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From issue: **Higher Education and Competitiveness** (Summer 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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A hiker treks through Parque Nacional Los Glaciares. Photo: Colin Monteath/Hedgehog House/Minden Pictures/Corbis. Homepage photo: Sergei Grits/AP.

[Competitive Eating](#)

BY

[Leani García](#)

Summertime in the U.S. typically evokes the image of barbecues featuring all-American fare. But for a group of unique, dedicated elite athletes, summertime food conjures up a chance at glory.

Competitive eating was introduced in Coney Island on July 4, 1916, by Nathan's Famous to determine who could ingest the most hot dogs within a set time. Since then, it has pulled in a number of other foods, including the "accoutrements," with the sponsorship of Coca-Cola and Heinz Ketchup—not to mention the upset-stomach reliever Pepto-Bismol. The sport revived in the mid-1990s when brothers George and Richard Shea took the helm of Nathan's Famous' publicity machine and gave it an air of serious athleticism, with rules overseen by two main bodies.

The better-known Major League Eating (MLE) is run by the Shea brothers and hosts over 80 competitive eating events a year around the United States. But the crowning event remains the annually televised Nathan's Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest on Coney Island. Then there's All Pro Eating Promotions, best known for inventing "picnic-style rules" in the U.S.—competitors must eat the food as presented, without mutilating it in any way.

Competitive eaters such as Nathan's champions Joey Chestnut and Sonya "The Black Widow" Thomas have become household names, thanks to their uncanny ability to devour awe-inspiring amounts of everything from chicken wings to tiramisu in a matter of minutes. At last year's Coney Island competition, Chestnut ingested 69 hotdogs in the allotted 10 minutes, while Thomas made history by winning the first-ever Nathan's Famous Female Hot Dog Eating Championship in 2011 by wolfing down 40 hot dogs. No word on whether they took advantage of Pepto-Bismol's assistance.

[View a video of the 2014 Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Championship](#)

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[La Jaula de Oro](#)

BY

[Rebecca Bintrim](#)

Hoping to protect herself from the journey ahead, 15-year-old Sara cuts her hair, binds her chest, and changes into a dirty T-shirt and a baseball cap. Emerging as a slouching teenage boy, she leaves her home in a Guatemalan slum for a better life in the United States.

This poignant scene opens director Diego Quemada-Díez's award-winning film, *La jaula de oro* (The Golden Cage), which recounts the journey thousands of migrants take to the U.S., through the eyes of four teenagers. The film provides an unflinching look at the harsh realities that migrants face during their journey.

The teens ride atop "*La Bestia*" (The Beast)—the nickname for the train used by migrants as a quick but dangerous form of transportation across Mexico—along with hundreds of fellow travelers who dream of reaching *el Norte*. Along the way, they encounter criminal gangs and narcotraffickers who use extortion and the threat of kidnapping to recruit migrants as drug mules in exchange for their passage. Despite the challenges, Quemada-Díez, a Spanish-born director who immigrated to the U.S. 18 years ago, brightens the story with glimpses of the generosity of strangers who feed and give shelter to the young migrants.

The film (its 57 awards include the Gillo Pontecorvo Award at Cannes in 2013) is distinguished by its documentary style and the use of actors with no prior experience. Quemada-Díez, who is actively pursuing a U.S. release, spent eight years researching over 600 migrant narratives to develop his story line. "I wanted people to see the root of why migrants are leaving," says Quemada-Díez, adding that he hopes audiences will reflect on the poverty and violence at home that propels so many young people to make such dangerous journeys.

Watch an exclusive AQ Q&A with Diego Quemada-Díez

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[Global Citizen Festival](#)

BY

Rebecca Bintrim

On September 27, thousands of citizens, celebrities, musicians, and humanitarians will converge in New York City's Central Park for a music festival driven by a shared purpose: ending global poverty. Now in its third year, the annual Global Citizen Festival is an all-day concert series organized by the Global Poverty Project, a humanitarian organization dedicated to ending global poverty by 2030 through citizen advocacy.

The festival, launched in 2012 under the direction of Australian humanitarian Hugh Evans and with funding from corporate partners such as HP, FedEx, Coca-Cola, and Forbes, raised \$1.3 billion in its first year with performances by musical powerhouses such as Stevie Wonder, Alicia Keys, John Mayer, and Elvis Costello. The 60,000 concertgoers and 20 million online viewers were also treated to appearances by Bono, Olivia Wilde and Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon.

Rather than pay for a ticket, 90 percent of attendees earn their spot by completing tasks to increase awareness of the annual policy themes through the Global Citizen Festival website, such as sharing videos or articles through social media, taking online quizzes, signing petitions, and e-mailing or calling their elected government officials and asking them to support legislation related to the year's stated goals. Each of the more than 100 activities are weighted from one to eight points based on their estimated impact, and concertgoers must accumulate a minimum of eight points to win a ticket.

This year's festival policy goals are universal education, sanitation and vaccines, and reversing gender inequality. To guarantee their spot at the festival this September, attendees are taking to the web to raise awareness about the need to broaden access to education for 57 million children worldwide and guarantee universal immunization, among other themes. And with a star-studded lineup of special guests and performers, advocacy never sounded so fun.

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10 Things to Do: Patagonia, Argentina

BY

Mercedes Laxague

Patagonia, the rugged, southern frontier region shared by Argentina and Chile, was once believed to be the home of a race of giants. It still looms large as a wild landscape where myth and reality coincide. The site of major hydro projects, the Argentine Patagonia also boasts four World Heritage sites. The best place to start your adventure is from San Carlos de Bariloche in Rio Negro province. Flights leave Buenos Aires daily. Don't forget to layer—the weather can be unpredictable.

1. Travel through the Road of the Seven Lakes. The picturesque *Ruta de los Siete Lagos* takes you through 66.5 miles (107 kms) of unpaved road through forested valleys to view the Patagonian Andes' seven major lakes: Nahuel Huapi, Espejo, Correntoso, Falkner, Escondido, Machónico, and Villarino.

- 2. Hike up the Meseta de Somuncurá.** This isolated basalt plateau in Río Negro province is the second-largest nature reserve in Argentina. Home to volcanic lagoons and the majestic condor, it is also the summer residence for shepherds during the breeding season.
- 3. Watch the whales.** Puerto Madryn is the gateway to the Península Valdés wildlife sanctuary, where you can glimpse orca and baleen whales, sea elephants, sea lions, and Magellanic penguins. (170 pesos)
- 4. Waddle over to Punta Tombo.** If you can't get enough of penguins, head to Punta Tombo, a peninsula jutting into the Atlantic from Chubut province that is home to Patagonia's most important Magellanic penguin colony. Thousands of penguins arrive at this spot between September and April to breed. (70–130 pesos)
- 5. Discover an ancient forest.** The storied alerces in Los Alerces National Park in Argentina's Chubut province are among the world's oldest trees—with some reaching 3,000 years old. Eat lunch beneath the shade of a towering tree, then go fishing for dinner in one of the park's many lakes. (80 pesos)
- 6. Touch a glacier.** *Parque Nacional los Glaciares* is the best place in South America to see immense glaciers stretching out infinitely before you. Hike across Perito Moreno Glacier, one of only three Patagonian glaciers that are still growing. (215 pesos)
- 7. Commune with nature.** El Chaltén, on Argentina's border with Chile, is called the “national capital of trekking.” Located within *Parque Nacional de los Glaciares*, it offers overnight campsites and is the perfect base site for hikes.
- 8. Explore the coast.** The *Parque Nacional Monte León*'s steppes, tidal flats and headlands are also one of the world's most biodiverse areas—including medicinal grasses and 20 species of marine and coastal birds. (Free)
- 9. See prehistoric cave art.** The *Cueva de las Manos* (Cave of Hands) contains an exceptional collection of cave art created between 9,500 and 13,000 years ago. The cave's name is derived from the stenciled outlines of hands in the cave, but the art also includes hunting scenes and depictions of animals native to Patagonia. (32 pesos)
- 10. Soak your aching feet.** After all that trekking, you'll welcome a soothing dip in the remote *Lago Posadas*, a glacial lake near the town of Hipólito Yrigoyen, with a distinctive turquoise hue. Seldom visited, it's well worth the detour off Route 40.

View a slideshow of different spots in Patagonia, Argentina.



The Perito Moreno Glacier—one of the biggest and most beautiful in Los Glaciares National Park—is less than two hours away from El Calafate.



Photos 1-6 courtesy of Adam Wolsky. Photos 7-8 courtesy of Giselle Diez.

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[Latin America at the Winter Olympics](#)

Latin American and Caribbean countries may not be as well-known for their winter sports as Canada, Russia or the United States, but the region does have a storied tradition at the Winter Olympic Games.

Argentina, the first Latin American country to participate, sent a five-man bobsled team to the second-ever Winter Games in 1928. Chile debuted its skiing team at the 1948 Winter Games and has participated in nearly every Winter Olympics since.

But after nearly 90 years of competition, no country from the region has claimed a single medal. To be fair, the largest delegations coming from the region rarely reach ten.

The 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, saw the region's largest delegation ever, with 40 athletes from 13 Latin American and Caribbean countries. And while none made it to the podium—Chilean skier **Dominique Ohaco** had the best showing, with a 13th place finish in slopestyle—the region's athletes still made their mark.

Prince Hubertus Von Hohenlohe, a Mexican-born German pop singer and Alpine skier, got more coverage for his mariachi-themed race suit than his skiing. At age 55, he was the oldest athlete to

compete in the 2014 Games, but failed to finish his slalom run after suffering a crash.

With 13 athletes, Brazil sent its largest delegation ever, while Paraguay was one of seven nations making their Winter Olympics debut. The country's lone participant was 22-year-old **Julia Marino**, adopted by American parents, who decided to compete for her native Paraguay. And then there was **Antonio Pardo**, the first Venezuelan to compete in Alpine skiing, who had to create a national ski federation in order to compete.

The storied Jamaican bobsled team, made famous by the 1993 film *Cool Runnings*, returned to the Sochi Winter Games for the first time since 2002. The bobsled duo—veteran **Winston Watts**, 46, and first-timer **Marvin Dixon**, 31—made it to Sochi with help from crowdsourcing campaigns and financial support from Samsung.

Though the team finished in last place, the Jamaican duo embodied the quintessential underdog story that makes viewers tune in to the Winter Games. Overall, the motley crew of athletes representing the region proved that the Olympics aren't all about the medals.

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[From the Think Tanks](#)

Human Rights Watch, Brookings Institution, *Corporación de Estudios para Latinoamérica*

The Venezuelan government's response to the protests that began on February 12, 2014, led to accusations of human rights abuses. In its report, [“*Punished for Protesting: Rights Violations in Venezuela’s Streets, Detention Centers, and Justice System*,”](#) Human Rights Watch analyzes 45 allegations of abuses perpetrated by security forces, including arbitrary arrests, abuse of journalists, collusion with pro-government gangs, and due process violations. The report makes several recommendations to the government, such as ordering security forces to end the use of unlawful force, ensuring freedom of expression and restoring judicial independence.

Brookings Institution

Under former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazil emerged as a regional and global power, albeit one often critical of the United States. In [“*Brazil’s Rise: Seeking Influence on Global Governance*,”](#) the Brookings Institution examines Brazil's use of soft power to assert itself regionally through Unasur and Mercosur, and globally through cooperation on issues such as the environment with the other BRICS and G20 members. The report suggests Brazil can continue its current global trajectory through addressing its overvalued currency and slow economic growth, as well as increasing its contribution to international peacekeeping and international development. It also suggests that the U.S. could play a greater role in helping Brazil meet its goals.

Corporación de Estudios para Latinoamérica

Proposed as an alternative to the more protectionist Mercosur, the Pacific Alliance trade bloc—created in 2012 by Chile, Mexico, Colombia, and Peru—emphasizes more open markets and free trade. In a

collaboration between cieplan and the Inter-American Development Bank, the report [*“Alianza del Pacífico: en el proceso de integración latinoamericana,”*](#) draws on specialists from Latin America and Spain to analyze regional integration and the impact of the Pacific Alliance on Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Peru, and Chile. The common theme of the report is that the Pacific Alliance can become a key tool for improving intra-regional trade, and for expanding trade with Europe and Asia.

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February 13, 2015

by [Timothy Bouldry](#)



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February 5, 2015

by [Stephen Kurczy](#)



Aconcagua is the tallest peak

in the Western Hemisphere
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