



**NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION**

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New Year in Ecuador is as much about the Old Year as the new. Effigies are made of old clothes stuffed with newspaper and adorned with a mask. These are known as the “Año Viejos” or Old Years. These effigies are made to look like national political figures, movie characters, etc., and are burnt at midnight on New Year’s Eve. The idea is to leave any negativity or problems behind in the old year and start afresh. A list of problems and worries may be written and put inside the effigy to be burnt. Fireworks are set off at midnight too, so even if you don’t find a new year party to attend, you will still see plenty of celebrations.



Every household in Ecuador would typically have one (if not more) of these effigies situated outside their door for the burning.



A New Year's Eve tradition in Ecuador is for men to dress haphazardly in drag (clowny looking make-up, cheap colorful wigs, very hairy legs in miniskirts) for New Year's Eve representing the "widow" of the year that has passed. The "widows" then go to the streets and stop each car that passes on that particular street in order to parody some form of sexy dancing. Large crowds would gather around to watch and laugh at the entertainment and the drivers are forced to give the "widows" some coins in order to obtain passage through the street.



There are also traditional family events and meals and modern celebrations such as hosting parties and going to nightclubs. People usually eat grapes and drink Champagne with close family members and friends.