GLOBAL ATLANTA SNAPSHOTS

A LOOK AT ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN THE ATLANTA REGION

south americans

The Global Atlanta Snapshots were created to foster understanding among all people of the Atlanta region. The Snapshots show the rich ethnic and cultural diversity that our region now enjoys. The residents of Atlanta's ethnic communities may have lived in the region for a long time or may have recently arrived. They may come from cultures and have customs significantly different from each other's, and from those of the general population of the Atlanta region. What they have in common with the rest of the region is that they make it their home, and they share in and contribute to its success. The Snapshots introduce and portray selected communities in terms of their backgrounds, their customs and cultures, their roles in the regional economy, and specific local resources available throughout the region.

South Americans* in the Atlanta Economy



Those South Americans who have migrated to the U.S. tend to be the more educated citizens of their respective counties. Many have already completed their post-secondary education or

are in this country to pursue higher education. In the case of South American women, ages 25 to 34, fully half – 49.8 percent – have a bachelor's or graduate degree, compared to 38.1 percent in the general Atlanta regional population. For women, ages 35 to 44, the corresponding figures are 40.2 percent (South American) and 34.9 percent (general population). South American men in the Atlanta region also have a higher rate of educational attainment by this measure, though by only a few percentage points.

Greater Atlanta's workforce includes an estimated 9,300 people of South American ancestry, 5,100 men and 4,200 women. South American men and women hold positions in business management

and professional occupations at relatively high rates, though not necessarily commensurate with their educational attainment. Not all South Americans come to this region with a strong educational background. Those migrating here from rural areas of their home countries, with fewer educational opportunities, are likely to be found in construction, landscaping and janitorial activities.

Thirty-one percent of men hold jobs in management and the professions, including computer-related positions (300 jobs) and architecture/engineering (210). About one in every five men holds a job in construction and maintenance occupations. South American women have a slightly higher rate of participation in business management and other professional occupations, at 35 percent. They are found in education positions (310) and in art, design and media occupations (145). Higher numbers of women are in services (1,230 jobs), including food preparation, building maintenance and personal care, and in sales/ office positions (1,160).

*This Snapshot focuses on those nationalities that form the greater portion of Spanish-speaking South Americans now in the Atlanta region: Columbians, Ecuadrians, Peruvians and Venezuelans. However, a brief introduction to the Portugese-speaking country of Brazil is also included because it is South America's largest nation.

Celebrated Holidays

Three Kings Day January

Carnival February

Hispanic Music and Arts Festival February

St. John's Day June 21

Independence Day - Venezuela

July 5

In addition to other Western holidays, South Americans may celebrate the following:

Independence Day - Colombia

July 20

Independence Day - Peru

July 28

Independence Day - Ecuador

August 10

Assumption Day

August 15

Independence Day - Brazil

September 7

Hispanic Heritage Month September/October

All Saints Day

November 1

All Souls Day November 2

Ascension of the Virgin
December 8

Virgin of Guadalupe celebrations

December

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A PERSONAL STORY

Mrs. Beatriz Arias arrived with her husband and two daughters in Atlanta from Colombia in 2000. She and her family fled because of security reasons, as the entire family fell victim to Colombia's internal conflicts. She had friends here who were the first ones to help her and her family to settle in Atlanta. Mrs. Arias is a lawyer, a graduate of the University of Caldas, located in Manizales, the capital of Caldas department (state) west of Bogota. She had been a judge for 25 years before she decided to leave Colombia. In the last 10 years she had been a family court judge. She was a member of the Association of Lawyers of Caldas as well as president of the Association of Judges of Caldas. Her husband is also a lawyer, and her daughters are currently studying and working.

After some time here in Atlanta, she started to offer her services as a lawyer and later benefited from a business training program provided by an Atlanta-based economic development consultant from Ecuador. Mrs. Arias then established a family-owned company called "Productos Doña Betty," which produces a variety of traditional Colombian foods such as "arepas" (Colombian tortillas). She is very proud of her new business venture and new life, even though it is very different from what she had back home.

Who are the South Americans?



Based upon archeological research and the study of language patterns, experts believe that the first settlers of the Americas were people from Asia who crossed the Bering Strait some 40,000 years ago. These ancient migrants gradually moved southward through Central and South America. Over many thousands of years, these groups, who initially based their existence upon seasonal agriculture, evolved into more complex societies. Most notably, the Inca civilization, centered in the Andean highlands, was highly developed, with a strong administrative structure, elaborate rituals and religious observances, along with high achievements in art and architecture.

Following the discoveries of Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci, Spanish explorers based in the Caribbean islands began to explore Central America and the South American mainland. In 1531, Francisco Pizarro led an expedition to find the fabled riches of the Incas and within two years conquered the Incan empire. Through the 16th and 17th centuries, the Spanish *conquistadors* (conquerors)

consolidated their rule, with a small core of Spanish-born administrators and clergy. As time passed, the fastest growing component of the colonial population was that of the *mestizos*, the mixed-race descendants of the Spanish male colonists and indigenous women. As the need for agricultural labor increased, the Spaniards introduced African slave workers, primarily to their lands on Caribbean coast of South America.

Spanish colonial rule extended into the early 19th century, when the consequences of Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808 reverberated in what was now known as "Spanish America". An independence movement by those subjected to Spanish rule led to the formation of independent nations in South America. Today some 345 million people live in 13 separate nations, most Spanish-speaking and overwhelmingly adherents of the Roman Catholic religion. The major exception to this pattern is South America's largest nation, Brazil, a land of 170 million predominantly Portuguese-speaking citizens.

As of the 2000 census, some 26,000 South American-born individuals had made their home in metropolitan Atlanta. Some people active within these communities are likely to regard these census counts as far too low. The Atlanta region's strong economy and its growing Hispanic/ Latino community of more than 200,000 people are among the reasons that South Americans are joining in the migration here. However, particular economic and political conditions (varying for each of the nations on which we place a focus) led some to leave their native lands and become a part of our changing metropolis. The following sections provide a brief overview of the forces causing people from the northern rim of South America (Brazil, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela) to migrate north.

Brazil

Brazil gained its independence in 1822 after three centuries of colonial rule under Portugal. Today Brazil is the largest Portuguese-speaking nation in the world and the largest country in South America, both in terms of population and land mass, with an estimated 186 million people as of 2000.



South Americans in the Atlanta Region: By the Numbers

Cherokee: 271 Clayton: 441
Cobb: 5,645 DeKalb: 5,686
Douglas: 250 Fayette: 405
Fulton: 5,430 Gwinnett: 7,286
Henry: 166 Rockdale: 226

Total 10-county Region: 25,806

- Gwinnett County is home to the largest population of South Americans with 7,286. DeKalb (5,686), Cobb (5,645) and Fulton (5,430) have large concentrations as well.
- There are a total of 25,806 South Americans in the Atlanta region.
- Approximately 6.4 percent of the region's foreignborn population is from South America.
- Although Clayton County has approximately 6.5
 percent of the region's foreign-born population,
 less than two percent of the region's South
 Americans live in Clayton.
- The 10-county Atlanta region is home to approximately 42 percent of Georgia's total population, but represents 80 percent of the state's South American population.

Simón Bolívar

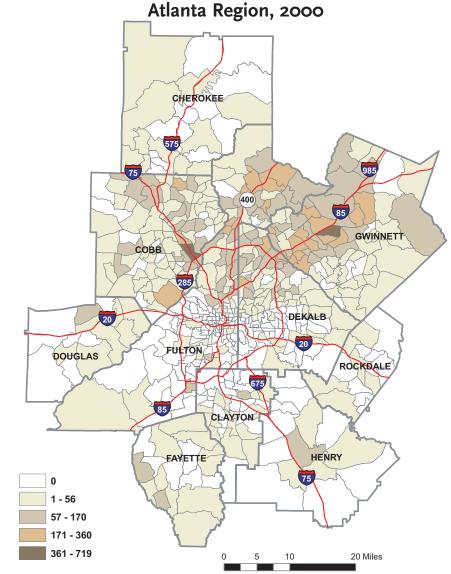
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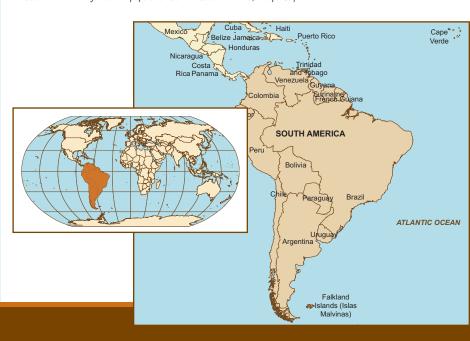
In the northern part of South America, the struggle for independence from Spain was led by Simon Bolivar. Starting in his native Venezuela in the early 1800's, this great general led his

forces to victories over the Spaniards. He brought independence not only to Venezuela, but also to Columbia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia (named in his honor). He is known as El Liberator (the Liberator) as well as the "George Washington" of South America. Statues, street and plazas, and even currencies named for him are found throughout South America.

SOUTH AMERICAN* POPULATION IN ATLANTA



Source: 2000 Census Data on Foreign-Born Population by Region, Country or Area or Area of Birth *South American refers to the population born in South America, except Guyana



South American Life in Metro Atlanta



The South American Hispanic/ Latino community is generally scattered across the central core counties of the Atlanta region. The largest cluster of Colombians is found in Gwinnett County (3,400

residents), with smaller numbers in Fulton County (1,800), DeKalb County (1,500) and Cobb County (1,200). The same four counties are home to the majority of people born in Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and Ecuador. The attached map shows the location of all South Americans in the region at the level of census tracts.

As is the case with other Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic/ Latino immigrant communities, many places of special importance to the South American community are likely to be found along the Buford Highway corridor. La Plaza Fiesta on Buford Highway is one of the leisure and entertainment sites likely to be visited by most Hispanics/Latinos,including South Americans. Many community events take place in La Plaza Fiesta facilities, and one can find many restaurants and ethnic shopping plazas nearby.

There are over a hundred Hispanic/Latino media outlets to provide information and entertainment to the communities, including newspapers, magazines, radio stations and a local TV channel.

Sports activities are also popular in Atlanta's South American communities. Soccer and volleyball leagues offer an opportunity for South Americans to get together and play these popular sports. Matches are usually held in public parks and draw large crowds of spectators and players.

As part of traditional Hispanic/Latino mores, children are expected to study hard and do well in school. However, under the current realities of life in Atlanta and the pressures of earning a living, these expectations are not always met. Some in the community regard this as a current social problem. Because parents are not able to spend enough time with children at home, the children are not excelling in school. The problem of school dropouts is being addressed by many social service agencies.

Who are the South Americans? (cont'd)

Despite Brazil's size, much of its population is concentrated in major cities along its extensive coastline. Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are among the most populous cities in the world. Of



course, almost half of Brazil's territory is covered by the Amazon River basin and its tributaries, so that is one reason for the urban concentration of its population.

"...MANY PLACES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE SOUTH AMERICAN COMMUNITY CAN BE FOUND ALONG THE BUFORD HIGHWAY CORRIDOR."

Brazil's economy is among the more stable in South America, but great challenges exist as the current ruling party of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is embroiled in a scandal that has the potential to undo years of financial reforms and progress.

Like the rest of South America, Brazil is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic and has large populations of Amerindians. Amerindians are the indigenous peoples of the Americas, prior to contact with Europeans. According to the 2000 Census, there were 4,600 Brazilians living in the Atlanta region, with the vast majority of them living in either Cobb (1,800) or Fulton (1,700) counties.

Colombia

This republic of some 42 million inhabitants is second in population size only to Brazil among South American nations. Columbia's population is comprised of people of European, African and Amerindian descent. Colombia is known for its fine mountain-grown coffee and another crop - coca, the raw material for the manufacture of cocaine. Cocaine and the vast amounts of money it generates have been at the heart of the conflicts that have dominated Colombia's history in recent decades. Several different armed groups have been clashing. Two guerrilla forces are active: the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (known as FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Opposing them is a well-armed paramilitary group that emerged from rural self-defense groups. Arrayed against these militia groups is the Columbian Army, historically less well trained than the guerrillas, but now being bolstered by the current central government. The resulting violence, including killings and kidnappings of government officials, has led many to flee the country, including some who have arrived in Atlanta with refugee status.

Ecuador

Ecuador is one of the smallest South American nations, with a wide range of attractions: Amazon rainforests in its eastern region, and volcanoes, indigenous Amerindian markets, and the Galapagos Islands off its western shore. The country's population, estimated at about 12 million in 2000, is an amalgam of persons with European, Amerindian and African origins. In the late 1990s, Ecuador was battered by both natural and political storms. A combination of floods and landslides

What are South American Customs and Culture?



While each South American country has its unique characteristics and customs, there are some common attributes that may be properly tied to Hispanic/Latino people of Columbia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Most social life is centered on family and church.

About 90 percent of South Americans are Roman Catholic and many Atlanta area congregations hold serv-

ices in Spanish. Many of the most significant national holidays in Latin America revolve around the Catholic calendar, including the Easter season, Christmas, and the various saints' days that hold special significance. A growing number of Latin Americans belong to Protestant congregations. There are also Latin Americans of the Jewish faith, some the descendants of early European settlers, others who arrived

from Europe after World War II.

Hispanics/Latinos are also known to enjoy community celebrations and welcome opportunities to participate in colorful festivities, featuring food, song and dance. The Atlanta region is home to a number of traditional folkloric groups, including those from Venezuela, Colombia and Peru. They dance at common events, such as presented by Grupo Cultura, or at celebrations specific to their homelands.

People from most South American countries tend to stand closer to each other than is standard in North America. They may be more overtly affectionate, with women often kissing each other on both cheeks as a greeting and men giving each other an *abrazo*, or hug, if they are friends. Direct eye contact is very important during conversations as well as shaking hands in greeting. In addition, at the end of any encounter with a group, you should shake every individual's hand. Hispanics/Latinos speak animatedly, gesturing enthusiastically. Care must be taken when gesturing back, however, especially with a member of the opposite sex. Some of the innocent hand gestures used in North America may have an offensive meaning to someone in South America.

triggered by El Niño weather patterns in 1997-1998 served to paralyze many coastal communities. A series of political crises also rocked the nation as two presidents were driven from office: Abdala Bucaram in 1997 and Jamil Mahuad in January 2000. Mahuad was succeeded in office by President Gustavo Noboa, who soon initiated a "dollarization" program, substituting the U.S. dollar for the *sucre* as the national currency. The program of economic reform was accompanied by declining real wages and rising urban unemployment rates, which contribute to continuing instability.

Peru

Peru is the ancient home of the great Incan civilization. Thousands come from around the world to see one of the country's greatest attractions, Macchu Pichu, the magnificent ruins of an Incan ceremonial site high in the Andean mountains. Peru has a population of about 25 million. The Amerindian population is the country's largest ethnic group: 45 percent are Amerindian; 37 percent *Mestizos* and Amerindian-white; 15 percent white and the remaining 3 percent are black, Japanese and Chinese. Along with its neighbors, Peru has endured years of economic and political turmoil. For much of the 1980s through the mid-1990s, battles raged between Maoist insurgents and government forces, resulting in an estimated 30,000 deaths.

The election of President Alberto Fujimori in 1992 led to some stability, but at the price of autocratic rule. Eventually, a bribery and corruption scandal led to Fujimori's resignation from office while out of the country in November 2000. The country recently elected its first Amerindian president, Alejandro Toledo.

Venezuela

Venezuela's population of 24 million consists of a mix of European (Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German) and African descendants. Only some 200,000 indigenous people are still living, primarily in the Amazon region. Venezuela is the birthplace of Simon Bolivar, a hero to many South American nations in his role to free their lands (then colonies of Spain) and bring them to independence almost two centuries ago. In 1928, crude oil became a major factor in Venezuela's economy and Venezuela became a leading exporter to the U.S. Venezuela's oil resources have not, however, meant economic stability for the country. Various fiscal and economic crises have roiled the nation in recent years. Devastating floods in December 1999, resulting in an estimated 30,000 deaths, compounded these problems. Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez Frias, in office since early 1999, was deposed and then restored to office in the course of two days in 2002. Continuing unrest more recently led to a movement to recall the president in 2004. President Chavez survived the recall vote and remains in office.

South American Organizations, Associations and Resources

Below is a listing of selected organizations who work with the South American Community. Additional resources are available at www.atlantaregional.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Catholic Social Services (Servicio Social Católico) 680 West Peachtree, Atlanta, GA 30308 (404) 881-6571
Hispanic Hotline (404) 888-7841 (Contact main office for services and outreach center locations.)
www.cssatlanta.com

Consulate of Colombia

5901-C Peachtree Dunwoody Rd., Suite 375 Atlanta, Ga 30328 (770) 668-0512, 668-0451, 668-0552 Ext 21-22-23-24 www.miavenida.com/consulcol

Hispanic Yellow Pages

(Páginas Amarillas Hispanas) Casablanca Publishing, Inc. P.O. Box 191033, Atlanta, GA 31119 (404) 844-0600 www.paginasamarillas-atl.com

Hermandad de San Martin de Porres

(San Martin de Porres Fraternity) 6017 Western Hills Dr., Suite 101 Norcross, GA 30071 (770) 409-9710 www.sanmartindeporres-georgia.org

Honorary Consulate of Ecuador

5505 Roswell Rd., Suite 350 Atlanta, GA 30342 (404) 252-2211

LULAC – League of United Latin American Citizens

(Liga de Ciudadanos Latinoamericanos Unidos) P.O. Box 12104, Atlanta, GA 30355 National Office: 2000 L Street NW, Suite 610 Washington, DC 20036 (202) 833-6130 www.lulac.org

Our Lady of The Americas Catholic Mission

(Misión Católica Nuestra Señora de las Américas) 5918 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA 30340 (770) 455-8437

ASSOCIATIONS

Asociación Peruano Americana de Georgia (Peruvian American Association of Georgia) 6017 Western Hills Dr., Suite 101 Norcross, GA 30071

(770) 831-1995 www.asociacionperuana-georgia.org

Asociación Venezolana de Georgia

(Venezuelan Association of Georgia) 9700 Medlock Bridge Rd., Duluth, GA 30097

Latin American Association (LAA) (Associacion Latinoamerican)a www.latinamericanassoc.org

LAA - DeKalb County (*Main office*) 2750 Buford Highway, Atlanta, GA 30324 Phone (404) 638-1800 fax (404) 638-1806

LAA - Gwinnett Outreach Center

Harmony Station Outreach Center Harmony Station Apartments 1250 Old Norcross Tucker Rd Tucker, GA 30084 (678) 205-1018

LAA - Cobb County Outreach Center

Hickory Lake Outreach Center Hickory Lake Apartments 490 Windy Hill Road, Smyrna, GA (678) 213-0500

BUSINESS

Association of Colombian Professionals in Atlanta (ACOLPA)

P.O. Box 2587, Suwanee, GA 30024 www.acolpa.com

Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

(La Camara de Comercio Hispana de Georgia) 2801 Buford Hwy., Suite 500 Atlanta, GA 30329 (404) 929-9998 www.ghcc.org

Brazilian American Chamber of Commerce (BACC-GA)

P.O. Box 93411, Atlanta, GA 30377 (404) 880-1551 www.bacc-ga.com

Colombian American Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta

1100 Spring St, Suite 640, Atlanta, GA 30309 (678) 488-2992; (678) 461-9912

Ecuadorian American Chamber of Commerce of Georgia

490 Oakleaf Trail, Suwanee, GA 30024

Peruvian Chamber of Commerce of Georgia 6017 Western Hills Dr., Suite 101

Norcross, GA 30071 (770) 409-9710 www.peruvianchambercomga.com

HEALTH

Clinic for Education, Treatment and Prevention of Addiction (CETPA) (Clínica de Educación, Tratamiento y

Prevención de la Adicción)

www.cetpa.org

e-mail: cetpa@cetpa.org

Corporate address 7740 Roswell Rd., Suite 700Atlanta, GA 30350

CETPA - Gwinnett Watkins Office Park 660 McDonough Dr., Suite N, Norcross, GA 30093 (678) 282-0307

Clínica de la Mamá

(770) 452-8630

4140 Jonesboro Rd., Forrest Park, GA 30297 (404) 684-1250 5139 Jimmy Carter Blvd., Norcross, GA 30093 (770) 613-9641

Clínica de la Salud Hispana

3652 Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd. Atlanta, GA 30341 (770) 451-0662 969 Windy Hill Rd., Smyrna, GA 30080 (678) 888-0173

Clínica de Urgencias Los Remedios

(Emercency Clinic Los Remedios) 275 Carpenter Dr., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30328 (404) 497-9739

Centro Médico Latinoamericano 2841 Buford Hwy., Atlanta, GA 30329

(404) 321-5151

Good Samaritan Health Center

(Centro de Salud El Buen Samaritano) 239 Alexander Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30313 (404) 523-6571 www.christianity.com/gshc

St. Joseph's Mercy Clinics (main office) 424 Decatur Street, Atlanta, GA 30312 (404)880-3550

Northeast Plaza 3367 Buford Hwy., Atlanta, GA 30329 (404) 880-3711

MEDIA

Atlanta Latino (Bilingual newspaper) 6400 Atlantic Blvd., Suite 200 Norcross, GA 30371 (770) 416-7570 www.atlantalatino.com

La Visión (Weekly newspaper) 2200 Norcross Pkwy., Suite 210 Norcross, GA 30071 (770) 963-7521 www.lavisiononline.com

Mundo Hispánico (Weekly newspaper) P.O. Box 13808, Atlanta, GA 30324 (404) 881-1484 www.mundohispanico.com

Telemundo Network

2470 West 8th Avenue, Hialeah, FL 33010 (305) 884-8200 www.telemundo.com

WAOS-1600 AM La Favorita

(reaches Cobb, Clayton, Douglas, Fulton, Fayette, DeKalb & Paulding counties) 5815 Westside Rd., Austell, GA 770.944.0900 www.radiolafavorita.com

1550 AM Radio La Que Buena

1800 Lake Park Dr. Suite 99, Smyrna, GA 30080 (770) 436-6171 www.radiolaquebuena.com

WPBS-1040 AM Planeta X (Spanish talk radio) 5750 Brook Hollow Parkway, Suite 101, Norcross, GA 30071 (770) 483-1000 www.radioplanetax.com

RELIGIOUS

Iglesia Adventista del Septimo Dia de Atlanta del Norte (Adventist Church of the Seventh Day of North Atlanta) 3554 Strait St., Doraville, GA 30340 (770) 451-1515 www.atlantanorte.com

Contact:

E-mail: globalsnapshots@atlantaregional.com

Order printed copies from the ARC Information Center at 404-463-3102 or download free from the ARC website at www.atlantaregional.com

Atlanta Regional Commission • 40 Courtland Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.463.3100 • www.atlantaregional.com

Charles Krautler, Executive Director

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The Atlanta Regional Commission is the official planning agency for the ten-county Atlanta region including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale, as well as the City of Atlanta and 63 other cities. ARC provides a forum where leaders come together to discuss and act on issues of regionwide consequence.

The Community Foundation • 50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 449, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.688.5525 • www.atlcf.org

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