

THE AFRICAN HERITAGE OF LATIN AMERICA SLIDE DESCRIPTIONS

1. **Women in candomblé ceremonies.** Afro-Latin American religions like santería, voodoo, and candomblé are very important in many societies. In this slide, a woman receives the spirit of the orishá Omulú. Candomblé, like the majority of Afro-Latin American religions, is an example of religious syncretism uniting Catholicism and African cults. This woman is performing a ceremonial dance of her orishá. (Courtesy of Pamela T. Llorens)
2. **Two men carrying sacks on the docks.** In the social heirarchy of countries with large black populations, blacks historically occupied the lowest level of society. The majority of African slaves performed very arduous tasks. Work conditions were difficult as well as dangerous and for that reason many slaves escaped to become runaways. Today, the descendants of the first blacks to arrive from Africa participate in all sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, there is a large percentage that continues doing the same work performed by their ancestors in the sugar mill and the port. (Courtesy of John N. Teunison, Latin American Library Photographic Archive, Tulane University)
3. **Men of African descent seated on a boat.** In the nineteenth century slavery was finally abolished in Latin America. Nevertheless, liberty did not always mean equality. Discrimination and racism are still grave problems although for many blacks, like the men seen in this slide, there is some social mobility. (Courtesy of John N. Teunison, Latin American Library Photographic Archive, Tulane University)
4. **Dish with candles.** In candomblé and santería ceremonies it is common to make offerings to the deities and to the orishás. In this slide, a family has prepared an offering to Changó. They have lighted the candles and prepared special food called carulú or calulú. The offering is left on top of the refrigerator. (Courtesy of Darién Davis).
5. **Market scene.** African food has had a great influence on Latin American cuisine. Although Europeans preferred the traditional food of the Old World, cooks --often African slaves-- added an African flair to the European dishes. They used indigenous ingredients in new ways. Two fruits associated with African cuisine are the coconut and the "guineo" (small plantain). Coconut is used in the preparation of many sweets and the "guineo" in typical dishes of the Afro-Latin American cuisine, like mofongo. (Courtesy of Ronit Weingarden).
6. **Blacks dressed as Indians in a folklore presentation.** In countries like Mexico and Brazil where slavery was widespread, many slaves fled from the cities and the plantations. On a few occasions, they formed communities with the indigenous population, and in this way the two races intermixed. The children that resulted

from the union between Indians and blacks were called "zambos." Many of them fought against Spanish domination. In the case of Mexico, the Europeans wanted to prevent this racial mixing for fear of the opposition that the zambos posed to their political and economic power. For this reason, the Europeans prohibited marriage between these two groups.

7. **Music and capoeira in Brazil.** The African influence can be clearly appreciated in Latin American music. "Capoeira" is a type of music brought by the slaves coming from Angola. The dance that accompanies it is a combination between a dance and a martial art. Other dances like the salsa, the merengue, and the cumbia are also based on African rhythms. (Courtesy of Lisa J. Barczak)
8. **Two Colombian blacks.** Colombia has a large percentage of people of African descent. In most Latin American countries, the African population is concentrated principally along the coast, especially on the Caribbean or Atlantic coast. In Colombia, the majority of blacks live on the Pacific coast and in the Cauca River valley. This slide is of the Cauca River valley. (Courtesy of Darién Davis)
9. **The Panama Canal.** Many people of African descent did not stay in the area to which their ancestors arrived. For example, a large portion of the black population of Panama came from Caribbean islands during the construction of the canal. They brought Antillian culture and customs with them. (Courtesy of Darién Davis).
10. **Panamanian students.** In Panama ethnic diversity of university students reflects the diversity of the general population. Nevertheless, in some Latin American countries, the number of blacks that matriculate in universities is minimal. There are many reasons for this including discrimination and, more importantly, the economic situation. Blacks still represent the poorest sector in some countries, and many working-class blacks do not have the money or the time to study. (Courtesy of Darién Davis).