



¡Bienvenidos a El Salvador!

Welcome to EL SALVADOR

HONDURAS



Map of Central America



Karen from Guarjila

The Sierra Madre means Mother Mountain Range.

El Salvador has a tropical climate, with two seasons. The dry season is from November to April and the wet season is from May to October.

Jacqueline from Puentecitos



Aracely from Cachagua



GUAYMANGO

Izalco Volcano

El Salvador is known as the Land of Volcanoes. The southern mountain range includes more than 20 volcanoes.

Lago de Coatepeque

Embalse Cerrón Grande

GUARJILA

Lago de Ilopango

SAN SALVADOR

Diego from San Salvador



Coastal Belt

Southern Mountain Range

Coffee and sugar are two of El Salvador's main exports.

El Salvador has a population of 6.2 million. The main language is Spanish. Some people speak Nahuatl.

Laguna de Olomega

Rio Grande de San Miguel



PACIFIC OCEAN

Geography

Location

El Salvador is on the western coast of Central America. Guatemala is to the north and west of El Salvador, with Honduras to the north and east and the Pacific Ocean to the south. El Salvador is located in the tropical zones, north of the equator.

Landscape

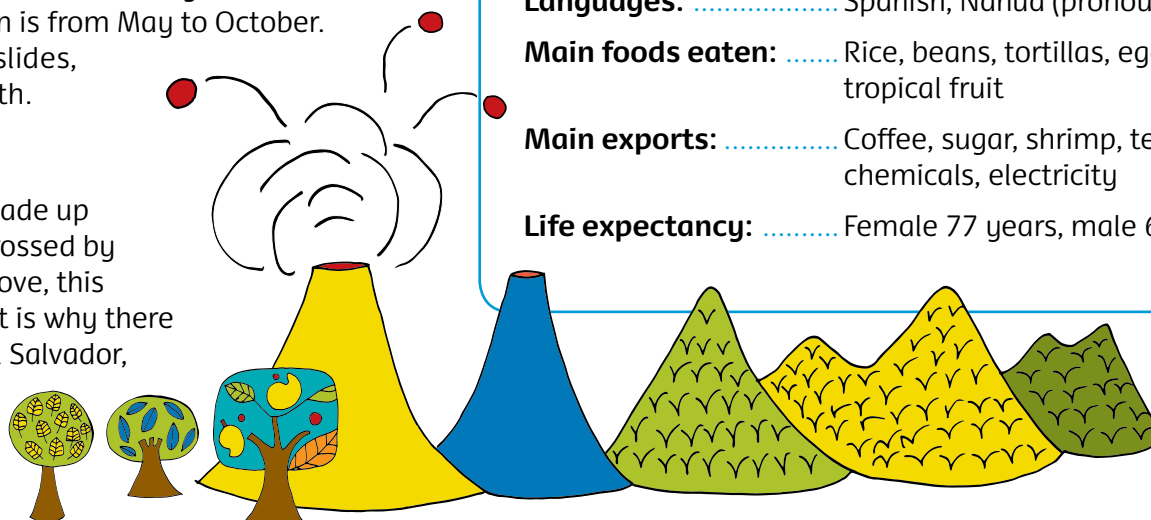
El Salvador has a spectacular landscape, including lush, green forests, active volcanoes and sparkling lakes. There are two mountain ranges in El Salvador, which run parallel to each other from the east to the west of the country. The northern mountain range borders Honduras and is called the *Sierra Madre* (pronounced “Madray”), which means Mother Mountain Range. The southern or coastal mountain range includes more than 20 volcanoes. The soil around the volcanoes is very fertile and lots of coffee is grown here. There is a central plateau in between the two mountain ranges, and a narrow coastal belt with beautiful beaches along the Pacific Ocean.

Climate

El Salvador has a tropical climate, with two seasons. The dry season is from November to April and the wet season is from May to October. Heavy rains and hurricanes can cause landslides, damage to buildings, injuries and even death.

Natural Hazards

The earth’s surface (known as the crust), is made up of large pieces, called plates. El Salvador is crossed by several plate boundaries. When the plates move, this causes earthquake and volcanic activity. That is why there are so many earthquakes and volcanoes in El Salvador, and in the rest of Central America.



Faith and culture

The majority of people in El Salvador are Roman Catholic. Religious songs are quite popular and can be heard during the celebrations of Christmas and other festivals. The music of El Salvador has a mixture of Mayan, African, Pipil (pronounced “Pee-peel”) and Spanish influences. Dance is also important in El Salvador, with many traditional folk dances about different aspects of the country’s history and traditions. Football is very popular. One of the main foods in El Salvador is called *pupusas* (pronounced “poo-poo-sas”). These are tortillas filled with cheese, beans, and/or pork.

FACTFILE

- Population:** 6.2 million (UN, 2011)
- Land size:** 21,041 sq km (slightly bigger than Wales)
- Capital:** San Salvador
- Currency:** US dollar
- Languages:** Spanish, Nahua (pronounced “Nawa”)
- Main foods eaten:** Rice, beans, tortillas, eggs, chicken and tropical fruit
- Main exports:** Coffee, sugar, shrimp, textiles, chemicals, electricity
- Life expectancy:** Female 77 years, male 68 years (UN, 2011)

History

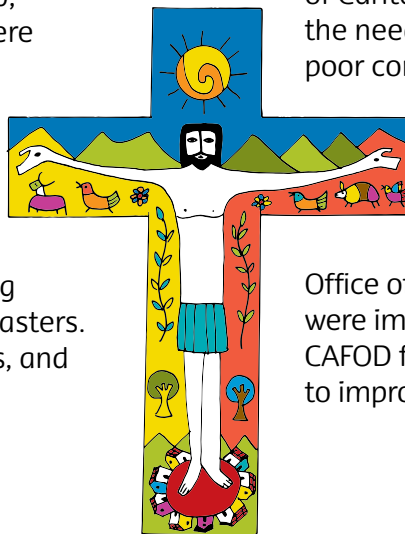
Many civilizations have lived in El Salvador. The Olmecs came to the region in 2000 BC, followed by the Mayans in 1500 BC. In the 11th century, the Pipil people, descendants of Toltecs and Aztecs, became the dominant group in El Salvador.

In 1524 the Spanish arrived, taking control and forcing the native people to become servants. El Salvador became independent from Spain in 1821 and gained full independence in 1841.

By the 20th century, there was much inequality in El Salvador – a few families were very rich and owned lots of land, but most people were poor and earned very little. People became very angry at this unfairness. In the 1970s, many people spoke out about what was happening, including Oscar Romero, who was Archbishop of San Salvador. But the rich were very powerful. If people complained they were put in prison or even killed.

Even so, Romero continued to tell the truth about what was happening to poor people in his country. Every week in his sermons on the radio, he spoke out against the violence. On 24 March 1980, Romero was killed while saying Mass. From 1980–1992 there was a long and violent civil war in the country. Many Salvadorans fled to the United States. An estimated 75,000 people were killed.

The war ended in 1992. Salvadorans continue to work hard to rebuild communities and make a better future for themselves. El Salvador still has its challenges, including poverty and gang violence as well as the risk of natural disasters. Today about 2 million Salvadorans live in the United States, and send money back to family still living in El Salvador.



DID YOU KNOW?

El Salvador...

- means 'The Saviour'
- is the smallest country in Central America
- is the only country in Central America not to have a Caribbean coastline
- is known as the Land of Volcanoes – it has over 20 volcanoes, which is more than any other country in the Pacific 'ring of fire'.



About CAFOD

CAFOD is the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development. We are the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. We work with partners across the world, wherever the need is the greatest, to bring hope, compassion and solidarity to poor communities, standing side by side with them to end poverty and injustice. We work with people of all faiths and none.

CAFOD has been working in El Salvador since the 1970s. At that time, there was much inequality between the rich and poor and people began to demand change. CAFOD supported the Legal Aid Office of Archbishop Romero. This office helped the families of people who were imprisoned or even killed for speaking out against injustice. Today, CAFOD focuses on projects which reduce the risk of disasters, help farmers to improve their crops, and help to build peace in the country.

GEOGRAPHY ACTIVITIES SHEET

LOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Using a world map, globe and/or atlases, ask the children to locate Latin America and El Salvador. Name the countries around El Salvador and the ocean beside it. Ask the children to plan a journey to El Salvador. Discuss which ocean and countries they would pass over to reach El Salvador. This could be extended into a maths activity, for example by calculating distances travelled.
- Using a world map, globe and/or atlases, ask children to identify the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, the equator and the Tropics. Locate El Salvador and the UK in relation to these. Discuss what is meant by latitude and longitude, and identify the position of El Salvador.
- Using the map of El Salvador included in this pack, as well as atlases, locate San Salvador and other major cities in El Salvador. Identify other key features in the country such as mountain ranges, volcanoes, lakes, and coastal regions.
- With the children, find out what the time is in El Salvador now. How many hours different is it to the UK? Look at time zones around the world.

See each photo card for a series of classroom activities to develop children's place knowledge and understanding of key aspects of human and physical geography.

PLACE KNOWLEDGE

- Ask the children to research El Salvador and produce a factfile about the country.
- Explain to the children that San Salvador is known as the Valley of the Hammocks. Ask them to think about why this is and challenge them to find out. Ask the children to find out key facts about San Salvador and compare them to a city in the UK.
- Make a classroom display about El Salvador. Use the illustrated map in the display, including children's written work and drawings from their study of the country.
- After the children have found out about the lives of the children in the pack, ask them to think about which area of El Salvador they would prefer to live in. Encourage your class to give reasons why, thinking about the similarities and differences between the different areas of El Salvador.

HUMAN AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

- In small groups, give children a set of photo cards and ask them to sort them into those that look similar, explaining their choices. Discuss similarities and differences.
- Give one photograph to each pair of children. Place it on a large sheet of paper and ask the children to draw what they think lies around the picture. Encourage them to talk and discuss their ideas and reasons for them.

CROSS CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SHEET

ENGLISH

- Give a photo card to each pair of children to write a caption for it or a speech bubble about what people are saying or feeling.
- Produce a travel brochure or advert about El Salvador. Research key attractions and activities to be included.
- Write a letter to a child in El Salvador about your local area, comparing it to their local area.
- Write a diary entry from the viewpoint of a Salvadoran farmer in the last few days of the dry season. How would they feel?
- Imagine you have visited El Salvador and write postcards about your trip.
- Recreate a day in the life of one of the children as role play.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Research the life of Oscar Romero and produce a fact file or biography.
- Find out more about how CAFOD works and our values at cafod.org.uk
- Where do you see the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in each of the case studies, for example, the promotion of peace or stewardship of creation? For reflections and actions to carry out with your class go to cafod.org.uk/geography

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

- Use one of the photographs or film clips as a stimulus for a session.

HISTORY

- Find out more about the history of El Salvador.

MATHEMATICS

- Research facts about El Salvador, such as climate, population, health and so on. Present the data in different ways, such as in graphs.

SCIENCE

- Research plants and animals found in El Salvador. How are plants and animals suited to the environment?

CITIZENSHIP

- Research the Rights of the Child and for each case study consider which rights are being fulfilled and which are not, for example, the right to clean water or to education.
- Think about the similarities and differences between your life and the life of one of the children in the case studies. If prompts are required, use key themes such as school, family, friends, food or the environment.
- Imagine you have just been to El Salvador. Write a persuasive letter to international leaders highlighting what is fair and unfair for people living there and what should be done.

ART

- Look at the illustrations in the pack. What do they show about El Salvador? The illustrations are by the Salvadoran artist, Fernando Llorca. Research the artist and find other examples of his work. Discuss his style and produce pieces of work in a similar style.
- Design and draw or paint your own Romero cross.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- Research different foods in El Salvador such as *pupusas* (pronounced “poo-poo-sas”). Find a simple recipe and hold an international food tasting day. *Remember to check for allergies.*