

Cotacachi's Health Matters

Summer 2013

Issue 2

Written by Mary Grover Edited by Lezley Suleiman

CotacachisHealthMatters@gmail.com

A Very Big Thanks!!!

Thanks so very much to everyone who gave the first issue of Cotacachi's Health Matters such a warm reception! All of your positive comments and suggestions were greatly appreciated! I hope the newsletter continues to provide our community with important and helpful information. As always, please feel free to send your comments, suggestions, complaints, ideas for upcoming articles, etc to

CotacachisHealthMatters@gmail.com

Also, I welcome the submission of articles from readers on health related topics!

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And the Survey Says.....

Starting with this issue I will be conducting occasional surveys to collect useful information from our readers. Keep in mind that these surveys are optional, informal and very unscientific! The results of each survey will be published in the following issue.

This issue's survey is about [health insurance](#)! Here are the questions:

1. Do you have any type of health insurance coverage here in Ecuador? Why or why not?

2. If you do have insurance:

- *What type of insurance do you have?
- *What is your monthly premium?
- *What type of experience have you had using the insurance (positive and/or negative)? Would you recommend your insurance to others?

3. If you don't have health insurance:

- *Why don't you have health insurance?
- *If you knew more about the various plans available in Ecuador would you be more likely to purchase insurance?

If someone out there in the reading audience has had experience selling/buying health insurance (professionally) in your former life and might be interested in gathering information about the health insurance options available to us here in Ecuador, I would be glad to assist. It might be possible to have the insurance companies send an English speaking representative to Cotacachi to make presentations about their product. I know some companies have already done this, but without providing much follow-up. Please let me know if you are interested in helping. It's not something I have to time to do all by myself!

Send your survey responses to me at:

CotacachisHealthMatters@gmail.com

Sources of Fresh Organic Produce in Cotacachi

Aside from your own home grown organic vegetables, as well of those of your friends and neighbors, here is the next best thing.....

1)La Querencia (which means “that which you have always wanted”)

General Manager: Rodolfo Cortina

La Querencia is owned and operated by Rodolfo and his family. They previously owned Casi Olivia Restaurant.

La Querencia is a certified organic farm in San Antonio del Punge, an indigenous community in Cotacachi county. Founded in 2008 and certified in 2009, it is now certified by BCS in Ecuador and in Europe, with additional certifications from the USDA in the U.S. and Kosher (K) for the Jewish community.

The family began growing produce for their own consumption, but have had many requests to share it with the public. Their produce is available for purchase on Thursdays in Parque San Francisco in front of La Espinoza (next to Eddie’s) from 11 AM until 12:30 (más o menos)

If you are not already on their mailing list, you can contact them at casiolivia@gmail.com

2).Finca Orgánica Kurikindi (Kurikindi means hummingbird in Kichwa)

This beautiful organic farm is located in the community of El Batán, just outside of Cotacachi. It is owned and operated by Aya Wada and Hector Flores.

According to Aya “Our goal is to contribute to a process of social and ecological change, one that will lead to a future where all our communities have daily access to healthy, delicious and socially just foods. Apart from that we grow our vegetables organically, we do not use new packaging. Any packaging, for example plastic bags, is recycled. Enjoying our food allows you to be part of this process. “

They sell their organic vegetables at their farm every Thursday from 2:15 PM till 4PM. It’s worth the trip to see the farm, but they also do home delivery on Friday mornings. In the future they hope to be selling in Cotacachi.

Each week they usually offer basil, lettuce, Italian parsley, curly parsley, cilantro, green cabbage, celery, hierba maggie, DAIKON, ají , fennel, carrots, turnip, leek, MIZUNA, tomatoes, etc.

They also offer fresh homemade bread and fresh milk. They have delicious chocolates made from organic cacao from the parish of Salinas in the province of Bolivar. The chocolates are made by a microenterprise managed by the local people working on a fair trade basis. They are also working on processed food using their organic vegetables. These products will be offered in the near future.

If you are not already on the mailing list for Finca Organica Kuridindi, you can reach them at : Finca Kurikindi <fincakurikindi@gmail.com>

3). PRANA ENERGIA VITAL

Owners: F.Xavier .and Minny Solórzano

González Suárez 1111 y 10 de Agosto, Cotacachi

(5936) 255-4177, (5939) 9496-3815 pranaev@aol.com

Tuesday is their fresh organic produce day. This includes varieties of: lettuce, radicchio, carrots, beet, turnip, Swiss chard, zucchini, string beans, broccoli, cauliflower, basil, cilantro, thyme, tarragon, sage, parsley, chives, leeks, rucola, radish, tomatoes.

Much in demand are their basil, leeks, chives, broccoli, lettuce and carrots. Arrive early to find your favorites.

The produce comes from Amigos de la Vida Foundation (AMI) which is a non governmental organization that cares for at risk children. The produce is grown organically to provide food for the children as well as to give an opportunity to learn about the garden.

AMI has been caring for vulnerable, at risk children and orphans for about 20 years. Cotacachi is a new location for them and at present they have five children living under their roof. AMI provides a safe, respectful, supportive environment for the children's early development. Their goal is to find nurturing, positive adoptive homes for all the children who come to them. ' Nuestro Hogar' (meaning Our Home) is the name of their facility and AMI's primary project.

AMI shares its extra produce with Prana in exchange for products from Prana. Any produce not sold at Prana will be donated to the soup kitchen. This is just one way in which Xavier and Minny contribute to the welfare of the community.

As Xavier put it , "Prana Energía Vital seeks to contribute to people's welfare through fostering individual and collective harmony and providing organic, natural and alternative products and services. In that regard, offering organic produce means sharing a healthy lifestyle rather than just making a profit. We are what we eat and what we do. "

In addition to organic produce on Tuesdays, please stop in and visit Xavier and Minny's beautiful store and see their large offering of gourmet foods , natural products and books.

LAVENDER- THE MOST ESSENTIAL OIL

by Lezley Suleiman

Lavender is one of the most beloved essential oils in the world. It has been used for many centuries in soap and perfume and its healing qualities are well known.

It has been called a first aid kit in a bottle. I had to stop myself last issue from attempting a list of all the things it is used for. Whole books have been devoted to the subject. The short list of traditional uses includes; sleep disorders, skin issues, cooking, digestive problems, high blood pressure, insect repellent, insect bites, headaches, burns, traveling needs, as an anti-microbial and muscle relaxant. Within these categories lie people's favorite recipes for food and beverages and Auntie Tillie's best knock- you- over- the- head sleep aid. Good for hangovers while I'm at it.

Try to find the best quality oils for all purposes. That way you know you are getting the full strength of the herb and not concentrated pesticides and additives. You need less of both herbs and oils when the product is pure. You may be disappointed in the results otherwise. Never ingest oils that are less than therapeutic grade and be sure it is an oil that can be ingested before you forge ahead.

Lavender is an oil I try never to be without. It's the one oil I travel with. I notice when I run out and try not to let that happen. It's great for sunburn, headaches, stomach distress and even motion sickness. I make sure I put some on my hair before I take long bus rides or fly for that matter as a lice deterrent. I sprinkle some on my bed in hotels for those skeezy bedbugs people are freaked out about. I use it in my home as a flea repellent and on my cat....though i confess she hates it and the jury is out about its effectiveness. Even the nasty Cotacacheno black flies are repelled by it and it will soothe the bites of the flies that escape your vigilance. Before I fly I also apply it to my feet. This is especially true in the US where we have to remove our shoes for TSA. Its anti-microbial effect makes me feel a little better about sharing foot space with everyone. It's also relaxing which helps in that situation. And Aunt Tillie was always sure to include some in her drawers (no, not her knickers) to keep things fresh and bug free.

It can be used 'neat', which means without a carrier oil, though I would do a skin test first. Children respond well to it for all kinds of situations. Used in the bath, for insect bites, even in lemonade, lavender is an oil for all seasons.

Flu season seems to be coming up again and I've been asked about alternative immune boosters as I am not a proponent of vaccines. Lavender does work to keep the nasties at bay. I will often wear it on my clothes around my face if people seem to be coming down with 'grippe' around here. I can say it went a long way in keeping my kids healthy in school. There's even a story about the tanners in Europe maintaining their health against the plague because they used lavender in tanning their leather!

When weird disease scares hit the news I do have other oils I rely on (as well as other techniques). Those would be considered the 'hot' oils like cinnamon which can often be found in mixtures like Thieves from Young Living and OnGuard from DoTerra.

Lavender grows well in Cotacachi. If you learn to recognize it you will see it everywhere. And it propagates easily from clippings. The benefit to the oil is that it's convenient and concentrated. So I have both as I can't resist the plant. When I see people trimming their plants I take a few clippings for my terrace garden. Provence is on my bucket list as a must visit. That and a tour of the vineyards. Anyone interested?

Cotacachi Health Factoids:

Dog Bites Dog bites appear to be on the rise in Cotacachi. The following information was obtained from the Sanitary Engineer at Hospital Asdúbal de la Torre (the local hospital). In the town of Cotacachi (not the entire county) in 2012 there were a total of 20 reported dog bites. In 2013 (Jan-July) there have been 19 dog bites reported so far. All of the canine perps were rabies free. In April of this year the hospital conducted a rabies vaccination campaign during which they immunized 2,806 dogs. Rabies vaccinations are available FREE at the hospital every Friday afternoon from 2PM-4PM. I have seen them reuse syringes on dogs, so you might want to stop by a pharmacy on your way to the hospital and pick up a new syringe. They aren't expensive.

Hepatitis A According to Dra. Luz Medina Vega, the dry season is the time when nonimmunized people are most likely to get Hepatitis A. The reason for this is that fields are more likely to be irrigated with contaminated water during the dry season than in the rainy season. Remember to always wash your fruits and vegetables with some sort of bacteriocidal solution like KILOL (grapefruit extract) before consuming. These types of washes can be purchased in TIA or Monica's SUPERMERCADO. Also, avoid raw or unpeeled fruits and vegetables when eating out unless you are very familiar with the restaurant.

Dra. Luz is a general family medicine practitioner here in Cotacachi. Her office is located on Pedro Moncayo between 9 de Octubre and Garia Moreno, phone number 099 944 7657. She does not speak English. I recommend her highly.

If you are interested in Hepatitis A and/or immunization information, please refer to Issue #1 of Cotacachi's Health Matters. If you need a copy, send a message to me at CotacachisHealthMatters@gmail.com

DDT Keep in mind that even if someone tells you their produce is organic, unless you have other proof of that fact, be cautious in accepting someone's word. There are stores here that sell many agricultural chemicals. On the shelves of some of those stores is DDT. Just to prove that DDT can indeed be purchased here, a trusted friend of mine went to one of the chemical stores and purchased it. The most concerning fact about the whole thing is that the DDT had no warnings or cautions listed on the container! So, if it's very easy to purchase DDT and DDT-like chemicals and if they come with no warnings or precautions, they're likely being used by people who have no idea what they actually are nor what their potential effects are. It's best to err on the side of caution!

SCENAR TECHNOLOGY HAS LANDED IN COTACACHI

by Lezley Suleiman

The Scenar (pronounced skaynaar) device is a small, handheld, biofeedback technology developed by the USSR to keep their cosmonauts healthy in space. When the wall came down so did the secrecy surrounding this amazing innovation. It looks like it came directly from the original Startrek series and would do Dr. McCoy proud. I have been using it for a variety of health challenges for almost two years. I brought a small version with me to Cotacachi thinking I would just keep it for personal use. However, when I discovered that it was useful for a full range of issues facing any number of us I decided to up the ante and get trained with the professional version. If you would like more information or would like an appointment I can be reached at lezley123@gmail.com.



”RITMSCENAR Professional Device was developed and designed by OKB RITM Russia. The Scenar biofeedback device emits a harmless electrical impulse that stimulates the body's own pharmacy via the skin helping to relieve and manage pain. This bio-energy feedback alters output every few milliseconds inducing remarkably rapid healing, allowing the body to heal itself by initiating release of biological activators. RITMSCENAR can be used as a stand-alone therapy or in harmony with other methods. RITM scenars have been manufactured in The Netherlands since 2001 with license of the design bureau OKB RITM Taganrog, Russia. Kosmed International scenar devices are certified for safety and environment (CE mark) medical devices 2A by British Standard Institutions, which permits RITM scenars on European markets. The device has been FDA listed for pain relief, muscle re-education, and stress reduction. “ This information was taken from www.scenar-usa.com .

Seasonal Flu in Ecuador

You may have seen new signs in local pharmacies that say any purchase of anti-flu medications or analgesic medications requires a written prescription from a doctor . This current restriction is intended to prevent people from self-medicating, which in turn can mask the symptoms of more serious illness with the possible end result of death. Local hospital officials recommend that individuals seek medical attention if they develop a high fever, headache, cough and difficulty breathing (instead of self-medicating).

According to local hospital authorities, there have been 200 cases of AH1N1 flu in Ecuador this flu season with 20 related deaths.

Prevention is the best measure!

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get [vaccinated](#) each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are [flu antiviral drugs](#) that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.

1. Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

3. Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>

<http://www.hoy.com.ec/noticias-ecuador/se-eleva-a-34-la-cifra-de-muertos-por-el-virus-de-gripe-ah1n1-en-peru-587743.html>

<http://www.hoy.com.ec/noticias-ecuador/50-farmacias-sancionadas-por-la-venta-de-antigripales-587215.html>

Thanks to Dan Delgado for his contribution to this article!

Volunteer Opportunity

You may or may not be aware of the fact that on Calle 24 de Mayo there is a senior citizen's home for women. It's an amazing place.....very clean, the staff is delightful and everyone who lives there seems to be extremely happy!!!! The facility is run by a group of Catholic nuns whose headquarters is located in Chile. You may have seen the director in the main plaza with many of her residents doing exercises, singing Christmas songs or just having a good time.

Two ex-pats have been volunteering at the facility and they would like to get together with others who might also enjoy volunteering there. It's a very welcoming facility and the sky is the limit as far as potential volunteer opportunities. If you have the interest and time to volunteer, or if you'd just like to learn more about this wonderful Cotacachi resource, please contact Mary Cordes at cordes2011@hotmail.com or Diane Luccia at thomasnbaker@yahoo.com

That's all for this issue! See you next time! If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, please send me a message at CotacachisHealthMatters@gmail.com

Please remember that I do not claim to be a writer and this newsletter is provided as a public service. Consult your medical provider for any health issues and remember to