The History & Culture of Ecuador
Pre-history to Colonization

- 16,000 – 18,000 yrs ago
  - First Native Americans arrive: Chorrera, Machalilla, Bahia, La Tolita, Tuncahuan, etc.

- 1463
  - Inca warrior Pachacuti & his son Topa Yupanqui begin conquering Ecuador

- 1531
  - Spanish conquistadors under Francisco Pizarro arrive
  - “Encomienda” labor system

- 1563
  - Quito becomes the seat of a royal audiencia (administrative district) of Spain (Audience of Quito)
Struggle for Independence

- **July 1808**
  - Napoleon invades Spain, places brother on the Spanish throne
  - Creole resentment of peninsulares
- **August 10, 1809**
  - Quito’s leading citizens set up a Junta & seize power
- **August 1810**
  - Quito governed by a Creole junta
- **December 1811**
  - Junta declares independence, but rebellion is crushed
Struggle for Independence

- **October 1820**
  - Guayaquil junta declares independence
  - Simon Bolivar Palacios (Venezuelan) & Jose de San Martin ( Argentine)

- **May 24, 1822**
  - Victory at the Battle of Pichincha, but Quito becomes part of Colombia & Guayaquil is annexed

- **May 1830**
  - State of Ecuador constitution
  - General Juan Jose Flores
Struggle for Stability

- 1830s-1940s
  - Rise & end of cocoa boom leads to instability
- 1948-1960s
  - Growth of banana industry leads to prosperity & peace
- 1970s
  - Discovery of oil in the Amazon
  - Industrialization, land reform
- 1981
  - Paquisha Incident, Peru/Ecuador border dispute
  - Economic crisis: inflation, mounting debt, etc.
Struggle for Stability

- 1984
  - President introduces free-market economic policies, pursues close relations with US
  - Kidnapping by military
- March 1987
  - Earthquake worsens economic problems
- 1988
  - Ecuador opened to foreign trade, fight against terrorism
- 1992
  - Modernization initiatives
  - Vice president flees country on corruption charges
Struggle for Stability

- **1996**
  - President deposed for alleged mental incompetence
- **June 5, 1998**
  - New constitution drafted
- **October 26, 1998**
  - Peace w/ Peru
  - Dollarization – lower classes lose, upper classes win
- **January 21, 2000**
  - Demonstrators enter National Assembly and declare a 3 person junta in charge of the country
Struggle for Stability

- **January 15, 2003**
  - Retired Colonel Lucio Gutierrez (member of junta) becomes president

- **April 2005**
  - President Gutierrez is overthrown after unconstitutionally dissolving the Supreme Court (and appointing new judges)
  - Ecuadorian Armed Forces “withdraws support” & Gutierrez flees
Politics

- Presidential Representative Democratic Republic
  - Executive – President Alfredo Palacio
    - 4 yr Presidential term
  - Legislative
    - 100 member Congress
  - Judicial
- Factionalism
- Weak Party discipline
- Strong indigenous population (since 1996)
Demographics

- 65% Mestizos (mixed Spanish & Amerindian)
- 25% Amerindians
- 7% Criollos (unmixed descendents of Spanish colonists)
- Afro-Ecuadorians, migrants from Peru & Colombia
Education

- Not tuition-free, but mandatory from ages 6-14
  - In rural areas, only 1/3 complete 6th grade
- Enrollment in primary schools increasing 4.4% per year (faster than population growth)
- Public universities have open admissions policy
  - Budget shortages, over population & extreme politicization has led to recent decline
Interesting Points

- January 2, 1980
  - China & Ecuador formally establish diplomatic relations
- In 100 yrs, shift from the Sierra (central highlands) to the Costa (coastal lowlands)
- There is tension & dislike b/t residents of Quito and Guayaquil
- Ecuador’s official motto until 1999:
  - “El Ecuador ha side, es y sera Pais Amazonico”
Ecuador vs. United States

- Population: 13,547,510
- Age Structure:
  - 0-14 yrs: 33%
  - 15-64 yrs: 61.9%
  - 65+ yrs: 5%
- Median Age
  - Total: 23.6 yrs
  - Male: 23.1 yrs
  - Female: 24 yrs
- Population Growth Rate
  - 1.5%

- Population: 298,444,215
- Age Structure:
  - 0-14 yrs: 20.4%
  - 15-64 yrs: 67.2%
  - 65+ yrs: 12.5%
- Median Age
  - Total: 36.5 yrs
  - Male: 35.1 yrs
  - Female: 37.8 yrs
- Population Growth Rate
  - .91%
Ecuador vs. United States

- Birth Rate: 22.29/1000
- Death Rate: 4.23/1000
- NMR: -3.11/1000
- Life Expectancy: 76.42
- HIV/AIDS: 0.3%
- Religion: 95% Roman Catholic
- Literacy: 92.5%

- Birth Rate: 14.14/1000
- Death Rate: 8.26/1000
- NMR: 3.18/1000
- Life Expectancy: 77.85
- HIV/AIDS: 0.6%
- Religion: 24% Roman Catholic
- Literacy: 99%
Culture

- Family structure
  - Importance of family
  - Civil Marriage, Religious Marriage, Free Union

- Sports
  - Soccer: Ecuador reached knock-out round in Germany
  - Volleyball
  - Bull fighting
  - Fishing
Culture

- **Food**
  - Costenos: fish, beans, plantains
  - Serranos: meat, rice, potatoes
  - Patacones: unripe plantains fried in oil, mashed, refried
  - Llapingachos: potato tortillas
  - Seco de chivo: goat stew
  - Beef jerky from *charqui* (Quechua)

- **Language**
  - Spanish
  - Kichwa (Ecuadorian dialect of Quechua)