Newsletter

A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

5 march 2024

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

The Caribbean: Leisure and Entertainment Industry, Destinations

Today we are going to review some of the most outstanding places that travelers like to visit, according to the list of the tourism platform TripAdvisor.

The Caribbean has been at the top of the leisure and entertainment industry for years. The sun, sea and mountain conditions make it a very attractive destination, with more than 14 million tourists visiting this region annually.



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One of the best successes in the promotion of tourist destinations in the region is the range of exclusivity they have managed to establish. There are destinations that promote packages ranging from very accessible packages for middle class countries with moderate income to high level exclusive places, only accessible to great magnates, art, politics or business personalities.

Every year renowned websites make a ranking, according to the criteria of travelers. Today we will review some of the most outstanding places, according to the list, made by the tourism platform TripAdvisor.

Dominican Republic is one of the best destinations, particularly Punta Cana, Playa Bávara. Located in the southeast of the island, it is probably the best known area of the country, and one of the most important Caribbean tourist destinations at present. The place is the meeting point of the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, miles of white sand and turquoise sea, framed by coconut trees: the perfect destination for a vacation, with family, couple or friends, for lovers of sun, relaxation or beach sports.

Trinidad and Tobago attracts 30,000 foreign visitors in just one week, thanks to its famous Carnival, a big popular and colorful party, with costumes and loud music to get people dancing. The country also stands out for its welcoming beaches and significant lodging network.

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Cuba, one of the first countries that initiated in sun and beach tourism, later abandoned the promotion circuits, keeping a low profile in this industry. It was not until the mid-1990s that the Caribbean island began the arduous task of recapitalizing this industry to position itself as one of the main destinations in the region.

Havana, the island's capital, was declared Wonder City of the Modern World in 2015. It also has two of the 25 best beaches in the world: Varadero, located in the Hicacos Peninsula, in the province of Matanzas, has 22 km of beaches of fine white sand and crystal-clear waters, and Playa del Pilar, located in Cayo Guillermo, Jardines del Rey archipelago, on Cuba's northern coast, is a paradisiacal destination.

Mexico, with the famous Riviera Maya, has practically everything to conquer the visitor: endless beaches of turquoise waters, rich regional gastronomy and a fantastic historical and natural heritage just a few kilometers from the surroundings of Playa del Carmen, where the resorts are located. The pyramids of Chichen Itza, one of the wonders of the world, the ruins of Tulum, the mysterious cenotes, colonial cities like Valladolid where time seems to have stopped are just a few examples.

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Finally, we leave you with the impressive city of **San Juan, Puerto Rico**. Old San Juan treasures colorful colonial buildings and cobblestone streets, emblematic places such as the Fort of San Felipe del Morro, San Cristóbal, the Fort of San Gerónimo, the Cathedral of San Juan, the Chapel of the Christ or the Plaza del Quinto Centenario.

Briefly we have toured these places where visitors can enjoy colonial cities, live their culture, interact with their people and enjoy local beaches and festivals. The Caribbean does not seem to be relenting in its efforts to consolidate its position as the best destination for the leisure and entertainment industry worldwide.

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Latin America: Impressive Guinness World Records

The name was taken from one of the most important breweries of that time, Guinness Brewery, owned by Sir Hugh Beaver.

According to the story, the idea of publishing a book like the Guinness World Records, in which data and curious facts that occurred around the world could be collected, arose in the early fifties of the twentieth century.



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A group of friends went hunting in the UK and discussed which was the fastest bird. When one of the hunters was unable to determine which was the fastest, Sir Hugh Beaver decided that a book in which records could be set would be a great idea that could become very popular.

The idea, which seemed far-fetched to many at the time, would eventually become a reality when Beaver commissioned the original book from the twins Norris and Ross McWhirter, who had founded a documentation agency to provide facts and figures, and who also had a reputation for having a fabulous memory. In Norris McWhirter's own words, his company was in charge of "supplying facts and figures to newspapers, yearbooks, encyclopedias and advertisers." So, without hesitation, Beaver hired them to compile as many facts and figures as possible for inclusion in a single book to be published on August 27, 1955 under the name Guinness Book of Records.

The name was taken from one of the most important breweries of the time, Guinness Brewery, owned by Sir Hugh Beaver.

Although the Guinness Book of Records was not originally intended to be sold, but rather as an advertising gift, it ended up becoming the best-selling copyrighted publication in history, with more than 120 million copies. It is second only to the Bible, with more than 4 billion copies printed, and the Koran, with some 800 million.

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Some of Latin America's Achievements in the GR Book

The region is home to some of these amazing records, for example The well-known **Cuban** tobacco maker José Castelar "Cueto" manufactured the largest tobacco in the world, with 90 meters long. In **Mexico** in September 2017 in the city of Jalisco, the world's largest guacamole was made. The Sierra de Tigre Avocado Packing Plant made the dish, which weighed approximately 2,980 kilos. An estimated 25,200 avocados, 3,500 tomatoes, 3,500 lemons, 3,000 lemons, 750 onions and 90 bunches of cilantro were used to make it, with the participation of more than 815 people, including students from gastronomy schools.

Argentina holds a record for the most pizzas made in 12 hours. The Asociación Propietarios de Pizzerías y Casas de Empanadas de la Argentina lived up to its name with an appetizing record on November 11, 2018. In addition to preparing 11,089 pizzas in half a day, this Buenos Aires-based institution also managed to serve more empanadas in eight hours (11,472). All proceeds raised went to charity.



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Ecuador was able to set a record with the largest floral decoration, using a total of 546,364 roses. The final work, made by some 1,500 volunteers, included a pyramid of Cochasquí, one of the icons of the region's rich archaeological heritage.

In the current year, new approaches are already being prepared to break records and set new ones. In future articles, we will talk about the winners.



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Latin American Cinema in First Decade of the 20th Century

In the 20th century, the dissemination of this art increased, especially in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico.

Cinema in Latin America resembles its peoples, representing, at least potentially, a very propitious space for the development of audiovisual industries worthy of enriching the identity processes and imaginaries of each people.



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However, it is often neglected by the authorities in charge of its promotion and by governments that do not encourage strategies aimed at a growing, albeit still unsatisfactory, integration of regional cinema.

This is one of the main artistic and cultural expressions of the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as a powerful means of mass communication. Its characteristics make it a primary source of interest for the study of political projects and collective imaginaries within different communities and in specific historical periods.

A Bit of History

The film industry arrived in Latin America in 1896, after the first exhibition of the Lumiére brothers in 1895 in the city of Paris. From then on, filming and projection equipment and professionals arrived, which led to the beginning of the development of productions in that region.

In the 20th century, the dissemination of this art increased, especially in **Argentina**, **Brazil** and **Mexico**, and from the 1930s onwards, Latin America aroused the curiosity and interest of many foreign filmmakers who sought landscapes, luminosities and "exotic" themes for their films.

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This is the case of Serguei Eisenstein who films ¡Qué Viva México! Film production companies also emerged, some with state support, such as Mexico Films, and others on the initiative of private entrepreneurs, such as Pecusa (Películas Cubanas S.A.). Most of the films of the time purported to show a Latin America attractive to foreigners, with lush landscapes and beautiful women.

The 1940s saw the rise of the "cinema of tears" and the production of many comedies such as Mexican rancheras, which showed life in the countryside and disseminated a nationalist discourse. In Brazil, that decade and the 1950s are considered the "golden phase" for studios such as Atlântida (RJ) and Vera Cruz (SP), which produced melodramas and mainly comedies, known as "chanchadas."

During the so-called golden age of Mexican and Brazilian cinema, Latin American companies such as Mexico's Estudios Churubusco and Argentina's Sono Films, which had a large infrastructure and their own "stars-system," also stood out. These competed for the hegemony of Latin American audiences on the continent, including populations in the southern United States. Latin American audiences cultivated, along with Hollywood icons, their own local stars and "divas" such as María Félix, Ninón Sevilla, Rita Montaner, Dolores del Río, and leading men such as Pedro Armendáriz, Fernando Soler, Jorge Negrete, Arturo de Córdova and Pedro Infante.

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Likewise, with the advent of sound films, an important musical film movement was forged, with the participation of great composers of the time such as Agustín Lara, Pedro Vargas, Ernesto Lecuona, Benny Moré, Pérez Prado, Carlos Gardel and many other famous names of Latin American music. Their rumbas, mambos, tangos, zarzuelas, valsinhas and all the wide range of urban music genres popularized by the radio stood out.Radio was the main promoter of radio soap operas and musicals that were later adapted to the movies.

In short, these were the first 50 years of cinema in Latin America, whose panorama would change substantially after the 60's with the advent of other forms of filmmaking. A more social cinema that would begin to show the life and roles of the common citizen was beginning to take shape.

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The New National Library in El Salvador

The facility has seven levels, seven areas with different themes and attractions designed to encourage and promote reading and the ingenuity of Salvadorans.

El Salvador is a small country located in the central part of Latin America. Land of beautiful natural countries, with large volcanoes, tropical rainforests and traditions rooted in Spanish and aboriginal cultures.



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On June 1, 2019, Nayib Bukele assumed the presidency of the country with a vision of bringing public policies and social management closer together for the benefit of citizens. In this endeavor, the president undertook a series of far-reaching reforms of the companies' security and management systems.

The New National Library And 7 Worlds to Explore

The library, donated by the government of China with an investment of more than 50 million dollars, in addition to the 10 million dollars contributed by the Salvadoran government for its construction, opens its doors as the first in the country to offer services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The National Library of El Salvador (BINAES) is the most ambitious project of the current government. The huge intelligent building is located in the Historic Center of San Salvador, right in front of the Gerardo Barrios square and in the same quadrant of the National Palace and the metropolitan cathedral. The facilities have seven levels, seven areas with different themes and attractions designed to encourage and promote reading and the ingenuity of Salvadorans.

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The first thing visitors find is a foyer where they can admire the mural of the 2012 National Culture Award, Carlos Cañas (1924-2013). It was rescued from the old Banco Hipotecario building, where BINAES operated until it was demolished to make way for the building donated by the People's Republic of China. In addition, there is an auditorium for conferences and shows with a capacity for 350 people and spaces for people with disabilities. Also, you can visit the Café Biblioteca, the salesroom of Editorial El Salvador and a consultation room of the General Archive of the Nation. The institution, inaugurated in November of last year, also has a VIP lounge.

The second level was designed for early childhood, the population from 0 to 7 years of age. It offers an ideal environment for the interaction of children and parents, in a calm area. It includes reading areas with 6,000 titles in Nauat, Spanish and English aimed at awakening an interest in reading among the youngest children. In addition, there are areas for psychomotor development, technology and storytelling.

The third level was recreated with a setting for children between the ages of 8 and 12 years old to explore different literary bets that contribute to attract them to reading. There are 26,000 physical books available, including poetry, narrative, short stories and drama, as well as interactive rooms with video games.

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The fifth level contains the General Collection, the patrimonial heritage of all Salvadorans. It includes books on narrative, short stories, novels, poetry, art, sagas, politics, Latin American oral tradition, classics, science fiction, self-improvement, psychology, exact sciences, technology, biographies, history, among others.

Visitors can consult and enjoy the books in reading rooms and terraces overlooking the historic center.

The last two levels are dedicated to technology and plastic arts. Virtual reality, prototyping, robotics and 3D modeling rooms have been designed. There is a digital reading room, an immersion room with simulators and a video game area with consoles and gamer computers. There is also a space for VIP meetings, a coworking area, a home automation area and another terrace with views.

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