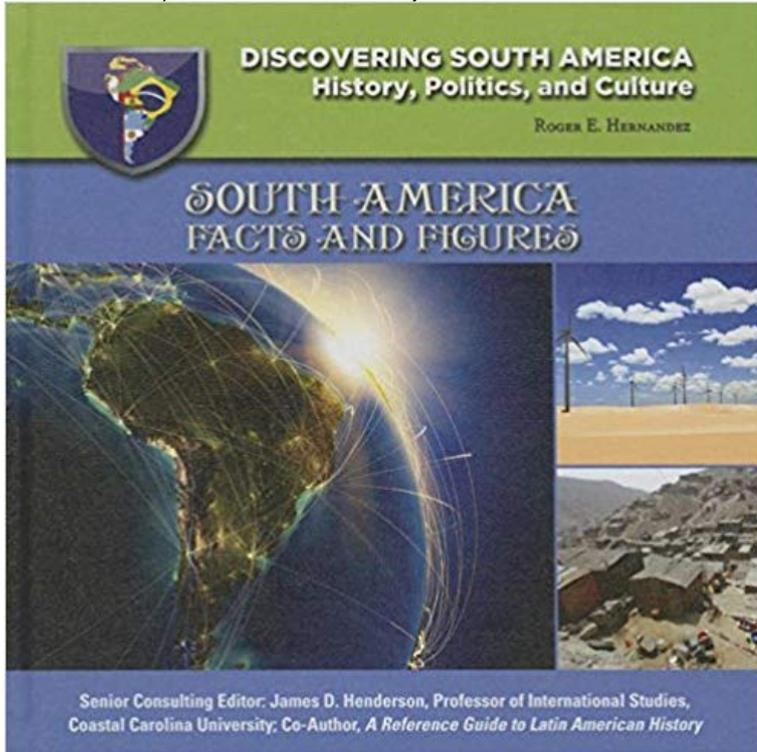


South America: Facts and Figures (Discovering South America: History, Politics, and Culture)



The fourth-largest continent on earth, South America is a land of great extremes. The longest mountain range on the planet the Andes divides the continent from its northern coast on the sunny Caribbean to its southern tip at stormy Tierra del Fuego. Within its boundaries lies the worlds highest active volcano (Chimborazo, in Ecuador), the worlds highest waterfall (Angel Falls, in Venezuela), and the worlds driest region (the Atacama Desert, of Chile). South Americas chief river, the 3,900-mile-long (6,276-km-long) Amazon, and its more than 1,000 tributaries flow from the worlds largest drainage basin, which is home to countless animal and plant species. More than 386 million people of many different cultures and races live in South Americas 12 independent nations and three dependencies. Some are descendants of the lands native Indians, such as the Incas; others carry on the customs and traditions of their European ancestors, especially the Spanish and Portuguese who centuries ago colonized the region. Although wars, political instability, and violence in many South American countries have taken their toll on the economy, leaving millions in poverty, the abundant resources of the continent continue to be developed, producing food and other items sold throughout the world. Theres a lot to discover about South America! Each title in this series contains color photos, maps, a chronology of events related to the country, recipes, list of festivals, ideas for projects and reports, and back matter including: an index, further reading lists for books and internet resources, and a series glossary. Mason Crests editorial team has placed Key Icons to Look for throughout the books in this series in an effort to encourage library readers

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