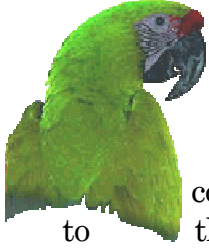


CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter March, 2013



Costa Rica

Costa Rica translates as "rich coast" in English, and any visitor to the beaches or around this part of the tropics would agree that this small country in Central America is blessed with a wonderful abundance of natural beauty and wildlife.

Costa Rica continually receives awards based on the sustainability of its environmental policies, and is one of the leading eco-tourism destinations on the planet. In 2009 the New Economics Foundation ranked the country, originally known as Tiquicia, as "the greenest country in the world" as well as "the happiest nation on the planet". The latter title was re-awarded in 2012.

Costa Rica is one of the few countries in the world to have no standing military. As a result, it hosts the headquarters of the United Nations' University of Peace.

The largest city, San José, was established as the capital in 1824. Taking over from the old capital Cartago, the population of San José has grown to around 300,000, while the metropolitan area has over 2 million. Every August there is a pilgrimage from the new capital to the old, called La Romeria, where

approximately half the population of the entire country travel the 22 kilometres by foot to visit a statue of the Virgin Mary.



Ponoramio National Theatre San Jose

The country is, despite being one of the smallest, the most economically developed of the Central American countries and the economy is stimulated by many immigrants from other Central American countries, particularly Nicaragua. It is estimated that between 10%-15% of the population are from neighbouring Nicaragua. The currency is the Colon, which takes its name from the explorer Cristobal Colon, or Christopher Columbus as he is more commonly known in English.



Costa Rican food revolves around the main staples of rice and beans. "Gallo Pinto" is the traditional breakfast, consisting of eggs, rice and beans. "A casado" is commonly eaten for lunch, and is a variation on the same theme,

but including pork, chicken or beef in place of the eggs, and a fried banana to go with it. Both meals can be found for a few dollars, but cheap food is difficult to come across. Many products are around the same price or even more expensive than in the USA, while the average income in Costa Rica is considerably lower than in the United States.

The country attracts many volunteers, who come to work to help protect the endangered wildlife. Sea turtles and sloths are among those that find their habitat threatened by the development of the country.

Article by Craig

Net News

NET LESSONS: Are you too busy to come to CROSSROADS?....Try our *lessons on the Internet!*

SITE OF THE MONTH:

You can find the "happy planet index" home page here:
<http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: "Time marches on", as is often said, and here we are again in spring, the season of most changes. The rooftop garden is starting to bloom and on sunny days we can even sit outside. What a contrast to only a few weeks ago! With change and new growth there is always progress and I expect to see this in the coming months here at Crossroads with many new experiences for us all.

Junko Says: Learning English while working in a specific field is a great idea. I know of a good way to do this and travel at the same time! EF has Internships and Volunteer programs available. You can get involved in a field that interests you while you develop your new language skills overseas. You're not paid a salary and it's only part-time, but what a great opportunity! Check in with me in the office for the details.



Matthew Says: Spring is here so I can walk my dogs in the sunshine. We like to walk along the river and watch the ducks and cranes gracefully stroking the surface of the water with their paddles as they lift off before swooping up into the air to look down on us as we trot along aimlessly and listlessly wondering what all the fuss is about.

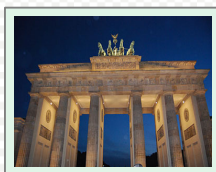
Craig Says: Over the course of this month, I will be saying farewell to you all, and at the end of March, to Matsuyama. I am leaving to take up a new position in a university in Hyogo prefecture which will begin delivering degree courses in English in 2015. It has been a pleasure to teach you all and I hope you continue coming to learn with the Crossroads team for many years to come!



Arnaud Dit: Mars était le Dieu de la guerre Romain. Il est représenté par un bouclier et une lance, ce qui forme le symbole très connu des maies. Mars est aussi une planète de notre système solaire. Les scientifiques pensent actuellement qu'il existe encore de l'eau liquide souterraine sur Mars. Et peut-être, des bactéries.

NOTICE BOARD

Working Holiday Visas



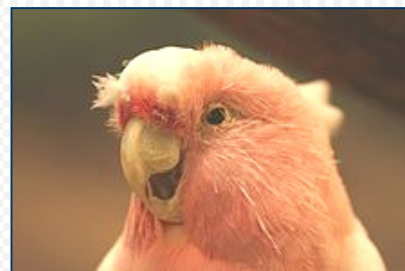
A Working Holiday Visa is issued to encourage young people to experience different cultures through travel. You can travel, work and live in a number of countries that issue these visas. They include the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. In the case of the U.K., this visa is good for 2 years instead of the usual one year.

Also, for those who just want to visit, a Japanese citizen can go to most EU countries for 3 months without even requiring a visa! Again, in the case of the U.K., you can go visa-free for up to 6 months.

Crossroads is affiliated with EF who have a very well organized world-wide program supporting Working Holiday travellers, travellers for study or just travellers.

If you are interested in getting a working holiday visas, or want to study overseas, or just travel, ask Junko in our office and she can help you with your plans.

Pet's Corner



COOKIE the Cockatoo

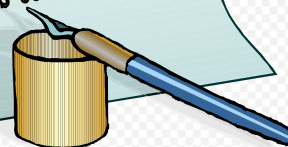
Well, OK, Cookie is not exactly a pet, but if you are thinking of having a pet that will stay with you for a very long time, you might think about getting a parrot like Cookie.

Cookie lives at Brookfield Zoo in Chicago now, but he is actually an Australian "Major Mitchell's Cockatoo" given to the zoo in 1934! That's right, in 1934 when he was only 1 y/o. He will be 80 this month!! ...You can tell he's old by his bald patch...

He's an inspiration for those who want a "friend for life", and a parrot might just be that for you!

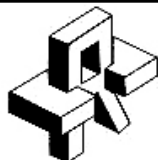
A THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

What matters in life is not what happens to you, but what happens to others because of you.



Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.



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