

Celebrating Food, Art & Culture

Hispanic American Heritage

“El Gueguense”

The Ambassador of Chilean Cuisine

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“Arreglo Flora” by Heleodoro Heras



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Photo by Regina Azevedo



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Tortillas Like Mamá's, But This Is No Bodega

You're not going to find Swanson frozen dinners at Rancho Liborio, a shiny new 49,000-square-foot supermarket in Denver. But you will find giant Peruvian kernels of corn, tilapia sold live, and stacks of fresh tortillas, made from 600 pounds of corn ground in the store daily. And shoppers might one day be able to buy a chicken that was slaughtered and plucked on site a few hours earlier.

The store's slogan pretty much says it all: *"Si es de allá lo tenemos aquí."* Translated, "If it's from there, we have it here." The upscale store is a new concept — to sell food to an increasingly affluent pool of Hispanic grocery shoppers as well as the growing segment of people who want fresher, local and more authentic food.

With its bright, wide aisles, agua fresca bar and an expansive selection of hot food like carnitas, Rancho Liborio wants to be the go-to store for second- and third-generation shoppers who are attracted to markets like Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, but want to cook and shop in a store that feels like home.

For decades small markets and bodega-style stores in cities like Los Angeles, Dallas and New York catered to new immigrants looking for lower prices. But larger chains are now trying to capture those shoppers. They are finding that it takes more than a few Mexican products mixed in among the ranch dressing and Fruity Pebbles to attract them. "If you add jalapeños to the produce department, it doesn't become a Hispanic store," says Jack Rosenthal, the food service supervisor for the two Rancho Liborio stores in the Denver area.



Although there is no one typical Hispanic shopper, some generalizations are driving the design of the new Latino-theme stores. Many have wider aisles because, research shows, grocery shopping is often a family outing. Hispanic families tend to be larger, and more people cook from scratch, so produce and meat departments tend to be bigger and better stocked. But the generalizations end there. The term Hispanic applies to people from many countries, each with particular preferences for things like fruit, meat, spices, bread and beans. Tastes can change from city to city, even neighborhood to neighborhood.

A walk through the dried-bean aisle at Rancho Liborio is a case in point. There are pintos, both the larger speckled brown ones preferred by Mexicans and the smaller, lighter-colored ones used in Peru. Pink beans appeal to Puerto Ricans, and black beans to Cubans, Guatemalans and Brazilians.

The Rancho Liborio bakery is a study in cross-cultural merchandising. The Cuban bread has to have the right delicate crust and texture for dipping in café con leche. The compact Mexican loaves called bolillos are sold near Salvadoran pastries called peperechas, layered with pineapple. The tres leches cake is a hit with almost everyone, including African American shoppers from the area.

Generational differences that arise among Hispanic shoppers further complicate things for grocers. One shopper does not mind spending \$2.29 for a pupusa, but to her mother that seems expensive.

Yet, Liborio markets are attracting white, black and Hispanic customers because, when it comes down to it, a grocery shopper is a grocery shopper. "It's not so much the cultural stuff," says Marie Lopez, a dental hygienist in the Denver area. "Everything Rancho Liborio is fresh, and the prices are good. That's really what I'm looking for."

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Leads and Chews Gum At the Same Time

Last March, at his first annual meeting as President and CEO of the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company, Bill Perez reflected on the strengths and opportunities that attracted him to join the global confectioner last year.



Bill Perez, CEO
Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company

"With the Wrigley Company, there is a lot to like — including our culture, brands, distribution infrastructure, front-end merchandising expertise, geographic presence and innovation pipeline, as well as the strength of the gum category. At the same time, we have a number of opportunities to take Wrigley's performance to the next level, and our team is committed to addressing the challenges and fully leveraging our strengths."

Perez is the first leader of the Wrigley Company from outside the Wrigley family - a company more than 100 years old and built on mainstay brands such as Juicy Fruit, Big Red, Altoids, Lifesavers, and the venerable Wrigley's Spearmint gum. Since its founding in 1891, the Wrigley Company has been led by four generations of the Wrigley family. Adding Perez to the line up has turned out to be a sweet move for Wrigley. On Oct. 23, 2006, the day he was hired, company stock rose 13.7% — the biggest one-day jump in 20 years. Since that time, the decline in stock values for Wrigley have reversed and as of this writing, are trading at historical highs.

Yet Perez, who headed up consumer goods manufacturer S.C. Johnson for eight years and did a short stint at Nike as its CEO, is still very much running the company lockstep with the Wrigley family. William Wrigley, Jr. serves as the executive chairman and chairman of the board of directors. According to a recent article in *BusinessWeek*, Bill P. and Bill W., as they are called internally, have worked hard to build a viable management partnership, with Bill W. focusing on strategy and innovation and Bill P. focusing on operations and financials.

Perez was recently (and rightfully) named one of the most influential Hispanic Americans in the corporate world.

El Gueguense

One of the earliest examples of a Native North American comedy, *El Gueguense* was proclaimed a masterpiece of the “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind” in 2005 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Nicaraguan poet Pablo Antonia Cuadra called the play’s wily antihero “the first character in Nicaraguan literature.” But the number of Nicaraguans who have actually seen *El Gueguense* performed is dwindling. And that has some worried that this measured piece of cultural heritage will disappear.

Which is why, last October, I sat in a packed theater at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D. C., watching an excerpt from *El Gueguense* put on

by Nicaragua’s Ballet Folklórico. The excerpt presented by the troupe, lively though it was, gave only a taste of the whole work, the plot of which goes something like this:

The title character is an older man brought before the colonial governor on various minor charges. In a series of comic exchanges, *El Gueguense*, who deals in contraband items, pretends not to understand the governor and twists his words around to insult him. Eventually the old man fools the authorities into thinking he’s rich and arranges for one of his sons to

marry the governor’s daughter, the Lady *Suche-Malinche* (La *Malinche* was the Nahuatl woman who acted as interpreter to conquistador Hernan Cortes). Meanwhile, a number of masked mules — perhaps representing the Native population oppressed by colonial rule—dance but never speak. As the play ends, *El Gueguense* has gained the upper hand and has navigated around the authorities’ rules through trickery. Yet he remains wistful for bygone days, “the time of the blue thread” (perhaps a reference to a particular dye used in pre-Columbian Nicaragua), when life was better. “Let me recall old times, that I may console myself with that,” he says in one of the play’s closing lines.

As to what this allegory means, scholars have spent decades trying to figure out. Most concede that some of the original meaning (or at least some of the subtleties) has likely been lost in the endless translation and reinterpretation of an evolving piece of street theatre. The mixing of languages accounts for many of the double or triple entendres delivered by *El Gueguense* and his sons—most of them at the expense of the colonial authorities. Many are sexual in nature. No one is spared his barbs, not even his own family.

Surprisingly, with its sometimes not-very-subtle lampooning of authority, the work

was never permanently banned, even by the Spanish colonial authorities who were the target of much of its humor. In a country that prizes poetry and art, *El Gueguense* survived as a symbol of the Nicaraguan people’s humor and endurance in the face of often greedy or capricious rulers. With political change again coming to Nicaragua this year—Sandinista President Daniel Ortega, who governed in the 1980s, was reelected in November—*El Gueguense* is sure to be interpreted in fresh new ways. Along with encouraging performances like the recent one in Washington, D. C., by the Ballet Folklórico, UNESCO’s recognition will help in supporting the artisans and performers who have kept the work’s tradition alive. There’s good reason to believe that *El Gueguense* will survive for another 300 years, dancing, joking, and winking to the crowd just as he’s always done.

From *American Indian*, “*El Gueguense*,” by Tony Reichardt, Pages 27-31 © 2007 Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian



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Feijóo Sisters Give an Historical Performance

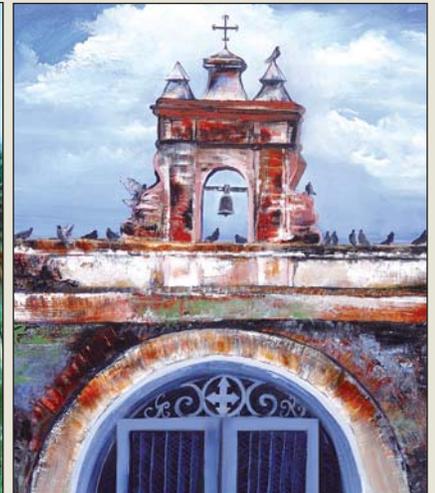
The National Ballet School in Havana, Cuba — touted the largest ballet school in the world — has been the training ground for many superb dancers who perform in leading ballet companies throughout the states and internationally. Little did sisters Lorena and Lorna Feijóo know when they began lessons at the school, they too would become international stars, or that they would give a performance that will always be talked about among ballet aficionados.

Tchaikovsky’s “*Swan Lake*” is a revered classic that is based on a tale that dates back centuries. “*Swan Lake*’s central metaphor [is] doubleness, disguise, and revelation,” writes Debra Cash for wपुर.org. “*Odette* is the Swan Queen and *Odile* an impostor. One is a spirit of tender faithfulness, the other of carnal invitation. One suffers and the other just wants to have fun.”

When the Boston Ballet company performed “*Swan Lake*” casting Lorna in the role of *Odette*, the white swan, and Lorena as *Odile*, the black swan, it was a performance that made history. Never before had two siblings taken the stage as stars and given such an electrifying performance.



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Pictured left to right by Elizabeth Erazo Baez: "Cuarto Player," "El Camino," and "Capilla del Cristo."

La Celebración de la Vida

Puerto Rico, Chile and Mexico: three of the world's 21 Spanish-speaking countries, yet each owning a rich culture that is unique and distinct. In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, we pay tribute to three artists who share a powerful ability to communicate on canvas beauty, emotion, vibrancy, and life — ideals prevalent throughout all Hispanic and Latino cultures. Yet, as these fine artworks demonstrate, Latin culture is by no means homogenous and includes a great diversity of history, styles of expression, and pastimes.

Depicting the Color of Emotion

Elizabeth Erazo Baez, Puerto Rico

"Art and being an artist have always been a part of me. I believe that God has blessed me with the gift of art in my life, and it is one of the many blessings that I enjoy most.



Baez

I love to paint themes of Latin American traditions, specifically of my Puerto Rican culture: landscapes, seascapes, portraits, and the richness of color found in the still life of tropical fruits and plants. I am

very proud of my culture, and enjoy learning more everyday about its traditions and people. In my art, I try to use the brilliant, rich colors that I remember seeing in La Isla del Encanto, Puerto Rico.

I was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., of Puerto Rican parents, and moved to Puerto Rico as a young girl. At that time, I felt like I was introduced to real color. Living in New York can be gray at times, with all the tall buildings. So when I saw all that color — there was bright

green everywhere! When the sunlight hits that rich lush tropical landscape - now that is real color. Drawing was all this little "Newyorican" girl did.

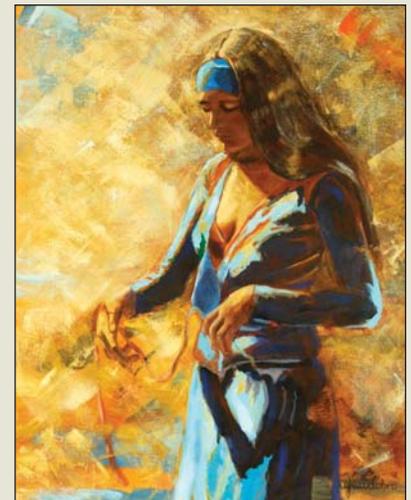
Now, I live in Miami — filled with bright sunlight and lots of bright greens — with a family of my own. As an adult, I realized art was not just something I liked to do: Being an artist is a important part of who I am. I am inspired by love of family life, America, Latin culture, pride of the Puerto Rican culture-- being "boricua"- the light of our spirit. From the details of flowers in a landscape, a little girl's smile, love of animals, the spirituality and light that fills us, the waves of the sea, to the solitude that haunts us. Color speaks to us everywhere, to truly see it, I believe you have to feel it."

For Those on the Streets

Veronica Garcia-Huidobro, Chile

My childhood and youth were marked by changes; countries, languages, cultures ... a great experience meeting so many different people who will always remain in my memories.

My university life started with languages — Spanish, French, and English — which served as bridges for direct communication, irreplaceable in human relationships. This university life then extended to sciences (I became a biologist) where I learned the immense creation of God from a scientific perspective; the physical, chemical, and biochemical knowledge of plants, animals and man. My professional life,



Pictured left to right by Veronica Garcia-Huidobro: "Dream," "With Grace," and on facing page, "Freedom."

at the beginning, was linked to the sciences and communication, which at that time were starting to change the way the world would communicate.



Garcia-Huidobro

Arts were a constant during all my life through ballet, drawing, and painting. Yet it was the sickness of a loved one that led me inextricably to the arts. I had decided to take a sabbatical to attend to my sick father and also pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree at the Universidad Católica. Those events led to my decision to help people with a history of life on the streets by donating the proceeds of each painting that I sell to the Corporación Nuestra Casa (www.nuestra-casa.cl), and they have motivated me to become a professional painter. They are the motor of my creation, through which I capture my passions, such as my love for horses, on white canvases.

Finally, nothing that I have previously described could have been possible without the constant love and support, throughout more than 30 years, of my husband, José Rafael, who with infinite patience has been a faithful companion on each new adventure that I, his restless partner, have undertaken. As an extension of those 30 years, our three children, María Verónica, Jota and Valentina and also my son-in-law, Sebastián, have been as supportive and enthusiastic as their father. Thanks to life, that has given me so much.....

Savoring Life on Canvas

Heleodoro Heras, México

As México abounds with variety and contrasts, so do my paintings. Mood and emotion fuel the thrust in my work as I express realism in a painterly fashion. I want to capture those glimpses into the human drama, the



unembellished fleeting moments of a tender touch ... a stray gaze ... a wandering thought ... the poetry found in motion, or expressions on the faces of people as they relate to one another. It all speaks to me loudly and beckons to be captured on canvas.

My childhood in Tijuana, México, was filled with artistry. From an early age, I remember being captivated by color, light, and form. This fascination developed a fervent desire to draw and paint. I began with leftover house paint and for a canvas, I would stretch old sheets or retired jeans over cardboard and wooden panels.

It was somewhat later, at age 13, that my aunt Brígida, seeing my keen interest in art, took me along on one of her trips to Los Angeles and stopped by several art galleries for my enjoyment. I was hooked! She gave me my first set of oils, and I still have several small tubes left from that original set. At age 17 and as a new immigrant to the United States, I enrolled in high school and with unbridled passion attended many art classes while earning my diploma.

During my childhood I would hear about famous Mexican painters, the likes of Diego de Rivera, Siqueiros, Tamayo, and Orozco. I had been exposed only to some of their reproductions; however, I had never been so immersed as I was now with original works. Here, I was also seeing Sorolla, Dali, Bosch, Dürer, Daumier, Van Dyck and countless other giants of the world of art. In a very humble way, I felt I was in my element, finding delight and inspiration in the art and the beauty that surrounded me.

Serving in the armed forces during the Vietnam War interrupted my artistic plans, but when I returned home, I went to work in the graphic arts industry and earned a bachelor of arts degree from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. But it was an eight-month respite in México that pushed me to a new level. I was able to focus on new and exciting subject matter that had enduring significance for me, and my artistic vision crystallized. It was at that moment in time that I emerged with a fervent



Pictured top to bottom: "Mil Besos" and "Muñecas" by Heleodoro Heras.

passion to paint the people, places, and events of working peasants and ordinary citizens.

Nurturing mothers, pretty maidens, elderly people and beautiful children began to find their way into my canvases. I was able to savor life as they live it today within the rugged beauty of the land, the villages and the dwellings. I left my job and became a full-time professional artist.

I have been able to stay focused for more than 16 years now, in a career that only very few people are privileged to survive. This independence did not come without initial difficulty or loss.

However, I have seen God's hand in providing, and covering for all my shortcomings.



Heras

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For more information on our cultural fine art collection, visit www.picture-that.com

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The Ambassador Of Chilean Cuisine

The Chilean Food Market made a grand, state-side splash at the home of Chilean Ambassador Mariano Fernández earlier this year. Photo by Regina Azevedo.

We're not kidding. Mariano Fernández really is the Chilean Ambassador to the United States. Not only is he a distinguished statesman, serving prior posts in Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, like many of the people who find themselves profiled in *Unity*, he is an unabashed foodie.

Earlier this year, before the blooming of the capitol's famed cherry trees, he transformed his residence on Massachusetts Avenue into a "Chilean Food Market." It was an elaborate event designed to showcase the enormous variety of Chilean food and beverages imported into the United States. Found in artfully crafted, rustic food stalls were many items well established in the states: Chilean wines, fruits (among them avocados), salmon, and olive oil. Yet the Ambassador took special pride in the products just arriving in America and making their way into the pantries of top chefs: the carica (Chilean papaya), the pisco, the merquén (smoked smashed chili prepared by the native Mapuches), the pulp of lúcumá (completely unknown in the states), raspberries and chirimoyas, southern organic lamb, cheeses, Chilean abalones, prawns, shrimps, mussels, sea urchins, scallops, and king crabs. Delicioso!

Not content to simply display the food, Ambassador Fernández asked his amigo, Chef Guillermo Rodríguez, one of Chile's elite, superstar chefs, to prepare a feast with the items on display. When pressed to explain what makes Chef Guillermo's cooking so special, the Ambassador didn't pause to think about it. "Chef Guillermo has made an important contribution to our culinary heritage. He has updated the Chilean classics to make better and proper use of our indigenous ingredients and shorten preparation times for busy cooks," he said during a phone interview.

Ambassador Fernandez also noted that stews are the heart of Chilean cuisine. "Peru is well known for ceviche, a dish reflective of Japanese immigration to that country. Argentine cuisine is famous for its exquisite and copious use of beef. In Chile, our dishes often originate from Native recipes using maize and their adaptations to the cooking styles of Spanish conquistadors," he says. "The result is a rich tradition of stewed meats and vegetables."



Pictured left to right: Eduardo Santos, Agriculture Attache at the Embassy of Chile; Chilean superstar chef Guillermo Rodríguez; Chilean Ambassador Mariano Fernández; Marta Bonet, from the Chilean Embassy economic team; and sous chef Axel Manríquez. Photo by Regina Azevedo.

Turkey Tonnato With Potatoes and String Beans

From the cookbook *Sabores de Chile*.
Serves 6

For the turkey:

- 6 cups chicken stock
- Salt and pepper
- 1 turkey breast including bones and skin

For the tuna sauce:

- 1 can tuna (8 ½ oz./260g) in olive oil
- 3 large anchovy fillets
- ¾ cups of mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3-4 tablespoons lemon juice

Garnishes:

- 1/2 pound pared, fresh string beans, (if frozen, defrosted)
- 1 pound small potatoes, peeled and in quarters
- 2 tablespoons capers, to sprinkle
- 1/2 cup black olives, pitted and quartered, to sprinkle
- Fresh basil in julienne strips, to sprinkle

To prepare turkey, pour the stock and 1 quart of cold water into a large saucepan. Allow to boil over medium heat for several minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste and then place the turkey in the saucepan. Reduce the heat and simmer over low heat for 1 1/2 hours or until clear liquid comes out of the turkey when pricked with a knife. In the process, skim off and discard the froth and surface solids with a slotted spoon. Remove from the heat and allow to cool in the saucepan for 30 minutes. Remove the turkey from the saucepan and place on a cutting board.

In the meantime, prepare the tuna sauce. In a food processor place the tuna, anchovies, mayonnaise, oil, lemon juice and 1 tablespoon of cold water and process until the mixture is soft and creamy. Set aside in a bowl.

Boil the stock again, add the string beans and cook for 3 minutes. Drain the string beans and set aside. Add the potatoes to the stock and cook for 10 minutes then drain and set the potatoes aside. Keep or freeze the stock for other uses.

With a sharp knife cut the turkey in thin slices. Cover a serving platter with the prepared string beans, place the potatoes on top and also a few tablespoons of tuna sauce. Cover the vegetables with slices of turkey and sprinkle with capers, olives and basil on top. Serve the remaining tuna sauce in a sauce boat.



Chef Douglas Rodriguez

The Godfather of Nuevo Latino Cuisine

Chef Douglas Rodriguez has always been known as something of a maverick - a mover and shaker in the world of avant garde cuisine. Just before the Y2K hysteria, *Newsweek* selected him as one of the 100 Americans that will influence the coming millennium. *People* magazine noted him as the superchef who makes Latin food haute, haute, haute. And it's true: Rodriguez's culinary creativity has made an indelible mark on the upscale image of Latino food in America. You can see this for yourself should you visit one of his restaurants in Miami, Philadelphia, Arizona, or the most recent opening of De La Costa in Chicago which received three stars by the *Chicago Tribune*.

Rodriguez, a James Beard Award winner, is a son of Cuban immigrants and was raised in Miami, where the sights, smells, and tastes of Cuban/American cuisine fueled his passion for food. By the age of 13, he already had a collection of cookbooks, pots and pans, and was developing original recipe concepts. At 14, he landed his first restaurant job as a summer apprentice, and later, he chose to attend Johnson and Wales University in Providence, R.I., where he honed his skills and techniques.

Returning to Miami after his graduation, Rodriguez soon opened Yuca, an upscale Cuban style restaurant in Coral Gables, Fla. Yuca was a success, and at age 24, Rodriguez was a celebrated Miami chef, winning the "Chef of the Year, Miami" award from The Chefs of America and receiving his first and second "Rising Chef of the Year" nominations by The James Beard Foundation. While Yuca served distinctly Cuban cuisine, Rodriguez constantly studied new flavors, ingredients and ideas, and his passion for preparing fine food sent him back north to New York City.

Rodriguez became the executive chef and co-owner of the phenomenally successful Patria, which opened in 1994 in New York City. It was the laboratory for his new cuisine, which he called "Nuevo Latino." Patria received a three-star review in *The New York Times* and accolades from *The New Yorker* and *Gourmet* among others. After Patria, Rodriguez opened Chicama, a Peruvian Ceviche bar that earned two stars in *The New York Times* followed by Pipa, a Tapas bar that became one of the favorite spots for New Yorkers. Hence Rodriguez has earned the nickname, "the Godfather of Nuevo Latino Cuisine."

Ceviche is one of Rodriguez's main culinary contributions, and you can find many of his recipes in *The Great Ceviche Book* published by Ten Speed Press.

Rodriguez is a pioneer in creating exciting ceviches. Pictured right: Salmon Ceviche with Horseradish Cream



On the line at DeLa Costa in Chicago



Salmon Ceviche with Horseradish Cream

By Douglas Rodriguez. Serves 6.

For the sage salt:

2 tablespoons kosher salt
12 sage leaves
Oil for frying

For the horseradish cream:

2 cups heavy cream
2 ounces prepared horseradish, squeezed to remove the liquid
Juice of 1 orange
Juice of 1 lemon
Kosher salt to taste

For the ceviche:

24 ounces fresh skinless, boneless salmon, thinly sliced
Kosher salt to taste
Juice of 1 lime
1 scallion, thinly sliced on a bias
¼ bunch chives cut into ½ inch batons
1 Granny Smith apple sliced thinly on a mandolin
¼ red onion, shaved thinly on a mandolin
2 tablespoons mustard oil

For the sage salt, heat the oil to 375 degrees using a candy thermometer. Remove the stems from the sage leaves and drop the sage into the oil. When the rapid bubbling slows down after a minute or so, remove the sage leaves and dry on paper towels. Grind the fried sage leaves in a food processor or spice grinder (coffee mill), and then add the kosher salt and pulse once or twice. Let dry at least 2 hours at room temperature.

For the horseradish cream, add the squeezed horseradish to the cream and reduce by half over medium heat. Cool completely, add the orange and lemon juice, season with salt, and blend in a blender until creamy and frothy. Keep chilled until ready for use.

For the ceviche, toss the salmon with the salt and let the salt dissolve into the salmon before tossing in the lime juice and mustard oil. Let rest for 1 minute to let the lime juice cure the salmon and let the salmon become pale.

Take 75 percent of the apple slices and cut into batons, reserving the other 25 percent for garnish. Toss in the apple batons, scallions, red onion, and chives.

Place the ceviche on the plates and garnish with dollops of the horseradish cream. Garnish with remaining slices of apple slices and serve with the sage salt on the side.



Lorena Ochoa at the 2007 Ginn Open. Photo by Doug Benc/Getty Images, courtesy of the LPGA.

Ochoa Tops LPGA World Rankings

Lorena Ochoa brings new meaning to the phrase “the complete package.” The 2006 Rolex Player of the Year continues to wow the crowd with her charismatic personality and outstanding performance. Earlier this year, she broke Annika Sorenstam’s grip on the top spot in the world rankings and, as of this writing, is the top money earner on the LPGA.

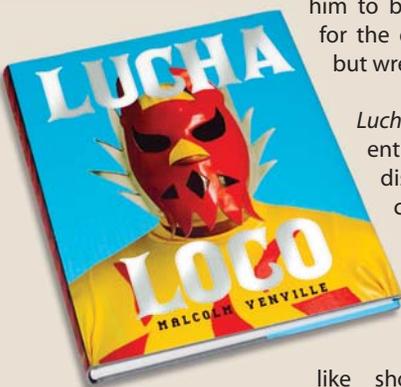
A 23-year-old native of Mexico, Ochoa went pro in 2002 after a dominant two-year college career at the University of Arizona. In fact, she never finished a college event more than three shots out of the lead during her career, and her average margin of victory during her eight-win sophomore season was five strokes. She finished first on the Futures Tour Money List to earn exempt status for the 2003 LPGA Tour.

During her first year on the LPGA Tour, Lorena recorded two second-place finishes and three third-place finishes. She missed only one cut in 24 starts and earned more than \$820,000 in winnings to finish ninth on the money list, the highest finish by a non-winner during the 2003 season. Most notably, Lorena won the Tour’s 2003 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year award by a landslide. Back home, her success fueled her country’s interest in golf, and two new Mexico events were added to the LPGA schedule in 2005.

Lorena is also an adventure-seeker, as seen by her successful completion of ecothons, triathlons and mountain climbing expeditions. And, fortunately for her fans, she embraces the notion of being a role model and is dedicated to giving back to those less fortunate. Lorena raises money for underprivileged children to attend La Barranca, a school in a small town near Guadalajara. She hosts two annual tournaments, one to raise scholarship money for the school and another to raise money for juvenile diabetes in Mexico.

Los Luchadores

In the introduction to *Lucha Loco*, Mexican poet, novelist, and literary critic Sandro Cohen, astute to the book’s ironic imagery, observes of one wrestler: “El Solar, strangely, found it necessary to confess that he once wanted to be a lawyer, and in Mexico that still means fighting for the little guy. Real life didn’t allow him to be an avenger for the downtrodden, but wrestling did.”



Lucha Loco is an entrancing visual display that captures the essence of the luchadores — Mexico’s masked, gladiator-

like showmen who apply their wrestling skills to the delight of ardent fans. The book was produced by acclaimed photographer Malcolm Venville. The life of a luchadore is two-fold. By day

they are butchers, salesmen, and accountants, but when evening falls they don elaborate costumes and masks to reenact the timeless battle of good vs. evil. It is an honorable and romantic sport that served as the storyline for Jack Black’s surprisingly touching movie, *Nacho Libre* and Warner Brother’s hit cartoon series, *Mucha Lucha*.

Remarked Venville of the book, “*Lucha Loco* represents something that is missing from life in the western world since the disappearance of the circus and vaudeville. There is poetry in its vibrant and expressive style.” The expression of deep emotions through style is something that has always intrigued Venville: A child of profoundly deaf parents, he is fascinated with unspoken language. He was immediately drawn to the still countenance of the luchadore mask that obscures a powerful, personal story.

More than 100 luchadores are included. Detailed color photos introduce the figure, the name reveals the character, and a quote reveals the mind behind the mask. *Lucha Loco* is bilingual and a preview of the featured fighters is available at www.luchaloco.com.



Rayo de Jansco

Kids ages five to 75 can create their own luchadores and have matches online at www2.warnerbros.com/lucha/home.html

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