

Celebrating Food, Art & Culture

Hispanic American Heritage

The Milagro Foundation

The Restaurant Empire
of Phil Suarez

When to Eat
Bread of the Dead

Chef Rafael Palomino



Photo by Robin Fryday

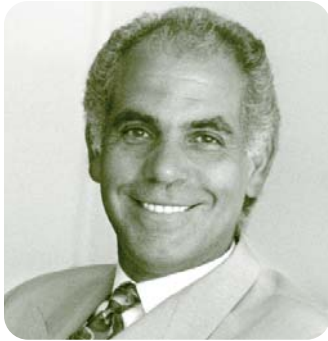


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King of the Bill

Phil Suarez's \$100 million restaurant empire includes Prime Steakhouse, the Bellagio Hotel and Casino eatery boasting the third highest per person check average in the country.



You would think Phil Suarez's past life would satisfy the hardest type A personality. He was a barroom chum with some of America's most notable personalities of the '80s—Rodney Dangerfield, John Madden, Bubba Smith, Mickey Spillane, Bob Uecker, Billy Martin, and many other celebrities—but not in the way you might think. Phil and partner Bob Giraldi produced and filmed the legendary Miller Lite commercials featuring the infamous debate, “tastes great, less filling.” The two also produced a sizable portfolio of award-winning commercials for Pepsi, Band-Aid, Mercedes, and other national brands, but the pinnacle of the advertising world was only an outtake on a career destined for bigger success.

Phil's work allowed him to travel across America and Europe, and, as an added benefit, dine at the finest restaurants in the world. It all made one thing clear—Phil's deepest passion was, and still is, the celebration of fine food. It is a passion that he now can trace back to the days of his youth and his mother's Puerto Rican kitchen, where she would spend all day preparing homemade soups, empanadas, and pastellas. The celebration of food has always been a Suarez family tradition.

Marrying his passion for food with his expertise in advertising, Phil launched a string of successful restaurants that became equally known for dramatic flair and impeccable food preparation. Today, he sits atop a \$100 million food empire stretching from London to New York to Las Vegas to Hong Kong. Instead of merely dining at the world's finest eating establishments, he owns several of them. The heavy in the lineup is Prime Steakhouse in Las Vegas. In 2004 Prime ranked 17th among the nation's highest-grossing independent restaurants in the annual survey by *Restaurants and Institutions*. The restaurant's check average, a stellar \$120 per person, was the third highest in the country.

While Phil is credited as the master strategist at Suarez Restaurant Group, he would be the first to admit that none of it would be possible without partner and chef extraordinaire Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Jean-Georges is internationally acclaimed for his

groundbreaking cuisine and ranks among the industry's elite. Writer Adam Hanft credits him with “changing the face of French cooking, opening it up to Asian influences, and liberating it from the ancien régime of butter and cream” in a recent *Inc. Magazine* article.

Still, while the Suarez empire is vast and includes a diversity of cuisines, it's interesting that his personal favorite is Lucy Latin Kitchen, which he named for his wife. Located in the ABC Carpet and Home building in New York, Lucy is also a favorite among leading food critics. Bob Lape of Crain's *New York Business* recently gave Lucy three stars, writing that the restaurant is “winning a fast following from the young and lively crowd.” Lucy's kitchen is under the supervision of Dominican-born Maximo Tejada.

You have to wonder if there is anything else to prove for a man who's conquered two highly competitive industries? Well ... yes. Plans are in place to leverage the Jean-Georges brand and expand the “food as entertainment” model to full-service hotels. For Phil, it seems that while success indeed tastes great, no amount of it is too filling.

Ethnic Foods Enhance Nutrition

The American Dietetic Association (ADA), the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, agrees with *Unity*, reporting that eating a healthy sampling of ethnic foods is a fun way to create a nutritious diet.

“With global communications, travel, and food imports, our ‘world of food’ gets bigger, offering more ethnic and regional foods. As a result, consumers have more food variety, food combinations, and ways to eat for health and pleasure. Many ethnic and regional cuisines offer health benefits, especially those that focus on grains, vegetables, beans, and fruits,” says the ADA.

“Ethnic cuisines allow variety in all of the food groups, so expand your menu by changing one food group at a time. Try switching from pasta and rice to eastern European kasha, Moroccan couscous, or South American quinoa. For fruits and vegetables, go for Mexican jicama, Chinese lychee, or Caribbean mango. Substitute traditional protein dishes with Asian tofu, Middle Eastern hummus, or Latin American black beans. Swap dairy products made from cow's milk for goat cheese or milk, Mexican queso blanco, or plain yogurt to top hummus or falafel.”

The best way to sample ethnic foods is when dining out, and don't hesitate to talk to the chef about a dish you'd like to make at home.



Inside Lucy Latin Kitchen

Top 50 Hispanic Restaurants

- A list of the top 50 of anything is going to generate debate, but that doesn't stop *Hispanic* magazine from annually listing the “Top 50 Hispanic Restaurants” each October. Not surprisingly, many of the Top 50 are in states that are home to the highest number of Hispanic Americans: California, Florida, New York, and Texas. Did you know that Latino-themed restaurants are growing 3.5 times faster than any ethnic-themed group? This fact comes from the National Restaurant Association, which also states that the U.S. Hispanic population spends more than \$55 billion annually on food and beverages. *Hispanic* magazine's list of “Top 50 Hispanic Restaurants” is on magazine racks now—check it out!



Do you know the Argentine American architect who designed the Petronas Towers?

Hispanic Heritage Builders

In 2000 at the age of 71, **Ricardo Legorreta** won the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Gold Medal, the association's highest honor for individuals. Ricardo is the president of Legorreta Arquitectos. The firm is located in Mexico City and has a satellite office in the United States. His most recent works are the Visual Arts Center at the College of Santa Fe, New Mexico and The Zocalo condominiums, also in Sante Fe.

The 1995 AIA Gold Medal was awarded to **Cesar Pelli**, the Argentine-born mastermind behind one of the world's most incredible engineering feats. You can read more about him in the "Did you know?" below.

Christine Granados writes that **Ramón Pacheco** holds the distinction of being called "the architect to the stars." Ramón is frequently called by celebrities such as Gloria and Emilio Estefan, Cristina Saralegui, Don Francisco, and Michael Caine to build and renovate homes and restaurants. Her entire article, which is a tribute to four contemporary Hispanic architects, can be found at www.hispaniconline.com.

Did you know?

- From 1997 to 2004, the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia were the world's tallest buildings, reaching more than a quarter mile into the sky with 88 floors and topping out at 1,483 feet. They are the creation of famed Argentine American architect Cesar Pelli. Cesar's design for the building had to meet the approval of Malaysia's prime minister, Datuk Seri Mahathir bin Mohamad, and the collaboration produced a floor plan creatively derived from the principles of Islamic art.

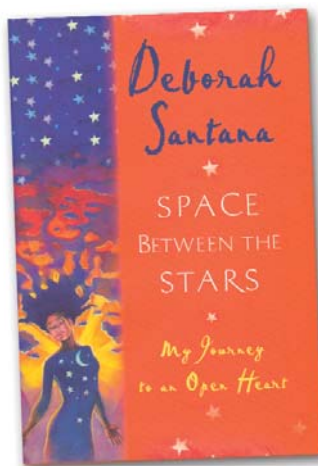
Milagro

The image of children as divine miracles, full of light and hope, and as gifts in our lives, is the meaning behind the name of the Milagro Foundation, a San Francisco-based charity serving children around the world in the areas of health, education, and the arts. The foundation was founded in 1998 by a loving couple wanting to share their success with underrepresented and underprivileged children. That couple is Deborah and Carlos Santana.

Often, philanthropists have a mid- or late-life burst of love for humanity after a personal tragedy or life-threatening illness changes their life forever. Deborah and Carlos will tell you that the philosophy of working in harmony with all of life, of sharing what you have, goes back to who they are in terms of family and how they were raised.

As a result of the Santanas' efforts, Milagro has dispensed nearly \$2 million in grants to causes that include abandoned babies in Albania, musical instruments for students in Bosnia, a new hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a music lab for street children in India. A few of the many educational programs supported by Milagro include a school for Israeli children, both Arab and Jewish, who study each other's culture side by side; the only theater school in the United States for deaf children ages 5 to 15; and numerous programs for children who are abuse victims or homeless. Milagro's outreach covers dozens of countries across the globe, but the bulk of the grants goes to causes in the United States, particularly those areas of Southern California where the neglect and abuse of children are severe.

As a public foundation, Milagro depends on public donations through concert tickets, individuals and generous corporate sponsors. Donations are accepted at www.milagrofoundation.org.



People with big hearts, trying to make the world a better place, have come and gone, always succeeding to some degree but never seeing their ultimate dream become reality. Yet, for this couple, who have been married more than 30 years, whose multi-ethnic roots and world wide following transcend cultural boundaries, whose words and music speak a language we all understand, it seems possible that the seeds they are planting today through the Milagro Foundation may be the miracle for tomorrow's children.

Space Between the Stars

Aside from serving as COO of the Santana Band and vice president of the Milagro Foundation, Deborah Santana is a life long writer. Her autobiography, *Space Between the Stars*, is the inspiring story of how she found her identity as a woman and mother, as a daughter to legendary bluesman Saunders King, and as a wife to guitar-maestro Carlos Santana.



Courtesy of A Home Away From Homelessness

Hispanic Heritage on Canvas

The Art of Contemporary Hispanic Artists

Promoting Cultural Awareness

Diversity, as it is represented through art, provides a window into cultural differences. Our art collection attempts to share these experiences with our shareholders, and communities. *Unity* and the art program and be used as a stand-alone diversity publication and a commitment to diversity and discover the vibrant



Ernesto Camacho. A New York City artist of Mexican/Puerto Rican descent, Ernesto studied art and earned his bachelor's at the University of Syracuse. He has exhibited at galleries in New York City and illustrated children's books on the Navajo Indian Reservation in northern Arizona. His paintings explore the intimate side of humanity as well as the human psyche in an array

of settings and time periods. Most of his work is based on photographs that he takes on location and refines in his studio.

Humberto C. Cruz. Born and raised in Cuba, Humberto attended the University de la Habana and received his master's degree in geographic sciences. He couldn't suppress his overwhelming

desire to be an artist, and in 1990 began working on environmental art projects throughout Cuba. Through his work, Cruz explores and captures the relationship between man and nature, as well as the magic of ancient cultures from a contemporary perspective. His artistic works have become well known in Japan, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States.

and Diversity Through the Arts

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diversity of new cultures and lifestyles.

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cultural fine art collection, visit

www.picture-that.com.



Red Bird Blues by Ernesto Camacho



De Reves by Wilmer Edgardo Castro Sandres



Body Series by Humberto Cruz



Cita para Tres by Wilmer Edgardo Castro Sandres

Wilmer Castro Sandres. Wilmer is part of a creative group that formed 10 years ago with a common inspiration to change the coordinates of space and the reality of objects and situations. Each member of the group created their own distinct techniques, and Wilmer was influenced by geometric figurative synthesis, expressed through mesh and figure. The mesh constitutes a

key element in the author's work, activating the different figurative elements with proximity and importance and creating a coherent space.

Armando Vasquez. Born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Armando's artistic aspirations began when he was only 5 years old, when he won his first prize for design. Since then, Armando has

won many prizes and recognitions for his art. He has participated in several national and international exhibitions. Armando studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara, Italy, later returning to Honduras to study architecture. He exercises his artistic talents in the areas of painting, sculpture, glass art, graphics, and architectural design.



In the Kitchen with Chef Rafael Palomino

Columbian-born Rafael Palomino began his life in the kitchen at age 16, working after school at Larry Forgione's River Café in Brooklyn, New York. He later traveled to France and studied under the guidance of celebrated chef Michel Guèrard in Eugènie-les-Bains. Returning to the United States to again work for Larry, he spent three enriching years at the critically acclaimed New York eatery, An American Place. He moved on to become sous chef to Jonathan Waxman at Jams, the restaurant that is credited with introducing New Yorkers to the highly popular California cuisine of the 1980s.

From 1987 to 1995, Rafael was executive chef at the famous Metropolis Café where he began to experiment with a cuisine that reflected his Latin heritage. In 1998, Chef Rafael opened his sophisticated midtown Manhattan restaurant, Sonora, which was immediately proclaimed by *New York Magazine* as one of the best places in the Big Apple to eat. In 2000, Chef Rafael brought his cuisine to Westchester County, and opened Sonora in Port Chester, New York. Consistently versatile and evolving—while maintaining his commitment to an excellent standard of Nuevo Latino cooking—he changed his New York City restaurant to Vida, and introduced a more Mexican-influenced menu. His latest restaurant, Pacifico, opened in Port Chester, New York in 2003.

Chef Rafael is also quite active outside the kitchen. He wrote his first cookbook, *Bistro Latino*, (William Morrow, 1998), to introduce home cooks to his brand of Nuevo Latino cooking. *Viva la Vida*, Rafael's second cookbook (Chronicle Books, 2002), features easy-to-follow recipes for entertaining Latin style. His third book, *Nueva Salsa*, contains 65 exciting salsa recipes (Chronicle Books, 2003). He is also founder of Spanish Speaking Chefs Association of America, whose goal is to support young Latin Americans interested in pursuing careers in culinary arts.

Did you know?

Salsa is the most purchased condiment in the United States. Recipes from Chef Rafael's *Nueva Salsa* will help you create the perfect salsa for any occasion. Mexican green tomatoes, known as tomatillos in Spanish, are a key ingredient in many Mexican salsas. Roasting them enhances their naturally robust flavor. This guacamole-like recipe with tomatillo, cilantro, and avocado is great with chips and makes about three cups.

- 4 roasted tomatillos, quartered
- 2 ripe Hass avocados, peeled, pitted, and coarsely chopped
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 1/2 roasted poblano chiles, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 1/3 cup white balsamic vinegar
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro

In a large glass or ceramic bowl, combine the tomatillos and avocado. Gently stir in the red onion, chiles, vinegar, lime juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper (don't overdo it or the avocado will get mushy). Let sit for 20 minutes, then stir in the cilantro and serve. Or cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Return to room temperature and stir in the cilantro just before serving.



Those funny-looking bananas are worth trying at home. Cooking with Plantains

Think of Hispanic foods and any number of things come to mind—masa, coconut, beans, rice, and many tropical fruits and vegetables. Yet, none are as versatile as the plantain.

Plantains are large cooking bananas but cannot be eaten raw like their smaller counterparts. Starchy and filling, green or slightly ripe plantains are often prepared the same way as tubers such as yucca and yam—as soup vegetables or grated for dough. Slightly ripe plantains can be sliced and mashed in a small press, then fried. Called tostones, these make a good accompaniment to stews and other saucy foods.

Ripe or “maduro” plantains are sweet with a slight tang. They are cut into chunks and fried in hot vegetable oil for 2 to 3 minutes until golden brown, then served plain or sprinkled with a bit of cinnamon for a special treat.

When choosing plantains, first consult your recipe. Green plantains should be hard to the touch and are usually prepared by boiling until soft enough to pound into a paste. If you need slightly ripe ones, choose those that are yellow all around and only give slightly. For very ripe plantains, choose those that are very soft and practically black all over. Regardless of the ripening stage, you'll need a knife to score and peel the skin—it won't peel easily like a banana.

Chillin' Colombian Style

- In Colombia, fruit shakes are popular and refreshing drinks, especially on long, hot summer days. Locals make them from milk, water, sugar, and their favorite fruit, such as lulo, a hairy, greenish-yellow fruit with a slightly acidic flavor; passion fruit; papaya; and guanbana (cherimoya), a creamy-fleshed fruit. For a quick cool down, try making your own. Combine in a blender until smooth 1 cup of your favorite fruit, 1 1/2 cups milk, 2 tablespoons sugar, and 1 cup crushed ice. If you are using citrus or highly acidic fruits, substitute water for milk. Makes four servings.

Behind the scenes at Lucy Latin Kitchen Executive Chef Maximo Tejada

Maximo Tejada's love of cooking began early, in his grandmother's kitchen in the Dominican Republic. Encouraged by his mother and grandmother, Maximo spent many happy hours helping out with family meals and holiday baking. Initially, he decided to pursue other careers in the hospitality field, but his passion for cooking soon led him to enroll in the French Culinary Institute in New York. There, his true professional calling became clear.

After graduating from the institute in 1996, Maximo began working at Patria restaurant in Manhattan at the ceviche station. Within nine months, he was overseeing the kitchen as well as the menu for the restaurant's enthusiastic dinner crowd. This is when he decided that acquiring a more global perspective would complement his formal training. He embarked on an extensive trip to Singapore, Italy, Spain, California, and other locations. His personal style began to move in an inspired direction. In 2000, within just a few months of joining the staff at Pipa and Chicama, Max was made head chef of these two prestigious restaurants in the Union Square area.

Soft spoken and gentle are not adjectives frequently used to describe chefs, but both perfectly capture Maximo Tejada. "I like to please," says this gifted chef. "I like people to enjoy my food, and I make sure that everything I cook I would be proud to serve to my family."

Maximo's genuine talent and dedication have earned him accolades at Lucy Latin Kitchen where he became executive chef in the fall of 2004. As a first-time executive chef, his respect for tradition combined with his flair for innovation earned Lucy Latin Kitchen three stars from *Crain's Business News* in March of 2005—just six months after he took over the helm.

Maximo sees cooking as an art form. For him, the ultimate challenge is to deliver creative presentations without sacrificing complex flavor. His focus on presentation and passionate service results in a memorable and unique dining experience.



Rainbow Ceviche

For the citrus dressing:

- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1 cup sesame oil

Combine all of the ingredients in a blender, and blend until emulsified and creamy. Reserve at room temperature.

For the ceviche:

- 6 ounces of tuna, sliced thin
- 6 ounces of salmon, sliced thin
- 6 ounces of red snapper, sliced thin
- 1 small red onion, sliced thin
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced thin
- 1 green bell pepper, sliced thin
- 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced thin
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon thinly sliced chives

In a bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Marinate for five minutes with the sesame citrus. Drizzle with sesame oil and serve. This recipe makes six servings.



Maximo's Coconut Soup

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 stalks of celery, diced
- 1 white onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 ounce fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 quart of fish stock
- 2 quarts of clam juice
- 1 14-ounce can coconut milk
- 1 piece of lemon grass, diced small
- 2 lemon leaves
- 1 red jalapeno, sliced
- 1 green jalapeno, sliced
- 1/2 of a red onion, sliced
- 4 pieces of cilantro
- 4 tablespoons fresh salmon, diced
- 4 tablespoons fresh tuna, diced
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- 12 cherry tomatoes, sliced
- 2 teaspoons mustard oil
- 4 ounces bay scallops
- 4 shrimp
- 12 clams

Heat the olive oil in a large stockpot over high heat. Add the onion, garlic, ginger, lemon grass, lemon leaves, and celery. Sauté for about six minutes. Add the stock, clam juice, and coconut milk. Bring the mixture to a boil. Cover and boil for about 20 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, onions, jalapenos, 2 pieces of cilantro, shrimp, clams, and scallops. Sprinkle the tuna, salmon, sesame seeds, and remaining cilantro into the soup. Drizzle with mustard oil, and serve. Makes four servings.

Cooking with juice ...

- Ceviche is seafood prepared with a centuries-old cooking method using acidic citrus juice instead of heat. It can be eaten as a first course or main dish. The preparation and consumption of ceviche is practically a religion in parts of Mexico and Central and South America, and there are as many varieties of ceviche as people who eat it. The chemical process that occurs when the acid of the citrus comes in contact with the fish is similar to what happens when the fish is cooked, and the flesh becomes opaque and firm. (excerpted from whatscookingamerica.net)

Dia de los Muertos

Two days of fun, dancing, food, and family rarely go with the idea of death. Yet “Dia de los Muertos,” or “Day of the Dead,” is a colorful and festive celebration that is held in honor of those who have passed away. The holiday begins October 31, ends November 2, and is observed in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, and other Central American countries, as well as in Hispanic communities throughout California, Arizona, and Texas.



Scenes from Dia de los Muertos seem goulish but are actually created in honor of the dead.

The food served throughout Dia de los Muertos is a sight to behold. The most important food is “pan de los muertos,” or “bread of the dead.” Much like coffee cake, pan de los muertos is a sweet, egg-based bread that is formed in the shape of skeletons and sprinkled with powdered sugar to resemble bones. Other special foods require long preparation times or rare, expensive ingredients. Once made, they are “offered” to the dead, then distributed among family and friends. In Mexico, labor-intensive tamales are popular or mole—a chocolate based sauce with ground nuts, raisins, and other spices that is the national dish. Sweets, such as candied pumpkin or caramel flan, are also important.

Mary J. Andrade has written seven books on Day of the Dead celebrations. Each book focuses on a different region of the country and offers a wealth of information and pictures for both would-be travelers and those wanting to celebrate here in the states.



Bread of the dead. Photo by Mary J. Andrade.

Dia de los Muertos is a much-anticipated festival with a complicated, 3,500-year-old history. It was born of Aztec tradition, molded by the Spanish-Catholic church, and thrives today in a century where ancient spiritual beliefs are often just that, ancient. It is based on the Aztec concept that death is the beginning of life, and those who have passed on can revisit their families, if they are properly motivated. A good part of the fun is providing the motivation.

The first full day of celebration is dedicated to deceased children, or las angelitas, and the following day is dedicated to deceased adults. Festivities marked by dancing, eating, and storytelling are held at grave sites or altars built inside the home. Decorations include flowers, toys, balloons, photographs, diplomas, or anything cherished by the deceased, even their favorite meals or drinks. Candy skulls and fake skeletons are placed everywhere, and they are often inscribed with the names of the deceased or adorned with their clothes.

Hispanic Food Trivia



Can you guess what South American city lends its name to lima beans? Okay, that was an easy one, but just in case, **Lima**, the capital of Peru, is the correct answer. Ready for bigger challenges? Try these Hispanic food trivia questions.

What popular food item gets its name from the Spanish word “torta,” meaning “round cake”; dates back to approximately 10,000 B.C.; and was the principal food of the ancient Aztecs? Coming in two varieties, corn and wheat flour, **corn tortillas** are unleavened flat bread that are highly versatile and low in fat.

What is the hottest chili in the world? Cuba is thought to be the birthplace of the **habanero** (meaning “from Havana”). They’re bright orange, yellow, or red and look like thumb-shaped pumpkins, but don’t mistake them for being cute and adorable. A mere sliver can make the toughest human being cry like a baby.

What spice is regarded as the most expensive in the world? We threw you a curveball here because **saffron** is not specifically Hispanic, but is used in countless Hispanic recipes. It takes anywhere from 70,000 to 250,000 hand-picked flowers to make one pound of saffron, but it tastes great in paella and other rice dishes.

What is the largest Hispanic-owned food company in the United States? You can see its name on countless items in your local grocery store. **Goya Foods** has more than 1,200 products under its umbrella. Based in New York, Goya employs more than 2,500 people in the United States, the Caribbean, and Europe.

Did you know?

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18.

Hispanics are the largest ethnic group in the United States with nearly 40 million people, or nearly 12 percent of the population. By 2010, their purchasing power is expected to reach \$1,000 billion according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth.

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