone by without a hitch, should have been a hint that all was okay. But apparently not.

The November letter contained instructions that I was to appear at a "local" IRS office with the letter, two personal identification documents (with photos), copies of my past income tax returns (but not 2020), with all worksheets and W-2s or 1099s for them.

That was disturbing. I am a permanent resident of Costa Rica and have not been to the USA for at least 15 years. Nor do I have any intention to go there any time soon. Not to mention the expense (which would exceed the 2020 refund I had received.)

So, I called the local tax experts, US Tax International, for advice. They were very helpful and reassuring – it was no big deal, they said; they had seen this before and all I had to do was call the IRS and explain I was out of the country, not going to return soon so I couldn't make a personal appearance, and to obtain instructions for an alternate procedure.

Anyone who has tried to call the IRS knows it can be an exercise in patience with multiple (vague) menus and sub-menus, dead-ends, etc. True to form, I spent 20 frustrated minutes going through multiple menu options, slipping down promising sounding "rabbit holes" to places that had no relevance to my issue, all of which required that I hang up and start over at the first menu again. Eventually, using my Sky King Secret Decoder Ring, I stumbled into a place where a live person was able to help me. After explaining my predicament,

it only took her another 20 minutes or so (while she underwent an intensive online training program that informed her how to handle my problem), and she was able to give me instructions on how to proceed. It was simple: just compile a package that contained copies of;

- A) A letter explaining that I was out of the country, not returning soon, and upon advice from an IRS Representative, was submitting copies of:
- B) Two picture IDs (there was a list of okay ones, but none included my CR Cedula,)
- C) The IRS letter
- D) My 2021 tax return, including any worksheets and my 1099-R.
- E) My 2022 tax return, including any worksheets and my 1099-R.

Her instructions included directions to send those items to a very specific address in Austin, Texas. (An example of that specificity was the coded second line of the address; 3951 IH 35, Station 6579, AUSC. (I can't explain why, but as I wrote that down I felt like I was being given Top Secret information and that I should be looking back over my shoulder to make sure nobody was watching.)

After giving my emotions a few days to settle down, I gathered the documents, wrote the letter, and prepared them into a package which I addressed, in large bold letters, to the secret address in Austin. On December 26th, I took the completed package to the local Costa Rica Correos office, paid for the postage and extra tracking service, handed over the envelope, and walked away feeling confident all would soon be resolved. As a matter of course, I included my return address, an Aeropost forwarding service address in Miami, on the package.

(Insert Rod Serling / Pigmies / etc. here)

On January 20, 2024, I received a notice from Aeropost saying that I had a package from the IRS to pick up. The following Monday I hied myself to the local Aeropost office, paid them about \$6 USD ... and was presented with my original package! It was slightly battered, had been opened by Costa Rica Customs. and resealed and plastered with two large Aeropost labels, one saying "documents", but was otherwise intact.

A little investigation revealed that Correos in Miami had, for some unknown reason, decided that rather than insert the package into the US Postal System, it should be delivered directly to Aeropost and, thus back to me.



Anyway, I have now resent the original package, battered as it is and with its Costarican Post Office postage stamp and tracking number labels and Aeropost labels, AND written another cover letter explaining what had happened and why the package looks as it does, off again. But this time, I no longer trust the Correos; I used DHL (for the bargain price of USD \$44 +!)

But even that was not easy – the guy at the Aeropost office who accepted my package on behalf of DHL couldn't grasp that "Internal Revenue Service" was a totally satisfactory "addressee name" on the shipping label. (It took some convincing on my part, but eventually we got it done.)

So now I am waiting for "the other shoe to drop," possibly a guy in a grey trench coat, fedora, dark glasses, and an IRS badge, knocking on my door. If I gotta go to the USA, he's paying.



# U.S. TAX

INTERNATIONAL

## U.S. TAX AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES

**JAIME MURRAY, EA**  
**ROSS LUSTMAN, CPA**




WE ALSO OFFER  
BOOKKEEPING  
SERVICES FOR US  
CITIZENS WITH  
FOREIGN  
BUSINESSES


**SPECIALIZING IN TAX PREPARATION FOR  
U.S. CITIZENS LIVING, WORKING OR  
INVESTING IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

**OVER 20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE  
IN COSTA RICA**

**COSTA RICA - 4000-7288**  
**USA - 800-345-7034**

✉ [contact@ustaxinternational.com](mailto:contact@ustaxinternational.com)  
[www.ustaxinternational.com](http://www.ustaxinternational.com)





## Comprehensive Home Insurance\*

Basic coverage protects your home and its contents against losses from fire, winds, hurricanes, floods, landslides, tremors, earthquakes, and other risks.

Additional coverage for theft, civil liability claims, and work related injuries for domestic employees, can be added.

*\*Terms and conditions apply.*

For more information about this and the full range of INS insurance packages, allow us to advise you at ARCR Customer Service, Juan Carlos Calero or Carlos David Ortiz


**Sonia Gómez García**

Insurance Agente and Consultant

Lic. SUGESE 08-1271

**+506 8338-1297/4052-4052**

**insurance@arcr.cr**

Exclusiva del 

# COCINA TIP

by April Primero



## Perking up That Morning Coffee

**E**ver get up in the morning and find you have more than a half of a pot of cold coffee from the day before left in your coffee-maker? Seems a real shame to pour it out, doesn't it? Well, you don't have to – there a way to save it and have a delicious brew for the morning. Try this:

To one-half pot of cold, brewed coffee, add:

One-half pot cold water. (Use no more than one-half pot of previously brewed coffee.)

To the filter basket and the previously used coffee grounds, add:

1 pinch of table salt

1 level tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon grated culantro

¼ cinnamon stick (optional)

Pour the cold coffee/water mixture into the coffee maker reservoir and brew as usual.

Pour into cups and serve.

**APRIL FOOL!** You can't resurrect old coffee! Pour down the drain and brew a new pot!





## DEDICATED CARE FOR HEROES

At Hospital Clinica Biblica we care about U. S. veterans residing in Costa Rica.

Our **VETERANS CARE PROGRAM** is designed to provide specialized medical support tailored to the unique needs of the military veterans.

For more information contact us:

📍 Omega Medical Tower, 1st floor

📞 (506) 2522-1500, Ext: 6094 / 6097

📠 (506) 8427-0776




**Join us for our  
Walking Tour of Downtown San José**



DISCOVER THE IMPORTANT  
HISTORICAL SITES NEAR YOUR  
HOTEL.

VISIT THE NATIONAL THEATER,  
THE MAGNIFICENT CATHEDRAL,  
THE HISTORIC STREETS OF  
BARRIO AMÓN, THE NATIONAL  
MONUMENT AND MORE.



 (506) 6063-9350  
(506) 6029-0568

 **THEREALSANJOSECR**



**Christopher Howard's  
Relocation & Retirement  
Tours to Costa Rica**

Recommended by the Association  
of Residents of Costa Rica (ARCR)

**The FIRST logical CHOICE before  
you make the move...**

**Costa Rica's #1  
Retirement  
Relocation Expert**

Sign up here:  
[www.liveincostarica.com](http://www.liveincostarica.com)



# LEGAL SERVICES

**ARCR provides complete legal services through our affiliate, Residency CR**

- Residency - Change of Status - Corporation Creation
- Last Will and Testament - Home or Land Purchase
- Vehicle Purchase - Legal Services of All Kinds

**Consultation FREE**

Appointments available by calling the ARCR  
office at 4052 4052, or send an email to:  
[legal@arcr.cr](mailto:legal@arcr.cr) or go to: [www.arcr.cr](http://www.arcr.cr)



**Here yesterday, today, and tomorrow**





# LEGAL UPDATE

by Rómulo Pacheco

## Residency: Do I need an Attorney?

People ask, "Why do I need to pay an attorney to get my residency? Can't I do it myself?" That's a reasonable question, one that has several subject areas, so I'll review them so you can have the information to make a good decision.

Yes, of course, you can do it yourself. However, whether you should handle the residency procedure or seek the assistance of an attorney depends on several factors, including your comfort level with the legal and other processes. Let's look a little closer at the factors which you must be prepared to address.

Residency applications in Costa Rica can involve navigating complex legal requirements, completing large amounts of paperwork, and dealing with potential language barriers. If you have previous experience or knowledge of the process, feel confident in your ability to understand and comply with the regulations, know the language, and are comfortable handling legal matters, you may choose to proceed without an attorney. But, before making that decision, consider the following areas in which you may need expertise:

1. **Specific Circumstances:** If your situation involves unique circumstances, such as having a complex legal history, previous denials, or special requirements, it may be beneficial to seek the experience of an immigration attorney.
2. **Language Barrier:** If you are not fluent in Spanish, working with an attorney who is proficient in both English and Spanish can be advantageous. They can assist with translation, communicate with immigration authorities on your behalf, and ensure an accurate understanding of the requirements.
3. **Legal Expertise:** Immigration attorneys have specialized knowledge of the residency application process, current laws, and any recent changes or updates. They can provide advice tailored to your situation, help you gather the necessary

documentation, and ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

4. **Time and Convenience:** Residency procedures can be time-consuming and involve multiple steps, appointments, and follow-ups. Hiring an attorney can save you time and effort by allowing them to manage the process on your behalf, schedule appointments, and submit the necessary paperwork in a timely manner.
5. **Mitigating Risks:** Engaging an attorney can help minimize the risk of mistakes or omissions that could potentially lead to delays, denials, or complications in the application process. They can guide you through the process to ensure all requirements are met and increase the chances of a successful outcome.

Being informed about the local laws and regulations, combined with the complexity of your individual case, can influence your decision of whether to hire an attorney or handle the residency procedure yourself; it all depends on your personal circumstances and level of comfort. I advise consulting with an immigration attorney for an initial assessment. They can provide personalized guidance, assess your case, assist you in navigating any challenges, and help you make an informed decision that will avoid potential complications that can lead to future frustration.

Questions or to set an appointment? Call or write me at:

*Rómulo Pacheco*

*Attorney at Law, Notary Public*

*Pacheco, Marin, and Associates*

(506) 2220-0055, (506) 2290-1074

[romulo@residencycr.com](mailto:romulo@residencycr.com)



# Useful Numbers

## United States of America Embassy

Phone: (506) 2519 2000

Address: Vía 104, Calle 98, San José

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

American Citizens Services: (506) 2519-2590

Fraud prevention Department: (506) 2519-2117

Duty Officer (after business hours): (506) 2519-2000  
(Dial zero and ask for the Duty officer)

## United Kingdom Embassy

Phone: (506) 2258 2025

Address: Edificio Centro Colón, Paseo Colón, Provincia de San José, San José

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Website: [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/costa-rica](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/costa-rica)

Email: [costarica.consulate@fco.gov.uk](mailto:costarica.consulate@fco.gov.uk)

## Canadian Embassy

Phone: (506) 2242 4400

Address: Sabana Sur, Edificio Oficentro Ejecutivo, atrás de la Contraloría, San José, 1007, Provincia de San José, San José

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Web site: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance>

Email: [sos@international.gc.ca](mailto:sos@international.gc.ca)

Emergency phone: +1 613 996 8885 (call collect where available)

## French Embassy

Phone: (506) 2234 4167

Address: A022, San José, Curridabat

Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Email: [a.m.bafrcr@gmail.com](mailto:a.m.bafrcr@gmail.com)

## Spanish Embassy

Phone: (506) 2222 1933

Address: Calle 32, San José

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Email: [emb.sanjose@maec.es](mailto:emb.sanjose@maec.es)

Emergency assistance: (506) 6050 9853

## Venezuelan Embassy

Phone: (506) 2220 3704, 2220 3708

Address: San Pedro, Los Yoses, 50 metros antes de finalizar la avenida 10.

Email: [embv.crsjo@mppre.gob.ve](mailto:embv.crsjo@mppre.gob.ve) and [embavenezuelacostarica@gmail.com](mailto:embavenezuelacostarica@gmail.com)

Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

## CONFUSED BY THE METRIC SYSTEM?

Need to know how to convert common measurements used in Costa Rica to Customary US Standard measurements? Use the handy conversion chart below!

Milliliters × .034 = Fluid Ounces

Kilograms × 2.205 = Pounds

Millimeters × .039 = Inches

Meters × 3.28 = Feet

Square Meters × 10.764 = Square Feet

Square meters × 10,000 = Hectares

Hectares × 2.47 = Acres

Kilometers × .62 = Miles

Centigrade × 1.8 + 32 = Fahrenheit

Liters × .264 = Gallons

(These are APPROXIMATE factors, NOT EXACT.)

Want a pocket version of some of the above conversion formulas?  
Ask for one at the ARCR Reception Desk. It's FREE!

**ARCR: (506) 4052 4052**





*Ivo's Blog by*  
**Godutch Realty**

How Can Future Expats Go Native In Costa Rica?  
 May 29, 2022

6 Super Tips That Unlock the Secret To Selling Your Home Online  
 May 28, 2022

The Best Types of Home Water Filters That Don't Require Plumbing  
 May 25, 2022

6 Passive Ideas to Stay Busy after Retirement in Costa Rica  
 May 19, 2022

*Ivo's Blog*  
**Every**  
**SUNDAY** morning  
 in your inbox!

<https://www.godutchrealty.blog>

# ARCR'S Costa Rica SEMINAR

Join us on the last Thursday and Friday of any month (except December) in San José to find out more about what it is like to live in Costa Rica”

## Subjects covered in the seminars

Residence - Costa Rican Law - Private insurance - State Insurance-Privatebanking-USEmbassy-CostaRicanCulture  
 Real Estate - Dental care & general medicine in Costa Rica  
 Taxes in USA and Costa Rica



For more information on seminar dates and to reserve your seat, visit the ARCR web site at [www.arcr.cr](http://www.arcr.cr), or send an email to [service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr), or contact the office by telephone at (506) 4052-4052. Facebook: [www.facebook.com/arcr123](https://www.facebook.com/arcr123).

# FROM THE EMBASSIES



## ASK ACS

### Voting Information

The presidential election will be on November 5, 2024, however dates of other elections can vary. Whether you're a first-time voter or have already received ballots and voted absentee in past elections, you must complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) each year to participate in elections as an overseas absentee voter. U.S. citizens abroad can receive an absentee ballot by email, fax, or internet download, depending on the state they are eligible to vote in. To review your local election requirements and guidance, visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program website: [FVAP.gov](https://fvap.gov). The U.S. Embassy in San Jose can assist with mailing your voter registration applications and ballots to the United States through the Diplomatic Pouch. You can hand deliver voting materials through a lock box located inside the main entrance of the Embassy or send your sealed ballots through Correos de Costa Rica to the following address: Embajada USA, Sección Consular, Apdo. Postal 920-1200, PAVAS 10109.



## BIOECONOMY: THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AND GROWTH

At a time when the issues of sustainability and environmental protection are front and centre in our minds, the bioeconomy has emerged as an innovative model that allows us to strengthen our economies while protecting the environment. Defined as an economy in which the basic building blocks for materials, chemicals, and energy are derived from renewable biological resources, the bioeconomy represents a significant shift from fossil-based to bio-based

production systems. This approach not only aims to reduce our carbon footprint but also seeks to enhance the value of natural resources in a sustainable, circular economy.

At the heart of the bioeconomy is the principle of utilising biological resources, such as plants, algae, and bio-waste, to create value-added products ranging from food and feed to bio-energy and bio-plastics. This sector holds the promise of revolutionizing industries by offering environmentally friendly alternatives to conventional materials and fuels, thereby contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the mitigation of climate change. Moreover, the bioeconomy is instrumental in promoting bio-diversity, soil health, and water quality, further underpinning its role in achieving global sustainability goals.

Recognizing the potential of the bioeconomy to drive sustainable growth, the British Embassy in Costa Rica is taking a proactive step by organising a high-level event on bioeconomy. This initiative aims to convene experts and policymakers from the UK, Colombia, Brazil, and Costa Rica for a comprehensive dialogue on policy formulation, challenges to implementation, and support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the bioeconomy sector. The conference is a testament to the importance of international cooperation and knowledge sharing in harnessing the full potential of the bioeconomy for sustainable development.

The event underscores the critical need for innovative policies that can address the unique challenges of transitioning to a bio-based economy, including technological advancements, financial mechanisms, and market development. By bringing together high-level delegations from countries that are leading the way in bioeconomy research and implementation, the conference will facilitate an exchange of experiences and best practices.

As the world grapples with the urgent need for sustainable solutions to environmental and economic challenges, the bioeconomy offers a promising pathway to a greener, more resilient future. The forthcoming high-level event in Costa Rica marks a significant opportunity to shape a sustainable bioeconomy framework that promises wide-ranging benefits. This initiative underscores the importance of collaborative efforts and collective dedication in leveraging the bioeconomy's potential to foster sustainable development, protect the environment, and stimulate economic growth for future generations.



# COME JOIN US!



## AMERICAN LEGION COSTA RICA POST 10

Website: [www.alcr10.org](http://www.alcr10.org) - Facebook: [amlegioncr](https://www.facebook.com/amlegioncr)

Chuck 506-8355-4488 or Matt 8968-6935

Open to NATO Country Veterans

Meets 1st Thursday of the month, Arenas Bar & Restaurant,  
Avenida 30, Escazu Central, 12:30 pm



## MARINE CORPS LEAGUE COSTA RICA

Website: [marinecorpsleaguecr.com](http://marinecorpsleaguecr.com) - Facebook: [mcleaguecr](https://www.facebook.com/mcleaguecr)

Andrew "Andy" Pucek: (506) 8721-6636

Meets 2nd Saturday of the month, Tap House Restaurant,  
City Place, Santa Ana, 11:00 am

Helping indigenous children & schools - Keeping up with Veterans Benefits & Issues - Helping veterans and their families

**PLEASE HELP US HELP OTHERS**

# SHIP TO COSTA RICA

## MAKING SHIPPING TO AND FROM NORTH AMERICA EASY

Our new California warehouse serves ALL the West Coast of the USA and Canada for shipment of large and small consignments – from cars and boats to building materials and household goods.



**[shiptocostarica@ship506.com](mailto:shiptocostarica@ship506.com)**

Partial or Full containers directly door to door from Canada and USA to Costa Rica.

We pickup palletized shipments all over the USA

Cars - Boats - Motorcycles - Quads - ATV's - Equipment - Lumber - Prefab Homes.

Moving back to the USA ? We do that too! We are logistics consultants.



**Bi-Lingual Personal Assistant**  
Will help you get settled.

Nury Mora, born and raised in San José has experience helping expats with

- Finding an apartment
- Setting up phone service
- Setting up cable and WiFi
- Bank visits
- Hospital and doctor visits
- Pharmacy visits
- Shopping
- Helping businesses

**Contact Nury Mora**

Phone: 6063-9350

e-mail: nurymoracr@gmail.com

## To Do List:

1. Join ARCR. (✓)
2. Apply for residency. ( )
3. Attend ARCR Seminar for Expats. ( )
4. Relax! ( )

 **Residencycr**

**www.residencycr.com**

**Phone: (506) 4052 4052**

**Serving ARCR members for over 20 years**

**Nature  
Smile**   
DENTAL CENTER

**SAVE FROM  
40% TO 60%**

**COSMETIC AND RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY**

**Start your New life  
With a New smile**



☎ Costa Rica (506) 4052-5050

✉ patientcoordinator@naturesmilecr.com

☎ Toll free number +1(305) 728-8666 • San José, Escazú, Plaza Colonial

**www.naturesmilecr.com**



# OFF THE HIGH SEAS

by Christine Monteith

## Casting my Ballot

**I**t's not too surprising that in the last few months there has been an influx of large dump trucks piled high with gravel rumbling over the washboard roads in our area. They, along with road graders, heavy rollers, and their operators, all made their appearance at about the same time as some colorful billboards featuring pictures of a trio of people with bright smiles signifying a "can do" attitude that popped up along our busier thoroughfares. See, it's Alcalde election season and the equipment is here filling in the craters that generously dot our dusty roads because the present administration wants our votes.

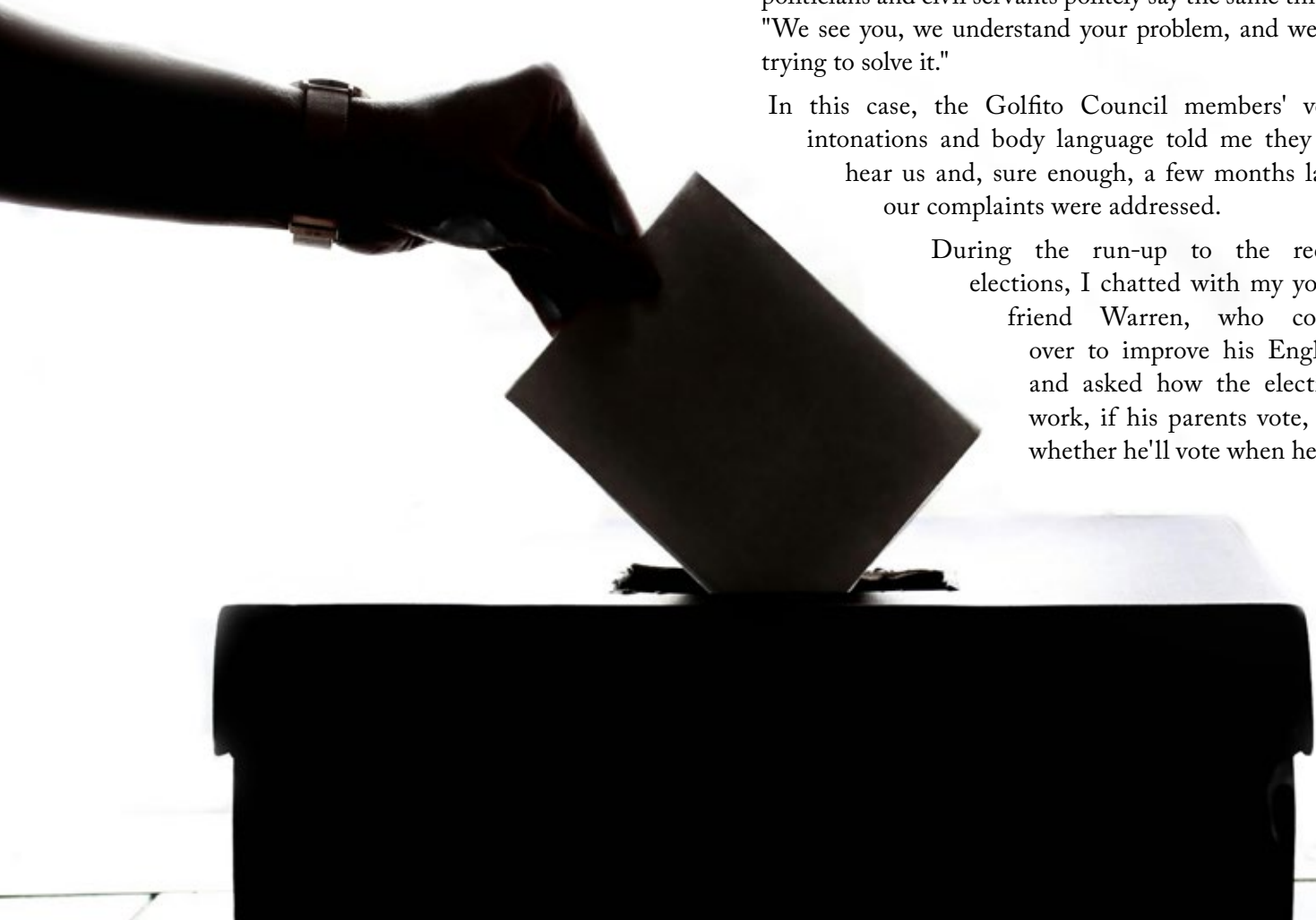
The Pavones district is the furthestmost from the Municipal Offices in Golfito and our lightly populated area receives the least attention of any of the communities that comprise the district (until it is election season.) It's

not for a lack of effort on the part of our community development associations. This dedicated core of people organize meetings, youth activities, and communication campaigns to motivate our municipal officials to authorize improvements.

For example, a year ago Ben and I went with our neighbors to a Municipal Council meeting to plead for some maintenance in our neighborhood. Our community association representative presented the case in her speech to the council and, from what I could understand, did a fine job. Then the various members of the Committee (there were nine on the dais) replied, and though I didn't understand everything they said, what I could understand reminded me of all the council meetings on the Monterey (California) Peninsula where I used to live; that no matter what the language is being used, all politicians and civil servants politely say the same things; "We see you, we understand your problem, and we are trying to solve it."

In this case, the Golfito Council members' vocal intonations and body language told me they did hear us and, sure enough, a few months later, our complaints were addressed.

During the run-up to the recent elections, I chatted with my young friend Warren, who comes over to improve his English, and asked how the elections work, if his parents vote, and whether he'll vote when he's of



age. I remember how important it was for me to vote when I was young. Before I left Canada, way back in the last century, I voted in a federal election. Then, because I was out of the country working, it was over ten years before I could vote again.

When my Green Card was about to expire I had a choice to renew it or become a US citizen. I chose citizenship because, at that time, I believed that I would spend the rest of my life in the US. Though I loved my country of birth, the breadth of opportunity in the US was exponential. Not long after I pledged my oath as a Naturalized US Citizen, I voted in my first election. I have voted in every election since.

Now, as an overseas citizen, I have registered to receive my absentee ballot by email from the County Elections Bureau. In November it will be my second Presidential voting cycle since moving here, and I will vote because I want to have my say in the future. (I'm getting ready to apply for Medicare, and eventually, I'll collect Social Security. Hey, I paid into it, so I want to get a return on my investment.)

Ben and I intend to spend the rest of our lives in Costa Rica, as long as we remain healthy and don't have to rely too heavily on Medicare. I believe that will be a

very long time. The more involved our lives are here, the more I come to understand Pura Vida and feel a yearning to fully participate as a Costa Rican citizen; if I ever gain citizenship, I'll be lining up at the escuela beside my neighbors and friends to vote.

I believe in the goodness in people. I believe that the majority of people who run for and win elected office are motivated to help their community. As I mentioned, I have spent many long evenings in council chambers, listening, observing, and speaking. I realize that at the municipal, city, and county levels, it requires time, energy, and patience to listen to the constituents... and there aren't a ton of perks. I know I wouldn't want to do it. So, I support those people of integrity who do, and I appreciate their dedication and effort.

As citizens of a democratic country we take for granted that voting is a right. I believe voting is also a gift, a duty, a privilege, and a blessing. Democracies like Costa Rica are based on the audacious experiment of 1787, and I, as one of the lucky people to be born into a democracy and live and thrive in two more, take that responsibility seriously. And I'm not shy in encouraging everyone to do the same; if you can, VOTE!

## Need to Apostille Documents for CR Residency?

**We can help! Free consultation**

**Luis Massieu**

Email: [luis@apostille.net](mailto:luis@apostille.net) | Phone +1 (212) 495-9323 | Whatsapp: +1 (646) 386-6707



# How to Protect Your Property Rights



**N**ow and then you might hear that an expat or a local property owner lost their property rights to squatters or thieves. Sadly, the Costa Rican legal system has loopholes allowing the bad guys to get away with squatting or stealing property. Plus, the resolution of property rights issues can be exacerbated by the judicial system being a bit slow. However, there are things that can be done to avoid needing to utilize that system.

NO ONE should be allowed to squat on land that is someone else's, and NO ONE should be allowed to take out a mortgage on a property that is owned by somebody else. Unfortunately, it has happened, although often it was the landowner's own fault. Let me explain how this can happen and then recommend how you can protect your Costa Rica property rights.

## WHO INVENTED SQUATTING?

Legally referred to as adverse possession, squatting was not invented by Costa Ricans. According to

Robert Neuwirth, an American journalist, author, and investigative reporter who wrote Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, A New Urban World, there are 1 billion squatters globally. So squatting is not a unique Costa Rican problem or even a third-world country problem; it takes place all over the world. My own home country, the Netherlands, had its problems in the '70s with the "crackers" taking over abandoned buildings in Amsterdam. The United States has had its own problems with abandoned buildings and squatters, of which which many people are unaware.

Of course the rules around adverse possession differ depending on the local laws, and the time requirement necessary before ownership kicks in varies from state to state, country to country. For instance, in California, it takes five years; in Texas, it is 30 years;



and in West Virginia, open dominion must be held over the property for ten years. In Costa Rica Article 277 of the civil code establishes possession rights for property through occupation: here, adverse possession can occur when the owner allows a third party to use and maintain possession of the property (squat on it) for more than a year (Par. 2, Art. 279 Civil Code).

That situation can take place when a vacant property is purchased but not fenced off or used for anything. The property, maybe located in the middle of nowhere, is never cleaned and the property taxes aren't regularly paid. Since the owner doesn't live there and rarely visits, the neighbors, who are local farmers, notice that nobody is using the land and build a shack on it. Then they build a fence around it and put some cows in it for pasture. By that, they have established the basic claim for possession.

Another scenario I have seen is when the owner stopped paying a caretaker his monthly salary... and the caretaker filed for possession.

Once in a while I hear from people who are angry with the Costa Rica legal system because they lost their property to a thief or a squatter. In some cases, they are right to be angry, and I agree that something should be done about it. But all too often it is the property owner's fault for not properly caring for their property. It is hard for some people to accept, but each owner should do everything in his/her power to protect their property rights, and the first step is to not "abandon" their property.



## WHAT DOES A SQUATTER LOOK LIKE?

It varies. Believe it or not, the colorful people in one photo here are squatters. Squatters in Costa Rica don't look like that, but the outcome is much the same

## HOW TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY AGAINST SQUATTERS

There are several common-sense steps a prudent person can take to ensure their property doesn't fall into the hands of squatters:

1. Always pay the property taxes on time and keep the proof. (This is where the problem can start; when a municipal employee sees that the taxes haven't been paid for some time.)
2. Maintain the property – keep it clean and well-tended.
3. Have the property fenced.
4. Have someone check on the land regularly. (Be careful who you choose to do this. There have been instances where the owner hired someone they didn't know well and received excellent reports, only to return and find the property occupied by, or even been sold to, a relative of the person doing the reports.)
5. If you hire a caretaker, draw up a formal labor agreement through your lawyer and always pay him/her on time.
6. If the above doesn't work, initiate either a civil procedure, known as an interdict, or a criminal action charging usurpación. This must be done within three months of the date squatters invaded the land. A late response from the owner can lead to lengthy and costly procedures and, worst of all, to the possibility that the de facto tenants will control the property.

## PROPERTY THIEVES

Squatting is one thing, outright theft is another. This has happened in Costa Rica more than a few times. The usual scenario is that an expat purchases a beautiful piece of property with the intent they will build their dream home on it in the future. They return to their home country for a few years to finish their career. When they retire and move to Costa Rica, they find out that the property is no longer in their name!

How can that happen!? It's an old scam; property thieves connive with a crooked notary public, who transfers the property into somebody else's name. That person takes out a mortgage on the property and, once the money is in their hand, disappears. The mortgage grantor never receives any



payments, so they foreclose on the property. The owner finds out when it is too late, and the property is not theirs anymore. (The type of property that is most frequently the victim of this type of fraud is raw land, not a house where someone lives.)

## HOW TO PROTECT PROPERTY AGAINST THIEVES

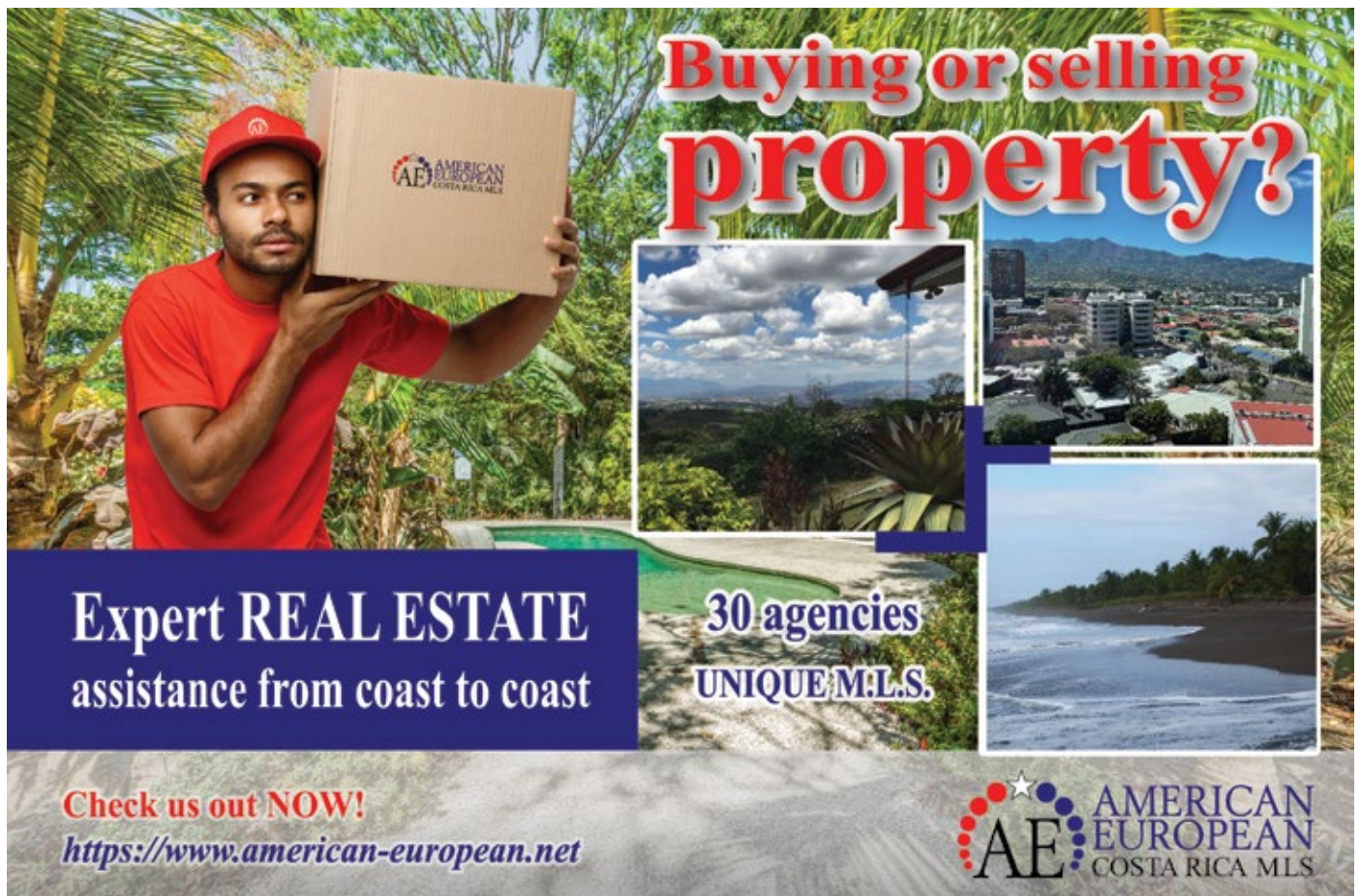
1. You can subscribe to a Property Alert service. For a price they will monitor your property title recorded in the National Register and alert you if anything changes. However, word on the street is that they do not take any responsibility for any theft or even for not alerting you, so it is possibly a waste of money. My recommendation is that you do your own due diligence on this by:
2. Check the title of your property online in the [National Register](https://www.godutchrealty.blog/costa-rica-property-buyer-seller-tips/how-to-check-costa-rica-property-title-yourself/) once a month. With the internet it takes only a few minutes. You can learn how here: <https://www.godutchrealty.blog/costa-rica-property-buyer-seller-tips/how-to-check-costa-rica-property-title-yourself/>

3. Register a Cédula Hipotecaria on your property. This is very much like a mortgage you own and will protect the property from being sold or mortgaged by anyone else. Ask your attorney about the Cédula Hipotecaria. If you don't have an attorney, call us and ask who we recommend.

## SAFE OR NOT SAFE?

All the above does not mean buying real estate in Costa Rica is unsafe. Times change and thieves become more imaginative, and so should we. Talk to your lawyer or a knowledgeable real estate agent about your questions. Taking reasonable precautions is just like installing a lock on your front door... something that you didn't need 40 years ago but do now.

*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](mailto:ivo@american-european.net)*



**Buying or selling property?**

**Expert REAL ESTATE assistance from coast to coast**

**30 agencies UNIQUE M.L.S.**

**Check us out NOW!**  
<https://www.american-european.net>

**AMERICAN EUROPEAN COSTA RICA MLS**



# Save Time, Book Online!



(506) 2656-2424 | 8706-7176  
Info@CostaRicaInfoCenter.com

**Free Travel Planning and Booking  
Service for all of Costa Rica**



TRANSPORTATION

TOURS

ACCOMMODATIONS

ALL COSTA RICA



# Time to **RENEW?**



**ARCR will arrange the renewal  
APPOINTMENTS for you!**

**Need an ESCORT for your appointment? Included upon request!**

The pandemic has affected many governmental service over the past year, but ARCR has been here the whole time and is **READY TO SERVE YOU**.



Call the office at **2220-0055** or send an email to  
**[service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr)** to arrange your appointment.

**[www.facebook.com/ARCR123](https://www.facebook.com/ARCR123)**



# DESIGN WISE

by Shelagh Duncan



## How Do I Furnish My Small Home?

**T**he Small House movement is not about sacrificing space but more about downsizing your lifestyle so you can live a more fulfilling life without a lot of debt or a huge mortgage. Whether you live in a small home, apartment, or condo, there is no reason to let a small space cramp your style. With the right furniture and a few smart ideas you can make any room fit to your personality and needs.

Multi-functional pieces, small-scale items, and some sensible storage options allow you to use space effectively without sacrificing style. Think up, not out. Play with lighter tones to give even the most cramped space a more open feel, and try some of these ideas to help you maximize your small space for optimum function and space. Let's see some of the ways you can make a less-than-spacious living area feel larger and work better for you.

### MULTI-FUNCTIONAL PIECES

These can take advantage of the space you have. A storage ottoman in a living room gives you another place to keep your lesser-used items, which can be used as additional seating or to give a fresh take on a coffee table. You can also use space-saving nesting tables as your coffee table or group smaller tables together, which can easily be separated for individual use when entertaining.

### CONSIDER CONVERTIBLE PIECES

Items like a wall desk can instantly transform from a storage piece to a simple workspace or homework center.

### SIZE MATTERS

Don't set your space up to fail by adding grand pieces that barely fit. Buy furniture that suits your small space.



Down-sizing doesn't mean you have to sacrifice drama – make simple adjustments such as buying a loveseat instead of a sofa, or replacing a large sleigh bed with an upholstered headboard base.

## SMALL-SCALE FURNITURE

US furniture manufacturers have responded with smaller-scale furniture options because of the condo boom and some people's preference for living downtown in apartments and condos instead of moving to the suburbs and commuting. Examples are small-scale sofas (75" wide) that offer ample seating space without taking up a lot of floor space. Look for sofas with slim track arms rather than the rolled or flare arm styles, and use thin side tables with floor lamps; they will save space on the small tables.

## THE ART OF STORAGE

Clearing clutter is the first step to making any space look more open. More and more furniture today is built



with function in mind, with an abundance of drawers or shelves to help you display what you want to show – and hide everything you don't.

## IN THE BEDROOM

Check out beds with built-in storage, like ones with drawers underneath. Build up, not out by using tall chests; they are a great way to save floor space while





adding drawers of storage for clothing, accessories, and anything else you throw at it. Trundle beds are useful without looking like bunk beds in a kid's room; the second bed nests under the upper bed and can be pulled out when needed to sleep guests. Murphy beds, fold-way beds, and sofa beds are all great options for small spaces.

## IN THE DINING ROOM

Look for small-scale tables with leaves so you have a table that fits, but that can be expanded when you need the extra space. Some tables offer storage space in their base or pedestal, which can be ideal for storing anything from table linens to plates to wine bottles. Banquette seating can offer storage and seating in one space-saving combo, and a glass-top table will seem to float in the space and make the area visually larger.

## IN THE LIVING ROOM

Bookcases are great because they offer storage and display space with an abundance of shelves. Bookcases with open shelving and no back keep the space open and airy and will make a chic room divider for an open-plan layout or a studio apartment. Full-height bookcases, especially those with doors, will give you even more storage space.

## LIGHTEN UP

Lighter colors help to create a more airy and open look. Worried that muted colors will cramp your style? Set the scene by painting the wall a light color and picking light-colored fabrics for larger pieces like a sofa, and then add your personality with the use of colorful art and accents.

## REFLECT YOUR SPACE

Mirrors work beautifully to create the illusion of more space by reflecting light throughout a room. You can make your space look larger and create a smart wall display by hanging mirrors of varying sizes and styles, as you would a group of framed photos. For a dramatic look, try leaning a large floor mirror against a wall.

Think big and enjoy living small!

Until the next time...

*Shelagh Duncan has been working in the interior design field for over 30 years and can be found at ROYAL PALM INTERIORS in Uvita. She can be reached at 506-2743-8323 or online at*

[www.royalpalminteriors.com](http://www.royalpalminteriors.com)

[royalpalminteriors@gmail.com](mailto:royalpalminteriors@gmail.com)

# WILD SIDE

by Ryan Piercy



## Baltimore Oriole

Until recently, the only thing that came to my mind when I heard “Baltimore Orioles” was the baseball team. On a recent trip to Monteverde, however, I had the opportunity to view some of the birds in person. And wow! I actually had no idea how colorful they are. I was in the orchid gardens when I heard the guides discussing them and within half an hour I was lucky enough to take a photo.

You can, in fact, find eight different types of Orioles in Costa Rica, depending on the time of year. The species

belong to the Icterid family along with blackbirds, but with an appearance that is much more ostentatious. The males sharp contrast of black feathers with brilliant orange on makes them fierce competition for even the most colorful resident species.

The Baltimore oriole (*Icterus galbula*) belongs to a group of birds referred to as Neotropical Migrants, travelling from Canada to Central America each year for winter. Sounds like a nice life. Some hardy specimens, however, may opt to remain in a cold North





America, with the help of feeders. When migrating these orioles will often travel in large groups. Of those who come south to such areas as here in Costa Rica (and further too) most will be seen in smaller groups of maybe two to four birds, although trees filled with nuts and seeds may attract a higher number.

The Baltimore Oriole is small for its species at just 18 cm and weighing just 34 grams, but the striking colors make it stand out among larger species. They were originally described by Carl Linnaeus in the 1758 10th edition of his *Systema Naturae*, and named for Lord Baltimore of Maryland, whose 17th-century coat-of-arms bore similar colors.

Most often seen in Costa Rica during the winter months, its time is mostly spent foraging for food until spring, when they return north to North America for breeding. The best possibilities for sighting them here

will be in areas where they are feeding and foraging in flowering or fruitful trees. They appear to be a very adaptable species and have been seen at elevations as high as 8,500 feet in Guatemala. I hope at least some will strive to make the journey further South so we can continue to enjoy them here as well!

**Automovile Insurance\***

Automobile insurance provides protection against damage to your vehicle, another's vehicle or property, and injury or death of persons involved in an accident. It also contains provisions for civil liability, medical services, legal expenses, and special equipment. A basic policy provides multiple assistance among many other protections.

*\*Terms and conditions apply.*

For more information about this and the full range of INS insurance packages, allow us to advise you at ARCR Customer Service, Juan Carlos Calero or Carlos David Ortiz

**Sonia Gómez García** Insurance Agente and Consultant Lic. SUGESE 08-1271

+506 8338-1297/4052-4052 | [insurance@arcr.cr](mailto:insurance@arcr.cr)

Exclusiva del **INS** INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE SEGUROS

# Trust!

We've had your back for more than 25 years



**Here yesterday, today, and tomorrow**

- Information - Residency - Legal Service - Seminars - Magazine - Discounts, and more.
- Serving expatriates from around the world!

Association of Residents of Costa Rica. - San Pedro, Mall San Pedro,  
Ofimall, 3rd floor, San Jose, Costa Rica (506) 4052 4052 - Email: [service@arcr.cr](mailto:service@arcr.cr)  
Website: [www.arcr.cr](http://www.arcr.cr) - [www.facebook.com/ARCR123](http://www.facebook.com/ARCR123)

**The ultimate  
REAL ESTATE  
experience**

Atenas  
Grecia  
Sarchí  
Naranjo  
San Ramón  
Escazú  
Santa Ana  
& much more

**We participate in the  
ARCR seminar!**

**Check us out NOW!**  
<https://www.godutchrealty.com>

**Godutch Realty**  
Real Estate for Costa Rica



# 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.costaricaaaa.com](http://www.costaricaaaa.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.costaricaaaa.com](http://www.costaricaaaa.com)

## ► American Legion Post 10

Meets the first Thursday of the month at 11 a.m. at Casa de España (across from the Palma Real Hotel & Casino) in Sabana Norte, San José. For more information call Matt Loper, 8968-6935, or Craig Carlson, 6042-9921

## ► 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](http://www.amigosofcostarica.org) or email to: [admin@amigosofcostarica.org](mailto:admin@amigosofcostarica.org)

## ► The Atenas Book Club

Formed in 2004, meets the first Wednesday monthly at 10:30 am, at alternating locations and with discussion leaders among the members. The group reads a variety of books and authors, reading both fiction and non-fiction. All books must be available

on Kindle or some electronic reader. Currently there is a waiting list to join. For more information contact Mary Martin Mason at: [marymason1946@gmail.com](mailto:marymason1946@gmail.com).

## ► 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](http://www.birdingclubcr.org) or email to: [info@birdingclubcr.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.democratsabroad.org/cr) Register to vote absentee at: [votefromabroad.org](http://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](mailto:andy@marinecorpsleaguecr.com), [andypucek@live.com](mailto:andypucek@live.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](mailto:pzwomansclub@gmail.com) or visit our web site at: [www.pziwc.org](http://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@pwnrcr.com](mailto:info@pwnrcr.com) The PWN website is: <http://www.pwnrcr.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](http://www.sanvitobirdclub.org) or email: [eltangaral@gmail.com](mailto:eltangaral@gmail.com) for more information.

### ► The Umbrella Club of Costa Rica (formerly Newcomers of Costa Rica)

Is a group for English speaking women living in Costa Rica to share experiences, ideas, common interests, and to promote fellowship among members. The core of the Umbrella Club is the Interest Groups which meet monthly. There are two to three general meetings a year. There are no dues. For more information, contact:

Grace at 2249-1208 or 8369-7992, or send an email to: [jaygracefernandes@gmail.com](mailto:jaygracefernandes@gmail.com) or Kelly at: [kclayton2003@yahoo.com](mailto:kclayton2003@yahoo.com)

**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](mailto:service@arcr.cr) subject line; Club Corner, and post them on the the ARCR Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/ARCR123](http://www.facebook.com/ARCR123).





# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

## Important dates in Costa Rica:

- 10 March, Sunday, Día del Boyero, Celebration  
 19 March, Tuesday, Saint Joseph's Day, Observance  
 10 April, Monday, National holiday

### DEFINITIONS:

#### 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

**ARCR SEMINAR** for expats April 25th and 26th. Location; Park Inn Hotel. Contact the office for reservations. Seating is limited.

### One-Liners

Nothing spoils a good story more than the arrival of an eye witness.

It only takes one slow-walking person in the grocery store to destroy the illusion that I'm a nice person.

The sooner you fall behind, the more time you have to catch up.

Everyone has a photographic memory; some just don't have film



**DR. ESTEBAN PIERCY VARGAS**  
 Cod. 13230  
**Medicina General y Mixta CCSS**  
**Home visits**  
 epv900@gmail.com  
 (506) 8333-9222  
 (506) 4052-4052  
 En / Fr / Es



**Alejandro Piercy**  
*Official Translator for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*  
**English-Spanish / Español-Inglés**  
 (506) 8726-3100  
 alejandro.piercy@gmail.com  
 www.translations.co.cr



Looking for an  
**English speaking Church?**  
**JOIN US!**  
 ibccostarica.org



**Like us on facebook!**  
 facebook.com/ARCR123