

MISSIONS MANUAL

'FE VIVA' WORLD MISSIONS

Kim Weiler - President

Guatemala Missions Trip

Trip Participants (the Team): Each participant will have a valuable role to play on the team. Each has a different story, and a different set of gifts which God will use perfectly to minister to specific people we meet on this trip. Whether you've participated on a mission project before, or whether this will be your first time, you can be assured that God will use you specifically. Remember, He's not calling you to be great, but to be faithful. And if you're faithful, you'll do great things for Him.

Every Team will have opportunity to work with each of our ministry areas:

Stoves for Life- Install smokeless stoves in homes around the community

Children's Programs – VBS type kids program of teaching, games, crafts, etc.

Door-to-door – visitation to poor in areas of outreach and local community

Youth Ministry – Weekly Youth services and outreaches

Medical/Dental Clinic – Specific medical personnel and supplies required

Bible School – Working with local pastors & leaders in outreach and practical areas

Education Centre – Providing college education to Youth in the community in government accredited school; ESL; Pre and Post natal care; Sewing, etc.

Feeding Program- working with rural schools to give a healthy fortified meal to 600 children and share the love of Christ through stories, dramas, testimonies, etc.

***Crusade Evangelism** – Specific Crusade teams for planned crusade events.

Food and Lodging: While in Guatemala we stay at the 'Fe Viva' compound. Most rooms sleep no more than four persons at a time. However, changes can be made to accommodate specific groups. Some rooms have A/C, however electricity is very expensive, so A/C is primarily used for sleeping at night. Running the A/C, etc. during the daytime is unnecessary as people are encouraged to remain outside for meals, fellowship and ministry. Most rooms do not have private bathrooms, so time in showers, etc. is to be kept to a minimum. We have only cool water showers. **You may NOT flush toilet paper.** It is to be deposited into trash cans beside

the toilet. Please bear with this inconvenience. We have a well system, so conserving water is essential, especially in dry season – December through May.

We eat most of our meals together in the 'Fe Viva' *rancho*. All drinks are made with purified water and all food is prepared with the utmost care and thought to your health. You are cautioned NOT to drink the tap water – *Agua Pura* is provided and can be bought at any *tienda*. We suggest that you **bring your own identifiable water bottles to be refilled often**. We provide team members with a bottle of *agua pura* at the airport. It is nice to have two water bottles on the go so you can carry one while the other is in the fridge. (Just keep filling and drinking).

What to wear

Women should have at least one skirt or capris at knee length or lower to wear for ministry times. Shorts are fine when at the Fe Viva compound or on leisure time. Women should also wear tops that are modest. Spaghetti straps are not recommended, however tops with wider straps are fine. Slacks, runners and flip-flops are also very important to bring. Make sure you have your bathing suit. Fe Viva provides bedding and a towel.

Men should have at least one pair of decent slacks for ministry times, although jeans, Khakis, etc are fine, too. Men should also bring shorts, swimsuit, runners, and sandals. T-shirts are fine for ministry, but it is good to have one or two dressier short sleeve shirts, too.

Remember, it is warm all the time. Humidity is also high, so be prepared to have a "sweat rag" with you. Pack your clothing as if you are going to a hot place. There is no need for wool PJ's, ha ha.

Travel Information

Flight Schedule: depends on location and time of year.

Medical Insurance: This is optional; we recommended you use your own discretion. Everyone is responsible for themselves. We do have contact numbers for local Doctors.

Passports: If you do not already have a valid passport in your possession, it is important that you begin the application process right away. It may take anywhere from 1 – 4 weeks to get a passport. You can pick up a passport application at any travel agency or postal outlet. If you already have a passport, check the expiry date today. **It is crucial that your passport be valid for at least 6 months after the trips scheduled return.** If it expires before the end of that period, you must apply for a new passport. You should keep your passport in your possession, but make a photocopy of pages 2 and 3 to keep in a safe place in your possession, other than with your passport. ***This is for Canadian citizens, others must check for specific travel visas required.**

Vaccinations: Some vaccinations are recommended, but not mandatory. Information on vaccines and administration of shots are given at your public health clinic. Allow 4 weeks for shots to be administered. It is good to have Hepatitis A&B & Tetanus shots up to date. Malaria pills are your decision.

Packing Information

Luggage: **Please check airline baggage rules in advance of departure** due to new airline policies.

***Carry-on Suggestions:** It is advisable to pack a change of clothing and any essentials like medication and toiletries in your carry-on in case your luggage is ever delayed or lost. No sharp objects allowed - scissors, small knives, sharp pointed objects etc.

Please check airline carry-on rules at time of departure.

Please keep in mind that while in Guatemala, modern washing and drying facilities may not be readily available. Therefore light weight clothing, which breathes and can be air-dried is most suitable. We do have laundry facilities on site, but remember, as with any team activities at home or abroad regular usage of such facilities are sometimes limited due to the number of persons using them. Label/identify clothing, as it all may be washed and dried with others.

What To Bring *These are only suggestions, they are not mandatory.

Unforgetables

- Passport
- personal water bottle
- Bible & Journal /Notebook
- Bank and/or Credit Card(s)
- Cash U.S. dollars only
- **Photocopies of all your I.D.**

Clothes

- Shorts / skorts
- Underwear
- Socks
- Light cool pants (for men)
- Skirt/capris (for women)
- Shirts / Cool tops / T-shirts
- Work clothes (paint, dirt, etc.)
- Casual Shorts
- Light Jacket
- Swimsuit (modest)
- (Pajamas)

Footwear

- Dress/Walking Shoes

- Sandals, Flip Flops
- Work shoes/runners

Accessories

- Sunglasses
- Belt
- Hat
- Nap Sack/Carry bag
- work gloves

Personal Medical

- Gatorade / electrolyte powder
- Antihistamine
- Tums
- Insect Repellent
- Motion Sickness Remedy
- Pain Reliever
- Prescription Drugs/medications
- Vitamins
- Throat Lozenges

Toiletries

- Cosmetic Bag
- Deodorant
- Comb/Brush

- Hand sanitizer
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Bar Soap
- Razor
- Shaving Cream/Aftershave
- Towel (high absorbent)
- Suntan Lotion
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Face Cloth & Small Hand Towel

Miscellaneous

- Camera/film/batteries
- Ear Plugs
- English/Spanish Dictionary
- Flashlight
- Pens/Pencils
- Reading Material
- Pocket Knife (checked bag)
- Thank you notes
- Snacks: nuts, protein bars, etc.
- Toilet paper/Tissues

Health Issues

Food and Beverages: In almost every case where we are offered food and beverages, it will be safe. Always avoid the tap water. Please take this advice seriously.

Diarrhea and Constipation: When a person's diet changes, they often experience difficulties with their digestive system for a few days. Two common symptoms are diarrhea and constipation. If you get diarrhea **be sure to drink lots of liquids**. Most diarrheas can be controlled by Pepto Bismol or Imodium. DO NOT bring anything stronger, unless you are under a physician's care and directions to do so. Constipation may be very serious if it continues for more than a few days. It is useful to have Metamucil or Ex-lax to help with constipation. However, prayer is and always has been the best medicine!

Financial Information

Trip Cost: \$7950.00 USD (approximate, may change. This varies with each team and duration of stay) This includes: accommodations, food, ground transportation, interpreters.

Extra expenses: Airfare, transportation to and from airport (other than on planned arrival and departure dates), occasional meals out (1or2), offerings, markets for personal shopping, and "free day" expenses, **INCLUDING FISHING TRIPS.**

Recommended Currency: It is advisable to have US cash. Traveler's cheques are **not** widely accepted. You may be able to cash them at a bank. It is also a good idea to take a VISA/MASTERCARD with you for emergency purposes.

Sponsorship: If you do not intend to (or cannot) cover the cost for the trip on your own, you should begin seeking sponsors as soon as possible. When approaching people for help, indicate to them that they can receive a tax-deductible receipt for income tax purposes for any financial help they give you, provided funds go through our Canadian office. Complete donor contact information is appreciated (name, email address, mailing address, phone number).

Emergency Number, and Email Address

'Fe Viva', Guatemala Tel: (Nelson) 011 502 5431-4199
Fe Viva Guatemala Address: Km 114.5 Carretera CA-2 Rumbo a El Salvador
Callejon El Cocalito, Guazacapan, Santa Rosa, Guatemala 06011
Email: kim@feviva.org

Team Hosts/Leaders:

Kim & Lynn Weiler – Fe Viva Founders/Directors
Nelson & Melissa Mejia - Assistant Base Directors, Stoves 4 Life Directors, Youth Ministry Directors

First Day: Fill up water bottles, Room assignments & Orientation with team members:

- Base Rules and Reg's (Do NOT drink the tap water. Do NOT flush toilet paper)!
- Review team schedule and itinerary
- Room keys: Please do NOT lose keys. RETURN keys before departure
- Medical issues, Allergies, Food concerns, etc.
- Preventing heat exhaustion/ heat stroke, dehydration, etc. **DRINK WATER!**
- Team Devotions and Personal Prayer and Devotional times are encouraged.

Introduction to the Country of Guatemala

Guatemala, republic in **Central America** with the largest population in the region, more than 12 million people. A rugged land of mountains and volcanoes, beautiful lakes, and lush vegetation, Guatemala is the third largest nation in Central America. **Guatemala City** is the capital and largest city.

Guatemala's culture is a unique product of Native American ways and a strong Spanish colonial heritage. About half of Guatemala's population is *mestizo* (known in Guatemala as *ladino*), people of mixed European and indigenous ancestry. Ladino culture is dominant in urban areas, and is heavily influenced by European and North American trends. But unlike many Latin American countries, Guatemala still has a large indigenous population, the **Maya**, that has retained a distinct identity. Deeply rooted in the rural highlands of Guatemala, many indigenous people speak a Mayan language, follow traditional religious and village customs, and continue a rich tradition in textiles and other crafts. The two cultures have made Guatemala a complex society that is deeply divided between rich and poor. This division has produced much of the tension and violence that have marked Guatemala's history.

Guatemala's economy traditionally has been based on exports of coffee, bananas, sugar, and other tropical crops. This focus on export agriculture has enriched the country's small wealthy class, but a large segment of the population remains very poor, especially the native people who supply much of the agricultural labor. Since Guatemala gained independence from Spain in 1821, its politics have often been dominated by military dictatorships. Social and economic inequities, compounded by government repression, led to a civil war beginning in 1960. The late 1980s saw movement toward more democratic, civilian rule, and in December 1996 a peace accord was signed to end the 36-year conflict, the longest civil war in the region, which had killed more than 100,000 Guatemalans.

Land and Resources

Guatemala is the most western of the Central American states, bounded on the west and north by Mexico, on the east by Belize and the Gulf of Honduras, on the southeast by Honduras and El Salvador, and on the south by the Pacific Ocean. Its total area of 108,889 sq km (42,042 sq mi) makes it the third largest nation in the region, after Nicaragua and Honduras. At its widest points, the republic stretches about 430 km (270 mi) east to west and 450 km (280 mi) north to south.

Guatemala's geography has frequently influenced its history. About two-thirds of the country's total land area is mountainous. The rugged terrain provided refuge that allowed the indigenous peoples to survive the Spanish conquest in the 16th century, while the fertile valleys eventually produced fine coffees and other crops that dominated the nation's economy. Frequent volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and torrential rains have often brought disaster to the country and made building and maintaining roads and railways very difficult.

Natural Regions

Two mountain chains traverse Guatemala from west to east, dividing the country into three major regions: the western highlands, where the mountains are located; the Pacific coast, south of the mountains; and the Petén region, north of the mountains. These areas vary in climate, elevation, and landscape, providing dramatic contrasts between dense tropical lowlands and highland peaks and valleys.

The southern edge of the western highlands is marked by the Sierra Madre range, which stretches from the Mexican border south and east, almost to Guatemala City. It then continues at lower elevations toward El

Salvador, in an area known as the Oriente. The chain is punctuated by steep volcanic cones, including Tajumulco Volcano (4220 m/13,845 ft), the highest point in the country. Most of Guatemala's 19 active volcanoes are in this chain, and earthquakes occur frequently in the highland region. The northern chain of mountains begins near the Mexican border with the Cuchumatanes range, then stretches east through the Chuacús and Chamá mountains and slopes down to the Santa Cruz and Minas mountains near the Caribbean Sea. The northern and southern mountains are separated by a deep rift, where the Motagua River and its tributaries flow from the highlands into the Caribbean.

To the north of the western highlands is the sparsely populated Petén, which includes about a third of the nation's territory. This lowland region is composed of rolling limestone plateaus covered with dense tropical rain forest, swamps, and grasslands, dotted with ruins of ancient Maya cities and temples.

A narrow, fertile plain of volcanic soil stretches along the Pacific coast. Once covered with tropical vegetation and grasslands, this area is now developed into plantations where sugar, rubber trees, and cattle are raised.

Guatemala has 400 km (250 mi) of coastline, but lacks a natural deepwater port on the Pacific. Guatemala claims territorial waters extending out 12 nautical miles (22 km/14 mi), plus an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles (370 km/230 mi) offshore. Hurricanes and tropical storms sometimes batter the coastal regions.

Rivers and Lakes

The principal rivers of Guatemala are the Motagua, **Usumacinta**, Dulce, Polochic, and Sarstún. The Motagua drains and divides the highlands and is navigable in its lower reaches, where it forms the boundary with Honduras before it empties into the Caribbean Sea. The Usumacinta, navigable for 480 km (300 mi), winds through the northern lowlands, forming part of the boundary between the Petén and Mexico, and then meanders across the Mexican state of Tabasco to the Gulf of Mexico. The Chixoy, a tributary of the Usumacinta, and the Polochic drain the central Verapaz region. The Dulce, a short but navigable river, provides a scenic connection between Lake Izabal and El Golfete Lake, then empties into the Bay of Amatique on the Caribbean coast at Livingston. The Sarstún forms part of the boundary between Guatemala and Belize. Many shorter, fast-running rivers flow from the highlands into the Pacific, providing power for hydroelectric plants.

Lake Izabal, near the Caribbean ports, is Guatemala's largest lake, covering about 800 sq km (about 310 sq mi). In the north is Lake Petén Itzá (98 sq km/38 sq mi), around which are many Maya archaeological ruins and exotic birds. The major town of the Petén region, Flores, is built on an island in the lake, on the site of an ancient Maya city. Guatemala also has many smaller lakes nestled in volcanic craters in the highlands, including the mystically beautiful **Lake Atitlán** (130 sq km/50 sq mi). South of the capital is the popular Lake Amatitlán (16 sq km/6 sq mi), at the base of the Pacaya volcano.

Climate

The climate of Guatemala varies according to altitude, from hot coastal plains to cold mountain heights. Most of the population lives between 900 and 2400 m (about 3000 and 8000 ft) above sea level, where there are warm days and cool nights with average annual temperatures of about 20° C (about 68° F). The coastal regions are hot and humid, with average annual temperatures of about 28° C (about 83° F). A rainy season, from May through October, is sometimes called "winter" because it brings cloudy afternoons and lower temperatures, and November to April is "summer." Yet May is the hottest month, with average lows of 16° C (61° F) and highs of 29° C (84° F); the coldest month is December, when low temperatures average 12° C (54° F) and highs are 23° C (73° F). During the dry season, especially from February to May, the air is often filled with dust. Rainfall in the tropical northern region averages between about 1500 and 2500 mm (about 60 and 100 in) annually; Guatemala City, in the southern highlands, receives about 1320 mm (about 52 in) annually.

Plant and Animal Life

Most plants typical of tropical areas are found in the Guatemalan lowlands. In the mountain regions oak trees predominate on lower slopes, giving way to pine forests above 2100 m (about 7000 ft). Orchids and other brilliant flowers grow abundantly throughout the country.

Deer, monkeys, and piglike mammals called peccaries are common in the sparsely populated lowlands. Other wild animals—including jaguar, tapir, and puma—are found in smaller numbers, and crocodiles inhabit some rivers. Bird life is extremely rich, but the brightly colored **quetzal**, Guatemala's national bird, is rare. The government has established several national parks and recreational areas to preserve plant and animal life. Among these are Mario Dary Rivera Park in the Baja Verapaz, dedicated to preservation of the quetzal, and the Chocón Machacas reservation near Livingston, on the Caribbean coast, designated for the preservation of the manatee and the mangroves. Efforts are also being made to save the elusive waterfowl known as the Atitlán grebe, which lives on Lake Atitlán.

Natural Resources

Guatemala's primary natural resource is the rich soil of its highland valleys and coastal plains, but it also has some petroleum, as well as nickel, lead, zinc, iron, and small quantities of gold, silver, and jade. Only 16 percent of the land is suitable for farming, with another 12 percent used for grazing. Forests and woodlands cover 40 percent, offering valuable timber, fine woods, and other products for both domestic use and export. The remaining 32 percent of the country includes urban areas and rugged terrain, desert, and lowland areas that have become exhausted or are otherwise unsuitable for agriculture or grazing.

Environmental Issues

Soil erosion, deforestation, and water pollution are major environmental concerns for Guatemala, and air pollution is a problem in Guatemala City. Forests have been cleared to provide more agricultural land and wood for fuel, which contributes to erosion. Guatemala is a party to international agreements to protect and conserve the environment and wetlands, as well as regulations concerning marine dumping, nuclear testing, and ozone-layer depletion. It has signed, but not yet ratified, agreements on biodiversity, climate change, hazardous wastes, and law of the sea.

People

Guatemala's population, the largest of any Central American country, is 11,278,000 (1996 estimate). Growing at the rate of 2.5 percent annually, the population is forecast to reach 12.4 million by 2000. It is almost evenly divided between Native Americans and ladinos, but also includes small groups descended from African and European immigrants. Within the population are widely varied ways of life, differing between ladinos and indigenous people, between urban and rural residents, between the more affluent and the very poor.

Guatemala has a young population, with 43 percent under age 15 and 74 percent under age 30 in 1995. The birth rate of almost 35 per 1000 population is five times the death rate (7 per 1000). Guatemala's people suffer from one of the highest infant mortality rates in Central America, 52.2 deaths per 1000 live births (1995), but that represents a significant improvement from 125 per 1000 births in 1960. Life expectancy at birth is slightly less than 65 years (62 years for males and 67 for females), among the lowest in the region.

The estimated 1996 population density of the country was 104 per sq km (269 per sq mi). The majority of the population lives around Guatemala City and in the western highlands. Both coasts are more lightly settled, and the large Petén region has a very small population. In 1995, 1 of every 500 Guatemalans left the country, most fleeing from the violence of the civil war. However, the emigration rate was much lower than that of neighboring El Salvador, and some refugees who fled across the border to Mexico during the war have been returning to their homes in the 1990s.

Although almost 60 percent of Guatemalans still live in rural areas, in the 20th century an increasing number have moved to urban centers. The main causes of this migration are rapid population growth and the transfer of more and more land from subsistence farming to production of crops for export. As rural residents no longer have enough land to feed themselves, many seek opportunities in the cities.

The largest metropolitan region is Guatemala City and its surroundings, with an estimated population of nearly 2 million. The capital city itself had 823,301 inhabitants (1994 census), and the next two largest municipalities in the

country are both suburbs of Guatemala City: Mixco with 305,297 people, and Villa Nueva with 192,069.

Quetzaltenango, a trade center in southwestern Guatemala, ranked fourth in size with 108,605, just ahead of San Pedro Carchá with 102,557 and Cobán with 93,633. The Guatemalan government reports that the 1994 census undercounted the total population by about 12 percent.

Ethnic Groups

The major ethnic groups in Guatemala are the Maya and the *ladinos* (Spanish for Latins), those of mixed indigenous and European descent. But the difference between ladinos and indigenous people is much more a matter of culture than of biological bloodlines. Native people who adopt Spanish as their primary language and exchange traditional clothing and lifestyles for European customs come to be regarded as ladino, regardless of their biological background. Ladinos include a wide range of people, from the country's elite and middle classes to very poor urban and rural residents. However, the elite group tends to be more ethnically European than the majority of ladinos, with more ties to original Spanish colonists and later European immigrants.

The indigenous people of Guatemala have maintained a distinct identity, centered on lands and villages in the western highlands. Many speak a Mayan language rather than Spanish and follow spiritual practices from before the Spanish conquest, sometimes blended with Roman Catholic beliefs. Although most are poor by material standards, their lifestyle is ecologically and spiritually satisfying to them, and they have largely chosen to remain isolated from national life. The Guatemalan government at times has tried to suppress indigenous culture, make Spanish the universal language, and promote European ways. During the civil war, indigenous people were often caught in the crossfire between guerrillas and the government, or targeted by the military for repression and even massacres to discourage them from aiding the guerrillas. Peace agreements signed in 1996 to end the war pledged to respect and promote indigenous culture.

Disagreements exist over the number of indigenous Guatemalans, with estimates ranging from 44 percent to 65 percent of the population. Census figures appear to have undercounted them substantially, and their number appears to be growing more rapidly than the population in general. Most of the nonindigenous population is ladino; people of solely European descent represent only a tiny percentage of the population. There are also some African Americans, especially in the coastal regions, including small communities of *garífunas* (black Caribs) on the Caribbean coast. These are descendants of native **Carib** peoples and rebellious black slaves from the Caribbean island of **Saint Vincent**, who fiercely resisted European domination and were deported by the British to the Central American coast in the 18th century.

Languages

Spanish is the official language of Guatemala and the primary language of 60 percent of the population. For the rest of the population, the primary language is one of the more than 20 Mayan languages, including Cakchiquel, Quiché, and Kekchí. Many Mayan speakers also know Spanish. English is widely understood among the upper class and business people, and there is a significant German-speaking community, descended from Germans who settled in Guatemala in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Religion

Roman Catholicism traditionally has been the major religion of Guatemala since the Spanish conquest during the 16th century. However, many Native Americans have continued to practice their traditional religions, either separately or combined with Catholic beliefs. Protestant missionaries have worked in Guatemala since the mid-1800s but gained few converts until the 1960s, when Pentecostal evangelical sects began to grow rapidly in both rural and urban regions. Nearly 30 percent of Guatemala's population is now Protestant.

Education

About 44 percent of all Guatemalans over the age of 15 are illiterate (51.4 percent of females, 37.5 of males), among the highest rates in Central America. Although elementary education is free and compulsory, lack of enforcement and inadequate resources leave many Guatemalans without a formal education. About 58 percent of school-age children, 1.5 million pupils, attend primary school; this plunges to only 16 percent for secondary

schools, which have an annual enrollment of about 250,000 students. Only about 20 percent of students complete primary school, with figures even lower in rural areas. Many rural schools only go to third grade, and much of the nation's education budget is spent in Guatemala City. In addition to public schools, there are also private and church schools, both Catholic and Protestant, among the nation's 9000 primary schools.

The University of San Carlos of Guatemala, founded in 1676, is the national university, and tuition is free. But the university has suffered greatly from the political conflicts in the country and from insufficient resources. This has led to the founding of private institutions, including Rafael Landívar University (1961), run by the Catholic order of Jesuits; the Mariano Gálvez University (1966), with strong Protestant origins; the University of Del Valle (1966), closely connected with the American School of Guatemala; and Francisco Marroquín University (1971). All of these universities are located in the capital city, but several have branches in other cities. Guatemala City also has several smaller universities and colleges.

Way of Life

There is great variety in Guatemalan lifestyles, marked by differences between ladino and Maya ways and between urban and rural areas. In the capital, European culture and fashions have long been dominant. More recently North American styles—in cinema, music, politics, business, even fast-food franchises—have become a powerful influence that has diminished traditional Spanish customs. In urban areas, the ladino culture is a mixture of indigenous and Spanish traditions. Ladinos often blend the clothing and musical styles of the two cultures, and eat dishes from both groups: wheat bread and processed foods on one hand, traditional corn tortillas and rice and beans on the other.

Outside the capital, especially in rural areas, more traditional ways persist. In indigenous communities, most of the women and many men still wear brightly colored native dress. The typical rural family is industrious; men usually work the fields, while women care for the children and weave beautiful textiles with motifs that are unique to each community. A diet of corn, beans, and a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables is standard. Chicken and rice dishes are also common. Beef or pork are less common among the poorer classes, but popular among middle and upper sectors in both town and country. Among a variety of native dishes, on festive occasions Guatemalans of all classes serve a *tamale* made from cornmeal with a variety of vegetable and meat fillings wrapped in a banana leaf.

Social Issues

In Guatemala the wide gulf between a small, wealthy elite and a large impoverished lower class is very evident. The inequities have worsened in the 20th century, as the population has increased and more resources have been devoted to producing exports. Although a significant middle class has developed in urban areas, more than 80 percent of Guatemalans live below the poverty level. According to 1987 statistics, the top 10 percent of the population received 44 percent of the income, and the bottom 10 percent received 0.9 percent.

Poverty affects both urban and rural Guatemalans, but rural residents, including most of the Maya population, generally live under harsher conditions. More than 70 percent of rural residents are classified as living in extreme poverty, compared to 36 percent of urban inhabitants. In the 1990s, about 60 percent of Guatemalans have access to drinking water and sanitation, but figures are lower for rural areas. About 54 percent of the population has access to health care, but the majority of doctors are around Guatemala City. Malnutrition affects about 60 percent of young children, and the infant mortality rate is high.

The problems of the middle and poorer classes have been major issues in ongoing political struggles throughout the 20th century. The widespread abuse of human rights has also become a domestic and international issue, after years in which the military-dominated governments repressed any opposition and massacred entire villages to discourage support for guerrillas. **Rigoberta Menchú Túm**, a **Quiché** activist for indigenous rights, did much to publicize the problem and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 for her work. Recent governments have finally begun to curb human rights abuses, and 1996 peace agreements signed by the government and guerrillas

promise protection for human rights, respect for indigenous cultures, and many social programs. In recent years, street crime has also become an important problem, with violent crime rising as poverty increases.

Culture

The contrast between the modern ways of Guatemala City, the center of Guatemalan cultural activity, and the traditional customs and crafts of the Maya peoples gives Guatemala a colorful and dynamic culture. Spanish colonists gave Guatemala its official language and many architectural and art treasures. Magnificent buildings of the colonial period remain at Antigua Guatemala, the colonial capital, located about 40 km (about 25 mi) from Guatemala City. Contemporary crafts such as weaving, jewelry making, and ceramics combine indigenous design and color patterns with Spanish technical skills. Throughout Guatemala, the marimba remains the typical Guatemalan musical medium, although it is often challenged now by Mexican *ranchera* music and North American rock.

Guatemala's literary heritage includes the 16th-century *Popol Vuh*, a Maya account of the creation and history of the world. Among 20th-century Guatemalan artists of international repute are the writers Enrique Gómez Carrillo, Rafael Arévalo Martínez, Mario Monteforte Toledo, and **Miguel Ángel Asturias**, winner of the 1967 Nobel Prize in literature. The 20th-century painters Carlos Mérida, Alfredo Gálvez Suárez, and Valentin Abascal, among many others, have been inspired by the indigenous heritage of their nation, while a whole community of primitive painters at Comalapa has achieved international recognition. A number of Guatemalan social scientists have been recognized for their work in exile during times of conflict and repression in their own country. These include sociologist Edelberto Torres Rivas, historian Julio Castellano Cambranes, and author Victor Perera. A notable Guatemalan composer is José Castañeda, while Dieter Lehnhoff has done much to preserve the musical heritage of colonial and modern Guatemala.

Guatemala City is home to many of the nation's libraries and museums, including the National Archives, the National Library, and the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, which has an excellent collection of Maya artifacts. The Colonial Museum, in Antigua Guatemala, has large exhibits of colonial artwork.

Economy

Guatemala has had a strong traditional, subsistence economy since before the Spanish conquest in the early 1500s, producing corn, beans, chocolate, cotton, and a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. To these indigenous products, the Spaniards added wheat, sugar, livestock, and European fruits and vegetables. Guatemala exported small quantities of cacao, sugar, cotton, and other crops early in the colonial period, but in the 18th century the Spanish government put greater emphasis on exports. Since then, Guatemala has steadily increased its dependence on foreign markets. In the 19th century, first cochineal dye derived from insects and then coffee became the principal Guatemalan export. Coffee revenues paid for early development of the country's cities, roads, and other facilities, and the elite class of coffee planters became powerful in government and the military. In the early 20th century bananas became an important secondary export, and large foreign-owned banana companies contributed greatly to the nation's network of railroads, ports, and communications systems.

In the late 20th century Guatemala significantly diversified its exports, with sugar, cardamom, cotton, livestock, and other products gaining importance. After 1945 manufacturing developed, adding another dimension to the economy and permitting the rise of an industrial elite alongside the coffee planters. The growth of manufacturing was greatly aided by the establishment of the Central American Common Market (CACM). Recently, assembly plants (*maquiladoras*) for clothing and other export products have become important. Guatemala's rapidly growing population means that domestic food production remains a major part of the economy. But profitable export crops have expanded into the best land, forcing Guatemala to import more food, increasing the cost of living.

The Guatemalan economy grew at about 5.5 percent per year throughout the 1960s and 1970s, but civil disorders and world economic crises during the 1980s brought an economic downturn. Gross domestic product

(GDP) growth since then has grown at rates from 3 to 5 percent annually, reaching \$15 billion in 1995, when it grew by 4.9 percent. The per capita GDP in 1995 was \$1420, placing Guatemala behind Panama, Costa Rica, and El Salvador but well ahead of Honduras and Nicaragua.

Until 1980 Guatemalan governments usually pursued conservative fiscal policies. But during the 1980s they were encouraged by international lenders to accept large loans, and Guatemala's external debt grew dramatically, from \$760 million in 1978 to \$2.8 billion by 1990. Since then, austerity measures have slowed its growth, but in 1994 the debt was \$3 billion, equal to about one-fifth of the GDP. To pay interest on the debt, the government has imposed budget cutbacks, which most seriously affect the lower classes. In the 1990s, most economic indicators for Guatemala showed improving conditions, but benefits were not evenly distributed, and the standard of living for many continued to decline.

Labor

Guatemala's labor force is estimated at 3.2 million workers (above age ten). In 1995 agriculture occupied 58 percent of those workers; 14 percent were employed in manufacturing; 12 percent in services; and 12 percent in other activities. Unemployment was slightly more than 4 percent, but an estimated 31.5 percent were underemployed. A minimum-wage law (requiring wages of from \$2.50 to \$5 per day) went into effect in 1992, which helped keep wages ahead of inflation through 1994.

Labor organization has been important in Guatemala since the 1920s, but has often suffered repression from government and private paramilitary groups. Labor organizers have been labeled "Communists," and many were killed, tortured, or exiled under military regimes that governed from 1931 to 1944 and from 1954 to 1985. Only about 9 percent of Guatemalan workers are organized, although both industrial and agricultural unions exist. Guatemala is a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO), International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), World Confederation of Labor (WCL), and World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

Agriculture

Agriculture in 1995 accounted for 24 percent of the GDP, 58 percent of the labor force, and 57 percent of Guatemala's exports. Coffee has been Guatemala's most important export for more than a century, and, despite considerable diversification, in 1995 it still accounted for 28 percent of Guatemala's exports. Sugar has been rising in importance, accounting for 12 percent of exports in 1995. Bananas remain important, and are grown in the tropical lowlands mainly by foreign corporations—including Chiquita (formerly United Fruit and United Brands), Fyffes, Dole, and Del Monte. But as world demand for bananas has declined, soil has been depleted, and other crops have been developed, banana production has become a much smaller percentage of total exports than formerly, representing 7 percent in 1995.

Since the 1970s Guatemala has been the leading exporter of cardamom, a spice popular in Arab countries. Falling prices for this crop, however, have diminished its importance, and in 1995 it accounted for only 2 percent of Guatemalan exports. Fresh fruits, flowers, seeds, and vegetables account for another 5 percent of exports. Guatemala no longer exports cotton, which until recently was a major export. Cotton output dropped dramatically from 700,000 bales in 1979 to 40,000 bales in 1995, because of both production problems and wide competition from other regions and synthetic fibers.

Export agriculture has absorbed much of Guatemala's limited arable land, so that food production has suffered. Guatemala more than doubled its food imports between 1987 and 1995. Corn remains the principal crop for domestic consumption, but significant amounts of rice, beans, sorghum, potatoes, soybeans, and other fruits and vegetables, as well as livestock, are also raised.

Forestry and Fishing

Guatemala's large forests, estimated at 3.6 million hectares (8.9 million acres) in 1992, have been declining at the rate of about 90,000 hectares (222,000 acres) annually, as trees are cut for firewood and construction timber. Some valuable stands of mahogany and cedar remain. In 1995 timber exports equaled \$9 million (0.5 percent of total exports).

The commercial shrimp and fish industries have grown in the 1990s, accounting for about 1 percent of exports in 1995. Domestic seafood consumption is small.

Mining

Mining accounts for only 0.4 percent of the GDP and 0.3 percent of the labor force, but it grew by nearly 12 percent in 1995. Small quantities of antimony, barites, feldspar, gypsum, marble, limestone, silica, and gravel make up part of this, but petroleum is the major mineral resource of Guatemala. Guatemalan petroleum, however, does not nearly meet the country's consumption needs. Most Guatemalan crude oil is used for asphalt and other derivatives. Production rose from 1.5 million barrels in 1990 to 3.4 million barrels by 1995. Guatemala has produced about 8 million cubic meters (283 million cubic ft) of natural gas annually since 1989.

Manufacturing

In 1995 manufactures accounted for 14 percent of the GDP, slightly down from a high of nearly 17 percent in 1980. Products are mainly exported to the countries of the Central American Common Market (CACM). The CACM provided the main stimulus for investment in manufacturing after 1960, and output grew rapidly in the 1970s, but slowed in the 1980s because of political instability. In the 1990s manufacturing has recovered somewhat, although it has grown at a slower rate than the GDP. Recently, assembly plants of clothing and textiles have become an important part of the manufacturing sector, mostly for export to the United States. Leading manufactures include processed food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, glassware, paper, and furniture.

Energy

Guatemala uses less energy per person (210 kilowatt-hours of electricity) than any other country in the western hemisphere except Haiti. Although Guatemala's rapid-flowing mountain streams provide potential for hydroelectric plants, only 37 percent of the population has access to electricity, and in some areas up to 86 percent of the residents lack electric power. Even in Guatemala City there are sometimes electrical shortages. The government is working to privatize electrical services, and private companies have begun to supplement electricity provided by the National Energy Institute (INDE). About 35 percent of Guatemala's fuel needs are met by petroleum, most of it imported; wood fuel supplies 59 percent of the domestic energy used.

Foreign Trade

The export of coffee and bananas has been important to the Guatemalan economy throughout the 20th century. More recently the economy has diversified substantially, and principal exports now are coffee, sugar, bananas, and cardamom. But other products are also important, including fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, processed foods, textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, plastics, cosmetics, rubber and paper products, beef, and petroleum. Exports totaled \$1.94 billion in 1995. The United States is Guatemala's principal market, taking 31 percent of its exports in 1995. Next in importance are El Salvador (13.9 percent), Honduras (6.4 percent), Germany (5.8 percent), and Costa Rica (5.2 percent).

Guatemala's principal imports are raw materials, automobiles, machinery, other manufactured goods, food, and petroleum. Imports come especially from the United States (43.7 percent in 1995), Mexico (9 percent), El Salvador (4.9 percent), Venezuela (4.6 percent), and Japan (3.7 percent), and totaled \$3.17 billion in 1995. Although Guatemala historically had favorable trade balances, in the 1990s it abandoned protectionist policies, and imports began exceeding the value of exports. The trade deficit reached \$1.04 billion in 1993, dropped to \$996 million in 1994, but in 1995 rose again to \$1.23 billion. The trade deficit has usually been offset by earnings from tourism, other services, and investments; consequently, Guatemala has generally had a favorable overall balance, which in 1994 totaled \$11.9 million.

In addition to the Central American Common Market, Guatemala belongs to the [World Trade Organization](#).

Currency and Banking

The Guatemalan currency is the *quetzal* (6.1 quetzals = US \$1; 1996). It was established in 1926, with one quetzal equal to one U.S. dollar, where it remained until 1986. Then, because of inflationary pressures, the

quetzal was devalued to 2.50 quetzals to the dollar, and it has continued to decline. The Bank of Guatemala (established 1946) is the central bank and sole issuer of national currency. Both foreign and domestic private banks operate throughout the country, as does one owned by the army.

Transportation

The Pan-American Highway crosses Guatemala from Mexico to El Salvador through the highlands, as does the Pacific Littoral Highway along the Pacific coast. Most of Guatemala's highways and secondary roads are gravel or dirt; of the total 26,429 km (16,386 mi) of roadways, 2868 km (1778 mi) are paved. The state-owned Ferrocarriles de Guatemala owns most of the nation's 1019 km (632 mi) of narrow-gauge railroad, which provides links with Mexico and El Salvador. Pipelines carrying crude oil total 275 km (171 mi).

The principal ports on the Caribbean are **Puerto Barrios** and Santo Tomás de Castilla. Guatemala has no natural, deepwater harbors on the Pacific Ocean, but Champerico and Puerto Quetzal handle ocean cargo over the beach. An international airport serves Guatemala City. Aviateca, formerly the national airline, was recently privatized and a majority of its shares acquired by Transportes Aéreos Centro Americanos (TACA), an airline registered in El Salvador. Aviateca provides both international and domestic service, while many other international airlines provide service to Guatemala. The country has 528 airports, including nine with paved runways more than 1000 m (3280 ft) long. Guatemala is a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Communications

Guatemala has a modern telephone system run by the state-owned Guatel Company, serving an estimated 250,000 telephone lines in early 1995. But telephones are still difficult to get and expensive to install, giving Guatemala one of the lowest per capita phone ratios in the Americas, only 2.3 lines per 100 inhabitants. Cellular phones are a monopoly controlled by a private U.S. company, Comcel. By mid-1995 it had 11,000 subscribers and was growing rapidly. Guatemala belongs to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and Universal Postal Union (UPU). The Guatemalan postal service is sometimes unreliable.

Guatemala City has four daily private morning newspapers, *Prensa Libre*, *Siglo Veintiuno*, *El Gráfico*, and *La República*, as well as the government's *Diario de Centroamérica*, and one evening paper, *La Hora*. These papers circulate throughout the republic, as do two weekly news magazines, *Crónica* and *Crítica*. Guatemala has five national television stations, including one owned by the armed forces, that broadcast nationally over 25 channels. There are 91 AM radio stations and 15 short-wave stations, including five government and six educational stations.

Tourism

In 1993 tourism became Guatemala's second most important source of foreign exchange, behind coffee. The delightful climate, colorful indigenous communities, and ancient Maya ruins attract more than 500,000 visitors yearly. Civil disorder deterred expansion of tourism through the 1980s and early 1990s, but with a peace agreement signed in 1996, the Guatemalan Tourist Board expects more than 800,000 tourists annually by the year 2000, producing an annual income of about \$550 million. In 1994, 192,000 tourists came from North America, 179,000 from Central America, and 110,000 from Europe. Estimates for 1996 were 610,000 foreign visitors, spending an average of \$490 each for a total of nearly \$300 million. At the end of 1996 there were 14,600 hotel rooms, with plans for 18,000 by the year 2000.

Government

Strong executives have characterized Guatemalan government historically, with the military often playing a major role. The country is divided into 22 departments, and departmental chiefs, appointed by the president, traditionally exercised great authority. The 1945 constitution, adopted during a revolutionary period of political and social reform, provided for greater local autonomy, but military domination of the country after 1954 curtailed democracy. The constitution of May 31, 1985 (effective January 14, 1986) provides for a representative

democracy with three independent branches: executive, legislative, and judicial, plus an autonomous Supreme Electoral Tribunal. It provides for universal suffrage for all citizens over age 18. Following the unsuccessful attempt of President Jorge Serrano Elías in May 1993 to assume dictatorial powers, several amendments were added to the constitution in 1994.

Executive

Under the 1994 amendments to the constitution, executive power in Guatemala is vested in a president, who is popularly elected to a four-year term and cannot be reelected. The Guatemalan president has great authority, although civilian presidents are in practice limited in their control of the armed forces. The president has the power to name his Council of Ministers and many other officials and is aided by a vice president.

Legislature

The 1994 constitutional reforms reduced the size of Guatemala's unicameral Congress from 116 to 80 members and reduced their terms from five to four years.

Judiciary

Guatemala has a civil law system with judicial review of legislative acts. The Supreme Court is the highest appeals court. The 1985 constitution also created a Court of Constitutionality, to decide questions of constitutional violations, and an Office of Human Rights Ombudsman. In addition, in what might be considered a fourth branch of government, it created the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, independent from the Supreme Court, which has jurisdiction over elections.

Local Government

Elected municipal councils have been incorporated into Guatemalan constitutions since 1812, but in practice centralized authority from Guatemala City and lack of local financial resources have limited local government. Departmental chiefs appointed by the president have exercised great authority, often becoming local dictators. The constitution of 1985 provides for municipal elections, and in Guatemala City and other larger urban centers, city government plays an important role.

Political Parties

In the 19th century liberal and conservative factions of the elite constituted the principal political parties, and the Liberal Party dominated the country from 1871 to 1944. Beginning in 1945, new parties emerged, but usually represented a particular individual leader rather than broader ideological groups. Most of the parties since the military took control in 1954 have been rightist parties, usually associated with an army general, while leftist parties were outlawed most of the time. In 1982 General Efraín Ríos Montt disbanded all political parties after assuming dictatorial powers.

New political movements emerged after 1985, when civilian rule was restored and parties were again legalized. The Christian Democratic Party (PDC) of President Vinicio Cerezo was dominant from 1985 to 1990. Its leading challenger was the center-right National Centrist Union (UCN), led by newspaper owner Jorge Carpio, which played a major role in Congress in the early 1990s. In 1993 Carpio was assassinated, and President Jorge Serrano Elías seized dictatorial control and disbanded Congress and all political parties. But Serrano was quickly forced to resign, and new political parties again emerged. Center-right, probusiness interests formed the National Advancement Party (PAN), which won both the presidency and a congressional majority in 1995 and 1996. Extreme right-wing interests with strong ties to Ríos Montt grouped into the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG). By 1995 the Christian Democrats and National Centrist Union had sunk to the status of minor parties.

Under agreements reached in 1996 to end Guatemala's long civil war, leftist parties were again allowed to participate in politics. Left-wing groups organized the New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG). This represented mainly the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG), which had served as a political umbrella for four guerrilla or outlawed groups: Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), and Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT). Also important were political action committees representing special interests, notably the Coordinating Committee of

Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations (CACIF), the country's major business lobby; the Mutual Support Group (GAM), a broadly based prolabor group focusing on human rights; the Agrarian Owners Group (UNAGRO), the leading agricultural exporters' lobby; and the Committee for Campesino Unity (CUC), a rural workers' association.

Social Services

Guatemala established a social security program and labor code in 1946. Although the law provides for an extensive program of health care, old-age pensions, disability and accident insurance, in practice the shortage of health-care personnel and other resources has meant that social services for the poor are very inadequate. The country has about 7 doctors for every 10,000 inhabitants, and most doctors work in the Guatemala City area. In 1995 only 754,100 people, less than a quarter of the workforce, were registered for social security. These problems are responsible, in part, for Guatemala's low life expectancy at birth, less than 65 years, among the lowest in Latin America.

Defense

The army has historically been a major power in Guatemalan government. Efforts to reduce its direct role began in 1985 when the military was strongly criticized for its role in large-scale human rights abuses. The December 1996 peace accord requires the government to reduce the size of the army from 46,000 members in the early 1990s to about 30,000, and reductions have begun. Guatemala also has a small navy (1500 members) and an air force (1000). The minister of defense is by law a military officer and the de facto head of the military, although the constitution makes the president commander in chief. Presidents Ramiro de León Carpio (1993-1996) and **Alvaro Arzú Irigoyen** (1996-) have begun to assert civilian control over the military and have taken legal action against some corrupt officers. Males between the ages of 18 and 50 are subject to conscription for periods of 24 to 30 months.

In addition to the armed forces, there are other important security forces in Guatemala. The National Police, under the Ministry of the Interior, number about 12,000. The Treasury Police of the Ministry of Finance, some 2100, also exercise broad authority. The Military Police, under the Department of Defense, have about 4000 members. In addition, Ríos Montt in 1983 established rural Civil Defense Patrols, into which a half million Guatemalans have been drafted to protect villages from the guerrillas. The patrols have been highly controversial, having been accused of human rights abuses. Under the 1996 peace accord, they are to be abolished. Military expenses consume about 1 percent of the GDP.

International Organizations

In addition to trade groups and other organizations previously mentioned, Guatemala belongs to the Organization of American States (OAS), Organization of Central American States (ODECA), and the United Nations and many of its subsidiary agencies, including the Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); United Nations University (UNU); and World Health Organization (WHO). It is also affiliated with the Group of 24 and Group of 77 underdeveloped countries, and the Nonaligned Movement, representing nations that did not ally themselves with any large foreign powers.

History

Maya Civilization

Maya civilization arose in the highlands of Guatemala centuries before the birth of Christ, forming thriving city-states and a trading network that stretched over a wide area. Many Maya leaders and people later migrated northward, into the Petén and Yucatán regions, where the civilization developed during the Classic period, between ad 300 and 900. During this period the Maya built impressive ceremonial cities at Tikal, Uaxactún, Quiriguá, Mirador, and at many other sites in northern Guatemala, as well as in Honduras and Mexico. These

sites featured large temple pyramids and plazas, richly decorated with sculpture and carving. The Maya also developed sophisticated scientific knowledge, a complex calendar, and a hieroglyphic writing system.

After the collapse of Classic Maya civilization about ad 900, the Maya established new cities further north in the Yucatán Peninsula, which was the center of the Maya world during the Post-Classic period (AD 900 to 1521). Those Maya who remained in the Guatemalan highlands never achieved the scientific or architectural magnificence of the Classic or Post-Classic city-states, but their civilization survived longer. When the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century, several populous nations of Maya descent, notably the Quiché, the Cakchiquel, and the Zutujil, occupied the Guatemalan highlands.

Colonial Period

After Spanish explorer **Hernán Cortés** conquered the **Aztec Empire** in Mexico in 1519, he sent his lieutenant, **Pedro de Alvarado**, to invade Guatemala in 1524. Alvarado led a small Spanish force and thousands of indigenous Mexican allies. Alvarado found the native Guatemalans engaged in civil war and already suffering from diseases introduced by Europeans, which were spreading over the Americas even more rapidly than Spain's armies. He formed an alliance with the Cakchiquels to defeat the Quiché. Alvarado then faced a four-year rebellion of the Cakchiquels, which he suppressed by 1528, and established Spanish rule over the region.

Several Spanish conquerors competed for control of the Central American isthmus until the Spanish monarchy united the entire region as an *audiencia* (Superior Court) in 1542. Territorial adjustments followed, but by 1570 the *audiencia*, also called the Kingdom of Guatemala, had jurisdiction from what is now Chiapas State in Mexico to Costa Rica. The kingdom was officially part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, the large colonial territory based in Mexico. But a captain general, appointed by the Spanish king, ruled the kingdom from its capital at Santiago de Guatemala (today known as Antigua Guatemala). Guatemala became the center of government, commerce, and religion in the region, as well as the major province of the kingdom. Devastating earthquakes struck the city in 1773, causing officials to move the capital to present-day Guatemala City in 1776.

Colonial Guatemala produced relatively little of value for the Spanish empire, except for a little cacao, until the 18th century. At that time the monarchy, seeking to raise more money from its colonies, instituted measures known as the Bourbon Reforms to stimulate greater export production. In Central America, this especially affected El Salvador, which began producing large amounts of indigo for dye. El Salvador belonged to the province of Guatemala until 1786, when Spanish administrative reforms established it as a separate unit of the kingdom. Chiapas, Honduras, and Nicaragua were also made separate units, while Guatemala remained a province. This reform defined the future independent states of Central America.

Guatemala City remained the capital of the kingdom, but the loss of indigo-rich El Salvador was a blow to the power of the Guatemalan merchant elite. The provinces gained even more autonomy from 1810 to 1814, while Spain was occupied by French troops during the **Napoleonic Wars**. In 1812 an interim Spanish government adopted a liberal constitution that granted the colonists greater participation in government and representation in Spain. During this time, independence movements began in many of Spain's American colonies_.

Independence

Captain-General José de Bustamante ruled the Kingdom of Guatemala from 1811 to 1818 and repressed all moves toward independence, maintaining the region's loyalty to Spain. After the French were defeated in Spain in 1814, King **Ferdinand VII** was restored to the throne and tried to reassert absolute royal power. In 1820, however, a revolt in Spain restored the constitution of 1812. Spirited local election campaigns followed in Central America, opening a period of intense political rivalry between emerging liberal and conservative factions of the elite.

Guatemala gained independence from Spain without the wars that ravaged much of Latin America. In 1821 Mexico proclaimed itself an independent empire, led by General **Agustín de Iturbide**. On September 15, 1821, a council of notables in Guatemala City declared independence from Spain and formed a government that assumed jurisdiction over the entire kingdom, keeping the acting captain-general, Gabino de Gainza, as the chief

executive. Yet individual municipalities throughout the region, from Chiapas to Costa Rica, also assumed the right to act on their own, and several declared independence not only from Spain, but from Mexico and Guatemala as well. The government in Guatemala, dominated by the Honduran lawyer and scholar **José Cecilio del Valle**, quickly moved to incorporate the kingdom into Iturbide's Mexican Empire in January 1822. Resistance from the provinces soon erupted into civil war, but before the issue was decided, Iturbide's government collapsed. A Central American convention declared Central America independent on July 1, 1823, and formed the **United Provinces of Central America**, a federation that included Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.

Dissension plagued the federation. Member states strongly resented the Guatemalan commercial and bureaucratic elite, which had wielded power over them throughout the colonial era. In addition, the elite class was divided into liberal and conservative factions, which fought over government power, economic policies, and the role of the Roman Catholic Church in society. The first federal president, **Manuel José Arce** of El Salvador, resigned in 1827 after only two years in office, as civil war broke out between the opposing factions. By 1827 Guatemalan conservatives had seized control of both the Guatemalan state and federal governments, but in 1829 liberal forces commanded by Honduran General **Francisco Morazán** took Guatemala City. Under Morazán's presidency (1830-1840) the federation launched liberal reforms and moved the national capital from Guatemala City to San Salvador.

Morazán and other liberals advocated capitalism and republican government and wanted to limit the power of the clergy, while conservatives supported a strong church, traditional landowners, and highly autonomous states. Morazán instituted liberal policies that were pushed even further at the state level by Guatemalan Governor Mariano Gálvez. These measures took land from the church, indigenous people, and rural communities and turned it over to private owners and foreign investors for commercial agriculture. Liberal officials also made major changes in the educational systems, encouraged foreign immigration, and introduced trial by jury and other judicial innovations, replacing traditional Spanish legal practices. These actions alienated large sectors of the Guatemalan clergy, legal profession, and rural peasants, who were angered by the loss of their land and attacks on their priests. When a cholera epidemic spread misery throughout Guatemala in 1837, spontaneous revolts began to occur.

Rafael Carrera, a former army officer who had fought in the 1827-1829 civil war, led the peasants in a successful guerrilla war. Carrera held staunch conservative views, supporting the church and advocating states' rights against federal authority. He toppled Gálvez, the governor of Guatemala, in 1838. Then, as the federation began to disintegrate, he defeated its president, Morazán, in March 1840, effectively ending the United Provinces. From then until his death in 1865, Carrera dominated Guatemala, ruling almost as a dictator.

Under Carrera's highly conservative rule, Guatemala formally declared itself a sovereign republic in 1847. The Catholic clergy regained much of its power, and foreign influence declined. By imposing stability and order on the country, the regime brought modest economic growth and began developing the country's roads and other infrastructure. First cochineal, a dye derived from insects, and later coffee became major exports, tying Guatemala's economy closely to Great Britain and its Central American trading center at Belize. Carrera's military power also influenced events in neighboring states. Carrera intervened several times in the internal politics of El Salvador and Honduras, and in 1857 Guatemalan troops played a major part in ousting a U.S. adventurer, **William Walker**, from power in Nicaragua.

Revolution of 1871

Carrera's handpicked successor, General Vicente Cerna, continued conservative rule until 1871, when a liberal revolution headed by Miguel García Granados and **Justo Rufino Barrios** defeated Cerna's army. This ushered in a period of liberal rule in Guatemala, led by a series of strong dictators, that continued until 1944. Under these liberal leaders, Guatemala's economy grew substantially, largely from exports of coffee and other crops. This

development was accompanied by major social and political changes; the gap between wealthy growers and rural laborers grew larger, and laws were passed to create a more secular state.

After García Granados served briefly as president, Barrios was elected in 1873. He became Guatemala's first liberal dictator and the model for those who followed him, driven by a philosophy that emphasized order, science, and progress. Ruling until 1885, Barrios focused on economic growth rather than political liberalism, encouraging foreign investment and expansion of the coffee industry. He represented the coffee-growing interests of the western highlands, and he chose members of leading families from Quetzaltenango to fill important government and military posts, replacing powerful officials from Guatemala City. Coffee exports soared, bringing Guatemala money to build roads, ports, and railroads. Guatemala City and Quetzaltenango became modern cities, with paved streets and impressive new buildings, sewage systems, and parks. However, coffee plantations took communal land from native people, whom the government viewed principally as inexpensive labor for expanding coffee production. Rural residents were forced to work on government projects, and many who lost their land migrated to cities, becoming poorly paid laborers. A middle class also began to form in the expanding cities.

Barrios sharply limited the power of the Roman Catholic Church, passing laws that abolished the tithe, confiscated church property, and greatly reduced the number of clergy in the country. He welcomed Protestant missionaries, established civil marriage and divorce, and made the University of San Carlos into a secular national university. He also established a system of public schools, but this mainly benefited middle- and upper-class citizens in the cities. Illiteracy remained very high among rural Guatemalans, who often lost their only source of education when local priests were forced to leave.

In foreign relations, Barrios settled boundary disputes with Mexico, which had aided his revolution, by granting to Mexico most of the land it claimed in Chiapas. He also renewed conflict with Great Britain over its claim of sovereignty over Belize. Barrios revived Francisco Morazán's dream of a Central American union, which had failed 45 years earlier. Barrios tried to reunite the region's independent nations as a single federation by military force. This provoked war with El Salvador, and in 1885 Barrios was killed and the Guatemalan forces were defeated during a battle at Chalchuapa, El Salvador.

Liberal policies and the growth of coffee exports continued under Barrios's successors: General Manuel Lisandro Barillas, who was president from 1885 to 1892, and Barrios's nephew, José Reina Barrios, elected president in 1892. When Reina Barrios was assassinated in 1898, another liberal leader from Quetzaltenango, **Manuel Estrada Cabrera**, became president. Estrada Cabrera remained in power for 22 years, one of the longest reigns of any Central American leader. His rule was marked by expansion of the export economy, corruption, and political repression.

Under Estrada Cabrera bananas became an important export crop in Guatemala, controlled mostly by the United Fruit Company (UFCO), which was owned by U.S. interests. United Fruit developed banana plantations in the lowlands on both coasts of Guatemala and built a railway from Puerto Barrios, Guatemala's principal banana port on the Caribbean, to Guatemala City. It also built rail lines linking the coffee-producing regions to ports on both coasts and to Mexico and El Salvador. Guatemalan liberals had wanted such transportation, ports, and other facilities for decades, but with these benefits came greater foreign control over Guatemala's economy. Many Guatemalans resented United Fruit, as well as the German immigrants who had begun to dominate the coffee industry.

Expanding exports benefited the small elite and growing middle class in Guatemala City, but the majority of Guatemala's people gained little from coffee and bananas. Meanwhile, Estrada Cabrera built a fortune for himself from public funds, while using the army and a secret police force to eliminate any dissent. By 1918 opposition to his rule was growing in the capital city, among business leaders, military officers, intellectuals, and some students. Several assassination plots failed, but in April 1920 he was removed from office by the army and the national assembly, which charged that he was mentally incompetent.

A new Unionist Party, under the presidency of businessman Carlos Herrera, took over the government, but within a year army generals affiliated with the Liberal Party once more ruled Guatemala. For the next decade, under Generals José M. Orellana (1921-1926) and Lázaro Chacón (1926-1930), Guatemala enjoyed some political freedom as the export-led economy continued to grow. Labor unions began to organize in the capital, and the press exercised more freedom than it had since the 1830s. But the coffee elite continued to dominate the country, with the support of the army. They feared a violent revolution against them, similar to the Mexican Revolution that had begun in 1910, so they continued to repress radical political movements and serious efforts by the working class to gain a role in politics.

The Great Depression, the worldwide economic collapse of the 1930s, brought severe economic decline to Guatemala. Coffee exports dropped from \$34 million in 1927 to \$9.3 million in 1932, and banana exports also declined, though not as dramatically. Amid the worsening economic conditions, another Liberal general, Jorge Ubico Castañeda, took office as president in February 1931. Ubico remained in power until 1944, and became known both for improving the country's infrastructure and imposing repressive military rule.

Alarmed by a Communist-led rural revolt in El Salvador in 1932, Ubico purged leftists in politics and labor, branding all opponents as Communists and executing or exiling many of them. His allies were wealthy coffee planters and the United Fruit Company. Ubico cultivated popularity among poor rural citizens by visiting the countryside and distributing gifts and favors. In 1934 he abolished debt peonage, a system of forced labor, but replaced it with a similar vagrancy law, assuring planters a supply of cheap rural workers. The poor also were forced to work on Ubico's extensive program of public projects, which included roads, public buildings, and other facilities. His large network of roads and telegraph lines helped to link parts of the country that had been isolated. He reduced local autonomy, especially in indigenous communities, as he centralized power in Guatemala City and in his departmental chiefs.

Ubico maintained good relations with both U.S. and German business interests in Guatemala, and he openly admired the rise of **Adolf Hitler** in Germany. But he recognized that Guatemala's geographic position made its relations with the United States critical, and when the United States entered World War II in 1941, Guatemala became the first Latin American country to follow the United States in declaring war on Germany. Ubico quickly collaborated with U.S. officials in interning and seizing the property of many German Guatemalans who were accused of Nazi sympathies.

Ubico faced growing opposition in the 1940s from university students and middle-class political groups, who demanded democratic reforms. Street demonstrations and violence spread, and in July 1944 Ubico, in ill health, was forced to step down. General Jorge Ponce Vaides became president, but on October 20, 1944, a group of military officers and civilians forced him to resign and formed a junta to govern until new elections could be held.

The Ten Years of Spring, 1944-1954

Ubico's ouster began a decade of dramatic social, economic, and political change in Guatemala, referred to as the Guatemalan revolution or "Ten Years of Spring." Juan José Arévalo, a philosophy professor and critic of Ubico, returned from exile in Argentina and was elected president in December 1944. A new constitution was adopted in March 1945, which proclaimed a social-democratic revolution. Under this constitution, the government would give more attention to the grievances of middle- and lower-class Guatemalans and would begin to restrict the privileges and power of the elite class and foreign capitalists. The constitution gave more Guatemalans a voice in the political system, granting women the right to vote. It also provided for freedom of speech and the press and allowed previously banned labor unions and political parties to organize.

Arévalo was anti-Communist but favored what he called "spiritual socialism," a sense of cooperation and concern for the common welfare. During his five-year term, an advanced system of social security was established, and a labor code was passed to protect workers' rights and benefits. He encouraged the growth of urban labor unions and popular participation in politics, and began reforms in health care and education. He also promoted new industry and agriculture. Guatemala became a founding member of the United Nations in 1945 and the Organization of American States in 1948.

Although Arévalo enjoyed wide popularity among the Guatemalan people, the traditional elite classes opposed him. There were more than 20 military attempts to overthrow him during his term. Planter and business interests feared the social and economic reforms he advocated. United Fruit and other foreign companies opposed his pro-labor policies and encouraged the U.S. government to believe that Guatemala was moving too far left. At this time, the United States was involved in its **Cold War** struggles with the Soviet Union, and anti-Communist sentiment in the United States was intense. The conservative Roman Catholic hierarchy also opposed Arévalo, after the 1945 constitution renewed traditional liberal measures restricting political and economic activities by the clergy.

In 1951 Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, who had helped lead the 1944 revolt, succeeded Arévalo as president and turned the revolution more sharply to the left. Arbenz's most revolutionary act was the land reform law of June 1952, which attempted to take unused agricultural land from large property owners and give it to landless rural workers. The law was carefully written to avoid angering the powerful coffee planters, but it was aimed directly at the United Fruit Company's huge banana plantations. In 1953 the program approved the taking of 91,000 hectares (225,000 acres) of United Fruit lands, offering compensation that the company considered inadequate. More than 162,000 hectares (400,000 acres) of government-owned land was also distributed to rural residents. Meanwhile, Arbenz allowed the Communist Party to organize and included leftist labor leaders among his advisers.

United Fruit's propaganda campaign against the Guatemalan revolution influenced the U.S. government, which was fighting Communist forces in Korea and trying to contain Communist influence in eastern Europe and Asia. When arms from eastern Europe began to arrive in Guatemala in May 1954, the United States launched a plan to overthrow Arbenz, with the help of the governments of Nicaragua and Honduras. A group of Guatemalan exiles, commanded by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, were armed and trained by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and U.S. Marine Corps officers. The group invaded Guatemala on June 18, supported by the CIA, which used radio broadcasts and leaflets dropped on the capital to create an illusion of a much stronger invasion force. The Guatemalan army refused to resist the invaders, and Arbenz was forced to resign on June 27. A military government replaced him and disbanded the legislature. The new government arrested prominent Communist leaders, and released some 600 political prisoners arrested under Arbenz. Castillo Armas became president.

Military Control, 1954-1985

For the next 30 years military officers, beginning with Castillo Armas, dominated Guatemala. Many of the reforms begun during the revolution were reversed; land was returned to large property owners, Marxist parties were outlawed, and other political parties, labor groups, and rural organizations were banned or severely restricted. With strong U.S. military and economic assistance, the governments during this period were intensely anti-Communist and stifled free political activity. The military became a powerful elite class in society, with some officers gaining great wealth through corruption. With no peaceful way to seek political or social change, some Guatemalans turned to violence.

Castillo Armas was assassinated on July 26, 1957. After a period of instability and disputed elections, the legislature named conservative General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes president in 1958. In November 1960 he faced a rebellion, one of many revolutionary movements that were supported by **Fidel Castro** after he took power in Cuba. The Guatemalan rebels, who were trying to restore the progressive reforms of the 1944-1954 period, were defeated, but some escaped into the mountains and organized the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), beginning the civil war against the Guatemalan government.

Ydígoras allowed anti-Castro Cuban exiles, supported by the United States, to train in Guatemala for the ill-fated **Bay of Pigs invasion** of Cuba in 1961. Although Ydígoras was strongly anti-Communist, growing unrest in Guatemala worried right-wing military officers, and in March 1963 he was overthrown. General Enrique Peralta Azurdia took over the presidency, canceled elections, and held power until 1966. During his term right-wing terrorist groups known as death squads emerged, murdering labor leaders and political opponents, while leftist guerrillas increased their attacks on the government.

From 1966 to 1970 Guatemala again had a civilian-led government, but it brought little change and more violence. A reform candidate, Julio César Méndez Montenegro, won the most votes in the 1966 election, but the military government allowed him to take office only after he secretly agreed to let the army keep its authority over the war against the guerrillas. The military and death squads used harsh tactics against guerrillas and any citizens suspected of aiding them.

Beginning in 1970 army officers again controlled the presidency; these included Generals Carlos Arana Osorio (1970-1974), Kjell Laugerud García (1974-1978), and Fernando Romeo Lucas García (1978-1982), who won elections that were often marred by violence and fraud. During their administrations, thousands died in the continuing civil war. Guatemala also suffered a devastating hurricane in 1974 and a violent earthquake in 1976 that claimed more than 20,000 lives and left a million people homeless. The economy, however, experienced remarkable growth, stimulated by development of petroleum in the Petén and higher coffee prices.

In 1982 another general, Angel Aníbal Guevara, was elected, but he was quickly deposed by a military coup. General Efraín Ríos Montt, a former presidential candidate of the moderate Christian Democratic Party, assumed control as a dictator. Ríos Montt, a minister in a California-based Protestant Pentecostal sect, tried to reduce government corruption. He also offered amnesty to the coalition of guerrilla groups, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). But when the guerrillas rejected his terms, he launched a campaign against them that was more intensive and brutal than any previous effort. It was punctuated by military atrocities against indigenous communities and other rural citizens. Indigenous men were forced to join Civil Defense Patrols to fight the guerrillas, while the government carried out a "scorched earth" policy, in which the army killed or drove into exile thousands of rural inhabitants and destroyed more than 400 indigenous villages.

On August 8, 1983, the military ousted Ríos Montt and began a period of conciliation. Guatemala suffered from serious economic problems caused by declining tourism and a general international economic downturn. At the same time, Guatemalan military leaders faced international and domestic condemnation over atrocities committed by the army and other groups. The military decided to turn over limited power to civilians, and in December 1985 Marco Vinicio Cerezo, a Christian Democrat, won election as Guatemala's first civilian president in 15 years. Cerezo was unable to end the civil war and its accompanying human rights abuses, or to suppress the rising trade in illegal drugs. However, he played a major role in bringing about the Central American Peace Accord of 1987, which contributed to a settlement of the civil war in Guatemala and to conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Guatemala in the 1990s

Although the military still exercised ultimate control, civilian leaders continued to govern Guatemala in the 1990s. By the middle of the decade, a wider spectrum of groups was allowed to participate in politics, and negotiations began to end the civil war. But human rights abuses by the military remained the center of internal division and international attention for Guatemala.

In 1990 the United States cut off most of its military aid and all arms sales to Guatemala because of persistent human rights abuses. Despite the official suspension of more than \$3 million in U.S. aid, it was later revealed that the CIA had continued to fund the Guatemalan army. The CIA delivered nearly \$10 million in financial and military assistance shortly after aid was suspended, and American CIA agents in Guatemala worked to suppress reports of killings and torture by the Guatemalan military. In 1992 Rigoberta Menchú Túm, a Quiché woman from Guatemala, won the Nobel Peace Prize for her work on behalf of human rights for the poor and indigenous people of the country. Her work raised international awareness of their struggle.

Jorge Serrano Elías, a right-wing businessman and evangelical Protestant closely allied with Ríos Montt, became president in 1991. With the support of the army, Serrano seized dictatorial control of the government in May 1993, but a wave of protest forced him to resign. The Congress elected Ramiro de León Carpio, the country's human rights ombudsman, to succeed him. De León supported some reform measures to reduce corruption, but the military remained the major power in Guatemala's government.

In legislative elections, a right-wing coalition of parties that included Ríos Montt's Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG) triumphed in August 1994. However, peace negotiations with the guerrillas moved ahead slowly, aided by a United Nations mission, throughout 1995. In July 1995, for the first time in 40 years, leftist political groups were able to participate in politics. A leftist coalition of parties, the New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG), won 6 of the 80 congressional seats in elections in November 1995, putting it in third place between the center-right National Advancement Party (PAN), with 42 seats, and the right-wing Guatemalan Republican Front with 22.

In January 1996 PAN candidate Alvaro Arzú Irigoyen, a former mayor of Guatemala City, narrowly defeated FRG candidate Alfonso Portillo to become president. Arzú worked tirelessly to reach a peace agreement with the guerrillas, becoming the first Guatemalan president to meet personally with their representatives. Arzú made significant progress in reducing human rights abuses, dismissing military leaders and police accused of human rights violations and corruption. His government also faced a rising crime rate, including a wave of kidnappings, as poverty rose. Although recent fiscal policies had improved many economic indicators, the standard of living for most Guatemalans had continued to decline.

A peace accord between the government and guerrilla forces was finally signed on December 29, 1996, ending the 36-year conflict that had killed some 100,000 Guatemalans. During that time an estimated 40,000 more had disappeared and were believed dead, and up to 1 million people had been forced out of their homes or into exile. The peace agreements called for the guerrillas to lay down their arms, while the size of the army was to be reduced; a number of social programs were to be established, as well as a commission to investigate human rights violations. Under the accords, the government also recognized past abuse and discrimination against the country's indigenous people and pledged to respect the customs, languages, and religious beliefs of the Maya population.

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