

Pura Vida en Tres Comunidades: Cedral

Creative Projects from the RCAH Program on Sustainability in
Costa Rica

Carter Hurst

“Being in Costa Rica has been an exceptional experience for me. The beauty of the natural environment, the people, and the overall vibe of the life is uplifting. Although this is true, I find it to be not outstandingly different than my time in my home country, the United States of America... In Cedral I have been teaching English classes and decided to do my creative project with some of my students. I elected for them to write about the narrative of “exceptionalism” in Costa Rica and how it impacts their personal lives.”

Carter Hurst and Mary Gonzalez Rojas

Mary's English (Your English)

Costa Rica is special because it is a peaceful country with a grand and beautiful river, green mountains, incomparable biodiversity, excellent weather and beautiful beaches and imposing volcanoes and people pura vida.

Carter's English (My English)

Costa Rica is exceptional because it is a peaceful country of great beauty, clean water rivers, green mountains, and an incomparable biodiversity. It has an excellent climate and beautiful beaches along with towering volcanoes, and most of all, pure life people.

Mary's Spanish (Your Spanish)

Costa Rica es excepcional porque es un país de paz, con mucha belleza, ríos de agua limpia, verdes montañas, y una biodiversidad incomparable. Tiene un clima excelente, hermosas playas, imponentes volcanes y gente pura vida.



Carter Hurst



Carter Hurst

Jacob Templin-Fulton

“The photos in this collection attempt to sample my experience and time in Costa Rica. Specifically my understandings regarding the narrative of environmentalism and its place in Costa Rican culture, people, and life. These photos are meant to capture some of the simplicity, complexity, understanding, and confusion surrounding Costa Rica as an “eco-paradise”.



Jacob Templin-Fulton

Strawberry Plant in Hands - All of the food in Alex's restaurant comes from Cedral, most of it from his farms.



Jacob Templin-Fulton

Lexus Bacon

“In theory, rural Cedral represents all that is good about Costa Rica: family, farms, and tradition. However, those exceptional falsities that exist throughout the nation are even prevalent in the heart of Tico culture. This satirical piece gives people a close up and short look at the lives and people in Cedral through their pets. Each of the captions recognizes different elements that go against a some of the ideals of Costa Rican exceptionalism. None of the animals represent specific people, rather, they represent isolated behaviors, traits, and short conversations with random individuals in the community.”

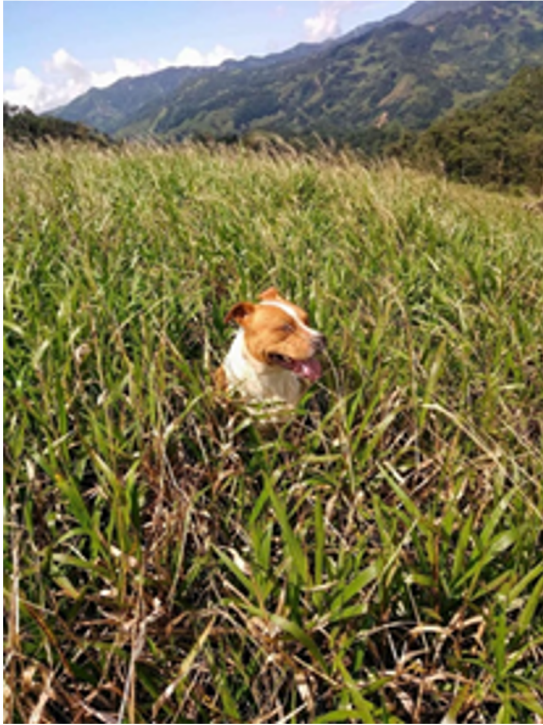
Lexus Bacon



Molly: *The community gossip*

She means well, I swear. Molly has just watched one too many telenovelas and wants nothing more than the live in one. In all honesty, she's a researcher and good neighbor. She cares about each of her neighbors and wants to make sure they're doing well and treating each other nicely. The only way to ensure those two things are true is to know every detail about their lives and share that information with other people so everyone is on the same page. It's a service to the community. There's no newspaper, so someone has to keep Cedral up to date on the latest news.

Lexus Bacon



Thor: *The a-typical campesino.*

The simple things in life bring Thor joy: waking up at 4AM, endless manual labor, and fresh dirt stains on the jeans his wife has given up washing. Thor was born and raised in Cedral (kinda). His family built their original farm just one mountain over when he was young, however, they had to switch mountains when Cedral became a bigger thing—always a little late to the party. In fact, Thor's a big supporter of Tico time. If he is less than 30 minutes late for anything, he is either seriously ill or there's free beer.

Lexus Bacon



Sock: *The one youth everyone wishes would leave town, but stays.*

While there is a problem in Cedral with youth leaving, Sock sure knows how to make people wish the problem was a bit bigger—one dog bigger to be exact. Not only is he obnoxious, rude, and self-absorbed, he offers absolutely nothing to the community. He does not help in his family farm. Instead, he spends his days beating his own high scores on the wii and walking through town with a Four Loco in his hand. His mother cooks all his meals for him, does his laundry, and keeps his room clean. Sock just shows up in life. 22 years old and based on the life expectancy in Cedral, he's got 70 more years of nothing in his future.

Lexus Bacon



Mickey: *Angry old man that hates change.*

Mickey's family is one of the original families in Cedral. He's been through it all. Cedral was founded in 1906, Mickey was born in 1916. Anything he missed, his parents could certainly fill him in on. Frankly, he's tired of all the technology and pavement taking over his town. His horse, Bucky, serves no purpose anymore with all the new dodads. His five sons have taken over the family farm and now he spends most days in his rocking chair watching the next generation ruin his little farm community in the mountains. With every creak of his rocking chair, he soothes his conscious knowing some things won't change—that thought remains so until the ruckus of a motorcycle zooms past his house. At the age of 91, Mickey knows he won't have to watch this hooliganism for much longer.