Famous Afro-Latinos in History

Deep roots in colonial Latin America define Afro-Latino identity. Alongside a person's Hispanic, racial, or national origin identities, it can often exist. For Afro-Latinos, life experiences are molded by race, skin tone, and other elements in comparison to those of other Hispanics. While many Afro-Latinos embrace the Hispanic or Latino identity, not all share this label. The Afro-Latino people are a dynamic and compelling gathering that has contributed enormously to different fields from the beginning of time. From music to sports and governmental issues, Afro-Latinos have pioneered trails and made incredible progress, frequently beating societal obstructions. Here are some renowned Afro-Latinos who have had an impact on their communities that will go down in history.





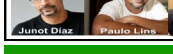
















Sammy Davis, Jr.

Primarily a dancer and singer, Davis was a childhood vaudevillian, and became known for his performances on Broadway and in Las Vegas, as a recording artist, television and film star, and the only black member of Frank Sinatra's "Rat Pack".





Afro-Latinos are Latin Americans who are descended from African slaves brought to Latin America and the Caribbean region during the trans-Atlantic slave trade4. They have made significant contributions to US history and American culture

The 15th of September



Hispanic Heritage Month

The idea behind this specific date is that the 15th marks the independence day of several Latin American countries. Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua celebrate their independence on the 15th of September. This date is quite significant since it honors the fallen and active Hispanic-Americans who served in the armed forces.

This specific date coincides with the same date that these states declared their independence from Spain back in 1821. This specific period was selected to recognize and celebrate all those who significantly contributed to the culture and of the Hispanic and Latino communities in the United States of America.



AFRO-LANTIX AUTHORS

Esteban Hotesse

The Only Dominican-Born Member of the Tuskegee Airmen



Esteban Hotesse superimposing a B-25 Mitchell medium bomber assigned to the Tuskegee Airmen.

Esteban Hotesse joined the United States Army Air Corps during World War II. One of the few Latino men to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces, Esteban was an additional rarity considering he was black. He made history by becoming the first Afro-Latino member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, the only all-black pilot group of military pilots in the U.S. Army Air Corps (the precursor of the U.S. Air Force).





AFRO-MEXICAN

Vicente Guerrero

Mexico became the first country in North America to have a Black president in 1829. Born to an Afro-Mexican father and Indigenous-Mexican mother, Vicente Guerrero fought in the Mexican Revolution, eventually helping the country gain independence from Spanish rule. He became president in 1829.

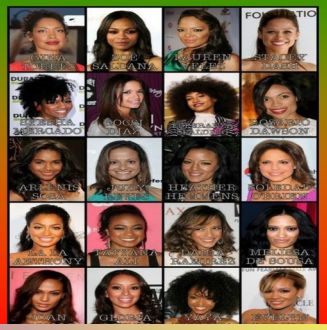


Slavery was abolished on Independence Day — September 16, 1829
It was under Vicente Guerrero that slavery in Mexico was abolished on September 16, 1829 (which is now recognized as Mexico's Independence Day), approximately 40 years before the United States would do the same.

Afro-Latinx Women



Learn about the inspirational life of Celia Cruz, an Afro-Cuban singer whose talent and charisma helped to popularize salsa music in the United States. Educators from the National Postal Museum and the National Museum of African American History and Culture take a look at Celia's life and the energetic music that defined it through Smithsonian museum objects, a bilingual children's book, and postage stamps.





Gwen Ifill, born in 1955 in Jamaica, Queens, is known as a trailblazing African American journalist, television newscaster and author The 43rd stamp in the Black Heritage® series honors Gwen Ifill (1955–2016), one of America's most esteemed journalists. The stamp art features a photo of Ifill taken in 2008 by photographer Robert Severi. Among the first African Americans to hold prominent positions in both broadcast and print journalism, Ifill was a trailblazer in the profession.

Hispanic Heritage Flags

Hispanic and Latino Americans

Refer to Americans of full or partial Spanish and/or Latin American background, culture, or family origin.

Hispanic refers to Spanish-speaking individuals or those with a background in a Spanish-speaking country.

Latino refers to those from or with a background in a Latin American country.

Hispanics make up the largest ethnic minority in the United States, with more than 50 million Hispanic Americans living in all 50 states.

Latinx is a gender-neutral alternative for Latino/a.

Flag of the Hispanicity



Bandera de la Hispanidad

Adopted: 12 October 1932; 92 years ago
Design A white banner with three purple crosses pattée and the Sun of May rising from behind the center one.
Designed by Ángel Camblor

Hispanic Heritage & Culture







At its core, Hispanic culture is defined by a shared linguistic and historical heritage rooted in the influence of Spain and its language, Spanish. The term "Hispanic" refers to people, cultures, or languages originating from Spanish-speaking countries, primarily those located in Spain and Latin America. This connection is a critical component, distinguishing Hispanic culture from other related but distinct cultures. However, the nuances of what constitutes "Hispanic" are complex, often leading to confusion and debate, particularly concerning the difference between "Hispanic" and "Latino." The term "Hispanic" emphasizes the linguistic and ancestral ties to Spain, as derived from "Hispania," the ancient name for the Iberian Peninsula, where Spain is located. This means that any culture which has a traceable origin tied back to countries where Spanish is the dominant language would be considered Hispanic.

Key Characteristics of Hispanic Culture

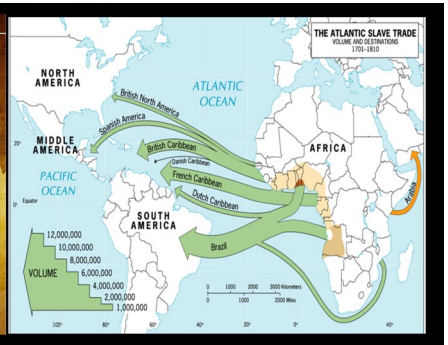
Several characteristics are typically associated with Hispanic culture:

* Language: The primary language is Spanish, though regional dialects and indigenous languages coexist.
* Family: The family unit is often highly valued, with strong bonds and extended family networks.
* Religion: Catholicism is a significant influence, stemming from Spanish colonization, although there is religious diversity.
* Music and Dance: Rich traditions of music and dance vary by region but often include vibrant styles like salsa, tango, flamenco, and mariachi.
* Food: A diverse range of culinary traditions utilizing local ingredients and techniques, with staples like rice, beans, corn, and various meats.
* Art and Literature: A rich artistic tradition reflecting both European and indigenous influences, with notable contributions to literature, painting, and sculpture.
* Festivals and Celebrations: Numerous festivals and celebrations are an important part of the culture, showcasing local and national pride.

THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

SHIPS OF THE WEST AFRICA SQUADRON HAD AN ENORMOUS AREA OF COASTLINE TO PATROL AND AN EVEN VASTER OCEAN BEYOND THAT





Afro-Lantinx Athletes



Ana Fidelia Quirot: The Resilient Cuban Middle-Distance Runner

Ana Fidelia Quirot overcame adversity after suffering severe burns in an accident. Despite her injuries, she returned to win gold at the 1995 and 1997 World Championships and silver at the 1996 Olympics in the 800 meters. Her resilience and talent remain an inspiration.



David Ortiz: The Clutch Hitter of Boston

David "Big Papi" Ortiz transformed the Boston Red Sox franchise, leading them to three World Series titles. His postseason heroics and over 500 career home runs earned him a place in the Hall of Fame in 2022.



Caterine Ibargüen: Colombia's Triple Jump Queen

Colombian athlete Caterine Ibargüen redefined triple jumping, recording a personal best of 15.41 meters (50.10 feet) and winning Olympic gold in 2016. A two-time world champion and Pan American Games winner, she became a role model for aspiring athletes in Colombia and beyond. Her achievements earned her the prestigious IAAF Female Athlete of the Year award in 2014.



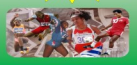
Albert Pujols: "The Machine" of Baseball

Born in the Dominican Republic, Albert Pujols dominated Major League Baseball for over two decades. His first 11 seasons with the St. Louis Cardinals were historic, featuring a .328 batting average, 445 home runs, and two World Series championships. With over 3,100 hits and 662 home runs, Pujols is regarded as one of the greatest Latino baseball players ever.



Marileidy Paulino: Dominican Republic's Sprint Sensation

Marileidy Paulino rose from humble beginnings to become one of the world's fastest 400-meter sprinters. She won silver medals at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and the 2022 World Championships before making history in 2024 by becoming the first Dominican woman to win Olympic gold. Her story of perseverance continues to inspire many.





Luis Tiant: Cuban Baseball Star

Luis Tiant, affectionately known as "El Tiante," was one of the most dominant pitchers in Major League Baseball. Over a 19-year career, he won 229 games and became a Boston Red Sox legend. Despite numerous Hall of Fame considerations, his legacy remains strong among baseball enthusiasts.



Leyanis Pérez: Cuba's Rising Triple Jump Star

Leyanis Pérez is quickly making a name for herself in the triple jump. With impressive performances at international competitions, she is poised to carry on the legacy of dominance in the event.



Julio César La Cruz: Cuba's Boxing Technician

Julio César La Cruz is one of history's most dominant amateur boxers. With multiple Olympic and world championship titles, his defensive mastery and tactical intelligence have made him stand out in boxing.

Afro-Latino athletes have played a crucial role in shaping the history of sports. Their talent, resilience, and dedication have broken barriers and inspired millions across generations. As we celebrate Black History Month, we recognize their contributions and honor their lasting impact on sports and society.



Félix Sánchez: The Dominican Hurdler Who Defied Expectations

Félix Sánchez, nicknamed "Super Félix," gave the Dominican Republic its first Olympic gold medal. Many doubted his ability to return to the podium. Still, in 2012, at the age of 34, he won another gold medal in the 400-meter hurdles, cementing his place among the greatest hurdlers in history.



Linda Caicedo: The Future of Women's Soccer

Colombian footballer Linda Caicedo is one of the brightest young talents in women's soccer. Her technical skill and goal-scoring ability make her a key player for Colombia's national team as they compete on the world stage.

Rebeca Andrade: Brazil's Gymnastics Trailblazer

Rebeca Andrade made history as the first Brazilian female gymnast to win an Olympic medal. At the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, she won gold in the vault and silver in the all-around. Andrade remains a force in artistic gymnastics, inspiring multiple world championship titles.

Teófilo Cubillas: Peru's Soccer Legend

At the 1970 World Cup, Peak proclaimed Peruvian midfielder Teófilo Cubillas his successor. Cubillas showcased his brilliance by scoring five goals in the tournament and securing the Best Young Player award. He later played in Europe with FC Porto and Alavés, becoming a beloved figure. He received a lot of retirement to help Alianza Lima rebuild after a tragic plane crash further solidified his legacy.

HISPANIC ASTRONAUTS

Rodolfo Neri Vela
First Mexican Astronaut

Joseph Michael Acaba
First Puerto Rican Astronaut

Arnaldo Tamayo Méndez
1st AFRO-LANTIX Astronaut

Ellen Ochoa
First Hispanic Woman Astronaut

Pedro Duque
First Spanish Astronaut

Francisco Rubio
First Salvadoran Astronaut