



Academia Latinoamericana de Español, one of AmeriSpan's partner schools in Quito, Ecuador.

Country Close-up-Ecuador

Public Safety: *Intermediate*

The authorities have expanded their anti-crime campaign. Since September 28, the armed forces have been collaborating extensively with the national police to combat growing street crime, drug trafficking and kidnapping. Visitors should carry their passports (or a certified copy) at all times, since checkpoints have been set up along highways and spot checks are being carried out especially in discotheques and bars. A new branch of the police, intended specifically to provide tourists with information and assistance, was supposed to begin functioning in October 94. Street smart behavior is called for in Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca. Guayaquil is especially prone to gang violence. Visitors should avoid Panecillo and Cruz Loma (Pichincha) in Quito. The northern jungle province of Succumbios, along the border with Colombia, remains risky. Inter-city bus travel is safest during daylight hours, although there have been fewer reports of bus hijackings. Car theft is on the rise, do not pick up hitchhikers. The countryside and smaller cities remain generally safe and tranquil.

continued on page 3

Language Travel Contest — Everybody Wins!

AmeriSpan is currently sponsoring its 2nd Annual Language Travel Essay Contest. Everyone entering the contest will receive a coupon for a 5% discount on any AmeriSpan language program. In addition, the winning and runner-up essays will receive the following:

GRAND PRIZE

2 weeks of language instruction
2 weeks homestay (with meals)
50% discount on Airfare

SECOND PRIZE

1 week of language instruction
1 week homestay (with meals)

To enter, type (in English) a 200-750 word short essay on one of the following topics:

- "Why learning Spanish is important"
- "Why cultural immersion is the best way to learn a language"
- "Why study Spanish in Latin America versus Spain"
- "Who will be affected by the

growth of Hispanics living in the US"

Essays must be received by March 15th and the winners will be notified by phone on April 14th. Must include name, address, and telephone number on essay. No faxes will be accepted. All entrants agree to give AmeriSpan the right to reprint and publish their essays. Executive Intensive Programs and Special programs are excluded from grand prize or second prize.

In This Issue

Letter from the Editor	2
Spanish Spring Break in Costa Rica	3
AmeriSpan: Off The Wire	4
School Profile: Instituto Falcon in Guanajuato, México	6
Cultural Training – The Key To Doing Business	6
Latin American Travel Advisor	7
Conference for Foreign Language Teachers in Costa Rica	8



AmeriSpan Unlimited
THE BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES

Letter From The Editor:



Hello Friends,

Welcome to the Winter 95 issue of *The Translator*. *The Translator* is a newsletter published periodically for the customers and friends of AmeriSpan. Each issue is full of news, tips and hard-to-find information not found anywhere else. Whether you are a seasoned language traveler, or new to the language travel concept, *The Translator* is required reading.

This issue marks the introduction of *Country Close-Up*, a new regular feature in our newsletter. Each *Country Close-Up* will investigate the current situation in the country with regard to public safety, health risk, travel costs, the economy and the political situation. The information for each *Country Close-Up* is compiled by Latin American Travel Consultants, an organization dedicated to promoting safe and rewarding travel throughout Latin America. For more information about Latin American Travel Consultants, see their advertisement in this issue.

We are pleased to announce the rules of our second annual Language Travel Giveaway Contest, the dates for the third International Conference on Teaching Second Languages and our first Spanish Spring Break for Families. In addition, this issue profiles our partner school in Guanajuato and much more.

We hope you enjoy this issue and *Hasta Pronto*.

Sincerely,
John Slocum
President & Co-Director



John Slocum relaxing in a hide-away in Montezuma, Costa Rica

Save on Audio-Forum Tapes

Tape programs are a great way to prepare for your next language travel trip or to use after your trip to keep the newly learned Spanish fresh. If you are interested in purchasing Audio-Forum tape programs, you can buy from AmeriSpan and save 15% from the Audio-Forum prices. Audio-Forum has the following Spanish tape programs - Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Business Spanish, Medical Spanish and Pastoral Spanish).

Passport Renewals By Mail

The State Department has a mail-in passport renewal center (about a two week turn around). Mail a completed application (available at the post office), your old passport, two passport photos, \$55 (check or money order) to:

National Passport Center
P.O. Box 371971
Pittsburgh, PA 15250

Honduras Travel Tips

We recently discovered a gold mine of information about the Honduras - his name is Brad Martin. He publishes "Honduras Travel Tips" and it is free to those that ask (although we strongly suggest you send him a check for the effort and material). To request a copy, write to: Brad Martin, P.O. Box 531, Mountain View, CA 94042. Tell him that AmeriSpan sent you.

Program Catalog-Always Current

AmeriSpan has decided to keep the same program catalog cover but we update the content of our Program Catalog about every 4 months therefore it is always current.

Become an AmeriSpan Reseller

If you are interested in earning free language travel or cash commissions, you can become an AmeriSpan reseller. You sell and we handle everything else. If you are interested in receiving more information, call or write and request the reseller's information package

Spring Break In Costa Rica

AmeriSpan is co-sponsoring *Spanish Spring Break for Families* in Costa Rica. *Spanish Spring Break* is open to anyone of any age wanting to study Spanish at AmeriSpan's most popular program in Alajuela. Tours to Tortuga Island, Arenal Volcano, Sarchí, the Heredia Butterfly Farm and a host of other activities are included. The program is being led by Meeghan McLachlan, the owner of Flint International

(specialist in teaching Spanish to children). Entire families can stay with the same Costa Rican family and childcare for very young children is available. So bring your spouse, your kids or your grandparents and experience the Switzerland of Central America first hand! For more information and a complete schedule contact AmeriSpan (800-879-6640) or Flint International (302-655-0731) Dates: April 17 - 23. Cost: \$695 (\$495 for those not studying).



Country Close-up-Ecuador

continued from page 1

Health Risk: low

A national vaccination campaign against measles has been carried out. Cholera is under control. No recent developments.

Weather & Natural Phenomena:

It has been a heavy rainy season in the jungle and southern mountains, causing landslides and minor road damage. Normal climatic conditions prevail in other parts of the country. The rainy season is due to begin in the central and northern highlands, as well as the Pacific coast.

Travel Costs:

Daily travel budget: luxury \$243, 1st class \$116, economy \$22, basic \$8. Hotels: luxury \$83, 1st class \$37, economy \$12, basic \$4.50. Restaurants: luxury \$29, 1st class \$17, economy \$3.67, basic \$1.30. Airfares: \$0.076/km, \$0.12/mi. Bus \$0.014/km, \$0.022/mi. Taxi \$0.44/km, \$0.71/mi. City bus fare \$0.07. Gasoline \$0.32/l, \$1.20/gal.

The Economy:

US \$1 = 2260 Sucre (official cash), 2260 (official TCs), 2255 (parallel cash). Inflation 1.2%/mo = 13.9%/yr. Unemployment 14%. Minimum wage \$133/mo. Cost of living index \$383/mo. Ecuador's monetary reserves rose to a record US\$1.466 million in the first half of 1994, due to an increase in

foreign investment and nontraditional exports. The GNP rose by 3%, but imports were up 34%, during the same period. On Oct. 4, the country signed an agreement for rescheduling its US\$7.300 million debt with foreign private banks, after 8 years of being in arrears. The flower export sector has been severely affected by the imposition of antidumping tariffs against this product in the U.S.A. Exports of tuna fish, poultry, and cocoa have also declined. The government's privatization campaign has not advanced in the face of strong labor opposition in the telephone and electric companies. However Ecuatoriana, the bankrupt national airline, is due to be sold off shortly. The government increased the price of diesel fuel by 162% on Nov. 1, to bring it into line with the price of gasoline. Although the govt. announced a simultaneous increase in transport subsidies, it is felt that transport cost will now inevitably rise, in turn producing a ripple of price increases throughout the economy. Widespread protests are anticipated in response to the move.

Political Situation: stable

A process of constitutional reform has begun with a plebiscite on Aug 28 in which voters approved proposals for changes set forth by the president. Formal amendments drawn up along the lines of these proposals were submitted to congress on Oct. 4. Legislators must decide on these within 100 working days, otherwise a second and definitive referendum will be

held. The proposals for reform include permitting presidential reelection, the introduction of a bicameral congress, recognizing dual citizenship. In late Sept., congress impeached the ministers of finance and external affairs for misconduct in their politic duties, and the ministers of energy and health were ordered to stand trial. The minister of health subsequently resigned. Also in late Sept., the minister of education resigned in opposition to the proposed reintroduction of religious teaching in schools, after almost a century secular public education. A major scandal has arisen over an allegedly illegal US \$830,000 government loan made to the president's granddaughter.

AmeriSpan Partners:

Academia de Español-Quito, Academia Latinoamericana de Español and Instituto de Español "El Quijote".

Country Close-Up is provided by

Latin American Travel Consultants
Box 17-17-908

Quito, Ecuador

Fax: 593-2-562-566

via Internet: rku@pi.pro.ec

Ecuador





AmeriSpan: Off The Wire

New Regional Office

In December, AmeriSpan opened an additional office in Atlanta, Georgia to focus on the Southeast part of the United States. Calls to the AmeriSpan toll-free number originating from the southeast are automatically routed to the Atlanta office. In keeping with AmeriSpan's "We have been there" policy, this new office is staffed by former AmeriSpan language travelers.



New Program In Santiago, Chile

AmeriSpan has added a language program in Santiago, the capital of Chile. With a backdrop of the Andes, about 4 million people live in this modern city full of skyscrapers. Santiago offers language travelers the comforts and cultural activity of a big city while being close to beaches, mountains and Chile's lake district.

AmeriSpan's partner school has a good mix of casual language travelers and professionals that have re-located to Santiago. The typical program is 4 hours/day of small group instruction but many professionals choose a Super Intensive Spanish Program (6-7 hrs./day).



New Program in Trujillo, Honduras

AmeriSpan's partner in Copán, Honduras will be opening a new campus in Trujillo, Honduras, in April 1995. Trujillo is located on the Northern Caribbean Coast of Honduras. Yes, the school is located on the beach! Students can even combine both programs - spend a few weeks investigating the Mayan ruins and then head to the beach. Remember, capacity is small at both campuses so register early.



Buenos Aires Partner School Increased Capacity

Our partner in Buenos Aires has recently doubled capacity to over 20

students which formerly had a capacity of only about 10 students.



Free Organized Activities Introduced

Two AmeriSpan partner schools have begun offering free afternoon activities as part of their language program. Activities will include dance classes, culture courses and visits to local places of interest.

Our partner in Caracas, Venezuela has reduced the language classes from 6 hours/day to 5 hours/day and added at least 5 hours/week of supervised activities. While ILISA, one of two AmeriSpan partner schools located in San José, Costa Rica has begun offering complimentary afternoon activities at least 3 days a week. Directors of both schools realize that an integrated activity program strengthens the overall language program.



Language Travel Coupons

AmeriSpan Language Travel Coupons make the perfect birthday, anniversary or graduation gift for those who want to travel and learn. The coupons are purchased and used like any gift certificate but there is no need to specify dates, location or program because these coupons may be used toward any AmeriSpan program and have no expiration date.



Late Registration and Payment

Many times you can register as little as one week before a program starts. However, "on-time" registration and payment is 4 weeks prior to the start of your program. Late registration and payment is subject to a mandatory \$35 late fee. Full payment (not only registration fee) is due 4 weeks prior to the start date. It is difficult to fulfill special

requirements (i.e. homestay, etc.) when you register less than four weeks prior to your start date.



Excursions In Costa Rica

Many of you have requested information about excursions in Costa Rica. There are a number of day and weekend trips including rainforests, jungles, beaches and white water rafting. If you are studying in Alajuela or at the Forester Institute in San José, we recommend the excursion programs offered at the schools. The excursion program in Alajuela is a bargain, saving you almost 30%. For other excursions, you can arrange these through the many tour companies in Costa Rica. One of the best is Costa Rica Expeditions (tel: 506-257-0766 & Fax: 506-257-1665)



Great Value In Costa Rica

On January 1st, many language schools raised prices 5-20% including 3 of the 5 Costa Rican programs represented by AmeriSpan. Despite the price increases, programs in Costa Rica still offer better overall value than most of AmeriSpan's other programs. However, the language programs in Heredia and Escazú are a steal! Heredia offers lots of extras including a special beach campus, Latin dance classes (daily!), and tons of other organized afternoon/evening activities. Heredia will be raising their prices 10% on April 1st. If AmeriSpan receives your application before March 21st, you can lock in the current prices regardless of when you plan to study.



Suggestions

Tell us what you want from us - new programs, additional services or whatever we can do to improve our service. Address letters to:
AmeriSpan Unlimited
Attention: Suggestions
P.O. Box 40513
Philadelphia, PA 19106-0513

School Profile



Location

Recently, the Mexican Peso has been in a free fall which means foreigners can buy more for less. If you are interested in traveling to a unique, charming city then Guanajuato is for you. The city with its twisting streets and subterranean passageways is located in a ravine surrounded by steep slopes. The city possesses a youthful spirit and at night guitarists roam the streets and folk groups play in the plazas.

Atmosphere

The school's facilities are housed on two floors in a small building near a small plaza and the majority of the students come from North America and Japan. The students and staff interact in a friendly manner and the atmosphere is family-like.

Language Program

Instituto Falcon offers an excellent, yet flexible, program that allows students to determine the breakdown between grammar, conversation and culture courses. Grammar classes average 2-4 students but are never larger than 6 students (conversation classes can be a little larger). The school uses a communicative method,

combining speaking, listening, writing and reading (a textbook is used as a supplement). Intermediate or higher level students can select various culture courses (literature, history, politics, legends, etc.) instead or in combination with conversation and grammar classes.

Homestay

Generally, homestays in Guanajuato are with middle or upper-middle class families. Accommodations are not fancy but the families are warm and friendly. The typical program provides a room shared with another student but a private room upgrade is available for an additional charge. The one negative is that most families live in houses on hills and require a climb or a bus ride.

Activities/Excursions

The school has a weekly movie night, hosts guest lecturers, has frequent parties and organizes some activities in the afternoons and evenings for students. In addition, the staff sometimes organizes weekend activities (San Miguel de Allende, Dolores Hidalgo, Valencia silver mine, etc.) which are accompanied by a staff member.

Cultural Training - The Key To Doing Business

"Many companies are still hesitant about allocating resources to cultural training because the results are not always apparent and easily measured, said a company spokesman for Bell Atlantic. "However, we have found that recent transferees who received training adapted to the new culture and became productive in a shorter time span than those who were transferred before 1991 (the year the company began sending transferees and families to cultural training classes)".

Industry consultants believe that nearly half of all major companies U.S. companies now give executives cross-cultural training before foreign transfers to reduce the cost of unsuccessful transfers and botched assignments. It is estimated that Corporate America loses \$2.5 billion or more a year from failed transfers.

Both ILISA (San José, Costa Rica) and Instituto Falcon (Guanajuato, México) have Latin American Business Courses. Learn about the Latin business culture, the Latin concept of time, the "Latin-style" of negotiating and important etiquette pointers. Call AmeriSpan for more information.

Latin American Business Course

Recently, Instituto Falcon has introduced a Business and Culture course that focuses on important cultural and etiquette background necessary to conduct business "Latin-style" including business culture, the "Concept of Time", and "Gender Roles". Optional internships in banking, tourism and other areas of interest are available.

Beach Options

We receive many calls requesting programs near beaches. The programs in Mazatlán, Mérida, Montevideo, Trujillo and Panama City are all within 30 minutes of the beach. Destinations within 2-3 hours of beaches include Buenos Aires, Santiago, Caracas and all programs in Costa Rica. Finally, our partner

in Heredia has opened a part-time campus on Dominical Beach located on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica. Dominical Beach is located 15 miles SE of Manuel Antonio National Park. Students studying at the Heredia program have the option of studying at the beach about 1 or 2 weeks/month.

Latin American Travel Advisor

For the past 9 months, AmeriSpan has been receiving the Latin American Travel Advisor (a quarterly newsletter concentrating on Latin America published by Latin American Travel Consultants). Wow, it is great! This 12-16 page newsletter is chocked full of important information about Latin America. Amongst other things, every country is evaluated with regards to public safety, health risks,

travel costs, the economy and the political situation. If you're interested in traveling to Latin America, we recommend that you subscribe. The cost is \$39 for 4 quarterly issues. Contact: Latin American Travel Consultants, P.O. Box 17-17-908, Quito, Ecuador (Fax: 593-2-562-566). The chart below is reprinted from the November issue.

You can learn more
Spanish
reading
the news.



- Articles written in Intermediate Spanish
- Bilingual glossary - more than 1000 entries in each issue!
- World & national news, eco-science, business, & culture

Ad
Perspectiva
Monthly

"Tremendous help in vocabulary building. . ."

Just \$25 a year

- RUSH service: add \$1 start w/ current issue
- FREE Grammar Guide for new subscribers

EDUCATIONAL NEWS SERVICE
Box 60478-ASIPAN, FLORENCE, MA 01060-0468
Fax (413) 586-3448

1-800-600-4494
Call for **FREE** brochure

	Public Safety	Health Risk	Political Situation	Daily Travel Budget*	Official Market US \$1=	Black Market US \$1=	Monthly Inflation	Unemployment	Monthly Min. Wage	Monthly Cost of Living
Argentina	safe	low	very stable	\$74	1.00	—	0.3%	10.8%	\$300	\$1,604
Bolivia	safe	moderate	stable	\$27	4.66	4.66	0.9%	n/a	\$41	\$525
Brazil	intermediate	moderate	stable	\$45	0.85	0.87	2.5%	6.7%	\$81	\$437
Chile	safe	low	stable	\$42	412.50	414.50	0.4%	5.8%	\$122	\$536
Colombia	dangerous	low	stable	\$33	819.50	792.0	0.9%	10.3%	\$120	\$300
Costa Rica	safe	low	very stable	\$22	161.26	175.00	2.1%	8.5%	\$160	\$227
Ecuador	safe	low	stable	\$22	2,260.00	2,255.00	1.2%	14.0%	\$133	\$383
El Salvador	intermediate	moderate	intermediate	\$34	8.71	n/a	1.0%	18.0%	\$120	\$624
Guatemala	intermediate	moderate	stable	\$35	5.83	5.83	0.7%	1.5%	\$82	\$348
Honduras	intermediate	low	stable	\$20	9.17	9.21	1.8%	16.0%	\$54	\$205
México	intermediate	low	intermediate	\$59	3.42	3.50	0.6%	6.4%	\$103	\$989
Nicaragua	intermediate	high	stable	\$23	7.06	7.21	1.2%	58.0%	\$41	\$380
Panama	intermediate	low	stable	\$47	1.00	—	n/a	4.0%	\$200	\$596
Paraguay	safe	low	stable	\$38	1,919.00	1,920.00	3.2%	13.5%	\$208	\$389
Peru	intermediate	moderate	stable	\$39	2.21	2.21	0.4%	19.9%	\$85	\$330
Uruguay	very safe	very low	very stable	\$59	5.55	—	3.4%	10.5%	\$85	\$456
Venezuela	intermediate	low	intermediate	\$31	170.00	190.00	7.5%	9.1%	\$84	\$630

n/a = Data not available. — = Does not exist. \$ = US\$ calculated at the most favorable exchange rate available. *Approximate per person for economy travel based on 2 persons travelling together. **For a "middle class" family of 4. All data as of November 1, 1994.

Copyright © 1994 by Latin America Travel Consultants. Reproduction by any means is expressly prohibited. All rights reserved. P.O. Box 17-17-908, Quito, Ecuador. FAX =593-2-562-566. via Internet: rku@pi.pro.ec

Conference for FL Teachers in Costa Rica

Instituto de Cultura y Lengua (our partner in Alajuela) will be hosting the 3rd Annual International Conference on Teaching Second Lan-



Sonia Rojas lecturing at an AmeriSpan sponsored seminar for teachers in Guatemala

guages. AmeriSpan is so impressed with the overall program at Alajuela that we sponsored a special mini-workshop for Spanish Teachers in Guatemala last September. More than 11 schools participated including schools in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras and Guatemala.

Now is your chance to share your ideas with your peers from around the world! This year the Alajuela team has created a special package of teaching materials (tapes, videos, etc.) which participants will

get to keep. As always, the program consists of lectures and workshops while the final three days is filled with excursions to many exciting places in Costa Rica. Lodging is with local Costa Rican families and most meals are included. This year's program is from July 2 - 9 and will be conducted in Spanish. All foreign language teachers are welcome and the cost is \$800/person \ (3 or more only \$720/person).

TRAVEL ADVISOR®

- Public Safety
- Health
- Travel Costs
- and more...

Covers 17 Countries
Published Quarterly
Free Sample

"Sound Advice for Safe Travel"

P.O. Box 17-17-908, Quito, Ecuador.
Fax: +593-2-562-566. Internet: rku@pi.pro.ec



AmeriSpan Unlimited
THE BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES

P.O. Box 40513
Philadelphia, PA 19106-0513



BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 02641