



“PANAMA HATS”

The History of Paja Toquilla Hats



It is said that back in 1835, people in Montecristi, Manabí – Ecuador sent boxes of hats to Manta and Guayaquil to be exported to Panama. The time coincided with the California Gold Rush (1848-1855), which made the hat famous because of the abundant sun on the west coast of the United States. They became so popular in the ports of Panama that the name was quickly linked to that location.

During the construction of the Panama Canal, Theodore Roosevelt, who was the president of United States at that time, wore those kinds of hats and contributed to their increasing popularity. Many workers also wore them. It is said that many passengers who were passing through the canal also made the hats famous. They became really valued around the world. Edward VII of England ordered a hat for himself and paid a lot of money for it. In 1985, the hat was selected as one of the 100 best designs ever by the Conrad Foundation in England. Also, in 2017, the UNESCO declared paja toquilla hats as part of the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

1. Read the text and answer the following questions

- Is there any technology involved to produce Panama hats? Yes X No X
- Do you think that the history of Panama hats started in Panama and then it was produced in Ecuador? Yes X No X
- Do you think the production of Panama hats contributes to the growth of a community's economy? Yes X No X

2. Fill in the blanks using information from the reading.

- Paja toquilla hats are called _____.
- Theodore Roosevelt wore those kinds of hats during _____.
- _____ ordered a hat for himself and paid a lot of money.
- In _____, the hat was chosen as one of the best designs by the Conrad Foundation.
- The _____ declared the hats as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Why are toquilla straw hats called “Panama hats”? _____