



¡ME ENCANTA EL ESPAÑOL!



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 Costa Rica	 Cuba	 Ecuador	 El Salvador	 Guatemala
 Honduras	 Mexico	 Nicaragua	 Panama	 Paraguay
 Peru	 Rep. Dominicana	 Uruguay	 Venezuela	 Guinea Ecuatorial

Click on any of the countries or corresponding flags above in order to gain a more in depth view of the people and the culture. **Veinte Mundos**<sup>1</sup> has compiled a grouping of important information, useful resources, links to the biggest national newspapers, and more for each of the 20 Spanish speaking countries.

## The Spanish language worldwide

Spanish is one of the world's most widely spoken languages and the official language in 20 countries. It is spoken by nearly half a billion people worldwide, and in the United States more than 35 million people consider Spanish their mother tongue. As a result of Christopher Columbus' discoveries and the subsequent colonization of South and Central America in the late 15th century, Spanish spread across the whole continent (except for a few countries, such as Brazil).

The majority of Spanish colonizers came from Andalucía and Extremadura in southern Spain, or prepared for their voyage in this region, and so today the pronunciation of Spanish in Latin America still resembles that of Southern Spain. Over the centuries various indigenous languages and expressions from African slaves have influenced Latin American Spanish, so every Latin American country has its own particular accent, words and expressions. As a result of these differences, communication problems can sometimes arise between Spanish-speakers from different countries.

The biggest peculiarity of Latin American Spanish pronunciation is the 'seseo'. Whilst in European Spanish the letter z is generally pronounced as "th", in Latin American Spanish it is pronounced as "s". Also whereas in Spain "usted(es)" is only used as the polite form, it is the normal form of address in numerous Latin American countries. As a result, the second person plural (vosotros) is used very rarely in Latin America.

Spanish belongs to the Romance linguistic branch of Indo-European languages. Evolved from Latin, it is related to French, Italian, Romanian, Portuguese and Romansh.

1. Veinte Mundos, *Veinte Mundos- los 20 Mundos*. [20 Spanish Speaking Worlds] Retrieved from <http://www.veintemundos.com/en/spanish/>