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## ARCHIVE

From issue: **Consulta Previa and Investment** (Spring 2014)

# Panorama

Stay up-to-date with the latest trends and events from around the hemisphere with *AQ's* Panorama. Each issue, *AQ* packs its bags and offers readers travel tips on a new Americas destination.

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Revelers in Barbados' famous street carnival. Photo: the Barbados Tourism Authority: Adrian Richards.

## [World Cup Update](#)

With preparations for the 2014 FIFA World Cup nearing completion, soccer fans across the region can turn their attention to what really matters: their national team's chances of winning on the world's biggest stage. Although European teams have won four of the last six competitions, South American teams have historically fared far better when playing at home.

The World Cup draw last December placed the 32 qualifying teams in eight groups of four. From June 12 to June 26, each team will play the other teams in its group in a round-robin format. The top two teams from each group will advance to the elimination round. Not all groups are created equal, so here are some predictions for the hemisphere's 10 qualifying teams.

Host country Brazil will likely take top spot in Group A and is a favorite to win this year's competition. After a convincing 3–0 dismantling of Spain in the Confederations Cup last June, Brazil—and its 22-year-old phenom, Neymar—has once again found its winning stride. Cameroon also stands a strong chance of emerging from the group, sending Mexico—which barely qualified

—packing.

The star power of Argentina's Lionel Messi, Uruguay's Luis Suárez and Ecuador's Antonio Valencia will help their teams make a deep run in the tournament. Unfortunately, while Chile has a talented squad, *La Roja* faces World Cup defending champion Spain and the 2010 runner-up, the Netherlands, in Group B.

Colombia, which failed to qualify for the last World Cup, was expected to finish first in Group C this year, until a season-ending injury to star striker Radamel Falcao tempered expectations. Nevertheless, *Los Cafeteros* will likely advance to the next round.

After making a convincing qualifying run, the United States was rewarded with the “Group of Death” (Group G), which includes European powerhouses Germany and Portugal, as well as Ghana, the country that eliminated the U.S. in the 2010 World Cup. The U.S. and conference rivals Honduras and Costa Rica may be doomed from the start.

Despite the stiff competition, at least five Latin American countries are sure to make it to the Round of 16: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Colombia. Expect to watch one of the region's powerhouses playing in the World Cup Final on July 13.

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## Crop Over

**BY**

[Leani García](#)

The island of Barbados' economy has evolved from its mono-crop dependency in the eighteenth century as the world's largest sugar producer. But every summer, the island pays tribute to this legacy with a revival of a three-centuries-old harvest festival known as Crop Over. Originally, the festival was meant to cap the long sugar cane growing season with honors to the most productive cane cutters. But today, it has become a celebration of Caribbean culture that briefly overshadows Barbados' modern fame as the home of pristine beaches, a thriving economy and the birthplace of pop singer Rihanna.

Crop Over was transformed from its origins as a one-day festival to a four-week event by the Barbados Tourism Authority in 1974. Since its modern rebirth, Crop Over has been attracting thousands of visitors from around the world with Calypso music, Soca dancing, street festivals, and, of course, rum. This year's festival will be preceded by the Cavalcades, a series of outdoor concerts beginning May 3, leading to the official launch on June 28 with the ceremonial delivery of the last harvested canes and the Crop Over Feast. While sugar no longer drives this economy of more than 288,000 people, it remains a staple of the island's agriculture. It is here that the King and Queen of the Crop are crowned, based on the amount of cane cut throughout the year. Then the party really begins.

The main event is the August 4 Grand Kadooment—a street carnival that some say eclipses neighboring Trinidad and Tobago’s Carnival. The party wraps up at the Spring Garden Highway with more music, food, elaborate costumes, and cocktails. Barbados tourist authorities like to boast that Crop Over is the Caribbean’s “sweetest summer festival.” For weary visitors who make it through the duration, it may also be the liveliest.

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## [10 Things to Do: Manaus, Brazil](#)

BY

[Rebecca Bintrim](#)

*Manaus, the historic gateway to Brazil’s Amazon, melds a colorful past and a bustling entrepreneurial culture with its status as a symbol of biodiversity. Just beyond the riverport and the spectacular architecture of the city center is the rainforest that has lured adventurers and dreamers for centuries. Now, Manaus, home to nearly 1.8 million people, can add sports to its list of attractions as one of the sites for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.*

- 1. Climb above the canopy.** A course in tree climbing gives ecotourists an alternative way to experience the world’s largest tropical forest. (210 *reais* for a one-day excursion.)
- 2. Swim with dolphins.** Pink river dolphins, found primarily in the Amazon River, are known for their playful nature, long beaks and pink hue. After feeding the dolphins, swim with them in their natural habitat. (130 *reais*)
- 3. Witness nature’s grudge match.** For nearly four miles (6.4 km), the dark Rio Negro and the sandy Rio Solimões flow side by side, creating a starkly beautiful natural divide called *Encontro das Águas* (Meeting of Waters), before merging to form the Amazon River. Catch a boat from Porto da Ceasa, 6.5 miles (10.5 km) from the city center, to see this natural wonder.
- 4. Refuel with superfoods.** Snack on guaraná and açaí, the acclaimed superfruits native to the Amazon rainforest. And don’t forget the fish! With over 2,000 species in the Amazon River, many typical dishes use local fish, like the famous *caldeirada de tambaqui*.
- 5. Hobnob with rubber barons.** The neo-classical *Teatro Amazonas* opera house was built by Italian architect Celestial Sacardim during the nineteenth century rubber boom. While the rubber barons are long gone, the music remains. The luxurious 700-seat theater offers guided tours Monday-Saturday and cultural programs nightly. (10 *reais* for a guided tour; prices vary for general admission.)
- 6. Befriend a manatee.** For just 5 *reais*, the *Bosque da Ciência* (Science Forest) run by the *Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia* offers visitors an introduction to the mysteries of the rainforest, and glimpses of manatees, otters and monkeys. Don’t forget to stop by the nature museum.
- 7. Beat the heat.** With average temperatures in the humid 80s and 90s (26-32 C) year-round, the

Ponta Negra River beach is a perfect place to cool off. Just eight miles (13 km) from downtown, it's the perfect spot for a picnic lunch or a view of the spectacular sunset.

**8. Find your own tree house.** Treetop resorts and jungle lodges can be found throughout the city. The Arou Amazon Towers, the largest treetop hotel in the world, has suspended walkways, elevating guests off the ground and into the canopy layer. (1,150 *reais* per night.)

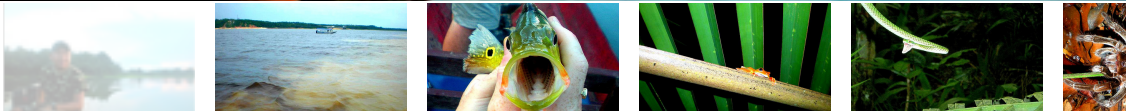
**9. Get a whiff of Paris.** Constructed during the rubber boom, the Mercado Adolpho Lisboa, about 10 minutes from the city center, is a replica of the Parisian Les Halles market. Find great deals on local goods inside this landmark building.

**10. Catch World Cup fever.** The Arena Amazônia soccer stadium can seat up to 46,000 people and is powered by rainwater and solar energy. The stadium will host four World Cup matches this June before it becomes home to four local soccer clubs.

*View a slideshow from Manaus, Brazil.*



Matthias Raymond guides a group down the Amazon River.



*All photos courtesy of Christine Horton.*

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**[Produce on Wheels: Baltimore's Pop-Up Mobile Farmers'](#)**

## Market

**BY**

**Kate Brick**

Two to three days a week a bright green repurposed *Washington Post* truck roams the streets of northeast Baltimore. But instead of newspapers, it is delivering fresh fruit and vegetables.

The produce is grown in the same neighborhood where it is consumed—on a six-acre “urban production farm” in Clifton Park. Through this mobile farmers’ market, the Real Food Farm offers inner city residents wholesome, seasonal organic fruits and vegetables at affordable prices.

The farm began in 2009 as a project of Civic Works, Baltimore’s service corps. Recognizing that neighborhoods in northeast Baltimore were “food deserts”—places where groceries were hard to access, and fresh, affordable local produce was non-existent—Civic Works partnered with the Center for Design Practice at the Maryland Institute College of Art to design a food truck that could make produce more accessible for low income residents.

Two years later, the mobile market— which doubles as an educational tool, teaching schoolchildren about urban agriculture and nutrition—hit the streets. And residents don’t have to wait for scheduled house calls: they can flag down the truck any time on the street.

Acknowledging the limited resources of the mobile market’s consumers, prices are around 50 cents lower than typical farmers’ markets, and government food assistance programs are honored. A grant from the Farm Alliance of Baltimore City allows the market to offer a “Double Your Dollars” program giving customers \$10 worth of produce for every \$5 dollars spent. The mobile market frequently sells out of its daily produce.

According to Shelley White, the program coordinator for the Real Food Farm, the overwhelming demand for the mobile market has led local farms to supplement the Real Food Farm’s inventory. “The hope is to [...] expand to other parts of the city. There are many neighborhoods that lack access to healthy, locally grown food; the challenge is having enough produce to serve them,” White says.

***View a video about the Real Food Farm's collaboration with the Maryland Institute College of Art.***



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## [Ahora Sí Llego](#)

Halfway between the Cuban towns of Martí and Baracoa, Cuban and Italian filmmakers José Balboa and Desiderio Sanzi plug a hole in the gas tank of their Russian Ural sidecar motorcycle with a glob of powdered deodorant and super glue. It's a temporary fix for the machine that will carry them across all 15 Cuban provinces.

That scene in *Ahora Sí Llego!* (Now I Will Arrive) sums up the filmmakers' determination to show a side of the country that few outsiders see. Inspired by Che Guevara's legendary 1952 motorcycle trip through Latin America, the 93-minute film is a visually stunning journey through Cuba's countryside.

But it is also a tribute to the variety of Cuban artistic collectives and institutions flourishing in the hinterland. The journey is interspersed with interviews with artists who produce some of Cuba's often overlooked folk art, such as traditional wood and stone carvings, as well as modern forms of creative expression, such as performance art and animation.

***View a slideshow of images from the film.***



A World War II-era Russian Ural sidecar motorcycle takes Cuban and Italian filmmakers José Balboa and Desiderio Sanzi through all 15 Cuban provinces.



“Cuba is more than just La Habana,” Medardo Teunto Albóniga, an art teacher in Matanzas, tells the filmmakers. But they may be knocking on an open door. The film premiered in Havana in December and was supported by some of the government’s key cultural institutions: the *Consejo Nacional de las Artes Plásticas del Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales* (National Council for the Visual Arts at the Center for Development of the Visual Arts) and the *Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos* (Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry).

But the most striking aspect of *Ahora Sí Llego* is the glimpse it provides of the island. “It is Cuba—no filters, completely authentic,” Sanzi says, adding that it portrays “a world that is disappearing.” That world is a tight-knit community that finds ingenious ways to live and create with limited means.

This world view is present in every scene—much of the film is shot from the moving motorcycle, and the bouncing, dusty footage adds a *cinema vérité* dimension to the work. The name “*Ahora Sí Llego*,” a stranger’s comment during one of the many motorcycle repairs, captures the hopeful and romanticized view of Cuba that inspired the film: “We had a broken motorcycle, very little money; we were hungry and tired,” says Sanzi, “but we had a lot of heart, and the promise of the next province.”

***View a trailer for Ahora Sí Llego!***



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## **From the Think Tanks**

### **Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (RESDAL), International Crisis Group, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México**

Crossborder cooperation on crime, the institutional development of police and armed forces, and the role of private security are high on Central America’s public safety agenda. In “Public Security Index, Central America: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama,” *Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina* (RESDAL) measures the levels of security in six Central American countries. While the figures illustrate the grave security challenges in the region, they also provide a concrete basis for academics, policymakers and civil and international organizations to engage in a “deeply political reading of [security] within a broad historical perspective.”

#### **International Crisis Group**

While the Colombian government is negotiating a peace agreement with the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—FARC), an agreement with the smaller *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Army—ELN) remains elusive. In its report, “Left in the Cold? The ELN and Colombia’s Peace Talks,” the International Crisis Group analyzes Colombia’s attempts to negotiate with the ELN, and offers prescriptions for negotiating with the group both in Colombia and abroad. Recommendations include expediting creative and flexible cooperation between the government and the ELN, engaging the international community in the peace process, and inviting the ELN to participate in the current peace talks with the FARC in Havana.

*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*

Over the past three decades, China has turned into an economic powerhouse, becoming the second largest trade partner for both Mexico and the United States. “China and the New Triangular Relationships in the Americas: China and the Future of U.S.-Mexico Relations,” published by the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, examines areas of instability, including the ways in which China’s growing influence in the region jeopardizes the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and Mexico, and contributes “to the erosion of NAFTA’s integration process.” The authors also note the opportunities for all three countries to benefit through tripartite cooperation.

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*February 13, 2015*

by [Timothy Bouldry](#)



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by [Stephen Kurczy](#)



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