

Quinceanera: A Hispanic tradition

By **Eddie Cervantez and Fernando Rosendo Ramirez**
Hispanic Triangle News

The Quinceanera has been the traditional celebration of a girl when she reaches the age of 15. It symbolizes the day she leaves behind her dolls and becomes a young woman.

The tradition originated with the Aztecs in Mexico and was originally only for boys.

The Quinceanera is now a mainstream celebration in the United States and Mexico. The church ceremony is an optional part of the celebration. At the church ceremony, the girl is blessed by the priest

and receives the sacraments. Both the girl and her parents must be involved in the church. The religious ceremony introduces the young girl to the community and offers thanksgiving for her life and transition to adulthood

Traditionally before her Quinceanera, the girl cannot cut her hair, wear make-up, paint her nails, wear high heels or go out on dates. These traditions are lost once they emigrate outside of Mexico.

The Quinceanera event resembles a wedding with much of the same fanfare, a pretty dress, church ceremony,

group of attendants, and a reception afterwards. Her court of honor consists of 14 girls and 12 boys. The girls all wear identical gowns and the boys wear tuxedos.

At the party, the Quinceanera and her court show off their dance skills. Much practice goes into the preparation of the different dance routines. The final dance during the presentation is the father-daughter waltz. The father presents his daughter with her first pair of high heels. After placing them on her feet, they dance their waltz. Her first dance as a young woman and not daddy's

little girl.

Some people say that the Quinceanera has out-lived its traditional meaning and is now just a waste of money. They argue the money can be for college tuition. Others feel that many young girls see this as an ok by the parents to find a boyfriend and start a family of their own adding to the rise in teenage pregnancy among Hispanics.

Whatever your thoughts about the Quinceanera, it is a beautiful tradition that brings family and friends together to celebrate the transition from a child to a women.



Fernando Ramirez/Hispanic Triangle News
Aarica Nicole Zapata in the traditional Quinceanera gown.

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