Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Santiago de Cuba Prepares for the 2025 Caribbean Festival

Santiago de Cuba is getting ready to host a new edition of the Caribbean Festival, also known as the Fire Fiesta, from July 3 to 9, 2025.

This event, considered one of the most important in Cuba's cultural calendar, brings together representatives of Caribbean popular cultures in a celebration of traditions, art, and regional thought.



Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

"This year's edition will be dedicated to Curaçao and will feature activities such as the International Colloquium "The Caribbean That Unites Us," where participants will discuss the history, identity, and culture of Caribbean peoples.

Prestigious awards such as the "Casa del Caribe" International Prize and the "José María Heredia" Plaque will also be presented.

Among the festival's most notable events are the Serpent Parade, which opens the festivities with Afro-Cuban rituals, the Cimarrón Tribute in El Cobre, and the Burning of the Devil, a closing ceremony symbolizing spiritual renewal.

For one week, the streets, squares, and cultural venues of Santiago will host music, dance, theater, visual arts, and religious ceremonies. This edition promises to reaffirm the festival's commitment to preserving Caribbean identity and promoting cultural exchange among nations in the region.

Published by teleSUR 18 April, 2025

Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Cuban Cigars: The Global Symbol of Excellence

Renowned for their exceptional quality and craftsmanship, Cuban cigars have long been revered as the epitome of luxury and sophistication. With a history rooted in Cuba's fertile valleys and a tradition upheld by master artisans, Cuban cigars are not just a product—they represent a legacy deeply entwined with the island's cultural identity.



Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

A Rich History of Craftsmanship

Cuban cigars trace their origins back to the 16th century when tobacco cultivation was introduced to the island following its discovery by European explorers. Over the years, Cuba's unique climate, enriched soils, and artisanal techniques have established it as the undisputed leader in premium cigar production. The distinct aroma and flavor of Cuban cigars are attributed to the meticulous selection of tobacco leaves, which are grown primarily in the Vuelta Abajo region of Pinar del Río Province—considered one of the finest tobacco-growing areas in the world.

Unparalleled Reputation

Globally, Cuban cigars enjoy a reputation as the finest cigars money can buy. Brands such as Cohiba, Montecristo, and Partagás have become synonymous with excellence, attracting connoisseurs from every corner of the globe. Each cigar is handcrafted by skilled workers known as torcedores, whose expertise ensures that every piece is a work of art. Unlike industrially produced cigars, Cuban cigars embody a tradition of care and attention that elevates them to a league of their own.

Challenges in the International Market

Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Despite their acclaim, Cuban cigars have faced significant hurdles in reaching international markets. The decades-long embargo imposed by the United States has restricted their availability in one of the largest consumer markets. However, these limitations have only heightened the mystique surrounding Cuban cigars, turning them into prized possessions for collectors and enthusiasts. In recent years, the gradual easing of trade restrictions in some countries has created opportunities for Cuban cigars to expand their reach and reclaim their place in the global market.

A Cultural Symbol

Beyond their luxurious appeal, Cuban cigars are an emblem of Cuba's cultural heritage and resilience. From the skilled hands of the torcedores to the iconic cigar factories in Havana, every stage of production reflects a commitment to tradition. Cuban cigars are not merely a commodity—they are a testament to the island's ability to preserve its identity in the face of globalization.

As Cuba continues to navigate economic challenges and international trade dynamics, the legacy of Cuban cigars endures, reminding the world of the island's unparalleled craftsmanship and cultural pride.

Published by teleSUR 17 April, 2025

Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Mexico's Cenotes: Natural Wonders and Cultural Treasures at Risk

In the heart of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, cenotes are among the country's most stunning natural features. These sinkholes, formed by the collapse of limestone caves and filled with groundwater, create unique landscapes and vital ecosystems.

Cenotes are classified into three main types: open, semi-open, and closed or cavern cenotes, depending on how exposed they are to the surface. Some, like Ik-Kil, are wide and open to the sky, while others, like Holtún, are hidden deep underground.



Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Beyond their beauty, cenotes are home to a rich variety of life, including species like the axolotl, turtles, fish, and aquatic plants. But these ecosystems face growing threats from wastewater contamination, agricultural chemicals, and expanding human activity.

For the ancient Maya, cenotes were sacred sites. They served as sources of water and places for religious ceremonies. At Chichén Itzá's Sacred Cenote, archaeologists have found offerings and human remains, revealing the deep spiritual importance of these natural wells.

Today, Indigenous communities are taking legal steps to protect cenotes by seeking to recognize them as legal entities with environmental rights. Their goal is to preserve these ecosystems for future generations.

Popular cenotes such as Azul, Suytun, and Dos Ojos attract thousands of tourists each year. However, their preservation depends on responsible tourism, environmental protection, and respect for their historical and cultural significance.

Published by teleSUR 14 April, 2025

Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

The Poncho: A Symbol of Identity and Tradition in Andean Culture

The poncho, an iconic garment of the Andes, goes beyond its role as a cloak to become a symbol of cultural identity and connection to the land. Used since ancient times, its design and purpose reflect the richness of Andean communities, their traditions, and values.



Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Primarily made from sheep, alpaca, or llama wool, the poncho stands out for its artisanal craftsmanship and the unique designs that vary by region. Its colors, geometric patterns, and embroidery tell stories, representing elements of nature, indigenous worldview, and the ties to their environment.

This garment not only provides protection against the cold of the Andean highlands but also plays a profound cultural role. It is a symbol of respect in festivities, rituals, and social gatherings. Community leaders often wear intricately designed ponchos as a mark of authority and prestige. Additionally, the poncho holds significance in spiritual ceremonies where indigenous communities strengthen their bond with Pachamama (Mother Earth).

Beyond being a functional accessory, the poncho reflects the cultural resilience of Andean peoples, their heritage, and their struggle to keep traditions alive in the face of modern challenges. In its essence, every woven thread is an expression of history, identity, and cultural pride.

Published by teleSUR 16 April, 2025

Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

The Green Healers: Latin America's Living Tradition of Herbal Medicine

In the highlands of the Andes, the dense Amazon jungle, and the dry sierras of Mexico, a quiet revolution in healthcare continues to thrive. Rooted in pre-Columbian wisdom and shaped by centuries of resistance, Latin America's tradition of herbal medicine—known widely as medicina verde—remains a vital part of community life.



Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

21 April 2025

Weekly Newsletter covering Latin America and the Caribbean issues. A Project between Green Zone Foundation and teleSUR.

Despite the spread of industrial pharmaceuticals, millions across the region still turn to local healers, curanderos and yerberos, who rely on plants like uña de gato, ruda, and epazote to treat everything from inflammation to anxiety. Their knowledge, passed orally through generations, is often dismissed by official health systems but continues to provide affordable and culturally resonant care to the rural and urban poor alike.

In countries like Bolivia and Peru, governments have begun integrating traditional medicine into public health policy, recognizing both its efficacy and its role in preserving Indigenous identity. In Cuba, the economic blockade has fueled state support for herbal alternatives, with the Ministry of Public Health distributing tinctures and teas made from locally grown plants.

But this legacy faces threats. Commercial exploitation, biopiracy, and deforestation endanger both the environment and the knowledge keepers. “We’re not just protecting plants, we’re defending a worldview,” says María Luz, a Mapuche healer from Chile’s Araucanía region.

As debates on decolonizing healthcare grow louder, Latin America’s medicina verde offers a living example of how healing can be local, collective, and grounded in a deep respect for the Earth.

Published by teleSUR 15 April, 2025