



## CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1519–20    Outbreak of sickness devastates highland Guatemala, three to four years prior to Spanish intrusion.
- 1523       Pedro de Alvarado and his army of conquest, consisting of native warriors as well as Spanish forces, leave Mexico to invade Guatemala.
- 1524       The conquest of Guatemala begins. Preliminary distribution of Indians in grants of *encomienda*. The Kaqchikel Maya, at first Spanish allies, rebel against the invaders.
- 1527       Founding of Spanish capital of Santiago de Guatemala in Almolonga.
- 1529       Jorge de Alvarado, brother of Pedro, carries out the first large-scale distribution of Indian towns in *encomienda*.
- 1530       The Kaqchikel rebellion ends.
- 1534       Francisco Marroquín named first bishop of Guatemala.
- 1536–37    Friar Bartolomé de las Casas arrives in Guatemala and is very outspoken about *encomendero* mistreatment of Indians. Las Casas and a high-ranking government official, Alonso Maldonado, sign an agreement granting the Dominican order authority to conduct the “peaceful conquest” of the Vera Paz region, which does not take place until a decade later.
- 1541       Pedro de Alvarado dies in battle in northwestern Mexico. Spanish capital of Santiago in Almolonga destroyed by mudslides in mid-September.

- 1542–43 New Spanish capital, also called Santiago, established in nearby Valley of Panchoy. Transition to more stable royal government with the return of Maldonado, now governor of Guatemala.
- 1548–49 Seat of the Audiencia of Guatemala moved to Santiago. Enforcement of the New Laws begins, including the abolition of Indian slavery and reform of Indian tribute requirements.
- 1565 Drafts of forced native labor, *repartimientos de indios*, begin around Santiago.
- 1584 Bernal Díaz del Castillo, chronicler and ancestor of Francisco Antonio de Fuentes y Guzmán, dies in Santiago.
- 1626 Thomas Gage, a Dominican friar born in England and the first non-Spaniard to chronicle his travels in Central America, arrives in Guatemala.
- 1632 First publication of Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*.
- 1642 Francisco Antonio de Fuentes y Guzmán, great-great-grandson of Díaz del Castillo, born in Santiago de Guatemala.
- 1676 Approval of the founding of the Universidad de San Carlos.
- 1699 Fuentes y Guzmán dies in Santiago de Guatemala, having completed a manuscript of his *Recordación Florida* a few years earlier.
- 1712 Indian uprising in Chiapas.
- 1717 Earthquakes seriously damage Santiago de Guatemala.
- 1754 Indigenous parishes administered by religious orders begin to be placed under the control of secular clergy.
- 1759 Forced distributions of raw cotton, to be woven into thread by indigenous women, is prohibited.
- 1767 Use of forced native labor, *repartimientos de indios*, is authorized in indigo dye works on the Pacific coastal plain.
- 1768 Archbishop Pedro Cortés y Larraz takes office in Guatemala and begins his pastoral inspection, which lasts until 1770.
- 1773 Earthquakes strike Santiago de Guatemala.
- 1774–76 Site of capital moved from present-day Antigua Guatemala to Guatemala City.
- 1786 Construction of a new seat for the Universidad de San Carlos begins in Guatemala City, continuing until 1840.

- 1793–96 Consulado de Comercio, a merchant's guild, is established in Guatemala.
- 1800 English textiles are allowed to be imported into Guatemala, hurting local weaving operations.
- 1811 Cochineal insect, used to produce valuable dyestuff, introduced into Guatemala from Mexico.
- 1812 In the midst of turmoil caused by the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, the Constitution of Cádiz abolishes Indian tribute and decrees Indians to be Spanish citizens.
- 1814 Ferdinand VII, restored to the Spanish throne, abolishes the liberal Constitution of Cádiz and reinstates Indian tribute.
- 1820 Indian uprising in Totonicapán.
- 1821 Proclamation of Guatemalan independence. Quezaltenango declares itself an autonomous province within the Mexican empire.
- 1838 State of Los Altos, centered in the city of Quetzaltenango, separates from the Republic of Guatemala.
- 1839 Conservative leader Rafael Carrera takes power. He and his successors rule Guatemala until 1871. Numerous colonial institutions are re-established.
- 1840 Carrera invades Quetzaltenango and reincorporates Los Altos into the Republic of Guatemala.
- 1854 Rafael Carrera is named *presidente vitalicio*, president for life.
- 1865 Carrera dies and is replaced as president by Vicente Cerna .
- 1871 Military invasion from Mexico, led by Miguel García Granados and Justo Rufino Barrios, ushers in Liberal revolution and ends Conservative rule.
- 1873 Barrios elected president. He rules until 1885. Guatemalan military academy, the Escuela Politécnica, is founded.
- 1877 *Reglamento de jornaleros*, a code of work regulations for Indian laborers, is instituted under Barrios, thereby guaranteeing cheap labor for coffee plantations. The "coffee state" comes into being.
- 1885 Barrios dies in the Battle of Chalchuapa, El Salvador. Manuel Lisandro Barillas assumes the presidency, and governs until 1892.
- 1892 José María Reina Barrios becomes president.
- 1897 International coffee prices fall sharply.

- 1898 Reina Barrios is assassinated. Manuel Estrada Cabrera becomes president. Indian uprising in San Juan Ixcoy, Huehuetenango.
- 1904 Construction of modern port facilities on the Atlantic coast at Puerto Barrios is completed. Estrada Cabrera grants generous railroad concessions to United States interests, including sizable amounts of land later planted in bananas for export by the United Fruit Company of Boston.
- 1920 Estrada Cabrera is overthrown and Carlos Herrera named president. Abolition of forced labor drafts or *mandamientos*.
- 1921 Coup d'état overthrows Herrera, after which General José María Orellana becomes chief of state.
- 1922 Orellana wins presidential elections. Communist Party established. Widespread disturbances and revolt against the Liberal government attributed to the Conservatives. Political opponents assassinated, imprisoned, and exiled.
- 1924 Coffee prices rise. The United Fruit Company rents large amounts of land to grow bananas along the Motagua River Valley. Closer commercial ties struck between Guatemala and Germany.
- 1925 Severo Martínez Peláez is born in Quetzaltenango.
- 1926 Orellana dies and General Lázaro Chacón assumes the presidency.
- 1927 Chacón government decrees abolition of Indian *cabildos* in municipalities with a large number of Ladinos.
- 1929–33 Numerous banks fail as Guatemala suffers the impact of world depression.
- 1930 Chacón relinquishes the presidency because of illness and dies shortly after in New Orleans.
- 1931 Jorge Ubico assumes the presidency. Labor unions and the Communist Party abolished, and newspapers suppressed.
- 1934 Debt peonage abolished.
- 1935 *Libreto de jornaleros* is restored to ensure a steady supply of labor for coffee plantations.
- 1936–37 Government of General Francisco Franco in Spain is recognized. Treaty of reciprocity signed with the United States and a commercial agreement reached with the German Reich.
- 1939 Ubico government declares neutrality in World War II.

- 1941 Guatemala declares war on Japan and Germany.
- 1944 German properties expropriated. Public protests result in Ubi-co's resignation. General Federico Ponce assumes power. Elections called. The October Revolution results in the formation of a revolutionary junta. Constitution of 1879 repealed.
- 1945 New Constitution promulgated. Juan José Arévalo elected president and takes office. Faculty of Humanities founded at the University of San Carlos.
- 1947 First labor codes established. A national institute of social security also founded.
- 1950 Confederación Nacional Campesina, the National Peasant Confederation, established. Presidential elections won by Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán.
- 1951 Arbenz assumes presidency. Construction of Atlantic highway begins, posing a direct competitive threat to seaport and railroad monopoly of United Fruit.
- 1952 Agrarian Reform Law promulgated. Under this law, 100,000 peasants receive 1.5 million acres of land. Guatemalan Workers Party founded. Some 400,000 acres of unused land owned by United Fruit is expropriated
- 1954 The U.S. government denounces "communist intervention" in Guatemala. Ministers of Arbenz clash with U.S. representatives at the Inter-American Conference in Caracas, Venezuela. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency plans and executes "Operation Success." Army of liberation invades Guatemala from Honduras. Arbenz is forced to resign. Leader of invasion force, Carlos Castillo Armas, becomes president. After defending the Guatemalan revolution on national radio, Severo Martínez Peláez and other supporters of Arbenz flee into exile.
- 1957 Castillo Armas assassinated. Elections held with charges of fraud. Martínez Peláez returns to Guatemala from his first exile in Mexico.
- 1958 General Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes assumes presidency.
- 1960 Young military officers rebel against the Ydigoras Fuentes government.
- 1962 Demonstrations against Ydigoras Fuentes government. One of the earliest guerrilla groups, the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes