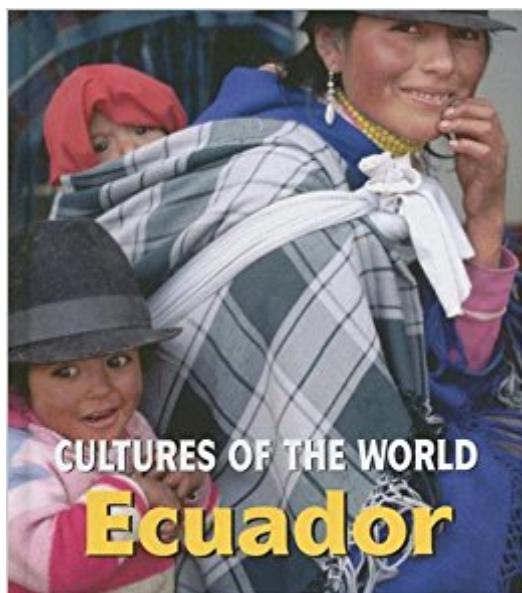


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Ecuador (Cultures Of The World, Second)



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8--Both titles briefly cover history, government, economy, and geography; however, their strength is in their coverage of contemporary culture. Particularly useful is the information on religion, the arts, food, leisure activities, and social roles. The books have great visual appeal with excellent full-color photographs on every page. Ecuador is especially successful in explaining social and economic hierarchies within the country. The cultures of the indigenous populations, blacks, mestizos, Hispanics, and other immigrants are discussed. The author describes how members within each group relate to one another and how these diverse cultures create the ``hierarchical pyramid'' that is Ecuadorian society. Portugal effectively presents details of everyday life, but suffers from a lack of organization when covering history and government. Information on particular topics such as the Moors, the Revolution of 1974, and the European Community is scattered under various headings throughout the book. While it is helpful to see these topics in different contexts, readers are forced to page through each chapter in search of a complete picture and adequate explanations. Several errors in the index add to the challenge. (One error was found in Ecuador's index, as well.) Glossaries are minimal; fortunately most vocabulary is defined in context. Ecuador is the more distinctive of this pair, but both provide more contemporary cultural information than entries in the ``Enchantment of the World'' (Childrens), ``In Pictures'' (Lerner), and ``Let's Visit'' (Burke) series. Kristin Lott, East Brunswick Public Library, NJCopyright 1995 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Fine and lasting reference information for grades 5 and older, and are highly recommended picks for discriminating collections." -- Children's Bookwatch, September 1999 --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I liked this book. I found it to be informative and easy to read, with a simple, straightforward narrative and format. The pictures are, in my opinion, vivid and relevant. Similarly, the facts presented are substantial, and reasonably comprehensive for the book's length. If the text has a negative, it is that it comes across as a tad stale and one-dimensional at times, seeming to be written purely from an outsiders' perspective, based on secondhand research and fact-finding rather than firsthand experience; for me, this treatment tended to cast the country and its people in a somewhat narrow and inaccurate light. Use discretion in this regard, however, and one can still glean much from this book. Overall, I came away from the read feeling as if I had a basic, working knowledge of Ecuador and its people -- not a complete knowledge, to be sure, but certainly a foundation on which to add and cultivate. So, my gratitude goes out to the book's authors, subjects, and publishers. I have benefited from your work and service.

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