

## HOW TO READ ATENAS TODAY

Many of the pages in Atenas Today are in two column format, and the default “view” in the *Adobe Reader* will present these pages in a large size that requires you to scroll up and down to read the whole page.

By changing the “view” to “**Full Screen**” you can fit the page to your screen and avoid the scrolling.

When in “Full Screen” view, left click to advance to the next page, or right click to go back a page.

If the text is too small for your taste, push the “escape” key to exit the “Full Screen” mode, and change the “zoom” level to get the size you want.

### **THE NEW YELLOW PAGES**

**Don't forget to download and save the latest version of the Yellow Pages. Many new businesses have been listed. This section will help you find the goods and services you need.**

# ATENAS TODAY



Tabebuia Ochracea  
Corteza Amarilla  
Photo: Wikipedia Español

*ATENAS TODAY is a free English language newsletter for the residents and potential residents of Atenas, Costa Rica. It contains informative articles and creative compositions submitted by our readers, and is distributed via email approximately once a month to over 500 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Marietta Arce at [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com).*

*Compositions from back issues are archived on the Atenas Chamber of Tourism and Commerce website, [www.atenascatuca.com](http://www.atenascatuca.com). Click on the English version and then Atenas Today on the business page.*



## DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

New names and numbers have been added to the directory. With each issue Atenas Today subscribers will receive an updated file containing the names and contact information of people who have chosen to be listed. Simply download the PDF file attached to this Atenas Today email and print it or save it on your computer.

If your name is on the list without contact information, it is because you are a subscriber to the newsletter, but have **not authorized the publication of your email address or other information**. To add or correct data please send an email to [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com)

Issue No. 98

February 23, 2013

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## Publisher's Note



This issue was prepared in advance of my trip to New York just days before the Chili Cook-Off took place. I receive many wonderful comments about the impact our publication makes and could not imagine missing a month just because I am away!

By the time you read this installment, we have had a wonderful time raising funds at Chili Cook-Off for those well-deserving children. In the next edition, I will list all the winners and the donation that was given to the Hogar de Vida. My thanks and recognition to all those who set aside time for the months of planning and exerted extraordinary efforts to make this event a huge success.

Our town is enjoying the excitement that comes with the return of the expats who 'summer' here! There is an exhilarating energy present at the farmers market as returning friends and permanent residents pick up the threads of conversations they left unfinished.

As I make my way through the different stalls, I am entertained by the tidbits of newsy information that come my way. It makes my day when I sense that others feel about Atenas and Costa Rica the way that I do.

Our Atenas Today community is expanding to include non-native English speakers as well. It is very fitting because a strong community results when cultural exchange is experienced and appreciated. Fridays are a lively, concentrated example of the unique diversity we experience in Atenas, today and every day.

Happy reading!

Marietta Arce  
marietta.arce@gmail



*An Afternoon Visitor*  
photograph by Peter Boyer; peabo2@me.com



## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

This space is available for posting community activities for the following weeks. Please provide information about your activity or event to [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

February 23, 2013 --- SECOND ANNUAL PO-8 BENEFIT  
February 23, 2013 – The Art of Tea (see flyer attached)

March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde. (SEE FLYER)

March 6<sup>th</sup> & March 20<sup>th</sup> - **Recycling** in Atenas from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Plaza in front of the Central School, near the volleyball court.– Recycling of aluminum, metal, plastic, paper cardboard and tetrapak - NO ELECTRONICS, STYROFOAM or EGG CARTONS Please rinse and separate your recyclables before dropping them off. Thank you.

February 27<sup>th</sup>, (Please confirm with Sara or Kay 2446-0664) and  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>

*Atenas Wednesday Women*  
informal get together at Kay's Gringo Postres  
every Wednesday afternoon at 12:30 PM

February 26<sup>th</sup> , -- Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's Restaurant  
March 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> : 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner required.

March 12<sup>th</sup> - 3 p.m. Abandoned Animals of Atenas Foundation meeting at Kay's Gringo Postres. Please contact Virginia 2446-5343 or Sylvia 8868-1386 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcome.

March 13<sup>th</sup> - Writer's Club meets at Colinas del Sol, at Noon. Contact L. Michael Rusin @ [crcaseyboy@gmail.com](mailto:crcaseyboy@gmail.com) (2451-8063) for more information. Please confirm.

March 18<sup>th</sup> - PLEIN AIR - A group of people with curious minds who meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at a different location to explore and express their creativity through visual art and writing. Contact Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 or [janyatsko@ice.co.cr](mailto:janyatsko@ice.co.cr) to find out where the group has been and where it is going.

March 23<sup>rd</sup> – HOGAR DE ANCIANOS – Atenas of Yesteryear...I remember...  
This all-day activity is being organized by a group of expats, CATUCA, the Hogar de Ancianos and members of the community. Please see information and flyers around town as the date approaches. Not to be missed if you want to know how things used to be!!!



March 31<sup>st</sup> - Happy Easter!



# The Art of Tea

Vista Atenas B&B

Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:30 AM to 2:30

**T**he ancient art of tea brings many healing gifts. It lifts the spirit and at the same time calms and rejuvenates; it brings us into a still moment of meditation. During this 4-hour class you will savor and increase your knowledge of six high-quality teas each followed by delectable palate cleansers. After the light lunch provided, you will create a visual and written diary using four of those teas. This personal tea diary will be your memento of a relaxing, healing and creative experience.

**Join Atenas residents**, Suzanne Mark and Jan Yatsko as they share with you their combined talents while you receive all of the benefits!

**Comments** from previous workshop: "good info, good food, good tea, good company and two great instructors" ... "all the different textures and colors of the tea leaves brought out my creativity" ... "very relaxing and a great experience for me" ... "the subtlety of tea taste and color" ...

**COST:** 18,000 colones – Includes all teas, palate cleansers, lunch and materials for diary. Payment required by Tuesday, February 19th.

**SUZANNE MARK** has taken two trips to India to learn about tea and has worked as a tea educator in the US. Tea is a perfect tool for inner exploration and for over 20 years, Suzanne has taught 1000's of people how to channel their natural wisdom. She loves helping people connect to the deep place within that is infinitely wise and creative.

**JAN YATSKO** has been a mixed media artist for 34 years. She believes that teaching a combination of different but complementary subjects can result in a richer experience for the student. For eight years, Jan led 10-day Explore and Create tours in Costa Rica that focused on art, nature, culture and food. She has also combined yoga with writing and creating your own mandala. She delights in bringing out the natural creativity in her students, especially the people who think they don't have it!

**CONTACT:** Suzanne Mark at 2446-0674 [suzanne@suzannemark.com](mailto:suzanne@suzannemark.com)  
Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 [janyatsko@gmail.com](mailto:janyatsko@gmail.com)

For more information: <http://suzannemark.com/tea-meditations/>



## Buddhist Book Discussion

\*\*\*\*\*

Sunday, March 3, 2013

1:30pm

218 Roca Verde, Atenas

A gathering for those interested  
in Buddhism and Buddhist writings.

**ALL ARE WELCOME,**  
from non-Buddhists to  
experienced Buddhist practitioners.

For directions or information,  
please telephone or email:  
Adrienne and Richard Baksa  
2446-8509, 8355-0294  
adriennebaksa@me.com  
rbaksa@mac.com

\*\*\*\*\*





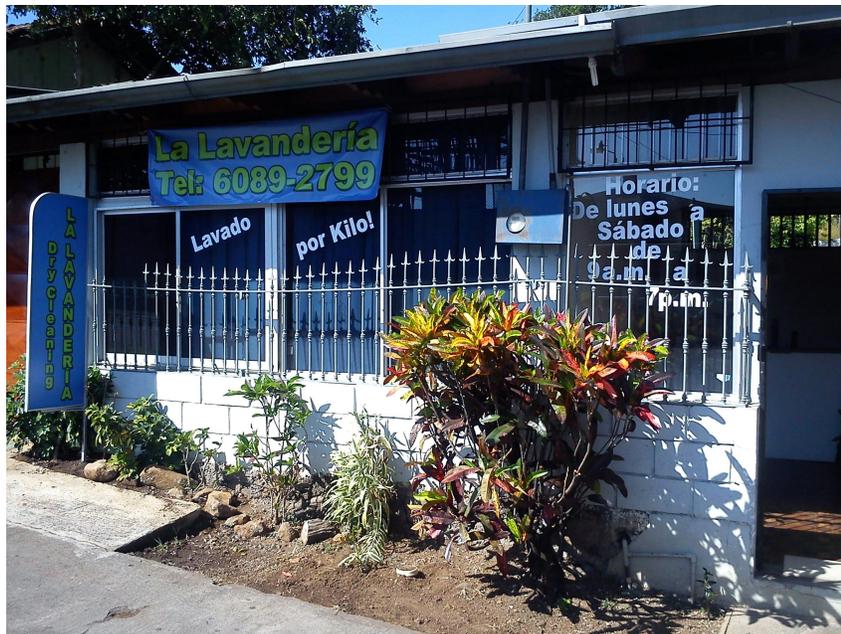
WHAT'S NEW AND/OR NOTEWORTHY:

**Souvenir**  
*mi gente*

**NEW NUEVO**

50 mts este de la corte  
50 mts east from the court house.

8563-8792 / 8616-2753



Dry Cleaning, Wash and Dry by the Kilo  
Located 25 Meters North of Banco Popular, Atenas Center

RESTAURANT: CAFÉ CULTURA --- **CLOSED**

RESTAURANT: LA TRILLA, **UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**



**WHAT'S NEW AND/OR NOTEWORTHY:**

**First Tour Store In Atenas**

**Costa Rica Summer**

We are pleased to announce our tours all over Costa Rica, so you can:

- Visit volcanoes, hot springs, beaches, islands, national parks and more.
- Do horseback ridding, bungee jumping, hiking, mountain bike, bird watching among others.
- Car rental, shuttles, beach condos & flight tickets.

We are located at the Atenas main entrance, across from ICE Tower. Office: 2446-8107;

Website: [thepropertystore.webs.com](http://thepropertystore.webs.com)

E-mail: [costaricasummer@hotmail.es](mailto:costaricasummer@hotmail.es),

[www.facebook.com/CostaRicaSummer](http://www.facebook.com/CostaRicaSummer)



**REOPENED AS: MOLAS SOUVENIRS AND FURNITURE**



**LOS ANGELES, ON HIGHWAY 3 (THE OLD ROAD)  
125 METERS EAST OF THE MONUMENT**

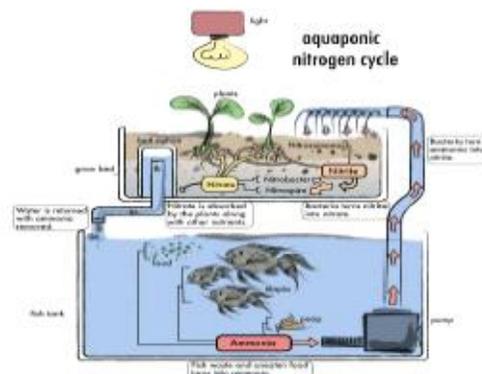
## Aquaponics: A Method for Growing 100% Organic Food



by Fred Ball

By definition, an aquaponics system is the marriage of aquaculture and hydroponics. The basics applied are simple and economically justifiable. Perhaps what is most important is that the resultant vegetable products produced are 100% organic. Exercising discretion there are no transgenic or other artificial ingredients used in aquaponics that can possibly have a negative affect on your health.

So how do you setup an aquaponics system? The essence of the system involves one-part fish plus multiple-parts vegetable contained in an installation comprised of various components. The following diagram shows a basic design for an aquaponics system.



Besides being healthful, the benefits of aquaponics are manifold: the amount of water used is about 10% of that used in traditional methods (e.g. gardening and crop production); low maintenance (no weeding, spraying pesticides, etc.); vegetables grow about 2 or more times quicker than those using conventional techniques; economical once the system is established; products are fresh; is sustainable. And with regards to the last point, sustainable can be defined as a commitment by us to maintain an ecological balance by preventing depletion of our natural resources no matter where they exist.

With respect to our own aquaponics system, we have produced successful generations of cucumbers, corn, string beans, celery, onions, lettuce, thyme and basil. At present we are producing tomatoes that are in their early stages of development.

For further information about this topic you can contact me, or my wife Roxana, at 24463344 / 70375753.

## Interview with: Roy Chacon, Jazz Pianist



*Contributed by Jude Seath*

Roy Chacon, Costa Rican born and educated in Heredia is a very fine Jazz and Classical Pianist. Roy's passion for music started at an early age. It was love at first sight for him with the piano. Classical, Bach, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, were inspirations. Jazz pianist Bill Evans and many great pianists: his idols. Quite unusual for a poor country boy from the mountains!

Roy worked his way through the university at Heredia in the Music department. Later studying music in Orlando Florida, Professor Roy became an arranger and accompanist for the singers at Disney World among other venues. Since returning to Costa Rica he has played in the National Symphony, Big Band Costa Rica, and many Jazz Groups. Currently he has worked for 5 years as a piano and band instructor at Bansbach in Escazú.



**RC:** I have moved to Atenas because I love the quieter, slower pace of life here. I like the climate and the people here. I have wanted to lower the stress in my life and have even started to practice Yoga. Ideally I would like to form a

foundation to start a school here in Atenas for music and the arts. Poetry. Jazz. Pop music. Everything and anything is possible. I have played music for Weddings, special events, Fiestas, even baby showers. I would love to be able to do that here in Atenas.



The process of learning to play the piano, like anything, let's say learning Karate, is easier when you and your teacher are relaxed. You can go thru the motions painlessly when you are not stressed. With calmness you can pay attention and learn specific skills more rapidly. I believe music brings joy and beauty to our lives. And with some work and some luck, *Bliss*.



Professor Roy Chacon lives in Roca Verde, Atenas and is available for piano lessons. He can be reached on his cell 8875 7996 or at [roymusicman@hotmail.com](mailto:roymusicman@hotmail.com)

He can be seen playing on YouTube: Roy Chacon Jazz Costa Rica

Due to an early deadline and a busy month, I've pulled this story from the archives. Comes in two parts. Paul Furlong – Room for a View

## Ed Caspers famous and endearing Mayan, Honduras Tour

2009

My second paying customer in my start up Central America Motorcycle Tour business in 2009 was with another old friend from tours gone by. Ed Caspers needed some time off and two weeks seemed enough to ride from Atenas Costa Rica, through Nicaragua, and all of Honduras right up to the Guatemala border to a little town named Copan. Cobble stone streets, quaint little restaurants and markets selling everything native.



Ed is an engineer and sailor in the Merchant Marine...Solid Rider, too.

Our first stop after crossing into Nicaragua was San Juan Del Sur. Ed wanted to spend a bit more in the area of accommodations. We used the same books you would, and came up with **Hotel Villa Isabella**. Not on the beach...two blocks away...and uphill? Yes, but two blocks away and uphill (sound is a linear thing) is where the peace is. It's quiet and comfortable there. Mike is a gringo and knows a bit about what people want.....a nice roomy hotel with lots to do...Internet, restaurant, ambiance and, well, Mike. He'll take you around and show you the town

when he has time. \$75 including a full breakfast is still affordable.



I guess Ed still remembered the Land's End Hotel where we'd stayed at the last time. Loud and gritty, it's across from the beach, \$30 a night and you can sit on the wall with a bottle of rum in your hand and watch the people stroll by. One night while Ed napped, I sauntered down to say hi to Paul, the owner of Land's End, and met a friend of his, Jose Sandino. What started out as a friendly hello, became an evening as Jose and I shared a whole bottle and talked into the night. If I remember, Jose's father or uncle was "the" Sandino who led the Sandinistas back in the '80s during that unfortunate war. Since I rarely agree with any side, it was refreshing to hear his views. I think what most impressed me was his knowledge of my forefathers and the letters they wrote to each other. Liberty is on the tongue of every revolutionary it seems, in the beginning. They mean well, these arrogant men, adjusting society and its wealth for the betterment of man. But from what I've seen, man prefers to be left alone.

There's an air of openness in Nicaragua. People are out in the streets and the kids are playing and I see no one worrying about being robbed or molested.



In fact, anything you've seen on sensation starved TV about traveling through Central America is out of proportion. Petty theft exists everywhere in the US. Why should we be surprised that it's here, too? Watch your things....right? Perspective... Yes, Latinos are different, as different as Spain is from England....and that's a good thing. Throw in the qualities of people who look as if they crossed the Bearing Straight about 10,000 years ago and you have a pretty solid mix; it's wise to pay attention, and respect, Aztec and Mayan blood is here too. A trip like this is best done with curiosity, awake, the purpose of adventure; the water's hot but, it's soooo cool once you get in....



On to Granada and a day or two in the **Alhambra Hotel** and walked all over town. About this time Ed was beginning to suffer from an old neck injury and was happy to get off the bike when we stopped. We continued the trip but stopped often and early at the end of the day. There were moments though, when we got off on some back roads and just enjoyed ourselves riding alone except for the occasional pack mule, or a tiny pueblo with kids playing outside.

Thanks to a friend in Granada, we found a nice route around Managua and up the west side of Lago de Managua to Leon. We passed hot, dusty dirt road afternoon to higher elevation and cooler temperatures. Leon was once the capital of Nicaragua, too.



Part of the beauty in Central America is its churches. The architecture is more that of Madrid than Seville and there's a comfortable cosmopolitan life there worth visiting. We liked it more because, for the one day "snap shot" we had, it seemed a path less traveled by tourists and seemed more authentic. We stayed at the **Hotel Austria** and were treated nicely there. Ed and I began the habit of taking taxi rides at dusk every day and asked the driver to recount bits of random history as we sipped our beers in the back seat.



The  
Next morning we were ready to put some miles on and got serious. We enjoyed some of the most picturesque mountains and interesting back roads that day. Once on the Pan American highway we headed north again.

After lunch in Estelí, we followed a dirt road east of the highway and spent the rest of the day exploring miles of beautiful back country. We made decisions at forks and spoke with people from a very old culture. No discos, no cars to speak of...just women washing clothes in a river, a donkey with a ten year boy on top holding plastic water cans.



People in Nicaragua aren't afraid to show their feelings

We rode till we came to a town called Jinotega and spent the night there. This was Contra country and heavy fighting took place here and in the surrounding mountains during the war. This area is still mined in places...but luckily not in the bars

or hotels. We saw signs for the route Sandino took on his epic march north.



It's sad to see what war does and how completely each side believes in its cause. Civil war is the worst kind. In those first heroic charges, it's easy to forget they're trampling through their own families, their own wives and children ground to a weariness and loss of heart that goes on till the money runs out. Then there is peace.

There's Peace there today. It's a hard life in Nicaragua but people manage. They do it quietly, they work hard and they play hard. There's a sense of pride and "can do" about them that makes them one of my favorite people.





After finding gas, breakfast and taking Ed for an unplanned ride through town as I got my bearings, we continued north and ultimately found our way to the border of Honduras in Los Manos and crossed in a couple hours. After that, short ride to Danli and **Hotel Mario Chavez**.



A taste of motorcycling through Central America

One could spend weeks in each of these towns and meet people who might have an effect on a curious soul. Motorcycle touring the way we do it, is more like sampling a wide-ranging buffet. The riding has to be there. A car, bus or train wouldn't work as we enjoy the prime reason for being there; to ride motorcycles through Central America.

We liked this little town and it was so strategically placed near the border, that we stayed there twice.



**Hotel Mario Chavez, Danli, Honduras**

We decided to get a move on and cover some ground. Ed's neck was cutting into his enjoyment and we had to stop often for him to rest. He thought he'd be all right but it would be best to get up to Copan and see the Mayan Ruins while he still had the desire to ride. We rode through the City of Tegucigalpa. We'd been warned it wasn't safe but some Brits we met later thought it was a great place. I'm constantly reminded of the people who tell me not to go into Mexico or down through Central America because of the dangers there. After eleven years of doing this, and having friends in other motorcycle tour companies down here, with even more time than me, I haven't heard of one verifiable instance of armed robbery or violence (written in 2009) on a tour.



Sometimes the land itself mourns its past



Central America's history is worn on the outside, so you can see it.

We spent the day on the Pan American highway, made time and stayed in Agua Azul on Lago de Yojoa.



People understand wanting your bike close to you.

Agua Azul is roughly half way through Honduras and one of the places in Central America that bring me back to Delaware in the '50's.



Where old Land Cruisers go to die...



Just an ongoing show...sun up, sun down

The hotel, Hotel Agua Azul, is a small group of cabins on the lake. We parked our bikes on our porch and relaxed from the ride. There's a bar and restaurant, and no reason to leave; just a quiet little place on the lake.

We left the next morning and headed north east to San Pedro Sula, not anything to write home about but it seems I keep passing through there. We resolved to miss it on the way home, and did have an adventure doing it. But today, we mostly just burned highway. The first thirty miles or more was just some beautiful riding...in the cool morning with the light right...yes this is why we ride and why we're willing to suffer a hundred miles of desert just for the possibility of sweet twisty roads. This is what the tour is about, serious good riding with little or no interference.



Taken from the breakfast table.

As we put in saddle time running up the highway, we came upon a young Indigenous fellow by the side of the road. He had his ear to his engine and was twisting the throttle with little effect. Ed and I peeked around the carburetor and fuel tap and gas tank... Surprised at not finding anything obvious, we stood back and pondered ... It was Ed who noticed there was too little exhaust coming out of the bike and there was this ting-gy- rattley sound around the muffler.

I'd seen this problem before but it wasn't till Ed mentioned there must be something blocking the exhaust that it sunk in. I said to the guy, "we're going to make a hole in your muffler..." At first he thought we were having a translation problem. I repeated myself in my clearest Spanish and explained why he had this problem; after all, this was a pretty new bike and one in ten thousand with a stock muffler. But he wasn't buying it. The three of us kicked the dirt and looked at the ground, the sky and the bike.

"Well?" I said. He began with the carburetor again. We smiled and began to say goodbye.

"Ya ya, hagalo!" says he. I pulled a trusty chisel from my tool kit while Ed found a three pound rock. Ready to make the hole, I took a peek at this poor Indian's face. Dark with doubt, unhappy with the prognosis, he nodded.... WHAM! Wham, wham, wham! The corner of my chisel began to make a triangle sized hole. The engine was still running and began to breathe a little easier. Three or four more licks and he had a nice little gash there. He twisted the gas, and the engine began to rise in RPM. Smiles all around, Whack whack whack....the gash got bigger and the engine sounded right purty. Whiiiiing! whiiiiing! whiiiiing!!! said the little motor... Our friend thanked us profusely and like the Lone Ranger and Tonto, we mounted up and rode off into that hot sultry desert day.

To be continued ...

fuzzlong@gmail.com

**It's A Dogs Life...REALLY!!**



**Stories from Mr. BudBud, Primero Perro of Lighthouse Animal Rescue. They were written 8 years ago when he first came to Costa Rica for a house sitting job.**

**6/17/2004**

**Hola!!!!**

**We had a really good time today! We started out searching for property again. We went up on the next mountain over from the house we are sitting and went all the way to the top of it. When we got up there the view was gorgeous!!! Dad says we can't live that high up though because he gets cold. Mom and I liked it though!!**

**We saw some cows while we were up there too. I don't know how they stand up on those steep hills!!**

**Then we went back into the town of Sarchi and there was this bus stopped in front of us. It was stopped to wait for a calf to get out of the road. Some lady came with a string and tied it around the calf's neck and led him away!! It was NEAT!!!**

**Then Mom took off up this road we had never been on. We went up....and up.....and up... and UP!!!!!! We saw a really nice waterfall so Mom and Dad got out to take more pictures and let me go potty. It was a really pretty place and the waterfall was spraying water on me!!! I liked it!!!**

**Then we get back in the car and go UP and UP and UP some more!!! We got way high in the clouds. Then the**

road got really narrow and we started DOWN!  
The road got narrower and narrower, the pot holes got bigger and bigger, and the clouds, which are just like fog, got REALLY heavy!!!! We could hardly see in front of us!!

There were some places where the road had caved in and you just had to kind of make your way around it.

Mom was beginning to get a little nervous because she could barely see and the road was strictly only wide enough for one vehicle. She finally decided that, since we had no idea where we were going to end up, she was going to try to turn around and go back.

We finally came up on a little wide spot and Mom starts trying to maneuver a turn around. While we were pulled off into the wide spot Mom looked behind us and here came a

**BUS!!**

Mom said, "Heck!!!! If a bus can make it I can make it!!!"

So we fell in behind the bus and kept going. Mom and Dad figured the bus HAD to be going SOMEWHERE and surely there would be a better road we could take to get home.

Well they should have thought that one through some more.

If there had been a better road that bus would most definitely have been on it!!!!!!

**DUH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Anyway, we get to the bottom of the mountain and Mom and Dad stopped to ask directions. That is when they found out that there was only one road back to where they needed to go.

Yep.....back over the mountain!!!! It was getting late and Mom was thinking "HOLY COW!!!! I do NOT want to drive back over that mountain in the "fog" and the DARK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"  
So we got started right away and made it back to the top. The road is better going down the other side so we didn't really have any problems. We were going down the other side when Mom spots this animal crossing the road. Naturally she hits the brakes and slows down so as not to hit it. We get close enough to see what it is and guess what!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**A TARANTULA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

It was HUGE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Dad is a HUGE NON FAN of spiders so he was stunned when Mom said "THAT'S A TARANTULA!!" She sort of yelled it because it was so big it was unbelievable!!!**

**Then Dad surprised us BOTH!!!! He wanted to get out and take a picture of it!!! Mom was about to do it when Dad grabbed the camera and got out. He didn't get real close of course, but he got close enough to get a good shot of it!**

**WOW!!!!!!!!!! I was impressed!!!! Dad!!!! Taking a picture of that big spider!!!!!!!!!! He usually vacates the premises when he sees one!!! Mom and I were sitting in the car watching Dad jockey around to get shots of it. Mom got laughing and said to me, "BudBud, if that thing makes one move toward your dad we will just have to blot him up at the bottom of the mountain. He will run right off that cliff!!!" LOL!!!!**

**Anyway, we got back into Grecia in time to have dinner at a restaurant called the Oasis. It is pronounced O-ah-seece. We had pork chops and papa fritas. Papa fritas are french fries. Then we walked around town with me in my stroller and we stopped and got a milk shake.**

**All in all it was a very interesting and exciting day!!!**

**We are hoping that tonight the e-mail will work. It has been giving us trouble for the past few days. Keep your fingers crossed!!!**

**BudBud the spider spotter!!**

# Top Beach Safety Tips: Be Safe and Have Fun in the Sun & Surf



*By Shannon Farley*



There's nothing better than a day at the beach. The sun, the surf ... what could be more fun? Especially in Costa Rica, where the sun, sand and sea are warm all the time!



Long beaches of gold, rich black, pearly white, beige and even pink sand, fringed with palm trees and other greenery – Costa Rica's beaches are paradise! Not by chance is the country also the third most popular destination for surfing after Hawaii and Indonesia.

However, every environment has its cautions. The sun is strong and the ocean is powerful and unpredictable, but being smart and following preventative measures, you can have a fun and safe time on Costa Rica's beaches.

Following are some **Top Beach Safety Tips**. Make sure to see the **Rip Currents** section at the end – it just may save your life.

## Top Costa Rica Beach Safety Tips:

**1. Go for the Sunscreen:** The heat makes for a fun time at the beach, but Costa Rica is located just above the equator and our tropical sun is unexpectedly strong. Choose sunscreens with sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 or higher, are sweat and waterproof, and have titanium dioxide or zinc oxide. These ingredients block both ultraviolet-B (UVB) and ultraviolet-A (UVA) harmful rays, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. Be sure to apply sunscreen 30 minutes before you head into the sun, and reapply every two hours, especially if you are sweating or swimming. Don't forget special sunblock for your lips.



<http://www.skincancer.org/healthy-lifestyle/outdoor-activities/how-to-hit-the-beach-the-sun-safe-way>

**2. Cover Up:** Soaking up the sun can be lovely, but you also have to know when to call it quits. Be sure to bring wide-brim hats, sunglasses and long-sleeved beach cover-ups with

you. Wear foot protection so you don't burn or cut your feet. Seek shade between the peak sun hours of 10 am and 2 pm.

**3. Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate:** Our bodies are made up of about 60% water, and every system depends on water. Just one cute little water bottle isn't going to be enough to keep you hydrated all day long at the beach. In Costa Rica's tropical hot climate, you should be drinking at least 1 liter of water every couple of hours. Avoid caffeinated beverages and alcohol in the hot sun. Fruits are an excellent source for water, such as watermelon which is 90% water. Oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, and melons are also strong contenders.



**4. Stay Safe in the Water:** Learn to swim and teach your children to swim. The ocean is powerful, and is not the same as swimming in a pool or a lake. Do not enter the ocean unless you know how to swim; be very cautious of dangerous surf and currents.

**5. Never Swim Alone:** Safety in numbers. Always swim with a buddy, and tell others where you are going.



**6. Never Turn Your Back on the Ocean:** Even the smallest wave can knock you over and cause injury, especially if you are surprised. Always face forward and never turn your back on the ocean.

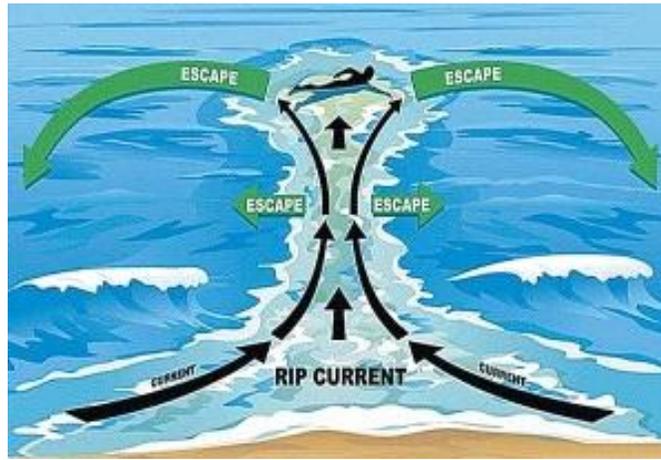
**7. Shuffle Your Feet:** Many beaches in Costa Rica have sting rays that like to settle in the warm sand in shallow water. Shuffle your feet when walking out into the ocean to scare any sting rays away and avoid stepping on them. If you do get "stung," don't panic and seek medical attention.

**8. Learn about Rip Currents:** See our important section below on how to get out of them and avoid them.

**9. Surf Safely:** Surf or Boogie board in waves that match your level. Do not go out into surf that is "above or beyond" your capability. Seek professional surf instruction if you want to learn how to surf; Costa Rica has many surf schools to teach you proper, safe surf skills. Contact **Del Mar Surf Camp** ([www.delmarsurfcamp.com](http://www.delmarsurfcamp.com)) or **Del Mar Surfing Academy** ([www.delmarsurfingacademy.com](http://www.delmarsurfingacademy.com)) at Hermosa Beach, just south of Jaco, for professional surf instruction, surf camps for adults and kids, and surf vacations.



**10. Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR):** Emergencies can happen anywhere. Learning first aid and CPR skills could save someone's life. Check out Emergency Care Costa Rica for excellent and affordable first-aid and CPR instruction and more; bilingual certified instructors. ([www.emergencycarecostarica.com](http://www.emergencycarecostarica.com))

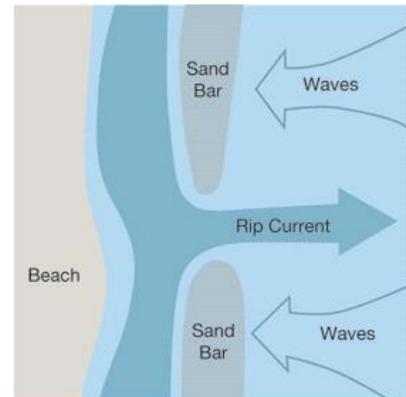


## RIP CURRENTS – What you Need to Know

Costa Rica is famous for its long sandy beaches. At first glance they are enticing and peaceful, but sometimes looks can be deceiving. The following information is to make you aware, not afraid, of beaches in Costa Rica. Beaches are living dynamic places; never do they stay the same.

*Information source: Say Leon Gamboa, Director of Emergency Care Costa Rica, a first aid and CPR-AED course education center, internationally certified by the U.S. National Safety Council.*

**Why Rip Currents Form:** As waves travel from deep to shallow water, they will break near the shoreline. When waves break strongly in some locations and weakly in others, this can cause circulation disturbances which are seen as rip currents: narrow, fast-moving belts of water traveling offshore. Rip currents can occur at any surf beach with breaking waves.



**Why Rip Currents are Dangerous:** Rip currents are the leading water hazard for all beachgoers. They are particularly dangerous for weak or non-swimmers. Rip current speeds are typically 1-2 kph (0.6-1.2 mph). However, speeds as high as 8 kph (5 mph) have been measured. Thus, rip currents can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea. The strength and speed of a rip current will likely increase as wave height and wave period increase. They are most likely to be dangerous during high surf conditions, as the wave height and wave period increase.

**Where Rip Currents Form:** Rip currents most typically form at low spots or breaks in sandbars, where rivers or estuaries enter the sea, and also near structures such as jetties and piers. Rip currents can be very narrow or extend in widths to hundreds of yards (meters). The seaward pull of rip currents varies – sometimes the rip current ends just beyond the line of breaking waves, but sometimes rip currents continue to push hundreds of yards (meters) offshore.

**How to Identify Rip Currents:** Rip currents are often not easily identifiable to the average beachgoer. Polarized sunglasses make it easier to see rip current clues. Look for any of these clues:

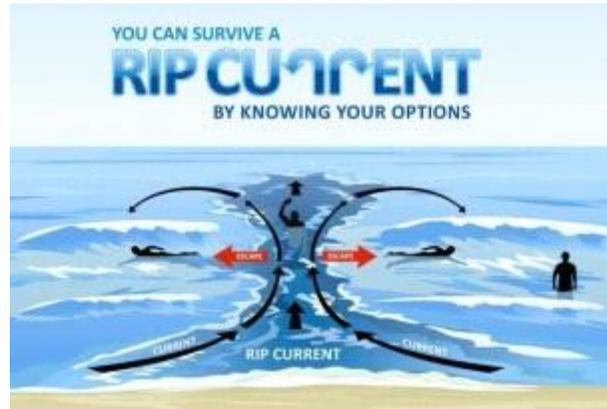
- A channel of churning, choppy water moving out to sea.
- An area having a notable difference in water color, usually due to swirling sediment from the beach.
- A line of foam, seaweed, or debris moving steadily seaward.
- A disturbance in the wave line coming in to shore.



**Rip Current Avoidance:** Ask locals at the beach you are visiting if there are dangerous or strong currents; most will know. Look for choppy water, usually brown; as the tide moves up and down it will create a drag, turning the water brown. Enter the water slowly, feeling for any pull of currents out to sea. When in doubt, only go in the water up to your knees and be careful of incoming waves that could knock you down. Remember that when the tide is low, it is pulling the strongest out to sea. Never go in the ocean alone.

**What to do if you get caught in a Rip Current:**

- Stay calm. Don't panic. Don't fight with Nature, you will lose. Conserve your energy.
- Do not try to swim to shore in a straight line. Rip currents work in a circular motion so the current will eventually pull you back out.
- You can swim parallel to the beach to get out of the current. Or, float and let it take you out. The force of the current lessens as it goes out to sea. When the current diminishes, swim parallel to the beach or at a 45-degree angle, until you feel free of the current and can swim back to shore – even if it is a different place than where you originally were. Better to walk back on sand than to fight currents.
- If you cannot get back to shore, just float and tread water, and wave your arms to attract someone's attention on shore for help. Do not panic or waste your energy.
- If you are going to help anyone in the ocean, bring something that floats. Do not go alone. A surf board is a great rescue tool, and rip currents are your friends on a board since the force takes you past the breaking waves faster than trying to paddle out yourself.



Find more information on rip currents at the Costa Rica National Tourism Board.

([http://www.visitcostarica.com/ict/paginas/folletos/banista\\_en.pdf](http://www.visitcostarica.com/ict/paginas/folletos/banista_en.pdf))



## Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off Is a Resounding Success!

By Judy Timson

What constitutes a successful event like the Chili Cook Off? Well, first off, it takes a village to pull off an event of this size. We had a great Committee, a strong volunteer base, a community of corporate sponsors, a fabulous commitment from donors, chili cooks coming from all parts of the country, chili judges to decide the winners, entertainment and an attendance that broke all records.

We don't want to spill the beans (excuse the pun) on all the details until we can fully report the results in total. Stay tuned for next month's article where we will spill the beans!

On behalf of the Chili Cook Off Committee and Hogar de Vida, we thank each and every one of you for opening up your heart and pocketbooks to make a difference for the children at Hogar de Vida. Donations are still being accepted in support of Hogar de Vida – please contact Judy Timson at [jteci@yahoo.com](mailto:jteci@yahoo.com) for more details.

Who's ready for next year's Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off?

## 25 Ways to Lead a More Creative Life



By Jan Yatsko

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

"We turn not older with years, but new every day." ~ Emily Dickinson

As we age it feels so comfortable to follow a routine. We have done it so many times we don't have to think, right? Routine kills passion, energy, the mind, relationships with people and creativity. Fostering creativity as we age benefits us in four different ways. Creativity strengthens our morale, it contributes to our physical health, it enriches our relationships and it is our greatest legacy ("The Second Half of Life" by Angeles Arriens). How can we connect to our creative fire? According to Maggie Kuhn, who founded the Gray Panthers, "Creativity and the joy of creativity are reinforced by new ideas. We must always be open to each new day, to the future, to new opportunities. They are there, but we have to be ready to see them." To get you started I have listed 25 ways to lead a more creative life.

1. Paint a door in your house with chalkboard paint and write or doodle away!
2. Walk or drive home a different route.
3. Sit outside and record in 15 minutes everything you see, hear, smell and feel. Look all around you. Write a poem based on your observations. Do this at least once a week.
4. Watch an inspirational and thought provoking Ted Talk online instead of a mind numbing TV program.
5. Draw your breakfast. Do it! You don't have to show it to anyone.
6. List 25 uses for a bandana, a brick or a pencil. Hint: Think of unexpected ways it could be used.
7. Rearrange your furniture and/or how a room is used. Moving things in a house stirs up the "chi" or energy.
8. Attend a Plein Air activity ([janyatsko@gmail.com](mailto:janyatsko@gmail.com)). Fun, adventure and creativity guaranteed!
9. Write your name using objects you found on the beach. Take a photo and post it on your FB Timeline.
10. Eat a bowl of soup for breakfast.
11. Do not watch or read news media for 5 days. That includes the TV, radio and anything on the internet. In its place, plan to do some of the other things on this list.
12. Take an online class on a different subject.



13. Think of 10 ways you could do a Random Act of Kindness and then do it!
14. Play with a small child and allow them to invent and control the activity.
15. Look at the same fern unfurling, a flower blooming, the same sky, etc. at the same time of day for 7 days.
16. Spend the night in your guest room.
17. Put your feet up on the bottom rung of the shopping cart and ride it to the return area.
18. Turn on dance music and dance to its rhythm while sitting in a rolling office chair.
19. Start to write your memoirs...your story.
20. Keep this quote at a place where you can see it every day. "If you're green, you're growing. If you're ripe, you rot." ~Anon.
21. Volunteer. You meet positive people and help someone at the same time.
22. Invite someone you know casually to lunch.
23. Share your talent or skill. Teach a class. Write an article for Atenas Today.
24. For 30 days, write one thing you are grateful for. When we are grateful, we have an open heart.  
An open heart keeps us learning and growing.
25. Interview a person you admire. They don't have to be famous. Think of thought provoking questions to ask them.

LAST... Sit outside and add five more ways you would like to lead a more creative life. When you get stuck, change your location. Above all, have fun. It is one of the most important components of a creative life!

## **The Atenas Today Art Gallery**

The Art Gallery is a regular feature of Atenas Today. Local artists are encouraged to submit photographs of their works to be included in the gallery, and to send a new picture each month. The artists may be contacted via the email addresses shown.



**The Belvidere & Delaware**  
**16" x 20"**  
**Oil on Linen**

Al Alexander  
*jeanandal@gmail.com*



**Harriet Sheppard**  
**hweyman@hotmail.com**

**Map Series #3**  
**25" x 25"**  
**Collage and acrylic on Board**



"Cowgirl"  
Watercolor

Dragonfly Animal Portraits  
[www.dianamiskell.com](http://www.dianamiskell.com)  
<http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com>



Larry Felder

"Three Oystermen"

60" x 44" oil on canvas, 2013

Email: [larry@feldergallery.com](mailto:larry@feldergallery.com)  
Blog: [www.larryfelderart.blogspot.com](http://www.larryfelderart.blogspot.com)  
Portfolio: [www.larryfelder.weebly.com](http://www.larryfelder.weebly.com)  
Gallery: [www.feldergallery.com](http://www.feldergallery.com)

## For the bloggers...



We are providing a list of *blogs* that might be of interest to our to our readers. By providing this information, we are not endorsing or accepting responsibility for any content found therein. Please contact us if you have any other blogs of interest that you would like to share. These are alphabetized for your easy reference.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Biolley Buzz   | <a href="http://bcrcoffee.com">bcrcoffee.com</a>   |
| Claudia Leon   | <a href="http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/">http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/</a><br><a href="http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/">http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/</a>   |
| Costa Rica: Sisters in Transition (Judy & Roxi)                        | <a href="http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com">http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com</a>  |
| De La Pura Vida Costa Rica<br>Diane Miskell<br>Dovile Vaigauskaite     | <a href="http://delapuravida.com">delapuravida.com</a><br><a href="http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com">http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com</a><br><a href="http://www.powerofindividual.org">www.powerofindividual.org</a>            |
| Fabulista De Costa Rica<br>Fred Ball                                   | <a href="http://fabulista DECR.blogspot.com">fabulista DECR.blogspot.com</a><br><a href="http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/">http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/</a>  |
| G. Martin Lively<br>Going Like Sixty                                   | <a href="http://fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com">fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com</a><br><a href="http://goinglikesixty.com">goinglikesixty.com</a>   |
| Julie and Rick in Costa Rica   | <a href="http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/">http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/</a>  |
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| Marietta Arce<br>Mi Chunche  | <a href="http://marisundays.wordpress.com">http://marisundays.wordpress.com</a><br><a href="http://michunche.com">michunche.com</a>  |
| Nadine Hays Pisani<br>New Life in Costa Rica                           | <a href="http://happierthanabillionaire.com">happierthanabillionaire.com</a><br><a href="http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/">http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/</a>  |
| Paul Furlong<br>Paul Furlong motorcycle blog                           | <a href="http://shootright.blogspot.com/">http://shootright.blogspot.com/</a><br><a href="http://eyeneo.com/">http://eyeneo.com/</a>   |
| Pura Vida Mommy  | <a href="http://puravidamommy.blogspot.com">puravidamommy.blogspot.com</a>   |
| Rubiatica  | <a href="http://rubiatica.blogspot.com">rubiatica.blogspot.com</a>   |
| Somewhere In Costa Rica<br>Su Espacio                                  | <a href="http://someswhereincostarica.com">http://someswhereincostarica.com</a><br><a href="http://www.suespacioate nas.blogspot.com/">http://www.suespacioate nas.blogspot.com/</a>   |
| The Real Costa Rica<br>The Very Worst Missionary<br>The View From Here | <a href="http://blog.the realcostarica.com">blog.the realcostarica.com</a><br><a href="http://theveryworstmissionary.com">theveryworstmissionary.com</a><br><a href="http://theviewfromherecr.blogspot.com">theviewfromherecr.blogspot.com</a> |

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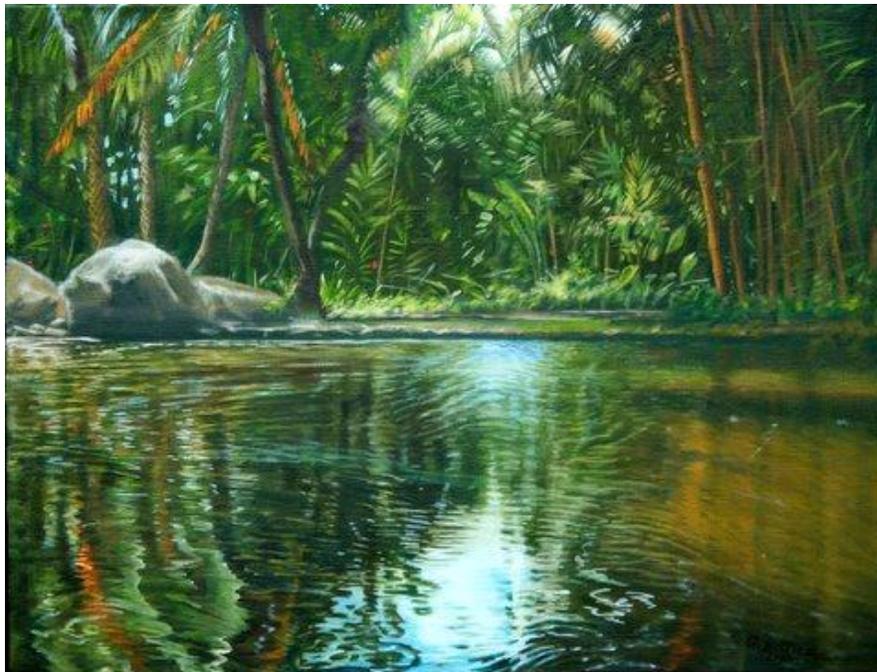
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