

Venezuela is the richest country in South America because of its mineral wealth. Oil is pumped up from beneath Lake Maracaibo, and iron ore is mined from the plateau south of the River Orinoco. It also has coal, bauxite and gold. The world's highest waterfall, the Angel Falls, is in Venezuela.

In Guyana there are important deposits of bauxite, which is used to make aluminium. Guyana was once British Guiana, and Suriname was once Dutch Guiana. But French Guiana is still French.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ecuador means *Equator*: the Equator (0°) crosses the country.

Colombia is named after Christopher Columbus, who sailed from Europe to the Americas in 1492.

Bolivia is named after Simon Bolivar, a hero of the country's war of independence in the 1820s.

La Paz, in Bolivia, means *peace*.



▲ Cattle and a cowboy in the Mato Grosso, in Brazil. This huge area of dry woodland and grassland is used to graze cattle. Horses are used to round them up.

