

Civil Government Organization

Costa Rica is divided into seven provinces: San Jose, Heredia, Puntarenas, Guanacaste, Cartago, Limon and Alajuela (of which our readership area is a part). Each province is divided into cantons. There are a total of 81 cantons in Costa Rica. Each canton is divided into "districtos". (There are a total of 474 districtos in the 81 cantons.) Within each of these districtos are any number of barrios and neighborhoods. The cantons in our readership area are: Grecia, Valverde Vega (there is a movement afoot to change the canton of "Valverde Vega" to "Sarchi"), and Naranjo.

Grecia has a total estimated population approaching 80,000 and is divided into eight districtos: Grecia (including the downtown area); San Isidro (north); San Jose (northeast and includes Gertrudis Norte and Gertrudis Sur); San Roque (west of downtown); Tacaes (east); Puente de Piedra (south); Bolivar (northwest and includes Los Angeles, San Luis, and El Cajon barrios); and Rio Cuarto (located far to the north northwest on the other side of Poas and on the Caribbean Plain--the plan is for Rio Cuarto to someday become its own canton).

Next the canton west of Grecia is Valverde Vega, which has a total estimated population of 20,000. It is divided into five districtos: Sarchi Norte (downtown and the immediate surroundings); Sarchi Sur (to the south and southeast of downtown); Bajos del Toros or Toro Amarillo (high in the hills to the north and actually contains a portion of Poas National Park); San Pedro (north northeast and includes La Luisa, Trojas and, we think, Los Angeles); and Rodriguez also called San Juan (which also includes the barrios or "sub-communities" of San Juan and Sabanilla).