



U. Desmond Alufohai
Director

Protocol & International Affairs Division
Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD)

Country Profile: Guatemala -Amazing and Unstoppable



Head of State: President Alejandro Giammattei (since January 14, 2020)

Capital: Guatemala City

Population: 17.8 million

Independence Day: September 15, 1821 (from Spain)

Currency: Quetzal

The [Maya civilization](#) flourished in Guatemala and surrounding regions during the first millennium A.D. After almost three centuries as a Spanish colony, Guatemala won its independence in 1821. Guatemala means “land of many trees.” Experts believe the word [Guatemala](#) derives from the indigenous Nahuatl word “Quahtlemallan,” meaning “land of many trees.” While it’s true that the country boasts a huge amount of forest, large swathes of it are being cut down for a myriad of reasons.

Guatemala is the most populous country in Central America and has the highest fertility rate in Latin America. It also has the highest population growth rate in Latin America, which is likely to continue because of its large reproductive-age population and high birth rate. Almost half of Guatemala's population is under age 19, making it the youngest population in Latin America. Guatemala has three (3) properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage: [Antigua Guatemala](#) (1979); [Archaeological Park and Ruins of Quirigua](#) (1981), and [Tikal National Park](#) (1979).

Important Facts about Guatemala!

It is home to the deepest lake in Central America

The volcano-ringed Lake Atitlan is a jewel in the crown of Guatemala’s tourism industry, but it is also interesting below the surface. Atitlan is the deepest lake in Central America (340 meters).

It boasts the tallest volcano in Central America

In a region where volcanoes are a common sight, Guatemala takes the title for the tallest one in Central America. Tajumulco, in the north of the country near the Mexican border, reaches 4,203 meters or 2.6 miles above sea level.

It has been inhabited for 20,000 years.

Long before the Spanish conquistadors arrived in [Guatemala](#), the land was ruled by various Mayan kingdoms. You can still see evidence of these pre-Columbian civilizations at more than 5,000 archaeological sites.

The national bird lends its name to the Guatemalan currency.

Guatemala’s national bird is the quetzal, a long-tailed bird that lives primarily in humid forests. It’s becoming increasingly difficult to see them in the wild, but you can see them every day on Guatemalan bank notes, as the currency is also named after the bird.

The Flower and Sawdust Carpets in Antigua, Guatemala

[Antigua](#) is a small city surrounded by volcanoes in southern Guatemala. It is renowned for its Spanish colonial buildings, many of them restored following a 1773 earthquake that ended Antigua’s 200-year reign as Guatemala’s colonial capital. As the first morning light hits the cobblestone streets of Antigua, Guatemala, locals come out of their homes with baskets full of flower petals, palm leaves and dyed sawdust. It’s one of the first days of *Semana Santa*, or Holy Week, a celebration that begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter, where locals use materials plucked straight from nature to transform the streets into colorful carpets, or *alfombras*. [The vibrant tradition has been an important part of Antigua’s cultural heritage for centuries](#). It was first introduced in 1524, when the [Spanish conquistadors](#) traveled from newly conquered Mexico to invade Guatemala. With them, the soldiers brought along their tradition of creating the carpets.

We extend our appreciation to the Consulate General of The Republic of Guatemala in Miami for their contribution to this article.

June was most likely named for the Roman goddess Juno, patroness of marriage, childbirth, and the well-being of women. Another interpretation says that the name came from the Latin *juvenis*, “young people,” who were celebrated at this time. Perhaps, the reason why the month of June is still a popular month for weddings today!

June is the month with the longest daylight hours of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, and conversely, June has the shortest daylight hours of the year in the Southern Hemisphere. June’s birthstones are the pearl, the Moonstone, and the Alexandrite.

Enjoy our featured country of the Republic of Guatemala and why it is amazing and unstoppable. We commemorate the following national heritage month: National Caribbean Heritage Month, National Immigrant Heritage Month, and World Refugee Day (June 20). According to the UN, every minute 20 people leave everything behind to escape war, persecution, or terror, and one (1) in every 74 persons on Earth has been forced to flee. World Refugee Day is an occasion to build empathy and understanding for their plight and to recognize their resilience in rebuilding their lives.

We salute all the nations celebrating their Independence or National Day this month. As always, please be safe!

Inside this Edition

The Republic of Guatemala	1
Briefs & Notes	2
World Refugee Day	4
Independence & National Days	5
About Us	5

BRIEFS & NOTES



Flag Day is a United States holiday that honors the flag of the United States. It is celebrated on June 14, the anniversary of the [Flag Resolution of 1777](#), which was passed by the Second Continental Congress on that date. The resolution established the design of the flag, which featured thirteen alternating red and white stripes and a blue field with 13 white stars. Flag Day was first proposed by Bernard J. Cigrand, a Wisconsin schoolteacher, in 1885. He urged his students to celebrate June 14 as "Flag Birthday." Cigrand continued to promote the idea of Flag Day throughout his life, and in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation officially designating June 14 as Flag Day.

Flag Day is a day to honor the flag and to reflect on the meaning of the symbols it represents. The flag is a symbol of the United States of America, and it represents the ideals of freedom, democracy, and equality. It is also a symbol of the sacrifices that have been made by the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. There are many ways to celebrate Flag Day. Some people fly the flag, attend parades, or participate in other patriotic events. Others read about the history of the flag or learn about the flag code. Still others simply take some time to reflect on the meaning of the flag and what it represents.

Here are some flag etiquette guides. The flag should never:

- Be flown upside down.
- Be used as a costume or for advertising purposes.
- Be used as a tablecloth or to cover a speaker's platform.
- Be used to carry anything.
- Be used as a receptacle for anything.
- Be burned or defaced.

[Interesting flag trivia:](#)

The oldest flag in the world is the Danish flag, which was first flown in 1219.

The most common color on world flags is red, followed by blue and white.

The rarest color on national flags is purple. Nicaragua and Dominica are the only two countries that have purple on their flags.

The flag of Nepal is the only non-rectangular national flag in the world. It is shaped like two stacked triangles, representing the Himalaya Mountains. There are only three national flags that differ on their front and reverse sides: Moldova, Paraguay, and Saudi Arabia.

Lightning Safety Awareness Week

[June 18 – 24, 2023 was National Lightning Safety Awareness Week.](#) Florida's topography being a peninsula makes it a hot spot for lightning strikes in the USA. In 2022, Florida once again [ranked number 1 in the United States](#) for lightning events per square mile. According to Vaisala meteorologist Chris Vagasky, "[The precise spot with most lightning in the United States in 2022 is just 2 miles west of Animal Kingdom Lodge](#)". The general region on Florida with the greatest lightning activity is where Lake, Polk, Orange, and Osceola Counties meet, according to the [Vaisala 2022 Total Lightning Statistics Annual Report](#). The reason why Florida always ranks high in lightning reports has to do largely with our beaches. We have world famous beaches on the east and west coast. As the sun gets higher in the sky every summer day, the air over land heats up faster than air over the oceans. This in turn creates the "[sea breeze effect](#)". Cooler air from over the ocean tends to move inland, where it heats up and rises. The hot air is very humid, and as it rises this humidity condenses into clouds. If conditions are favorable (as they often are) afternoon thunderstorms form. These storms can then move to either coast, depending on which sea breeze is stronger.

Although Florida ranks fourth in the nation for overall lightning flashes (behind Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas), due to a large population, popularity of our beaches, and outdoor activities year round, [Florida ranks highest for lightning fatalities in the US](#). One of the biggest dangers is what is called "blue sky lightning". Many people do not realize that [lightning can travel up to 25 miles before striking ground](#). This means that you can be on the beach and see dark clouds well inland over the Everglades, and still be in striking distance. When the sky above you is clear and sunny, you do not perceive any threat.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has these [lightning safety tips](#). Among them is the message "when thunder roars, go indoors". If you can hear thunder, then you are close enough to be struck, NOAA advises going inside a large, enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring. If this is not available, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof is a good alternative. You can estimate the distance you are from a lightning strike by [counting the seconds between seeing a flash and hearing thunder, then dividing by 5](#). Just remember, you can only reliably hear thunder if the flash is no more than 10 miles away, but lightning can travel further.

If you are going to enjoy outdoor activities this summer, you can carry [a NOAA weather radio](#) with you to get up to date weather forecasts and alerts. NOAA also has instructions on how to [take NOAA with you on your phone](#). There are also many third-party apps you can obtain. The author's favorite is the [free Local 10 Weather Authority App](#), which gives you push alerts, live radar, a lightning tracker, and more.

National Caribbean American Heritage Month (2023)



The Institute of Caribbean Studies' (ICS) effort to establish [National Caribbean American Heritage Month](#) (NCAHM) began in 1999 with an outreach to President Bill Clinton asking for the recognition of August as National Caribbean American Heritage Month. This resulted in the first White House Caribbean American Community Briefing being held at the Clinton White House in 1999. Meanwhile, a now-defunct, ad-hoc group of Caribbean Americans led by Doreen Thompson organized efforts to get June declared as Caribbean Heritage Month in Washington DC. ICS joined forces with the ad-hoc group in June 1999, but by 2000, the group dispersed.

In June 2000, ICS took on the mantle of leadership in Washington DC, changed the name to National Caribbean American Heritage Month, and organized events in June under that banner. Efforts to engage the White House were fruitless. In 2001, ICS was joined by the TransAfrica Forum and the Caribbean Staff Association of the World Bank to organize events during June, promoting recognition of June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month, and the momentum slowly began to build. In 2004, the efforts gathered steam, when an Official Campaign for June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month was launched upon the tabling of a Bill in the US Congress by Congresswoman Barbara Lee, with language provided by ICS Founder and President, Dr. Claire Nelson. ICS worked with the Office of Congresswoman Barbara Lee to galvanize support for the Bill from organizations across the country and also organized events on Capitol Hill in recognition of June 2004. The Bill was reintroduced and passed the House in June 2005, and the Senate in February 2006.

A Proclamation making the Resolution official was signed by President George Bush on June 5, 2006. Since the declaration, the White House has issued an annual proclamation recognizing June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month. Click here to view [President Biden's 2023 Proclamation](#).

This year marks the fourteenth celebration of June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month. The campaign to designate June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month was spearheaded by Dr. Claire Nelson, Founder, and President of the Institute of Caribbean Studies. Through the commemoration of this month, we hope to ensure that America is reminded that its greatness lies in its diversity, with Caribbean immigrants from founding father Alexander Hamilton to journalist Malcolm Gladwell, who have shaped the American dream.

Actress and Singer Sheryl Lee Ralph, of Jamaican heritage and basketball great Rick Fox, of Bahamian heritage, were named Official Spokespersons for the National Caribbean American Heritage Month in 2006.

Source: [National Caribbean American Heritage Month](#)

2023 National Immigrant Heritage Month

[History of National Immigrants Day](#)

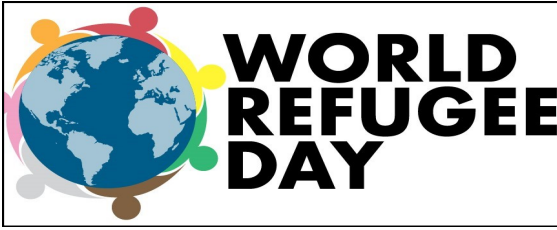
America is the world's great experiment in freedom and individual rights, and unlike any other nation on our planet, it was founded and built entirely by immigrants. Americans are citizens either by birth or by choice, abiding under a common flag and constitution, united by its legacy as a land of freedom and opportunity. It is easy to forget that as a nation of immigrants, we are the sum of every idea and dream that ever stepped ashore with an immigrant seeking new opportunities in the United States. Most of those ideas and dreams passed through Ellis Island, America's first federal immigration center.

Before 1890, the 42 individual states, then comprising the United States of America, regulated the flow of immigration into the United States. Europeans began fleeing political instability, restrictive religious laws, and deteriorating economic conditions in record numbers, leading to massive numbers of immigrants arriving on American shores by 1890. To ease the burden on individual states, the federal government took over responsibility for processing immigrant arrivals. Ellis Island in New York Harbor opened in 1892 as an immigrant station, becoming the primary port of entry for most immigration into the U.S. after 1890. Immigrants also entered the U.S. through other port cities, including Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, San Francisco, Savannah, Miami, and New Orleans. Ellis Island was the busiest because New York was the preferred port of entry for most ships arriving in America.

From opening day on January 1, 1890, until the day Ellis Island closed in November 1954, over 12 million immigrants passed through the Ellis Island immigration station, along with hopes and dreams of a better life for themselves and their families. Most of the Ellis Island immigrants shared a common dream: becoming an American citizen. In return for pledging allegiance and loyalty to the United States and its Constitution, immigrants who chose to become naturalized citizens were rewarded with all the rights and privileges afforded U.S. citizens, and the freedom to pursue "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

As we celebrate National Immigrants Day, we also celebrate the determination, ingenuity, and spirit immigrants continue to add to our melting pot of cultures we call America. [View President Biden's Proclamation on National Immigrant Heritage Month, 2023.](#)

WORLD REFUGEE DAY



[World Refugee Day](#) is an international day designated by the United Nations to honor refugees around the globe. It falls each year on June 20 and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution. World Refugee Day is an occasion to build empathy and understanding for their plight and to recognize their resilience in rebuilding their lives. According to the UN, every minute 20 people leave everything behind to escape war, persecution, or terror and one (1) in every 74 people on Earth has been forced to flee.

According to the [United Nations High Commission for Refugees](#) (UNHCR), at the end of 2022, 108.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order, including 35.3 million refugees, 62.5 million internally displaced people, 5.4 million asylum seekers, etc.

Children account for 40 per cent of all forcibly displaced people. Of the major hosting countries, Türkiye hosted nearly 3.4 million refugees, followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran with 3.4 million, Colombia hosted 2.5 million, Germany hosted 2.1 million and Pakistan – 1.7 million.

There are several types of forcibly displaced persons:

Refugees: A refugee is someone who fled his or her home and country owing to “a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion”, according to the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention. Many refugees are in exile to escape the effects of natural or human-made disasters.

Asylum Seekers: Asylum seekers say they are refugees and have fled their homes as refugees do, but their claim to refugee status is not yet definitively evaluated in the country to which they fled.

Internally Displaced Persons: Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people who have not crossed an international border but have moved to a different region than the one they call home within their own country.

Stateless Persons: Stateless persons do not have a recognized nationality and do not belong to any country. Statelessness situations are usually caused by discrimination against certain groups. Their lack of identification — a citizenship certificate — can exclude them from access to important government services, including health care, education, or employment.

Returnees: Returnees are former refugees who return to their own countries or regions of origin after time in exile. Returnees need continuous support and reintegration assistance to ensure that they can rebuild their lives at home.

[Source: United Nations World Refugee Day](#)

CONSULAR CORPUS OF MIAMI

Airport Operations Seminar

Thursday, July 13, 2023
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Miami International Airport
Concourse D Auditorium (Door #1)

RSVP By July 6, 2023
HThompson@FlyMIA.com

MIA MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Breakfast & lunch provided.
Please bring your parking ticket for validation.



INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAYS (JUNE)

June 2, 1946 – Italy: Republic Day or Festa della Repubblica (Festival of the Republic), commemorates the day Italians voted to abolish the monarchy and replace it with a republic.

June 3, 2006 – Montenegro: In a referendum held on May 21, 2006, Montenegrins voted to end the federation with Serbia and declared independence on June 3, 2006. The Serbian parliament recognized Montenegro's independence two days later.

June 4, 1970 – Tonga: After signing the Treaty of Friendship in 1900, the Kingdom of Tonga became a protectorate of the United Kingdom. Although Tonga retained its sovereignty and continued to self-govern, foreign affairs were handled by the UK. On Emancipation Day, June 4, 1970, Tonga achieved full independence from the United Kingdom.

June 6, 1523 – Sweden: On June 6, 1523 Gustav Vasa was elected king of Sweden, marking the abolishment of the Kalmar Union between Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. From 1916 to 1982, the day was celebrated as Swedish Flag Day. Since 1983, June 6 has been celebrated as Sweden's National Day, In 2023, Sweden will celebrate its 500th anniversary.

June 10, 1580 – Portugal: Portugal Day, also called Camoes Day, is celebrated annually on June 10 and commemorates the day Portugal's greatest and most revered poet, Luis de Camoes, passed away in 1580.

June 12, 1898 – Philippines: Although the Philippines declared independence from Spain during the Spanish-American War of 1898, Spain ceded them to the United States after the war ended. For nearly 50 years, the Philippines was a colony of the United States until achieving independence on July 4, 1946. In 1962, the date of Philippine independence was changed to June 12, 1898, honoring the day [General Emilio Aguinaldo](#) had declared independence from Spain.

June 12, 1990 – Russia: Russia's national holiday, Russia Day, has been celebrated annually since 1992. It commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) on June 12, 1990

June 17, 1944 – Iceland: After a two-part referendum in May 1944, the union with Denmark was dissolved on June 17, 1944. The date was chosen to coincide with the birthday of Jon Sigurdsson, the leader of Iceland's 19th Century independence movement.

June 17, 2023 – United Kingdom: Since 1748, when King George II decided to combine his birthday celebration with an annual military parade, the 'Trooping of the Colour', has marked the official birthday of the British Sovereign. Due to Britain's unpredictable weather, King George II chose to hold the parade in June, and this tradition continues today. This year, the celebration will take place on June 17th.

June 23, (1962) – Luxembourg: The celebration of the sovereign became an important patriotic public holiday during the reign of Grand Duchess Charlotte (1919- 1964). In 1962, National Day festivities were changed to June 23, to take advantage of the summer weather.

June 25, 1991 – Slovenia: The country declared independence from Yugoslavia on June 25, 1991.

June 25, 1975 – Mozambique: Since Vasco de Gama came ashore in 1497, and Portuguese settlers followed in 1505, Mozambique had been part of Portugal, first as a province and then as a colony. On June 25, 1975, Mozambique attained its independence from Portugal.

June 26, 1960 – Madagascar: Madagascar obtained its independence from France on June 26, 1960

June 27, 1977 – Djibouti: Before 1967, Djibouti was known as French Somaliland and from 1967 – 1977 as the French Territory of the Afars and Issas. When the territory gained independence from France on June 27, 1977, it was renamed Djibouti.

June 29, 1976 – Seychelles: A British crown colony since 1903, the Seychelles became an independent republic on June 29, 1976.

June 30, 1960 – Democratic Republic of Congo: On June 30, 1960, the DRC gained its independence from Belgium.

ABOUT US

The core mission of MDAD's Protocol and International Affairs Division is -

To facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.

Contact:

Tel: + 1 (305) 876-7457

Email: Protocol@FlyMIA.com

URL: https://www.iFlyMIA.com/protocol_international_affairs.asp

For comments, suggestions, event announcements or to opt-out, please send us an email.

