

## AN ECUADORIAN CHRISTMAS TRADITION

By Willard Robinson

Most folks do not get to do interesting things. I think it was Thoreau who said “*most men lead lives in quiet desperation.*”

Remember visiting grandma’s at Christmas? She always had a bowl full of candies, nuts, and fruits. And oh yes...her infamous gumball tree...a place to nash a handful of treats on your way out the back door. Visiting her for the holidays was always fun. And always interesting.

Saturday Isabelita, my wife, and I headed to the huge Santa Maria Market, in Quito and stocked up on Christmas goodies. In the evening we listened to Elvis’s and Kenny Chesney’s Christmas CDs and stuffed plastic baggies full of Christmas cookies, hard candy, an English walnut, sucker, wrapped chocolate candies and animal crackers...A tranquil life void of the desperate crowds in the malls!

From now until our stash depletes we will give these bags of treats to children and to adults that have helped us this year.

The maid, security personnel, and gardeners get larger, special bags. The plumber, our favorite taxi driver, and parking attendants get regular size baggies. Everybody graciously accepts these treats. I have yet to see a single person show apathy...I guess adults are just grown up children, too.

Sunday we will drive up to Cotacachi. The main highway from Quito to Cotacachi will have pockets of children hoping to receive any kind of Christmas treat. Families allow their children (toddlers to adolescents) to partake in this annual ritual. For many children, these treats will be the only Christmas presents they get. Ever watchful mothers or grannies are within a meter or so of their brood insuring their safety along the shoulder of the highway and helping the youngsters gather the goodies we toss to them.

Normally Police sit in their cars or pick up trucks at spaced intervals along this highway to control traffic and help protect the young innocents. **Of course**, they deserve a bag of goodies too!

It’s a win-win trip. We give our small gifts and receive the huge gifts of appreciation and happiness from these tikes in return.

**Now what’s this got to do with you?** Well, we want you to come to Ecuador. Share in some of the traditions. Take an active part of this interesting culture. Check out <http://www.ecuadorrealestate.com/> for a view of this beautiful, affordable country.

Get out of the rut you are in. Abandon your desperation. It's winter in the Northern Hemisphere, therefore summertime in Ecuador. Warm, sunny days. Grass and trees are green. Flowers are blooming. Treat yourself to a happy, stress free vacation. Visit our community in Cotacachi. Sit on the front porch of one of the condos and listen to a child practicing her flute lessons down in the valley (sound travels up, you know). Or listen to a lonesome burro braying to be let into his barn before nightfall. Or sip a cup of hot local Ecuadorian coffee or rich, creamy cocoa while enjoying the magnificent sunset. Spy the first evening star.

Think about it...you really can afford the luxury of living here. Pamper yourself a little. You've knocked yourself out on the 8 to 5 grind for most of your life...Now call in your mark. Take back a little of what you deserve.

Stroll the safe, uncrowded streets in town, or browse the quaint artisan shops that abound.

Main streets in the city center are closed to automobiles and are being modernized with colorful paving stones to accommodate walking traffic. Safe. Enjoyable. Romantic.

Check out Cotacachi. Check out the newer prospect in San Clemente. You can afford to live here. To retire in an area with people just like you. With people that have your same interests.

Lola Young, a shrewd, honest developer from the United States is developing these new homes. She and her husband will soon retire to this tranquil setting. And you can bet everything in this gated community is first class. It has all the amenities you expect. Paved streets. Underground electricity. 24 hour security. Neighbors that speak English. Private clubhouse. Walking trails...much more! Yeah, picture living here...Lower taxes. Lower food costs. Fresh veggies everyday...and TIME to share together with your loved one!

Visit us. Air transportation is such a bargain. Relax in sunshine. See the properties, then go back home and sell that spare lot you own. It's an albatross around your neck anyway, and only losing value, then come back to Ecuador and invest that money into something you can enjoy. You may even consider renting out your condo when you are not here. Make that extra money off your investment. Not a bad idea, huh?

Isabelita and I just returned this month from our home in North Carolina. The Fall foliage was beautiful. Then it got cold. We had to rake those leaves. Cut over grown bushes and pay a fortune to have 6 trees removed...an expensive visit...at the same time we watched our investment portfolio dwindle...

There is no "bad time of the year" in Ecuador...and we don't have hurricanes. Cotacachi boasts it's the land on "Eternal Spring". Daytime temperatures are around 70 degrees. The fire place feels good in the evenings.

You'll never scrape ice off your car windshield, or add gas additive to your gas tank again!

Take that needed vacation. Meet interesting people. See interesting places.

**BUT I'VE SAVED THE BEST PART 'TIL LAST...**Lola may help you **finance** your new home! See, she wants like-minded people to share her dream. Look at [info@ecuadorrealestatesales.com](mailto:info@ecuadorrealestatesales.com). You can ask questions on this link or set up an appointment to see these opportunities.

If you can't make it down before Christmas, then bag up some Christmas cookies, candies, and fruits and share them with neighbor children. Watch their faces. Allow your self to enjoy the warmth and happiness the children will return to you. Enjoy this wonderful season...and "y'all come see us real soon...Ya hea?!"

Lola, her family and staff, and of course, Isabelita and I, wish you a healthy and happy holiday season. Merry Christmas! Feliz Navidad!