

Lin & Larada's Christmas Letter



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Prepared & Moved to Panama

So we spent the summer clearing out the house. We hired Eric Bender to do a three-day estate sale. He was fabulous on the prep work, during the sale and afterwards.

We also rented a storage unit in Tijeras for items we couldn't let go of!

On September 2, we flew to Panama City with six suitcases and four carry-on pieces.

On September 3, we received our permanent visas! Another piece of the puzzle done.

Our trusty Uber driver, Joel and his friend, Robert drove us from Panamá City to our new home in Boquete in two cars. We had a miscommunication with Joel because we only told him about the six suitcases. We forgot the four carry-ons which forced us to do two cars, but it turned into an adventure of a lifetime. Lin rode with Joel, and I rode with Robert. We had Spanish and English lessons the whole way.

When we arrived, we hit the ground running. Our new home was partially furnished with twin beds in our bedroom and the other two bedrooms and a patio table and chairs in the living room.

So the first order of business was a large screen TV that sat on the floor for several days until we bought a stand for it. What made our first two weeks here go easily is our neighbor, John, offered to drive us anywhere we needed to go. We made a couple trips to David to buy furniture about thirty minutes away.

We bought three dehumidifiers to deal with the humidity to protect our clothes and technology! It's amazing how much water there is in the air here.

The bad news is we both got sick—a flu going around here that required a set of shots for three days. I also got a sinus infection and an ear infection.

On September 19, we celebrated Lin's 85th birthday with two couples and Jason. One couple lived miles from us in the east mountains of New Mexico and helped us a lot in the specifics of the move. Now they live within miles of us here—go figure!



The view of Volcán Barú we have out our living room window

Life in Panama

Several things happened that made our transition here go so smoothly. First, Jason, the man who was our tour guide in May ended up being our landlord. We really connected to Jason

Next, we became acquainted with two square and round dance friends who already rented a house from Jason's family, and one of his houses came available at the end of July. He held it for us, knowing we were coming September 2. We had seen the outside of the house but not the inside. Ruth, the square and round dance friend, sent us detailed pictures of the inside and measurements.

So having a house and a community already established made the transition here so much easier

We bought a car after renting it for a couple weeks. We have a great dealer to work with.

At the end of October, Lin and I flew to Panamá City and finished the process to receive our e-cedula, a national ID card.

Then I took a five week trip back to the states to do ranch business with my brother and attend a square and round dance festival I helped create in Albuquerque.

Life here is laid back and wonderful. We are ending the wet season where we started the day with sunshine and a beautiful view of Volcán Barú out our living room window Then most afternoons the rains hit.

Everything is green and rich—we live on the edge of a jungle!

Each week, we regularly go to two markets on Tuesday and on Thursday. We buy fruit, vegetables and locally produced items there.

We attend Jason's basketball games twice a week now and yell and scream. We have team shirts that match the player's shirts, thanks to another couple we met

I just released my tenth book, so I have continued writing. The title is *Time Measured Out!: Navigating Life's Journey Through Poetry*. Life is good!



Our Lives Changed Drastically—Plans for Our Future

Lin spent the first part of the year researching where we wanted to move to. Originally we had four countries in mind: Spain, Portugal, Costa Rica and Mexico. Panamá wasn't even on our list, but then he kept seeing it pop up in his research.

Then we got connected to Jackie Lange with Panama Relocation Tours and we made the decision—Panamá!

Plans Move Forward

We connected with an immigration lawyer, thanks to Panama Relocation Tour and started the process of getting our temporary visas.

Part of the requirements for the application for the visa was an FBI report for each of us. The main part of the report was our fingerprints. Lin got his taken digitally immediately.

After years of being a beautician, working with paper and typing on keyboards, I had a heck of a time getting mine. I did digital, out-fashion ink three or four times and digital. Finally, we went to a place in Albuquerque that specialized in fingerprinting and I finally got mine.

We also had decided on the area in Panama we were interested in—the western part and the city of Boquete.

Temporary Visa & Scouting Trip

So at the end of April, we flew to Panamá City and got our temporary visas and our Panamanian driver's licenses. We enjoyed several days in Panama City, playing tourist as we waited the process out.

Then we flew to David on the western side of Panama and spent over two weeks in Boquete. We hired a tour guide, Jason Lara, to look at different areas there Lin had researched.

There are eleven microclimates in the Boquete area, so we had to decide on whether we wanted up higher with cooler weather and more rain and down lower towards David with wind and hotter weather.

We also drove to Volcán, another city we were considering to move to and visited an old friend of Lin's he met when he was living in Costa Rica 27 years ago.



Lin & Larada enjoying an evening in Casco Viejo, Panamá City

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