

Latin  
America  
Culture

# culture influences

- Latin American and the Caribbean cultures have been heavily influenced by Europe through colonization and trade.
- Much of Latin America's culture has Spanish and Portuguese influences.
- African culture has influenced many aspects of Caribbean culture.



# mexico's culture

In Mexico, the mestizo and indigenous people (Native Americans) are the two largest ethnic groups today. The mestizo of Mexico is a product of mixed marriages between Europeans and the indigenous peoples. This is the largest ethnic group in Mexico. The indigenous people of Mexico are the descendants of the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the Americas. They include the descendants of the Aztec Empire, which once ruled Mexico.



# caribbean culture

In the Caribbean, Africans make up one of the largest ethnic groups. This is because many Africans were brought to the Caribbean (and some to Latin America) to work as slaves on plantations. The mulatto of the Caribbean and Latin America is a product of mixed marriages between Africans and Europeans or indigenous peoples. In the Caribbean, the heavy African influence on culture can still be seen in the food, dance, music, and traditions.



# languages

Most Latin Americans speak Spanish or Portuguese. This is because Spain and Portugal controlled most of the territory of Latin America. Spanish is the language spoken in Mexico and other areas that were colonized by Spain. Portuguese is spoken mainly in Brazil. The term, “Latin America”, was started in the 1800s to group the countries that spoke mostly languages based on the ancient Latin language.

# literacy



A literate person is one who can read and write. Literacy is a major factor in whether a person is able to get a job and be successful in the workplace. On average, 89 percent of people in Latin America and the Caribbean are literate. This leaves an illiteracy rate of 11 percent (that is a lot!) The standard of living (the “economic level” achieved by a person, family or country) is often lower in countries where the illiteracy rate is high.

# religion

Roman Catholicism is the religion most commonly followed by the people of Latin American countries. This is due to the heavy Spanish and Portuguese influence in the region.



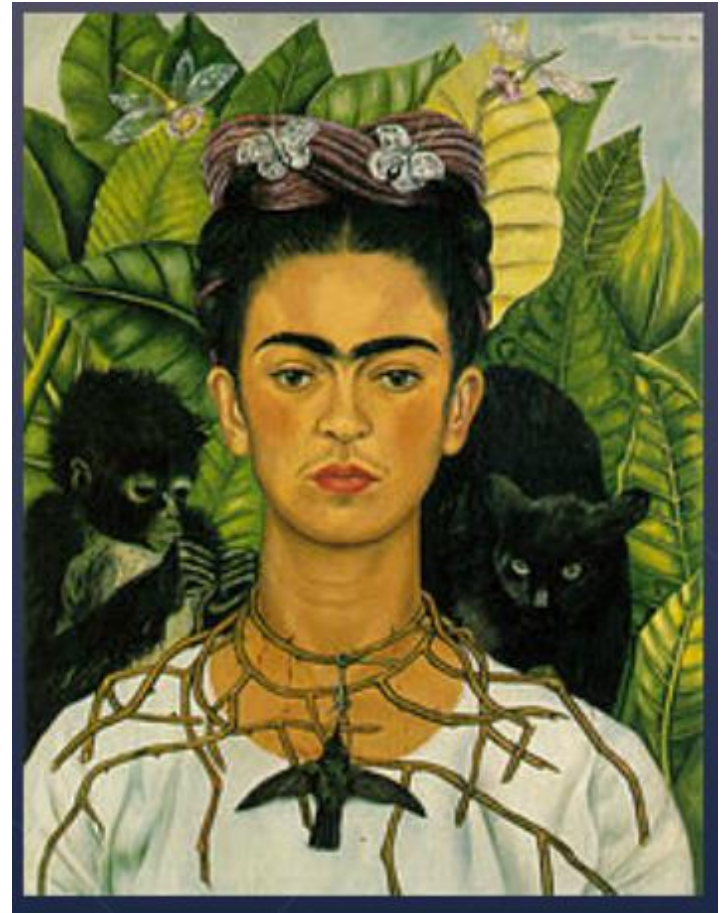
# holidays

Latin American holidays are heavily influenced by historical and religious events. For Example, in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo (May 5th), celebrates the Mexican army's victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. Day of the Dead is an example of a cultural blending. It is a blend of an indigenous and Roman Catholic holiday.



# art

- Visual art from Latin America has received more attention in the last century. The famous painter Frida Kahlo painted works about her own life or life in Mexico. Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco are famous muralists from Latin America.



# music



- Music is also an important part of the culture. The salsa and merengue come from the Caribbean and Central America. Cumbia is a kind of folk music in Colombia, while the mariachi is a form of popular music in Mexico. Sometimes the music has a special dance that comes with it, like with merengue music.

# sports

- Soccer (fútbol) is the most popular sport in Latin America.

