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Legal Posting

On this day, January 12, 2017, the following parties: Louis Bourgeois and Maite Duran Brito have reached an agreement pursuant to the following terms:

Mr. Louis Edward Bourgeois, a United States national, retracts a post made on Facebook on September 14, 2016, that read: "that Mrs. Maite Duran was being prosecuted for forgery and fraud and that she has broken some laws of Ecuador"; a situation that has led to judicial controversies and, considering the above and being that this behavior is not correct, I, Louis Edward Bourgeois, proceed to retract such post and other related posts. At the same time, I apologize to Mrs. Maite Duran Brito personally and publicly. It is his desire to offer a direct apology due to the complaint filed by Maite Duran against him as a private prosecution proceeding, he also agrees not to make any comments against Mrs. Maite Duran and her agency "Gringo Visas" on any social network media or other media outlets. This retraction is made in compliance with the decision made by the Judge of Penal Guarantees of the City of Cuenca.

Maite Duran's Response

As many of you know, over the past months on social media Louis Bourgeois has defamed Gringo Visas and me with false and untrue statements. Mr. Bourgeois declarations about Gringo Visas and me being investigated by the FBI and the Ecuadorian Government were entirely unfounded.

On the 12th of January, 2017 the Judge of Penal Guarantees of the City of Cuenca ordered Mr. Bourgeois to make a retraction of his previous false statements and make a private and public apology to me. I thank all my friends, as well as past and current clients who have supported me during this trying time.

CUENCA expats magazine

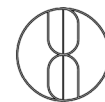
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Native New Yorker **Madelaine Barry** came to Ecuador about six months ago from Chiangmai, Thailand. Before that, she taught for eight years at an international school in Shanghai, China.



Aubree Jeanne loves drinking tea and playing with her two dogs Rumi and Sol. She lives for adventures in and around Cuenca, Ecuador where she currently resides as the owner and operator of RumiSol Yoga studio. When Aubree isn't teaching yoga you can find her playing in the kitchen or gallivanting in the outdoors.



Susan Burke March, Registered Dietitian, specializes in weight management and diabetes prevention. Well known for her weekly nutrition and health columns in CuencaHighLife.com, she collaborates with clients to create personalized programs to achieve health and weight goals without sacrificing the joys of living!
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Ed Lindquist is Managing Partner of Cuenca Expats Magazine. After receiving a master's degree from Northwestern University, he began a successful career in advertising and marketing - culminating with Toyota USA. Subsequently, Lindquist became President of Art Laffer's firm, before founding a global music company, which he later took public. Lindquist also has served as a consultant to Fortune 500 companies.



Susan Herron has enjoyed meeting fellow expats while writing the Meet Your Neighbor column. She has always loved photography and since moving to Ecuador in 2015 has found Cuenca to be a photographer's paradise. She has used her visual skills to create book covers for her husband's books as well as those of other authors.



Tina Paul is a retired naturopathic doctor and blogger. She along with her husband have a travel blog called www.retireearlyandtravel.com with tens of thousands of social media followers and over a million website visitors a year. She authored a weekly column for 2 Southern CA newspapers on health.
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Susan Schenck has a master's degree in Chinese medicine and is the award-winning author of two nutrition books: The Live Food Factor and Beyond Broccoli, as well as Expats in Cuenca: The Magic & the Madness. She gives healthy food prep classes in Cuenca.
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Keith Paul is a retired healthcare information technology executive and longtime website designer and blogger. He runs a travel blog called www.retireearlyandtravel.com with tens of thousands of social media followers and over a million website visitors a year. He is also an avid artist and photographer.
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Brian Gary - New Publisher

FYI New Publisher— Brian Gary & Other News

As many of you already know, Ecuador George is now World Traveler George. Not being in Cuenca, George could no longer serve as the Publisher of the Magazine and be our ambassador to the local expat community. We counseled with him and others about a replacement, and one name continued to pop up - Brian Gary's. Most of you know Brian from his music gigs, as a business owner (gym and travel), church worship leader, and all around "nice guy." As Brian is out and about in the community, he's sure to be in a position to be a positive influence for the Magazine. So Brian, welcome aboard! (to meet Brian go to page 18).

One of the joys of living in Cuenca is the low cost of beautiful fresh flowers. See and read about them on page 3. For those looking for gourmet cheese, there is something for you on page 24. And, for you artisan craft beer lovers, please go to page 00 for an extra treat.

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AQUA CENTRO

A New Holistic Approach to Cosmetic Procedures

by Ed Lindquist

Photography by Ruffolo Design and Courtesy of Dr. Salamea

AQUA CENTRO is the brain-child of Dr. Pablo Salamea. Many in the expat community already know Dr. Pablo for his humanitarian work as Medical Director of the gringo supported charity Helping Kids in Ecuador. Dr. Pablo is also a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons with a growing international reputation.

With over 3000 successful procedures performed, Dr. Pablo has encountered many patients who were either unclear about what aesthetic procedures were available or they were not knowledgeable about the best alternatives for their particular situation. Instead of a patient needing to interview different specialists at various locations, Dr. Pablo had a better solution: Why not organize a Center offering a full range of aesthetic specialists in one place for a holistic approach to both diagnostics and procedures. Not only would each patient save time and money, but the Center would also be able to provide a coordinated effort to meet all the aesthetic needs of various patients.

Dr. Pablo began the search to staff his new Center. He would provide the surgery but wanted to supplement his skill-set with specialists in aesthetics, dermatology, and nutrition. Dr. Pablo not only wanted to recruit the "best and brightest" of young professionals trained in the latest techniques but also searched for those possessing the same concerns for patient care, safety, and educating patients for successful post-op maintenance. Given the fact that a patient can receive the same cosmetic procedures and care in Ecuador for about one-third the price of the same in the States, Dr. Pablo senses a growth of English-speaking patients from the expat community here in Ecuador as well as North America. Anticipating this demographic, Dr. Pablo also required that each specialist be bilingual.

For those requiring post-operative recovery, AQUA CENTRO has arranged special rates at the ultra-deluxe Zahir 360, including personal recovery dietary service.



To ensure the utmost in patient care and safety, the AQUA CENTRO is located within Hospital Del Río and all procedures are performed at the same hospital, which provides a modern, safe, and high-tech surgical environment.



Dr. Pablo Salamea M.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive and Plastic Surgeon

Academic Training - Awards - Positions Held

- American Society of Plastic Surgeons
- Member of the Latin American Federation of Plastic Surgery
- Secretary – Ecuadorian Society of Plastic, Cosmetic and Reconstructive Surgery Chapter Austro
- Resurge US Foundation Volunteer Surgeon
- Director Rostros Felices Cuenca Foundation
- Director Helping Kids in Ecuador (HKIE) Foundation
- Associate Professor – Faculty of Medicine University of Azuay
- Head of Surgery at Vicente Corral Moscoso Hospital
- Head of Plastic Surgery Service Hospital Del Río

Services

- Eyelid surgery
- Rhinoplasty
- Otoplasty
- Chin Surgery
- Facial Rejuvenation Surgery
- Breast Lifting, Increase & Reduction
- Liposculpture & Abdominoplasty
- Buttocks & Calf Augmentation
- Body Contouring Surgery
- Reconstructive surgery (microsurgery and facial paralysis)
- Minimally Invasive Procedures (Botox & Facial Fat Transfer)



Lcda. Verónica Andrade T.

Nutritionist

Head of Nutritional Services at Hospital del Río

Academic Training

- University of Cuenca Accreditation Nutritional Science & Dietetics
- University of Europe Miguel de Cervantes Masters of Clinical Nutrition
- University of Favarola Argentina Post Graduate in Obesity

Services

- Integrated nutritional treatment
- Pre- and postoperative nutritional assessment
- Preparation of monthly food plans
- Monitoring and Controls
- Integrated treatment for weight reduction



Dra. Doménica Toledo G.

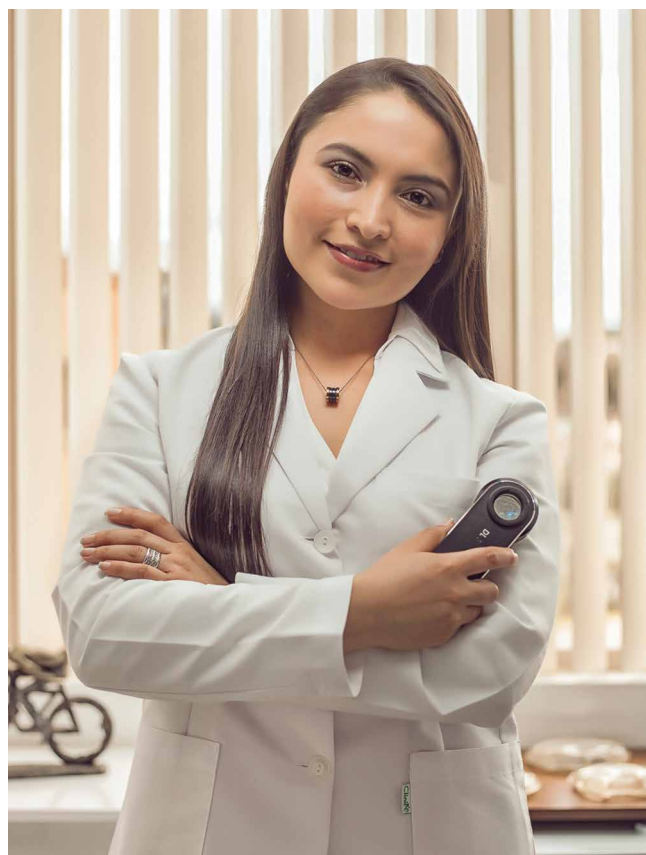
Aesthetics

Academic Training

- Catholic University of Cuenca
General Medicine
- University of the Balearic Islands, Spain
Masters of Aesthetic Medicine

Services Treatment for:

- Wrinkles
- Scars
- Baldness
- Under-Eye Bags
- Cellulitis
- Anti-Aging
- Platelet-Rich Plasma Therapy (PRP)
- Micropigmentation (Eye Shadow and Brow, Lip Fill)
- Facial fillers
- Hair treatments
- Permanent hair removal



Dra. Yadira Tapia P.

Dermatologist

Academic Training

- University of Cuenca
General Medicine
- University of Guayaquil
Dermatology

Services Treatments for:

- Diseases of the skin hair and nails
- Acne and Aftermath
- Keloid Management
- Skin Rejuvenation
- Peeling
- Melasma (Facial stains)
- Moles
- Detection and prevention of skin cancer
- Alopecia (Hair loss)
- Allergies
- Vitiligo treatments
- IPL
- Cryotherapy



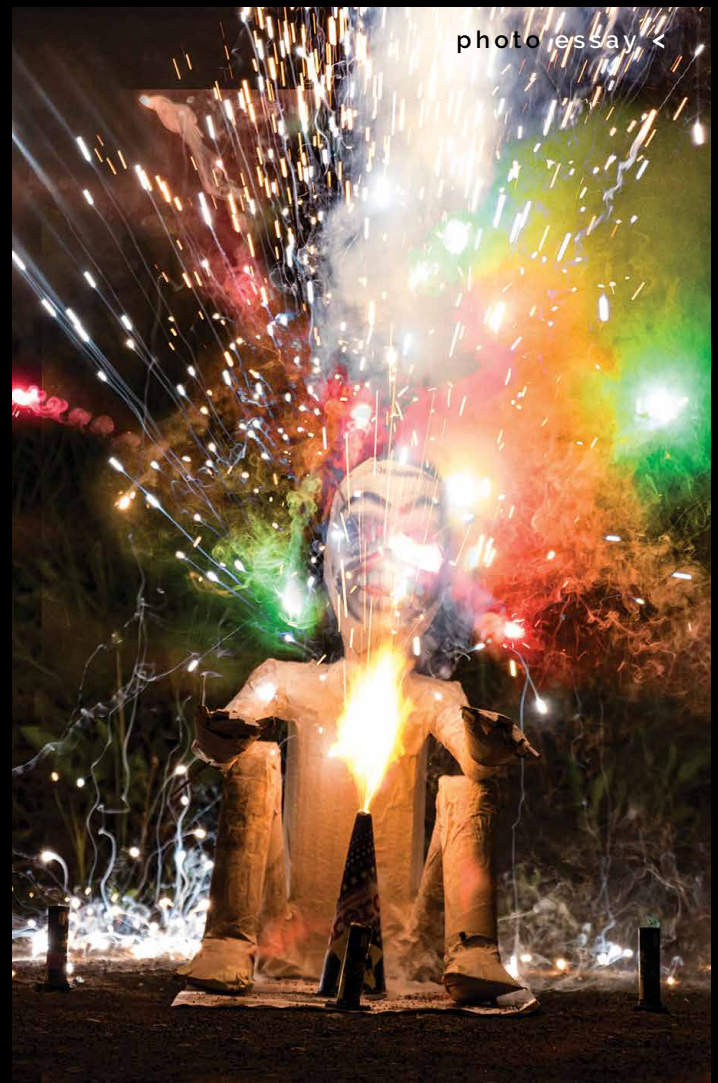
Colorful Lights of Cuenca

by Ruffolo Design Photography

Each year, Cuenca seems to outdo itself with Christmas lights and New Year festivities. This past holiday season was certainly no exception. It was the grandest we have seen in the past five years. Parque Calderón, the streets on El Centro, Otorongo Plaza, and even the Rio Tomebamba were aglow with brilliant colors.

The atmosphere grew increasingly playful with the approach of the New Year. Manigotes (effigies, large and small) carry wishes to release the old year and activate hopes for the new year. Set ablaze before midnight they release the old and herald the new. Some, stuffed with fireworks made spectacular displays, as you can see.





Abraham Lincoln Center

Building Bridges of Friendship

by Madelaine Barry - Photographs by Keith Paul



Current American Leadership

What building is the face of the United States in Cuenca? Where can you read Time, Wired, National Geographic, Architectural Digest and People in English? Who takes gently used adult and children's book donations? If you know the answer is the Abraham Lincoln Center, then you know what about 5,000 people who use their services every month knows.

The center was built to be a cultural meeting point between Ecuadorians and Americans in 1957. It offers Spanish and English lessons and does translations for nominal fees. Get a free library card to check out adult, young adult and children's books. Tap into eLibraryUSA, which accesses more than twenty databases of scientific books, magazines, and journals. Come to use their free Wi-Fi and computers. Ask the English-speaking attendant how to get into databases of the Department of State. It's a perfect place for reading and research!

The Abraham Lincoln Center is a non-profit organization that receives special project grants from the United States. Current director Alicia Boroto Carrasco took over from her father,

who was the director for 41 years. Back then Cuencanos had expressed a need for a place where they could learn English. The Lutheran Church stepped up to fill that gap, but the Catholic opposed it. A search began for a secular place, and after U.S. funding was secured, the Abraham Lincoln Cultural Center, now the Centro Ecuatoriano Norteamericano "Abraham Lincoln," was born.

Alicia proudly speaks of the improvements made through the years and the rising patronage. With a grant from the United States, that the Ambassador had talked about at his most recent visit, the center is in the process of building a 130-seat auditorium, planned to be finished sometime in January. It is state of the art with full audio/visual technology and will be able to host first-class cultural events. That's good news, as our city could surely use a venue that size.

Every year, the U.S. government sponsors scholarships for low-income high school students who show leadership qualities. The center teaches them computer literacy, American culture, and English, giving deserving Cuencanos a leg up to achieve success in higher education opportunities abroad.

When I said at the beginning that the Center is the face of the U.S. in our city, I asked if there was any unusual activity leading up to, or after, the recent presidential election. Alicia said there was not, but a few minutes later we heard a commotion in the street. We went to the windows to check it out, but it was only a protest for a local issue. Phew!

When the embassy in Guayaquil comes to offer passport and notarial services, the Center is where it takes place. It's quite a gem in our city!

Located at Antonio Borrero 5-18 y Honorato Vasquez - Phone: 07 282 3898 - Open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 12 pm and 3 pm to 6 pm.



Library space



Center Director and Librarian

Coconut

The Super Oil

by Susan Schenck - Photograph by Ruffolo Design Photography

Do you want more energy or a boost for your thyroid? Or help with weight loss? Would you like a nice skin lotion, lubricant, or hair tonic?

Coconut oil is a superfood with many additional uses. I use it in my coffee, as this luscious fat inhibits the release of insulin, a hormone that can cause you to store fat. It is one of the healthiest fats to use in cooking, as it remains stable even at high temperatures. Moreover, those who've attended my classes know that no raw dessert is complete without its rich taste. A quick recipe for a coconut oil treat: mix and blend by hand one tablespoon of coconut oil with one tablespoon of raw honey, then add one tablespoon of your favorite nuts.

Mike Patella, local expat chiropractor from the US, and his massage therapist wife Jing from China, hail coconut oil as the healthiest. "The medium chain triglycerides give us so much energy!"

Expat Liz Harrison of Chicago comments: "I grew up in Trinidad using coconut oil as a body lotion and sunscreen. I never, ever got burned. My sisters used it as a deep hair conditioner. Since their hair was very long, they'd apply it, leave on for two hours and then wash it. Their hair was very shiny."

Many expats have confided that they use this superfood as a lubricant for intimacy. "It works better than anything and without all the toxins."

I have found coconut oil to be the secret to a well-functioning thyroid. Often I notice that while everyone else is all bundled up in Cuenca, I run around in a T-shirt! I also eat about 400 calories a day of the stuff, and it never seems to get stored as fat, whereas if I overeat on carbs or other fats, I will gain weight.

Coconut oil is abundant in medium chain triglycerides that break down easily, are easily absorbed, and hence make for a quick energy boost. The liver processes medium chain fats by immediately converting them to energy instead of being stored as fat. Farm animals fed coconut oil are never obese, as they are on soybean oil and rancid fats.

Coconut oil also boosts the immune system, as it is anti-viral, antibacterial, and anti-fungal. It improves brain function and memory — some claiming it has even helped reverse dementia. Its fats are precursors to pregnenolone, an anti-aging hormone.

It can also be used in "oil-pulling"—first thing in the morning swishing a tablespoon of the oil around in the mouth for several minutes to pull out dental and oral bacteria. You can also go online to find how to use it for homemade beauty products, as well as a carrier for essential oils.

This super oil wasn't found here at all when I moved here in 2010, but now it is ubiquitous at local expat health stores and



Naturistas. For example, the new organic food store Pacha Kuna offers four brands—Ayamcoco, Nature Spirits, Alonso y Milena, and the well-known Oro Blanco. Because these brands are unrefined, the quality is superior and tastes better than any I've tried from the States.

An expat in one of my classes once remarked, "How can something so tasty be so good for you?"



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Owner and General Manager David Chillo Gallo welcomes all Cuenca Expat Magazine readers to an exceptional dining experience in the most beautiful restaurant setting in Cuenca. Going through a simple walkway from Benigno Malo between Raymipamba Restaurant and the New Cathedral you enter the courtyard an historic, intricately restored, centuries-old seminary building. On the second floor (accessible by both elevator and stairs) you'll find the new restaurant Sajana. You have a choice of outside seating overlooking the inside courtyard with stunning views of the New Cathedral Domes or indoor seating with magnificent views of Parque Calderon.

Sajana comes from the Quechua word meaning "satisfied" as you will surely be! The food is Ecuadorian neo-traditional with organic ingredients. Affordable

dishes run from appetizers like Llapingachos de Camaron (potato-based tortilla with shrimp) to Jipijapa Ceviches (a coastal favorite) to the Pampa Mesa house specialty feeding 3-4 guests. Wine, sold by the glass or bottle, is reasonably priced as are the cocktails.

Owner and General Manager David was mentored for seven years by the best in NYC. He understands that excellent food is not enough and places particular interest on customer service. The service is excellent and ensures an outing to be enjoyed by all.

Sajana is the perfect setting for Sunday afternoon conversation among friends with a glass of wine or a memorable, full-course evening dining experience. Sajana is open to serve you every day from 12 noon to 11 pm.

Sajana

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Domos de Cuenca, Earthquake Relief

by Madelaine Barry



Sally and Peter next to their dome tent

Perhaps you've seen the white domes set up on display around Cuenca? They are the brainchild of Los Angeles transplants and artists Sally Marr and Peter Dudar. When I say "artists," they are not just painters, but also sculptors, sketchers, filmmakers, environmentalists, photographers, garden designers and musicians. All of these talents come into play as they designed, built and will donate these temporary shelters to the victims of the April 16 Ecuador earthquake.

When news first reached them about the quake and resulting devastation, Sally and Peter thought how they could help residents of their adopted home country of five years. Pictures and first-hand accounts cemented their resolve to find a real path to action. Yes, they could begin to give concerts and donate money from the sale of their artwork, but, considering their many talents, was this enough? No, they felt that survivors shaken to their core, and continually enduring aftershocks, needed safe lodging. Cue the applause for Domos de Cuenca!

Peter's aptitude for sketching and knowledge of architecture set him loose to design suitable structures. He started out with, and never veered from, the dome. Ancient people who made teepees, wigwams and yurts certainly were onto something he figured, plus the circle is a comforting shape. The requirements

were simple but complex: easy to put up and take down, waterproof, lightweight, sturdy, yet not rigid, economical, and as much as possible, aesthetically pleasing. After many prototypes, what you see fits all those criteria.

They buy the actual materials from Coral Hipermercado and, from start to finish, one dome costs \$250. For the model that sleeps eight comfortably, it takes 36 meters of fabric. The material has flaps that tie down to the base. The circular base gives 13 square meters to live in, and the interior is nearly eight feet tall. PVC pipes act as the ribs that snap into the base and meet at the dome's apex. At the top is a removable circular "lid" that allows hot air and even smoke from a cooking source, to flow out. There is mosquito netting at the top to control bugs.

Upon completion of the first twenty, Ecuador's military will help with transport to Bahía, one of the hardest hit areas receiving slow help. The couple will then trust the people in charge of relief efforts there to distribute dome homes to those in greatest need.

If you can imagine living in an area of the domes, how could you tell which was yours since they all look the same? Sally has thought of that, as future domes will be in different colors. Plus she has reproduced copies of Ecuadorian art that will attach to the domes to serve as markers or "addresses" if you will.

With hundreds of people seeing these, there have been some who wanted to purchase one for their use. While flattered, Peter and Sally have suggested that interested consumers buy two; one for themselves and one to donate.

While Sally and Peter surely believe fortune has smiled favorably on them during their time here, they did suffer a financial setback that will directly affect their ability to place orders for more domes. After a 12-hour shift at the recent Cuenca festivals promoting the domes, a taxi driver taking them home drove off with a bag that had three microphones, a piano pedal and mic and instrument cables that will cost them about \$800 to replace. It's not so much for their property loss, but it affects their ability to perform and to raise money for future domes.

Parting thoughts from the couple are that they are continually gratified by the generosity of people they have met here, and that support their efforts. Ways you can help is direct cash donations, supplying them art or other items for them to sell, booking them for events and coming to their concerts. Even a hearty handshake and words of encouragement mean a lot to Sally and Peter www.VanishingKingdoms.com



CasaLista - Ecuador

High-Quality Pre-Fabricated Transportable Modular-Homes

by Cuenca Expats Magazine Staff - Photographs Courtesy of CasaLista

Nick Vasey & Santiago Rodriguez initially became well-known for the "Vilcabamba Real Estate Company" they founded in 2008. However, they recently re-focused on a new project, Casalista.

Casalista became possible because Santiago's grandfather, Roberto Layseca, is a veritable polymath! Architect, engineer, and designer extraordinaire, Roberto is the inventor of Casalista's amazing new brand of state-of-art, 100% transportable, modular-housing options. Roberto retired from his native Lima to Vilcabamba, to be with his family and work on the project fulltime. Casalista's five models (28m² to 55m² – current prices, US\$19,000 to \$30,000), are the latest iterations of more than ten years of design/refine/improve product development.

Casalista has just completed their very first modular-home (51m² – 600sq.ft. pictured below), and are busy raising awareness nationwide. Nick explained, "We were actually well underway with Casalista at the time of Ecuador's terrible earthquake. Naturally, after that, the project seemed to take on greater significance. Watching endless footage of the devastation, we knew we had an offering which could seriously benefit Casalista owners in the event of future quakes. We had an unbelievable response on Facebook (Casalista/Modulares) and now have over 10,000 followers."

Each modular-home is a very durable, solid-steel-framed structure. However, Casalista's true innovation centers around the

transportability of the homes ... which "fold" out of a box about the size of a small shipping container (see conceptual video on the homepage). The engineering is precise, and only one specialist tool is needed to erect or close the home.

A Casalista owner needs only a compacted flat-space, and availability of services. The homes are literally "plug & play." Set it up on-site, connect your water and power, move in your fridge and furniture, and be resident that very same night. And one day, if you want to move it elsewhere, you can! With these homes, you have that kind of flexibility.

There is flexibility also, in terms of potential uses, which are really limited only by imagination. Casalista homes can be used for personal accommodation, but also as offices, clinics, studios, libraries, etc. Private sectors like mining and construction will most certainly find them handy. The government could use them for general outreach, forestry, medical, policing, and/or emergency response.

Nick added, "Regarding the expat market, we believe many will be attracted to the investment potential, in terms of quick and easy rental income. Or perhaps use them while they're building (or for caretaker/guest residences). The fact they are instant, and that a building permit is usually not required, is a bonus!"

Interested parties should visit the Casalista website for comprehensive information, or just call Nick on 09 8611 9909 to arrange to view the current modular-home.



Rendering Unit interior



Unit in factory



Rendering of unit village

CasaLista Office/Factory – Vilcabamba, Ecuador.
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Richard & Amy Griffin

by Susan Herron



When becoming an expat you have the ability to really live your passion. Richard and Amy Griffin are both examples of this. Richard's passion is all about giving back. He is the President of Ecuador Cares, an Ecuadorian foundation founded by expats with the mission of helping disadvantaged children in Ecuador. Their current project is the NOVA school here in Cuenca, an immersion school with a mixture of students including 35 handicapped out of the 100 students.

Amy's passion is interior design and she works with expats who move here and need assistance with this.

Where did you live before moving to Cuenca?

R: I was raised in South Florida

A: I was raised in Atlanta GA, which is where we met

R: But the 19 years before moving to Cuenca we lived in Charlotte NC.

A: You didn't ask, but I thought I would mention, we have a son together and Richard has 2 children from a previous marriage.

What did you do before moving to Cuenca?

R: I was a CPA for 16 years and then went into the restaurant business and finally I owned a specialty food distribution company.

A: I attended design school and had a 30 year career as an interior designer

What were your family's and friend's reaction when you told them you were moving to Ecuador?

R: Reaction was similar to many - where is that? Do they have indoor plumbing? Great, when are you coming back?

A: Fortunately, our children's reactions were "wow that's cool, wish we could do that."

How long have you been here?

We moved in November 2013, so it has been three years.

When and why did you start thinking about living overseas?

R: Amy read an article about expat living in 2010 and got the notion started.

A: We had not really thought a lot about retirement. We felt it would probably be pretty boring in the States as we had seen and done most of it.

R: We researched many places online and settled on an initial visit to Cuenca in the summer of 2011.

A: We immediately fell in love with the city and decided this was it. We returned to Charlotte, sold everything and moved in Nov. 2013.

Why Ecuador and specifically Cuenca?

R: The proximity to the US, and especially FL.

A: Its stability.

R: What's not to love about the Latin culture, the Spanish

language along with the architecture, art, history and antiques.

A: Everything pointed to Cuenca.

What do you like to do for fun?

R: We love hosting dinner parties where Amy is the resident DJ.

A: I love gardening, and living in Chaullabamba we have the area in which to do so.

R: We have a car, so we enjoy getting out and driving on the back-country roads.

A: We love exploring Ecuador and other countries in SA.

What are your favorite things about Cuenca?

R: Living here has given us the opportunity to give back via our charitable efforts.

A: The weather here is almost perfect, at least my garden says so.

R & A: The many binding friendships we have developed here.

What are your least favorite things about Cuenca?

R: Bus fumes

A: That is about all we can think of.

What, if anything, do you miss most from "back home"?

R: Fall in the mountains.

A: We really miss the kids.

Are you completely retired? Do you work from here? If so, what type of work?

R: We both work a bit. As mentioned earlier, I am President of Ecuador Cares and this keeps me very busy.

A: I have continued with my interior design and work with expats who move here and need assistance. I am also experienced in new construction and remodeling.

Do you have any advice for people planning to move here?

R: Do your research! If possible, spend as much time here as possible before you make the move, and understand that you are a minority here; you must put aside your egos. If you are narrow minded and set in your ways, forget it! Being an expat anywhere is not always easy, so don't expect it to be. But, it can be the most rewarding thing you have ever done.

A: Don't make the decision if you are not totally and completely on the same page. Living in Ecuador can be one of the best things that will ever happen in your later years, it is totally up to the two of you to support each other and grow. Remember, though, Cuenca will not mend your marriage.

R: Try to learn some Spanish, it means a lot to the Ecuadorian people and will only enhance and make your life better and more interesting

A: Consider carefully the importance or lack of importance of your personal belongings. Do you need to bring everything with you or can you create a real home not just something that feels temporary once you get down here? Also, you will miss your kids and grandkids tremendously. Make sure you can handle this.

Do you have anything to share with newcomers to Cuenca?

R: This has worked for us so I will mention it again here. Get out of the city and explore the back-country roads. Get involved in a charity. When you give to others, you will receive more than you ever imagined.

A: Be open to all kinds of new friendships. Take advantage of all the wonderful fresh, organic foods.



Brian Gary

Brian Gary has lived in Cuenca for a little over 6 years. Brian plays piano with his band, Rubber Biscuit and is the owner of a gym called FuncFit Gym. He also works with the Gringo Network where he hosts trips to places like the Amazon, Whale watching, and Isla de la Plata. Brian feels fortunate to be the worship pastor at The Gathering here in Cuenca.

Where was the last place you lived before moving to Cuenca?

Just before moving to Cuenca, we were living in Franklin TN, but I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Why Cuenca?

We found after visiting other countries is that it is easy to find a place to vacation but rather difficult to find a place to actually live. When we made it to Cuenca, which was after Quito, most of the coast, and Guayaquil, there was something about the city that made it seem like a good place to try. Wasn't too big and not too small. Friendly people, very similar climate to SF area, and there was a great feel to the place.

What do you like most about living in Cuenca?

I have met some great people here and I'm fortunate enough to be out and about quite a bit and have learned to appreciate the diversity that is Cuenca. I have friends from not just the US and Canada, but from all over the world, and in every age group.

What's the magic formula for success?

When I figure that out I'll be sure to let you know! All I know to do is to try to not get caught up with what I don't have but to appreciate all the blessings that I DO have in my life, which are many!

Do you make friends easily?

I have always been able to build relationships easily and friendships develop from those relationships. I wouldn't say I have a lot of "close" friends but have many people that I love spending time with and cherish all the people in my life.

What are you most passionate about?

My relationship with my Lord and Savior touches every part of my life. Where I don't wear it on my sleeve nor push it on anyone, His love for me allows me to love everyone around me which has an effect on everything in my life from my family and friends, music, business, and everything else.

What accomplishment in your life are you most proud of?

I have a wonderful family and being able to be the dad to three wonderful children and grandpa to my grandchild is definitely the highlight in my life.

What song best describes you?

Where it seems like an overly obvious choice, this song has more meaning to me now that it ever has... Amazing Grace

If you could be a superhero what would you want your superpowers to be?

I can't imagine any power greater than the ability to heal. With all the disease and suffering in the world, I can't imagine a greater gift or superpower if you will.



Sharpen Your Mind with a **Game** of Bridge

by Keith & Tina Paul

Photographs by Keith & Tina Paul

Looking for a new social activity that challenges your mind and keeps you sharp? How about bridge? Playing bridge will develop logic, reasoning, quick thinking, patience, concentration and partnership skills as bridge is a partnership game. Bridge can improve memory and thinking in those at risk for cognitive decline. Even if you are never at risk for dementia or Alzheimer's, playing bridge can help you retain your mental sharpness.

Here in Cuenca, there is the Azuay Bridge Association. The Cuencanos have their own bridge house, and there is a North American group that plays there. They play what is called Standard American, Duplicate Bridge every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from 1 pm to 4:30 pm. The cost is only \$2 a day. You do not need to be North American to play. They welcome everyone. They are a friendly group that welcomes beginners as well as those of you who have played for 50 years. If you have only played party bridge, that is not a problem as there is not a big difference between party bridge and standard American. Duplicate simply means that others will play the same hands as you do and the best score will be the winner of that hand. You can go alone or with a partner. Everyone who shows up plays even if they have an odd number of people. They have player movements designed to accommodate every scenario.

Bridge can seem complicated at first, but once you get the gist of it, it can be addictive. My husband and I learned to play bridge this last March and have played regularly ever since. Bridge is so much fun. I can tell you that no one picked on or yelled at me when I made mistakes or when I still make mistakes today. You will never have to worry that you will be stuck and not know what to do. There is always someone who will take a look at your hand and help you through the process. My husband still uses his cheat sheet when he plays. It's all very friendly.

What if you don't know how to play bridge? Well, for only \$50 for an entire 8-week course, you can learn. There will be a class starting in February on Wednesday's and Friday's from 10 am to noon. You are welcome to bring and enjoy lunch with us after class and then stay for a while and watch us play. Watching players play the game will reinforce what you learn. If you're interested in signing up for the class or have questions, contact Bella at bjlacoste@hotmail.com.



A table of players at the bridge club



Bridge class being taught at the club



Bridge hand



Brian and Pablo

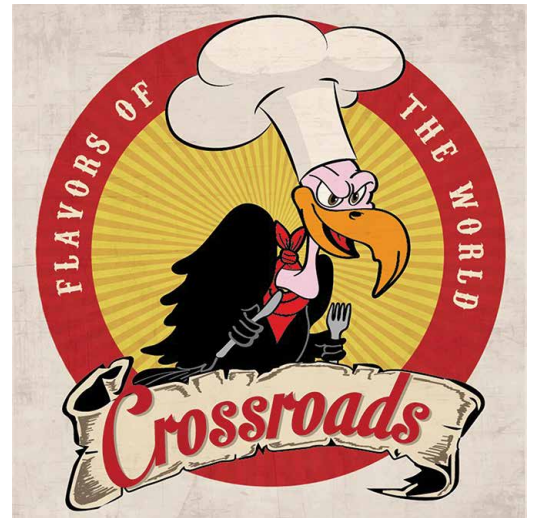
Expats enjoying plenty of comfort food and live music at Cross Roads on Luis Moreno Mora.

Photographs courtesy of Cross Roads

Expats in



Live Music



Cross Roads Logo



Milan and Roy



Jan, Pablo and Ed



Jannie, Regina, Fred, Larry and Kitty



Steven

Great way to spend an afternoon with wine tasting, and live music at Candor's beautiful location in Gualaceo.

Photographs by Melody Crabb and Ruffolo Design

the News



Wine Tasting Room



Melody and Jolene



Miriam and Wine Maker Abel



Learning about Dos Hemisferios Ecuadorian Wine



Peaceful Setting



Dos Hemisferios Ecuadorian Wine

Eating For One

When Everything Ordered Serves Two

by Susan Burke March, MS, RDN, LDN, CDE



Expats arriving in Cuenca often happily experience weight loss, sometimes significantly. For many, moving to Cuenca means walking regularly — instead of just from the parking lot to the store — sometimes for the first time in years. And after just a few months of more activity and more fresh fruits and vegetables, loose-fitting clothes reflect a new healthier lifestyle.

But then the pounds seem to creep up. Could it be because there are too many good restaurants with good-sized portions? Too many “gringo nights”...too many beers? No doubt, dining out can be hazardous to your waistline and weight. A recent 2016 study published in the *Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics* confirmed previous research that shows in the U.S. the average American adult eats meals or snacks at restaurants about six times a week, and the more frequent the restaurant meal, the more likely the person is to be overweight or obese.

And it's no different in any country around the world.

But dining out is one of the fun things to do in Cuenca. Besides dozens of ethnic cuisines, local Ecuadorian restaurants range from inexpensive almuerzos to elegant settings. How to stay social and stay healthy too? In Cuenca, we can dine around the world, and do it healthfully. I'm not going to talk about each and every ethnicity because that would be an entire book. The most important point to remember is that we can enjoy dining out in restaurants. We don't do it by “dieting,” we do it by dining healthfully.

My definition of diet is what I usually eat. I don't change my basic diet principles — or portion size — just because I'm not eating at home. On special occasions I will try a dish prepared with a rich sauce — but I'll ask for it on the side. On occasion, I'll enjoy a dessert — but I'll share it. If I indulged too often, the pounds would creep on.

So when I'm dining out, I take my diet with me. I go in fully informed and warned and enjoy the experience without compromising my health.

Know the Lingo.

Restaurant dining is a matter of choice and to make smart choices, it's important to be informed. If the menu doesn't detail the way the food is prepared, I'll ask.

There are a number of terms that makes it easy to distinguish between dishes that are well-prepared and those that are typically high in fat and calories. Frito means fried; Alfredo means creamy sauce; Con queso means lots of melted cheese.

Other terms that mean lots of added calories are creamy, crispy, breaded, crunchy... also loaded, smothered, and stuffed.

In both English and Spanish, it's all in the preparation. Here are some of the healthiest:

- **On the side** — en el lado — heavy sauce may undo even the healthiest cooking techniques. Remember those four little words—“On the side, please!”
- **Roasted** — asado — A good choice is roasted fish or chicken. Any food that is roasted will typically be lower in calories and made delicious by slow cooking in the oven.
- **Baked** — al horno — Cooked slowly with gentle heat. Pollo al Horno, Pescado al Horno — baked chicken or fish are a good choice, and don't forget that some restaurants tend to sauce baked foods heavily. Request salsa en el lado.
- **Grilled** — a la plancha — Cooked directly over the heat source, with coals or a gas grill.
- **In parchment paper** — en papillote is a French term meaning “in parchment” and is a method of cooking in which the food is put into a folded pouch, typically parchment paper or aluminum foil. This method makes a tender and healthy dish, usually fish or chicken breast, with added herbs and citrus, and little fat. Look for this one — request that the chef does not add butter or fat to keep it succulent without added calories — no agregue grasa por favor.
- **Poached** — escalfado — Cooked in simmering broth, water, or wine: traditionally fish or chicken, and the result is tender, with little or no added fat. Poached salmon is a treat — the fish comes out moist and delectable — for example, salmón escalfado.
- **Sautéed** — salteado — Cooked quickly over direct heat, with just a little fat or broth added. Depending on the amount of added fat, sautéed foods can be high in calories but typically is better than frito or fried.
- **Steamed** — al vapor — Cooked over boiling water in a covered pan. Steamed foods are usually lightly cooked, remain crunchy, and retain their nutrients. Look for steamed vegetables (verduras,) fish (pescado,) shellfish (mariscos,) or chicken (pollo,) especially in Asian food restaurants.

Finally, think about resigning from the speed-eaters club. Practice eating slowly, and you'll be amazed how much more satisfied you are with less. My favorite restaurant term is, “Para llevar, por favor.”

Yoga

Why Not Try It?

by Aubree Jeanne Sorteberg - Photographs by Sara Bradley

Most likely you have seen the photos, watched the videos, shared a meme, or read an article about it. Happy people in strange positions, with shining faces, praising the benefits of yoga. Today more than 36 million Americans in the United States reportedly practice yoga. In the year 2017 more than a third of North America citizens say they will give yoga a try.

Why the yoga craze? Yoga has been proven to have numerous health benefits; including cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, balance, and strength. Yoga can reduce stress, and the symptoms stress causes; such as anxiety, depression, and tension. A yoga practice has been shown to lead people to a healthier lifestyle, introducing the benefits of eating sustainably and living actively.

How exactly can a yoga practice lead to so many wonderful benefits? It sounds like a miracle. What exactly is yoga? Yoga in a word means "union." It is a practice rooted in over 5000 years of Indian traditions. It is the uniting of mind, body, and spirit to achieve harmony in the present moment. It is a physical practice based on compassion and self-acceptance.

So why not give it a try, everything until now sounds great. It is because of those photos. Those pictures and videos of young fit looking individuals. Of young women and men who are flexible and athletic, it makes yoga look exclusive, only accessible for stretchy, bendy, or spiritual people. Sheryl Cooper, a client with RumiSol Yoga here in Cuenca says, "I am a 70-year-old disabled woman; yoga is the only feasible exercise for me. It heals and opens my body, my mind, and my spirit." The yoga world is about accepting every Body, no matter the limitations. Yoga is not perfection; it is not about doing beautiful poses and posting them online to show your

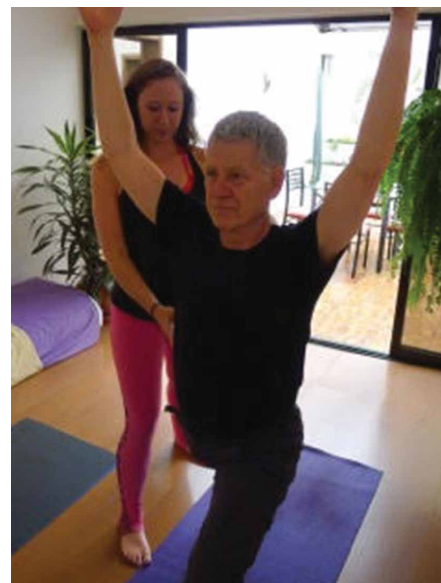
friends. It is about building awareness in your body, tuning in with yourself in the present moment. It is a journey of learning, observation, and self-discovery. Every pose can be modified to suite physical limitations; often it depends even on how we feel that day. In a safe yoga practice, we use props such as blocks, straps, chairs, or blankets; modifying the pose to fit the individual's needs.

“

I wanted to be stronger but didn't want to go to a gym, so I gave yoga a try and fell in love." Says Taylor Brooke, an expat living here in Cuenca. "I'm more aware of my breath during the day, and it centers me. My mood benefits from the meditative aspects of yoga. Because I'm getting stronger every day, I'm able to engage in physical activities that I had not thought would be possible for me. Yoga is so much more than an exercise class; it's a journey.

If we stay true to what yoga means: Union, then we can move forward by creating a yoga community that truly unites every individual. It is a world where we practice yoga safely, with mindful awareness, sharing the benefits together.

Stay tuned to learn more about Cuenca Expats Magazine's first yoga retreat during the month of March. Join RumiSol Yoga teacher Aubree Jeanne Sorteberg at our retreat location Inti Kamari; located in the Yunguilla Valley, a beautiful center for yoga and meditation, perfect for those interested in learning more.



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