



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Islam: South America

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While Muslims in South America are a minority, they are well established in Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela as well as in smaller numbers in Peru and other South and Central American countries. Muslims in South America arrived at various points and through diverse means. In Brazil, Muslims are largely thought to have arrived with the African slaves. In Peru, Muslims initially arrived with the Spaniards and again later with the Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian Diasporas.

- ❖ Argentina is home to one of the largest Muslim populations in the South America. Over the next 20 years, Argentina is expected to have the third largest-number of Muslims in the Americas. The King Fahd Islamic Cultural Center in Buenos Aires is home to the largest mosque in Latin America.¹ There are an estimated one million Muslims living in Argentina.²
- ❖ The Muslim population in Latin America-Caribbean is estimated to be 840,000 Muslims.³ Suriname has the largest percentage of Muslims in its population for the area. As of 2010 there were 65,444 individual Muslims which make up an overall 13.4% of Caribbean population.⁴
- ❖ The three South American countries expected to experience the largest in Muslim population are Argentina, Venezuela, and Brazil. Argentina has one million Muslims and is projected to grow to 1.2 million by 2030. Venezuela has 95,000 Muslims and will grow to 121,200 by 2030. Brazil has 204,000 Muslims and is expected to grow to 227,000 by 2030.⁵
- ❖ Venezuela is home to 100,000 Muslims. The capital, Caracas has the second largest mosque on the continent, the Ibrahim Ibin Abdul Aziz Al-Ibrahim mosque.⁶
- ❖ Muslims living in Brazil number around 34,894 according to the 2010 census on religion.⁷ The number of Muslims in Brazil continues to rise, having grown by 20.1% between 2000 and 2010.⁸
- ❖ Lima, Peru has a population of 5,000 Muslims; this number has remained fairly the same over the past 30 years. There are two main mosques in Peru, one located in the capital and the other in the southern city of Tacna; prayers are offered in both Spanish and Arabic. Tacna is also home to an Islamic school for children.⁹

¹ <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/208662.pdf>

² <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population/>

³ <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-americas/>

⁴ <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?pli=1#inbox/144c2d12d3cca3e7?projector=1>

⁵ <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-americas/>

⁶ <http://www.salatomic.com/d/Caracas+4788+Mezquita-Sheik-Ibrahim-al-Ibrahim>

⁷ ftp.ibge.gov.br/Censos/Censo_Demografico_2010/Caracteristicas_Gerais_Religiao_Deficiencia/tab1_4.pdf

⁸ <http://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/rio-travel/discovering-islam-in-rio-and-brazil/>

⁹ <http://www.perutraelcontact.com/fact-sheet-tacna-peru-travel-peru-tours.html>