

Venezuela



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A red watercolor splash or blotch, centered on the page, with a soft, feathered edge. The color transitions from a bright red in the center to a lighter, pinkish-red at the edges.

**GEOGRAPHY +
DEMOGRAPHICS**

MAP



DEMOGRAPHICS

- ▶ **Caracas** - capital, 2.916 million people
- ▶ **Population** - 30, 912, 302 people
- ▶ **Ethnic Groups** - Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Arab, German, African, Indigenous people
- ▶ **Religions**- Roman Catholic 96%, Protestant 2%, other 2%
- ▶ **Languages** - Spanish (official), indigenous dialects

CARACAS, VENEZUELA

- ▶ Sits in Cerro Avila Valley, with mountain ranges
- ▶ Inhabited first by Toromaimo Indians, until founded by Spanish in 1567
- ▶ Most murderous and dangerous city in the world





POLITICS

GOVERNMENT

- Federal Republic with 5 branches
 - Executive, judiciary, legislative, electoral and citizen
 - Similar to the US Branches of Government
- Legislative
 - Accept and reject laws. 18 years or older to vote. Voting is not compulsory.
- Executive
 - Plurality = win. Appoints VP. 6 year presidential terms.
- Judicial
 - Headed by the Supreme Tribunal of Justices. STJ is equivalent to our Supreme Court. Venezuela has 32 justices while we have 8.


GOVERNMENT

- Citizen
 - Prosecutor commander, defender of the people, and the comptroller
- Electoral
 - National Electoral Council oversees elections at local, national and regional level
 - 5 total
 - 3 selected by civil society, 1 by law and poli sci faculties, and 1 by citizen power

PRESIDENT

- Nicolas Maduro (2013)
 - Head of state and government
- United Socialist Party
 - 5.7 million members since 2007



A blue watercolor splash is centered on a white background. The splash has a soft, irregular edge and a gradient from a darker blue in the center to a lighter blue at the edges. The word "CULTURA" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font in the center of the splash.

CULTURA

COMIDA (FOOD)



Arepas

Cachapas



TRADITIONS AND FESTIVALS



- ▶ Carnival
 - Takes place 40 days before easter
 - Celebrated with dance, music, lavish costumes and parades
 - Many families gather and enjoy the festival together

- ▶ Feria Del Sol (Fair of the Sun)
 - International cultural festival in Merida every February
 - Bull Competitions, Cultural expositions, concerts parades, and competition for La Reina Del Sol (the Queen of the sun)
 - The Plaza de Toros (Plaza of Bulls) was built to provide Merida with a festival of its own and has now become one of the most important fairs in Venezuela





- ▶ Festival de San Juan
 - Celebrated to commemorate the death of Saint John
 - During this festival Bonfires are lit throughout the country at night to the sound of drums, as a wake for San Juan
 - The festivities continue on until the next day when they honor the Birth of St. John the Baptist



▶ Dancing Devils of Yare

- Pagan- Christian celebration in san Francisco de Yare on Corpus Christi Day
- The “Dancing Devils” wear colorful garments and masks
- Wednesday the Folkloric festivity is devoted to patron saint Saint Francis of Paola, to the Blessed Sacrament and to Jesus Christ
- Thursday the devoted disguise as devils and perform dances
- During this festival Fulias (a native style music) is played and decimas (native form of poetry) are recited and the people pray until dawn



FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN VENEZUELA



Miguel Cabrera





Hugo Chavez



Dayana Mendoza

A red watercolor splash shape, resembling a teardrop or an oval, with a soft, feathered edge. The color is a vibrant red, with some lighter, pinkish tones at the edges, suggesting a wet paint effect. The shape is centered on a white background.

ATTRACTIONS

Angel Falls



Isla Margarita



Medanos de Coro (sand dunes)





CRIME + CARTELS

CRIME

- ▶ Key transit country for drug shipments leaving Colombia for the United States
- ▶ Foreign groups control the drug trade primarily
- ▶ Many other problems



HISTORY

- ▶ Contraband alcohol, Colombian emeralds, tobacco : earliest illicit trades
- ▶ Dictatorships caused the country to be very unequal
- ▶ Suffered an economic crisis which increased crime
- ▶ Very corrupt security forces and political leaders who participated in illegal activities
- ▶ Attempted to stop drug trafficking, unsuccessful
- ▶ Hugo Chávez

ITALY'S COSA NOSTRA

- ▶ 1980's and 1990's
- ▶ Cuntreta and Caruana Families settled in Caracas
- ▶ Trafficked Cocaine and Heroin from Colombia to Europe with help of Cali Cartel



Pasquale Cuntreta



Alfonso Caruana

FARC

- ▶ Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)
- ▶ Largest irregular army in Colombia
- ▶ Use border states as refuge



<http://www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc>

ELN

- ▶ Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) en Colombia
- ▶ Left-wing political ideologies
- ▶ Focus on kidnapping, extortion, and attacks on economic infrastructure
- ▶ Recently linked to narcotics trade



<http://www.colombia-politics.com/elnjoinpeacetalks/>

CARTEL DE LOS SOLES

- ▶ Cartel of the Suns
- ▶ Corrupt network of security forces
- ▶ Supply weapons to the black market

LOS ACUSADOS

Hasta diciembre pasado, el capitán de coborta de la Armada Bolivariana de Venezuela, Leamy Salazar, fue jefe de seguridad y asistente personal de Diosdado Cabello. Antes ocupó esos cargos, pero bajo las órdenes de Hugo Chávez. El militar colabora en una investigación en la fiscalía federal del Distrito Sur de Nueva York.

Testigo
Implicados

TARECK EL AISSAMI
GOBERNADOR DE MÉRIDA
Señalado por Leamy Salazar como parte del círculo cercano de Diosdado Cabello, fue ministro del Interior y Justicia hasta 2012.

LEAMY SALAZAR
EX JEFE DE SEGURIDAD DE DIOSDADO CABELLO
Colabora en una investigación contra el jefe del Legislativo venezolano en Nueva York.

HUGO RAFAEL CHÁVEZ
HUO DE HUGO CHÁVEZ
Se encargó de organizar el traslado de cocaína en aviones de la parastatal Petrosul de Venezuela a los Cabos con destino final a Estados Unidos.

DIOSDADO CABELLO
PRESIDENTE DE LA ASAMBLEA NACIONAL DE VENEZUELA
De acuerdo con Leamy Salazar, es el líder del cartel de Los Soles e incluso lo escuchó dando ordenes para la partida de tanques cargados con toneladas de cocaína.

GERMÁN SÁNCHEZ OTERO
DIRECCIONADOR DE VENEZUELA ANTE NACIONES UNIDAS
Removido del cargo tras haberse enterado en su vuelo, su hijo organizó el traslado de drogas en aviones de FOVSA.

HUGO CARVALLO
GENERAL VENEZOLANO
Detenido en julio en Asaba a petición de EE.UU. por involucrado por presiones de Venezuela. Se le consideraba el líder del Cartel de Los Soles.

JOSÉ DAVID CABELLO
SUPERINTENDENTE DEL SERVICIO DE ADMINISTRACIÓN ADUANERA Y TRIBUTARIA
Encargado de lavar el dinero a través de la parastatal Petrosul de Venezuela.

FPLN

- ▶ Fuerzas Patrióticas de Liberación Nacional = The Patriotic Forces for National Liberation
- ▶ Venezuela's own guerrilla group



<http://www.larepublica.ec/blog/internacional/2011/12/12/venezuela-ejecuta-tres-guerrilleros/>

MEGA-GANGS

- ▶ Megabandas
- ▶ New form of organized crimes
- ▶ Participate in drug trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, and illicit gold mining
- ▶ De facto law in certain territories across the country as well as on the border



OTHER GROUPS + PROBLEMS

- ▶ Sinaloa Cartel
- ▶ Bolivarian Militia
- ▶ “Black gold” becoming an issue



A red watercolor splash graphic, centered on the page. The splash is roughly oval-shaped with irregular, feathered edges, transitioning from a bright red in the center to a lighter pink at the periphery. The text "CURRENT EVENTS" is written across the center of this splash in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

CURRENT EVENTS

CURRENCY CRISIS

- Government decided there would be a 72-hr period starting Dec. 15th where citizens could exchange the 100 bolivar note for coins of same value
- Bills never arrived on time creating panic and looting
- This week President Maduro gave the bills a 5-week extension for usage



CURRENCY CRISIS CONT.

- President Maduro has recently increased the minimum wage by 50% percent
- does little in the face of 1660% projected increase in the coming year
- The crisis has created a widespread shortage on food and other necessities since Venezuela relies heavily on imports and the money for said imports comes from oil

CITATIONS

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=venezuela+flag&view=detailv2&&id=6CE598A139112A27FD80A6ECEA54845519DCC056&selectedIndex=0&ccid=iUEBBGcC&simid=607987278149714677&thid=OIP.M894101046702f5675e27043a2b261d63o0&ajaxhist=0>

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=nicolas+maduro&view=detailv2&&id=0&selectedIndex=0&thid=A3c8766b1d9e312f6e6da7b6174e18301&stid=62dd568b-6165-618b-d9a8-240b52e23c2f&cbn=EntityAnswer&ajaxhist=0>

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<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/01/29/venezuelas-capital-worlds-most-murderous-city/79508586/>

<http://www.insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/venezuela#history>

<http://www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc>

<http://www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/elc>

<http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/the-traffickers-who-wear-military-uniforms>

<http://www.world-festivals.net/venezuela/venezuela-festivals.htm>

<http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Venezuela.html>

https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=angel+falls+venezuela&view=detailv2&&id=E7A6EEDD6F1077426533BF93E00D3EC17EB9ED22&selectedIndex=0&ccid=x99wS%2fO2&simid=608053137180525217&thid=OIP.x99wS_O2NGG-y_K6TFImLwEsDH&ajaxhist=0

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=isla+margarita+venezuela&view=detailv2&&id=2E590F48C13B98C78E8DF41D7DAF14B24FE4695E&selectedIndex=10&ccid=vHgfYeJm&simid=608054262459859851&thid=OIP.Mbc781f61e2662b7512b13fc6d0d778f7o0&ajaxhist=0>

<http://money.cnn.com/2016/10/21/news/economy/venezuela-food-prices-skyrocketing/index.html?iid=EL>

<http://money.cnn.com/2017/01/09/news/economy/venezuela-minimum-wage-increase-hyperinflation/index.html>

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/15/americas/venezuela-nicolas-maduro-extends-bolivar-notes/index.html>