

Meet Gregorio!



¡Hola amigos!

My name is Gregorio, and I'm from Colombia. Because it's in South America, people sometimes think that it must be very hot there. But not all parts of my country are hot. For example Bogotá, where I'm from, is very high up in the mountains, so it gets pretty chilly. That's probably why I like soup so much! I can't wait to share cumbia—one of our most special kinds of music—with you.

As we say in Colombia when we're getting really excited, ¡Wepa!

Gregorio



Gregorio

Musical Explorers
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We asked Gregorio ...

What is one of your first musical memories?

When I was very little, a melody came into my head, and I didn't want to forget it. So I grabbed a piece of paper and "wrote" the melody down, using syllables like "la" and "da." To my disappointment when I looked at the paper later on, it didn't help me remember my melody at all, since there were no actual notes or rhythms on it. Oh well! I was probably five or six, so I have to give myself a break. 😊

What is your favorite Colombian food?

It depends on where I am in Colombia. If I'm in Bogotá, I like to have some ajiáco, a chicken soup made with three different types of potatoes, or chocolate con queso, which is hot chocolate with cheese melted in it. But if I'm on the Caribbean coast, I like to eat fried fish with patacones, or fried plantain slices, and drink fresh corozo juice—made from the fruit of the same tree as one of our percussion instruments!

Growing up in Colombia, did you have favorite games that you played?

There were two main games we played at school. One was called "piquis" or "canicas" (marbles), where the school playground would become a bazaar of kids competing and winning marbles from each other. The other was trompo, which is a spinning top. We would see who could make the trompo spin the longest. My friend became a trompo national champion!



Ajiáco



Trompo



Patacones



Arriving at
Jackson Heights, Queens

