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# History of Trinidad and Tobago

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[[http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L342xH367/map\\_2-ebd09.gif](http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L342xH367/map_2-ebd09.gif)] Before the Spanish colonisation by Columbus in Trinidad, the island, situated in the Caribbean next to south America, was populated by Native Americans (Arawak and Caribs) with a population of 40 000 persons. </img8950|right>

In 1498 Columbus arrived on the island and called it Trinidad and Bellaforma. But the name of the second island changed to Tobago because there were tobacco plantations. Columbus saw three hills upon arriving in Trinidad, hence its name, but it was in 1532 that Spain conquered the island and the first wave of colonization began. They successfully imported and cultivated plantations of cotton, sugar, cacao and tobacco.

After the first wave of colonisation, the French took over the two islands in 1678. Spain lost Trinidad whereas Holland lost Tobago. With the French arrival the population of the islands became a big melting pot with different languages like French, Creole and Spanish.

T&T were declared islands of "New Spain" in the 1700s. Spanish king Charles III allowed strangers to come and produce. This and the French revolution, created a new wave of colonization by French planters and their slaves. The population increased. The economic situation was very attractive for French and British settlers.

England conquered Trinidad and Tobago in 1797 and this possession became official with a peace treaty between France and England in 1802.

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In 1833, slavery was abolished but between 1838 and 1917 a lot of indentured labourers were introduced. Therefore, Muslims and Indians came to the islands to work in plantations of cocoa, cotton and tobacco, where the workforce was insufficient. After the end of immigration of the different groups, the language in Trinidad and Tobago was not very clear. There was English, French Creole, Spanish, Indian Creole... The culture, likewise was undefined due to the many distinct national groups present on the isles.

In 1899, Trinidad was joined with Tobago to form one colony.

Due to the colonization, the island of T&T has a great culture. This island was a territory where many colonies had implanted their language, cultures and habits. In the T&T, there are many languages like English, English creole, Spanish, and a little bit of French creole. The history, the festivals, dances and music are the result of a mighty melting-pot of cultures. T&T became an independent state in 1962 and became a republic of the Commonwealth in 1976.

[Trinidad's population] </img8963|right>