

Wisconsin Couple Come Home to Paraiso de Amelia on Nicaragua's Pacific Coast

A few years ago, 24-year-old Becky Neumann thought of starving children and dangerous jungles when she thought about third world countries like Nicaragua. That was the way, after all, these countries were portrayed in the media. Despite this, Neumann, who works at Café Not Justa in Bayport, MN, and boyfriend Mike Kappers, a 31-year-old police sergeant and K-9 handler with the Somerset, WI, police department, purchased property at Paraiso de Amelia, a stunning, 100-acre eco-friendly development in the growing tourist town of San Juan del Sur, located on Nicaragua's southern Pacific coast. They made a deposit on the property before they stepped foot in the country.

And they're thrilled that they did.



Mike Kappers and Becky Neumann of Wisconsin stand with Paraiso de Amelia manager Pat Lynch on the patio of the model home constructed at the stunning, 100-acre eco-friendly development located on Nicaragua's Pacific coast.

“Nicaragua is beautiful and safe,” Kappers says. “The people are very nice. The land, the jungle and the beaches in San Juan del Sur, is stunning. We’re very pleased that we made the purchase at Paraiso de Amelia.”

Neumann concurs. She and Kappers were originally interested in looking for land in Costa Rica after an acquaintance of Kappers’ sang that country’s praises. The young couple then talked to Issy Gale, a real estate agent in Minnesota and one of the owners of Paraiso de Amelia. Neumann and Kappers had purchased season tickets to the University of Minnesota’s Gopher wrestling team for years from Gale. Gale’s son, Jim Gale, is a wrestling hall of famer and wrestling is still a Gale family affair. Issy Gale told Neumann and Kappers about Paraiso de Amelia and Nicaragua. Kappers handed over a deposit on a lot at Paraiso de Amelia sight unseen.

In April, 2006, Neumann and Kappers headed off to see for themselves what they had only heard about up to then. They spent 10 days traveling the Pacific coast of Costa Rica and then headed to San Juan del Sur. They say they simply felt more of a connection to this former fishing village that’s becoming one of Nicaragua’s hottest tourist spots. The magazine *Coastal Living* recently joined the ranks of publications touting San Juan del Sur’s attractions.

“The land prices were better in Nicaragua and for some reason, it felt as if the people here were more accepting of us,” Neumann recalls of her instant attraction to San Juan del Sur. She adds that she and Kappers were treated not as a source of revenue or a tourist just passing through, as they had been treated in other places they had traveled. Rather they were welcomed and people were as interested to learn about their lives as Neumann and Kappers were to learn about this new culture.

Paraiso de Amelia’s beautiful ocean- and jungle-view lots gave the couple a wide variety of choices. The project fit what they were looking for: a place away from home, access to beautiful beaches and pristine jungle, a warm climate, friendly people and a place in which to make a wise investment. They’d looked at other places, but none so perfectly matched their needs.

In the more than two years since Paraiso de Amelia was purchased, a new all-weather road has been put in place and installation of the electrical and water infrastructure is nearly complete. A model home with ocean views and pool has also been constructed and will be ready for rental or purchase soon. The project also has approval from the government’s environmental agency, MARENA. Paraiso de Amelia will be an eco-friendly development; currently a myriad of plants and trees are being planted to ensure the native beauty of the development for the future.

Neumann and Kappers plan to build a house on their ocean-view lot as soon as possible. They’ll use the house as a vacation home for themselves and their families and friends and rent it whenever possible. Kappers hopes to learn to surf, too, because Nicaragua’s nearby beaches boast world-class surfing and are less crowded than other beaches.

Neumann and Kappers recently returned to Nicaragua. This time, they saw much more of the country than time allowed during their first visit. They spent time in the capital of Managua, admired the handicrafts in Masaya market, hiked Mombacho volcano and spent time in the colonial city of Granada. They noticed that there were more foreigners living and visiting in San Juan del Sur. There's also more construction as more people from around the globe are realizing what a hidden treasure the country is.

"It was like coming home," Neumann said of her recent visit. "We were excited to see the property again and we were really excited to see the model home, which is beautiful. It seems like Paraiso de Amelia itself has come a long way."

For more information about Paraiso de Amelia, please visit the web site at www.paraisodeamelia.com.