

Lindo Quito De Mi Vida

IT HAS BEEN FIVE years since my last trip to Quito, Ecuador, the city I called home for three years in the late 1990s. At that time, the historic colonial center was almost too dangerous to visit because of high levels of crime, and no one seemed to care that this UNESCO World Heritage Site was in jeopardy of being lost forever.

This is a photo of the colonial center today. The dilapidated sixteenth century buildings have been restored and now house hotels, restaurants, and shops. The churches and monasteries have multilingual guides who offer individual tours of the gilded interiors. With a large police force patrolling the narrow, cobblestone streets day and night, a major clean-up campaign implementing regular garbage collection, and a multitude of beautification projects to improve facades, infrastructure, and landscaping of public and private property, the historic center has been transformed into a thriving cultural and commercial center.

Although economic power struggles and political infighting still present major roadblocks for Ecuador today as it struggles to move forward, the rehabilitation of the historic colonial center is concrete proof that when politics and bureaucracy are put aside and everyone rolls up their sleeves to get the job done, *si se puede!* What was once just a dream becomes reality.

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YOU'RE INVITED! We invite you to submit your photos along with a brief (approximately 200 words) description of why these images are important in your understanding of a person, place, idea, or incident from your experiences in international education. The photos could be of a simple moment on your home campus involving international students, a major event in an exotic location, or anything in between. The editors of *International Educator* will run selections on this page throughout the year. Please contact us for submission details at elainal@nafsa.org.