
This study is a survey of flutes and wind instruments used in the past and present in Costa Rica. This includes comparisons of how these flutes were used in pre-Columbian times to how they are used modernly, when the same instruments spans this broad time range. Many flutes that were used by the indigenous people of Costa Rica are used now in radically different ways. Some, like the ocarina, were originally used to play melodies and are now used as tourist souvenirs and sound effects in popular music. Seashells were used as a form of communication in the past, and are now used in popular music and also for communication. Modern flutes discussed that were not present in pre-Columbian times include the classical flute, the plastic recorder, and the clarinet. Globalization has brought many of these instruments to the country, as well as foreign musical genres that have become increasingly popular. However, some indigenous flutes continue to be used in popular music, and some of these foreign flutes are used to play music from this country.