

Celebrating Food, Art & Culture

The Spanish Harlem Orchestra

Do You Zumba?

The 9 Latin Superfoods  
You Need to Know

Health Hero  
Dr. Richard Carmona

Ancient Waterways of New Mexico

In the Kitchen With  
Chef Lorena Garcia



EDITION NO. 34

This Publication Brought To You By:  
Thompson Hospitality  
Compass Group



## Health Hero

Dr. Richard Carmona may be the CEO and vice chair of Canyon Ranch, a luxury wellness resort and spa company, but that doesn't mean his work is all about the rich and famous. As president of the Canyon Ranch Institute, the company's nonprofit arm, Carmona fulfills the organization's mission to "give back" to underserved communities and eliminate health disparities among income earners at both ends of the scale. It is also a personal mission he has pursued throughout his career, most notably as the 17th surgeon general of the United States. At the Canyon Ranch Institute, he creates partnerships with other health-focused organizations to raise awareness of public health challenges.

As an example of Carmona's leadership, the institute is working with the Urban Health Plan in the South Bronx to establish a program that incorporates Canyon Ranch's best health practices in a federally qualified community health center. Focusing on disease prevention and an integrative approach to wellness, the goal is to measurably change the health of one of the nation's poorest communities. He has also established the Surgeons General Collective, a circle of the six living past U.S. surgeons general who apply their knowledge to improving the health, security and safety of all Americans. In a partnership that includes the Lance Armstrong Foundation, the Surgeons General Collective announced its first initiative in early 2008: a call to create a national cancer strategy that improves access to care and focuses on prevention and survivorship. And there is the

Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, the Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition for the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, and the STOP Obesity Alliance, all organizations Carmona chairs directly or through committee.

Surprisingly, Carmona's career path to Canyon Ranch reads like more like an adventure novel than a standard clinical resume. It illustrates that there are many ways to live the American Dream. As a self-described "poor child, whose family sometimes had to stand in line at public hospitals not knowing how we would pay the doctor's bill," Carmona grew up in Harlem as the first-born in a large Puerto Rican family. As a youth, he experienced homelessness, hunger and the health consequences endemic to being poor. These early experiences made him keenly aware of the relationships between culture, health, education and economic status.

Carmona dropped out of high school in 1967 and joined the Army, where he did a tour of Vietnam as a U.S. Army Special Forces medic and weapons specialist. He received two Purple Hearts. Returning home with an Army GED, Carmona attended Bronx Community College and continued his education in California and Arizona, becoming a registered nurse, police officer and SWAT team leader, surgeon, CEO of a public hospital and health system, and a professor at the University of Arizona.

As a member of the SWAT team in Arizona in 1992, he made a dramatic cliff-side rescue by hanging out of a helicopter on a lifeline and harnessing the victim to himself before the chopper rose one-and-a-half miles to fly them



Dr. Richard Carmona, CEO of Canyon Ranch

both to safety.

In addition to two Purple Hearts, Carmona has received the Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, National SWAT Officer of the Year and the National "Top Cop" Award presented at the White House in 2000 — all before President Bush appointed him as U.S. surgeon general in 2002.

When his positions with Canyon Ranch were announced, Carmona expressed the belief that continues to carve his course in public health: "We must change from being disease-oriented to being health-oriented, and focus attention on preventing health problems, not fixing them after they've happened."

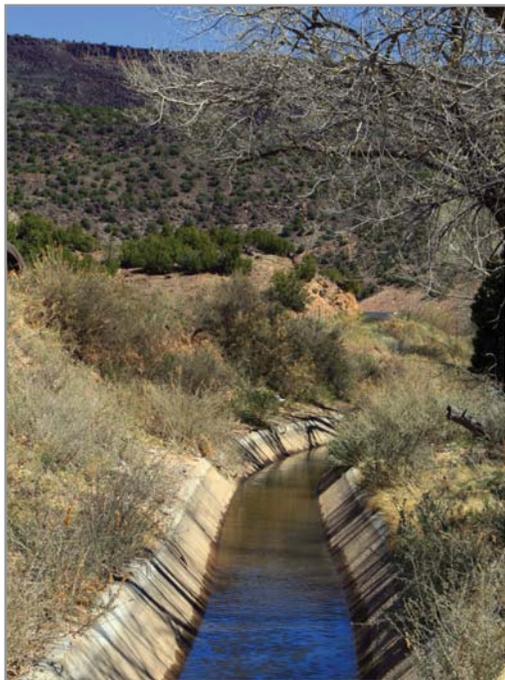
## Culture in the Ditches

Whether in the rolling crashes of the ocean or the steady lapping of a lakeshore, water creates deep connections between places, times and people. Along the acequias (ah-say-kee-as) of New Mexico, it's easy to feel history's tug and see the reflection of generations who have relied on these ditches' gentle waters. When Spanish explorers arrived in the Southwest in the 16th century, they discovered working irrigation systems built by the Pueblo Indians — acequias that resembled those built in Spain by the Moors centuries before. The channels followed the contours of the land, winding around trees, large boulders and hills, working with the force of gravity. With their horses and metal tools, the Spanish built more ditches to sustain their crops and their progeny for centuries to come. The acequias also created communities. They were often dug before the houses, churches and other buildings were finished, so important was the water to the community's success. Associations

were formed that would govern the use of water, and these associations formed the backbone of rural community life.

Hundreds of these waterways, which at one time stretched from Texas to California, still survive in New Mexico, providing an ancestral link to all the families who have farmed this same land for centuries. And the institutions of water management still survive: Acequia associations, comprising the "parciantes," or water-rights holders, and headed by a "mayordomo," continue to determine the allocation and distribution of water among members.

The latest generations have joined together to clear roots, grass, accumulated silt and other debris from temporarily dried ditches, and they have worked to rebuild the banks — just as their parents, grandparents and historic forebears did for ages before them. And in caring for the acequias, these families uphold and preserve their link to one another.



## Hot Salsa

Somehow, the music of Spanish Harlem Orchestra is felt more than actually heard, a discovery ardent fans might find amusing. While it is a delicacy for the ears, the hypnotic throb of steamy, rich percussions layered with precisely synchronized, swinging horns grabs the body's pulse and steers it through a searing dance lesson.

It's impossible to do, but if you could close your eyes while listening to this band, the sweaty heat of a 1960s summer pavement in New York City's El Barrio would curl up your legs, you'd hear the gusto of a Latin big band teasing the air outside a window, and from there the dancing would be inevitable. But, as we said, you can't close your eyes, because it's the music's overwhelming brightness that makes it so addictive.

"Our music style is the original sound of New York old school 'salsa dura' (heavy salsa) that was played in the early years by our pioneers," says bandleader Oscar Hernández. Those pioneers have names like Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Ruben Blades and Willie Colón, all of whom made club patrons jump with tropical big band Latin music in Spanish Harlem, also known as "El Barrio" and "East Harlem," during the '60s and '70s.

"It is beautiful music, there's no doubt about it," continues Hernandez, "It's Afro-Cuban music, but it developed in its own unique way in New York and Puerto Rico. What makes it so unique, hypnotizing and appealing in terms of a sound is what we try to bring to the forefront."

What the Spanish Harlem Orchestra brings to the forefront is unity. The 13-member ensemble reads like an all-star team of Latin music heavy hitters, so the band's appeal extends far beyond a single starring singer or player: "With SHO, everybody gets featured. You see a flute solo, you see a percussion solo, you see a piano solo, you see horns soloing throughout the course of the evening besides the three singers up front and the chemistry

that they have," says Hernandez. "It's not a bunch of flyweights who took on this name; we're the real deal."

That real deal creates more than just intensely hip and elegant get-up-and-move music; it's also garnered critical acclaim: All three of the 8-year-old band's CDs are Grammy nominees. The second album, "Across 110th Street," stole the prize for Best Salsa/Merengue Album right out from under the likes of Marc Anthony in 2005. And released last year, the latest collection, "United We Swing," features Paul Simon on the last track, crooning a lovely Latinized version of his own "Late in the Evening." Perhaps an even greater indication that the group has arrived is that "Sacala Bailar," the fifth song from the latest album, was chosen last fall as a Starbucks' Song of the Day.

SHO's touring brings the intense heat of salsa around the world, to appreciative audiences as far away as Japan and Hong Kong.

"We always go out there and leave our hearts on the stage," explains Hernandez. "I think people sense that. As long as you do that, people will appreciate what you're doing."



## Oscar, Junot and the Pulitzer

Oscar Wao is many things: He's a 300-plus-pound Dominican immigrant kid growing up in New Jersey; he's a boy obsessed with women, science fiction, fantasy and a curse that has plagued his family for generations; he's also a sad, smart and lovable nerd. Wao is the creation of writer Junot Diaz, a Dominican who immigrated to New Jersey at the age of 6. Wao's intense and aching story is the vehicle that earned Diaz the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, the Sargent First Novel Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award for Best Novel of 2007, and selection by Time and New York magazines as the best novel of 2007.

"The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao" (Riverhead) burst on the literary scene exactly one year ago this month, to irrepressible critical acclaim. Esquire magazine raved that it is "unruly, manic, seductive ... In Diaz's landscape, we are all the same, victims of a history and a present that don't just bleed together but stew. Often in hilarity. Mostly in heartbreak."

More than a decade ago, Diaz presented his debut book, "Drown," a compendium of 10 tales about the emotional lives of Dominican teens living in the struggling communities of the Dominican Republic, New York and New Jersey. "Drown" became a national best seller and earned Diaz a PEN/Malamud Award. It has since grown into a landmark of contemporary literature. "The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao" is now available in paperback.

### 'Tarnished Beauty'

Shunned by her community, Jamilet is a beautiful young Mexican woman whose body is marred by a shockingly gruesome birthmark. She has the face of an angel, but the people of her town believe she carries the mark of the devil. "Tarnished Beauty," by Cecilia Samartin, follows Jamilet's

journey as she crosses the border to find work in a Los Angeles mental hospital, saving every penny for the surgery needed to remove the mark she despises. It is only after making an unlikely connection with one of her disagreeable patients that she learns the true meaning of beauty. The Association of American Publishers' Publishing Latino Voices for America Task Force chose "Tarnished Beauty" for its Latino Recommended Reading List, and Kirkus Reviews awarded the book its prestigious star of merit.

### 'Brida'

With sales of more than 85 million books in 63 languages worldwide, Brazilian Paulo Coelho is one of the world's most beloved and prolific writers of mystery and spirituality. "Brida," one of his early novels, is now available for the first time in English. The book chronicles the quest of Brida O'Fern, a lovely young Irish girl who seeks knowledge and understanding of the world's magic and receives many unexpected gifts from her mentors along the way.



Junot Diaz during a radio interview



“Los Niños de Che Guevara” by Dwight Baird

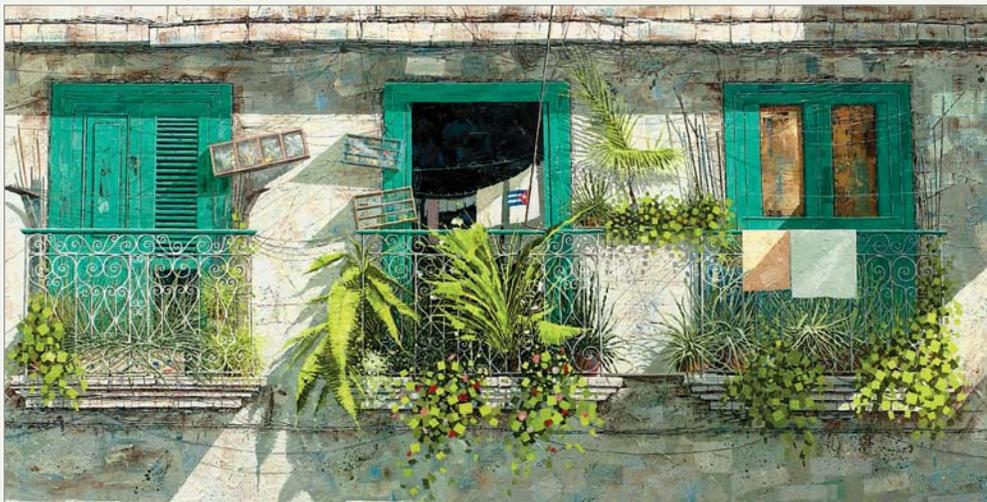
## Connecting Cultures

Radiant beams of light, colors and reflection are common threads in this exhibition that showcases the work of three contemporary artists. Each artist has mastered the use of these energetic elements in a unique and artistically skillful fashion. Another common thread that the artists share is how, despite their cultural differences, they commonly explore questions about the Latin American identity through their own life experiences. In fact, these artists of Canadian, American and Guatemalan descent are very much a part of the growing conversation about contemporary Latino art. The themes and issues they explore highlight everyday life across borders that are cultural, geographical and personal. In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, we pay tribute to the artistic contributions that Dwight Baird, Robin Maria Pedrero and Juan Jose Rodriguez have made. They beautifully illuminate the Latin culture by applying brush to canvas, while incorporating light, colors and reflection.

### Dwight Baird

“What excites me is finding beauty in places where no one even thinks to look, and then throwing it out there for others to see,” says Canadian Dwight Baird. After finishing art school, Baird spent two years as a graphic artist, and has enjoyed traveling and painting full time ever since. He spent two years in Europe before returning to Canada, working with galleries and promoting his art. In 1993 he published selected images from “The Baseball Collection,” a series of 50 baseball paintings. His work was featured in the 1992 MLB All-Star Program, and his signature piece, “At the Twilight’s Last Gleaming,” was used as the cover concept for the program in 1994.

“Sol a Las Tres” by Dwight Baird



During the past eight years, Baird has been chasing beauty in the callous barrios of “La Habana Vieja,” or Old Havana, alighting upon scenes that capture the soul of the historic city’s colonial core, and recording them in acrylic. “I’m trying to capture the end of a unique time in a country on the verge of change. Eventually, Cuba will no longer be the place it is now. Then these paintings will become an historical documentation of a distinctive time in a very special country.”

Baird’s style of contemporary realism often juxtaposes specific detail against larger backgrounds. He offers us a peek through the keyhole at a country stopped in time but desperate for change. From sun-splashed balconies, down winding streets and through mysterious doorways, he captures the light and soul of a vibrant city and country stranded in the past, and hoping for the future.

On this month’s cover is “Cuba Campeon,” a painting that depicts a young Cuban stickball player hitting a crushed Coke can thrown by his friend. “It seemed as though I was walking the streets endlessly, when I turned a corner and there he was. It was one of those moments when you know you have something really out of the ordinary. A stickball player — but with a combination of power and grace — and light and shadow — I have rarely seen. He actually looks like a dancer, and I titled the original study for this painting ‘Stickball Ballet.’”

Pictured left is “Los Niños de Che Guevara,” a painting that reflects daily life in Havana ... a mother chats with her neighbors and keeps an eye on her children as they play in the street ... no Nintendos or GameBoys to play with — just a few pieces of wood and an old hammer. “In Havana, people live in very confined spaces with no backyards and few parks, so their lives often overflow through doorways, on stoops and into the streets.”

Pictured below and to the left is “Sol a Las Tres,” or in English, “Sun at Three.” “Nothing complicated here,” explains Baird. “Just three windows in light and shadow. I was struck by the play of light on the balconies, and the plants, flowers, the vibrant colors.”

As in all Latin American countries and cultures, the architecture dating back to the Spanish colonialists is omnipresent. Balconies with intricate ironwork, distinctive doors and windows, tropical plants and the light of the tropics make up the mosaic that reflects not only history, but also life in Latin America today.

### Robin Maria Pedrero

An established award-winning artist, Pedrero began fine art studies as an adolescent in her hometown of Norwich, Conn. Her luminous landscapes and captivating portraits are in many ways a visual journal, reflecting her appreciation



"Hot" by Robin Maria Pedrero

of family and travel. "As Cuba changes," she says, "our family reflects on the hardships and catalysts that brought them to America. I create many pieces of fine art that document aspects of those experiences and stories." Her works are in private and corporate collections nationally and in countries such as Japan, Spain and Scotland. Today, Pedrero works from her home studio in Longwood, Fla., enjoying the company of her dog, Max.

"I respond to what catches my eyes and heart using colors, shapes and lines. I want to capture simple pleasures, like wind in the trees, reflections, and people and places around the world. Color and movement evoke moods of transition, strength and serenity. I use my fingers to blend pastels and sculpt through layering pigment. As I work, the images can be unexpected: Some terrains flow on to the paper from gathered memories to portray ubiquitous scenes, while some works are tangible locations. When I see smaller images like faces, animals and cities within works in progress, sometimes I enhance them to share my perceptions."

Pictured above is "Hot," a painting inspired by flamenco. Flamenco is a Spanish musical and cultural tradition with strong, rhythmic undertones and an impassioned dance style. "I captured flamenco dancer and choreographer Rosa la Huracana fanning and checking herself in the mirror before returning to her audience at Café Tu Tu Tangos in Orlando, Fla. My vision was to capture the flamenco dancer as perspiration illuminated her skin in an image filled with vibrant color, beauty and emotion."

Pictured below is "Epiphany." Flowers and foliage fill Hispanic homes, businesses and yards. Latin cultures are traditionally matriarchal in nature, so mothers occupy a special place of honor every day of the year, but especially on Mother's Day, when gifts often include corsages and flowers.

"Epiphany" by Robin Maria Pedrero



"While drawing orchids I received on Mother's Day, I was inspired to create a painting of a girl smelling the flowers. As I worked, I found these particular orchids had no scent, so I added the rose. My artwork reminds me of aspects of life when simple pleasures such as a scent bring joy and insight — hence the title, 'Epiphany.'"

### Juan Jose Rodriguez

"Fortunately, I started mixing colors and water on paper in childhood, so I believed watercolor was a simple game

of colors. Over many years, the exercise has taught me that this is a difficult and complex phenomenon, but also fascinating, expressive, delicate and, above all ... magical!"

A self-taught artist and native of Cantel, Quetzaltenango, in Guatemala, Rodriguez obtained his first drawing and painting prize at the age of 7. His academic path was long and wound through studies in teaching and architecture, a subject for which he also demonstrated special affinity and talent. As a teen, he entered the Instituto Normal Mixto de Occidente, in San Marcos, where he graduated as a primary teacher. At 25, he founded his first drawing and painting studio. He went on to graduate with advanced studies in architecture from the University of San Carlos de Guatemala, and on scholarship, he traveled to Colombia, Venezuela, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and Ecuador to specialize in housing design and construction with a social focus.

He made the decision to devote himself completely to his painting at the age of 44. These last 28 years as a devoted artist have brought him accolades and exhibitions both in Guatemala and internationally.

About "Sin Titulo," shown below, Rodriguez states, "From this blue-violet space, fragmented forms of red, blue and green travel, symbolizing a fantastic escape through movement; between these forms there are contrasts of color and form that it makes them seem that they emerge in a way that is slightly unreal." Asked to describe "A Ciudad Desconocida," he further elaborates: "Here I've created a spatial vehicle, where someone penetrates an unknown city constructed of strange forms, with fruits and some vestiges of humanity. In the midst of it all, a floating xylophone waits for someone to bring it to life."

Below: "Sin Titulo (Without Title)" and "A Ciudad Desconocida (A Strange/Unknown City)" by Juan Jose Rodriguez



## South American Superfoods

In the lush rain forests of the Amazon basin and the rugged plateaus carved into the Andes, native cultures have feasted on some of the globe's most nutrient-rich treats for thousands of years. As scientists quantify the healthy kick they deliver, exotic foods are showing up on smoothie menus and landing on grocery shelves, while some colorful standbys that have sat patiently in the produce section for years are taking on the title of "superfood."

### Açaí

The açaí (ah-sigh-ah-ee) berry is the tropical fruit scooping up the most attention at the moment — and with good reason. A little larger than a blueberry, this tidbit's antioxidant and vitamin potency is twice as big. A generous share of anthocyanins does more than give the berry its deep amethyst color: These flavonoids can help prevent blood clots, improve circulation, relax blood vessels and prevent atherosclerosis. And as if that's not enough to make this unassuming little fruit "super," each berry is also stuffed with amino acids, essential fatty acids and plant sterols, which protect the immune system. Recent studies indicate that açaí might even fight cancer.



Açaí, perhaps the most powerful superfood, is nearly impossible to find fresh as it grows only in Brazil, but a dried concentrate is available in many markets.

### Quinoa

West of the rain forest, in the high terrain that snakes along the Pacific, the Incas farmed and feasted on quinoa (keen-wah), a gluten-free grain they considered sacred. These ancient people were on to something: Quinoa packs a double helping of protein when compared to other cereal grains, as well as phosphorus, magnesium, iron and an unusually balanced set of essential amino acids.

### Chili Peppers

From Colorado to Peru, archeological evidence suggests that chili peppers have sizzled palates and prevented illness for thousands of years. The spicy heat is generated from capsaicinoids, compounds that also happen to possess powerful anti-inflammatory, analgesic and anti-cancer effects. In addition, peppers come with a generous side order of antioxidant carotenes and flavonoids, not to mention twice the vitamin C found in citrus fruits.

Dr. Manny Alvarez, an obstetrician-gynecologist, is also a big fan of the tongue-tingling peppers' health benefits. So much so, that he included chiles in the seven "Latin powerfoods" he outlines in his book, "The Hot Latin Diet." Alvarez also trumpets the detoxifying and metabolic properties of six other Latin superfoods:

### Tomatillos

These petite green cousins of the tomato burst with flavor and crowd a lot more nutrients into a husk-covered little bundle. A wealthy source of vitamins C and A, folic acid and potassium, tomatillos present a bounty of antioxidants.

### Garbanzo Beans

High in fiber and very low in natural sugars, these little white orbs improve digestive cycles and support the growth of healthy intestinal flora. Their calcium, phosphorus and magnesium contents are high, and they're made mostly of complex carbohydrates and protein, creating a time-release digestive quality that fuels the body with steady energy.

### Avocado

Indulge in this high-fat treat! This buttery fruit is a small suitcase full of potassium, vitamins B, E and K, as well as insoluble fiber. It might seem counterintuitive, but the fats in avocados actually signal the body to burn more fat stores, as well as cut bad cholesterol and lift good cholesterol. These fats also lubricate the intestines, and, with a high-fiber content, lend digestion a hand.

### Garlic

Garlic's a high flyer in the world of cholesterol, long known for lowering the nasty bad type and improving circulation. It's also an immunity workhorse, fighting off the microbes that make us ill.



### Guacamole With Fresh Corn And Chipotle

From Bon Appétit, recipe by Barbara Pool Fenzl

- 2 large ripe avocados (about 1 1/2 pounds), halved, pitted, peeled
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1 ear of fresh corn
- 1 plum tomato, seeded, diced
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 canned chipotle chile, finely chopped\*
- 1/4 cup sour cream

Mash avocados with lime juice in medium bowl. Using sharp knife, remove corn kernels from cob and add to avocado mixture. Stir in tomato and green onions. Combine chipotle and sour cream in small bowl; whisk to blend. Stir cream mixture into avocado mixture. Season with salt. Do ahead: Can be made 4 hours ahead. Place plastic wrap directly onto surface of guacamole and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving.

\*Chipotle chiles are dried, smoked jalapeños canned in adobo sauce. They are available at some supermarkets, at specialty foods stores, and at Latin markets.

### Cinnamon

Used medicinally since ancient times, cinnamon's power to lower blood sugar is garnering more attention in the face of today's escalating levels of diabetes. The spicy sweet seasoning is high in antioxidants and cholesterol-lowering qualities.

### Cilantro

According to Alvarez, the buildup of toxic metals in the body can create a breeding ground for viral infections, but a handful of this pungent green herb in the daily diet accelerates the body's ability to excrete such evils. The seeds of this plant, called coriander, are a long-recognized folk medicine for the relief of anxiety and insomnia.

## From Torts to Tarts

Lorena Garcia had every intention of becoming a paralegal. It was a sensible decision influenced by the fact that her brother was already practicing law. So in 1996, Garcia dutifully completed her studies to become a paralegal. Almost immediately, the newly credentialed graduate of Santa Maria University garnered her first job offer from a law firm. But in a pivotal moment, the Caracas, Venezuela native asked herself two questions:

“What am I gonna do? Am I really gonna do this career?”

Her verdict: No. Case closed. And that’s when Garcia surrendered completely to her unequivocal devotion to cooking, entertaining and all other things culinary.

Lorena Garcia simply had to become a chef.

“I always had that bug inside my head,” the ebullient gastronome explains. From about the age of 7, when she gazed upon a beautiful table her mother had set for a get-together with friends, she wound up being “the one cooking” and picking up cookbooks. “It was something that I always liked to do.”

So off she went in 1996 to Johnson & Wales University in North Miami. Just four years after spurning the field of law, Garcia earned a J&W degree in culinary arts and was free to plunge into a profound, epicurean affair of the heart. She apprenticed as a chef in France, Italy, Japan, Korea, Thailand and China. Then she established Food Café and Elements Tierra, two restaurants in Miami’s Design District that satisfied diners’ yen for Latin and Asian-inspired dishes.

Next came hosting duties on nationally syndicated shows ranging from “Vida Gourmet” on the Gems network to “Sazon con Lorena Garcia” on Utilisima. And she’s now into year three of a deal with Nestle, which entails weekly appearances on the Univision morning show “Despierta America.” Audiences can watch the cheery culinary phenom whip up Latin American dishes on that program.

In February 2008, Garcia inked a deal with California’s Baywood Cellars winery and launched her own wine varietals.

“I wanted to have a wine that was good enough to drink and to cook with at the same time. I wanted to create something that was made for cooking but at the same time you could enjoy with your food,” she says.

A month after the debut of her wine varietals, North Carolina retailer Belk Inc., added Garcia’s line of cookware, dinnerware, flatware and bedding to its merchandise roster. “That was my dream come true,” says Garcia about the LG Lorena Garcia product line.

The thirtysomething entrepreneur has channeled all of this business acumen and her exceptional culinary skills into yet another venture, a program called Big Chef, Little Chef. The 4-year-old initiative allows her to address a problem she says is rampant among young people.

“Through my travels, through connecting with the public,” she has witnessed “the obesity problem” in the Latin community. Garcia has four nephews she says were obese when they were younger and nearly became diabetics. “I needed to do something about it. I started cooking with them,” she says. “It’s always a problem that is very dear to me.” Through the program, she spends a few hours cooking with and instructing young people and their parents in settings ranging from schools to Boy Scout meetings.

The consummate host and cook, Garcia relishes feeding friends in Miami. She especially loves preparing food on the grill. “I’m very much an outside person and I do a lot of (cooking) on it (the grill),” she says. No food item is inappropriate for grilling, including eggs Benedict on a puffed pastry, which Garcia recently whipped up.

When Garcia and her friends get together, talk often turns to going out to eat. But everyone knows what is likely to happen:

Chef Lorena Garcia will happily cook for them. Case closed.



Chef Lorena Garcia



### Salmon on Plantain Cake

- 4 7-ounce salmon filets
- ¼ cup white wine
- ¼ cup vegetable stock

#### For the Truffle Butter:

- 1 pound butter
- 1 cup black truffle oil
- 2 tablespoons sliced black truffles

#### For the Lentil Salad:

- 1 cup black lentils
- 2 cups water
- ¼ cup green peppers slices
- ¼ cup red onions slices
- ¼ cup red peppers slices
- ¼ cup yellow pepper slices
- 3 tablespoons cilantro
- 2 each lime and lemon
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

#### Plantain Cake:

- 1 each plantain, ripen and sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt and pepper

Place the butter, truffle and oil in a food processor, mix until well combined, roll into a cylinder shape and wrap with plastic film. Place in the freezer, cut a slice of the butter and place on top of the salmon.

Season the salmon with salt and pepper, place the filets in a high-heat sauté pan until golden brown on both sides, add the wine and stock, and let reduced until salmon is ready. Set aside.

Place the black lentils in boiling water, cook until “al dente consistency.” Let cool. Add the remaining ingredients for the salad into the lentils, mix well and set aside.

Place the plantain slices on a cooking sheet, drizzle with the olive oil, salt and pepper, and cook for 20 minutes in a 350-degree oven until golden brown.

Place the plantains on the bottom of the plate, top with lentils then the salmon. Add the butter right on top so it will melt, and serve.

## Go, Milka, Go!

Milka Duno's life took a hairpin turn a decade ago when she was bitten by a Porsche. On a lark, Duno accepted the invitation of friends to burn a little rubber at a Porsche Driving Clinic, and the momentum was more than she bargained for. The speed quickened her pulse and the precision physics tickled her brain, and Duno, a Venezuelan engineer, let her naval career coast to the checkered flag.

Most professional race-car drivers get their careers on track long before their mid-20s. Switching gears this late in life can be intimidating — especially if you've poured every bit of yourself into academics. Duno is more than a racing anomaly: She's acutely intelligent. She holds four master's degrees and is an incredibly driven achiever. A native of Caracas, she won a scholarship to study naval engineering in Spain, where she earned three of her four degrees simultaneously.

Yet once Duno turned her steely discipline on racing, there was no stopping. She raced in amateur events in her native country to master basic skills, but when the winning came so quickly, she moved to the U.S. to race with the big boys. Since turning pro, she's become the first woman in history to win a major international sports-car race in North America, capturing the overall win at the Grand Prix of Miami in 2004. She also holds the highest finish for a female driver at the 24 Hours of Daytona. On the Indy-car circuit in 2007, she's learning the ropes and holding her own. Despite a brush with another car that landed her on the apron at this year's Indy 500, she finished the race in 19th place.

Duno's verve has won her opportunities outside of racing. Fans were thrilled at her acting debut as Kellie Gearbox in this year's Warner Bros. movie "Speed Racer." The film release closely followed the publication of a bilingual children's book called "Go, Milka, Go!" in which a cartoon race-car driver named Milka emphasizes the importance of education. To learn more about Duno, zip to her site at [www.milkaduno.com](http://www.milkaduno.com).



## Cardio Conversion

I did not want to Zumba (zoom-buh). I really, really didn't. But, there's no way I could write about this Latin-dance fitness craze without giving it a try. So off to the YMCA I went. Kathy, the Zumba instructor, and I chatted a little before class. She has five kids at home, and you could bounce a quarter off her abs. Suddenly I was quite curious about Zumba.

"Zumba's all about shakin' it. I want to see the flab fly!" Kathy announced to an all-female class of assorted ages and skin tones. I couldn't help but smile. The pulsating music started, and we began with an energetic salsa side to side, and up and down. Five minutes in, I was surprised at how quickly my shins and calves began to burn. But the music was seeping into my skin, and gradually, my hips no longer needed instruction — they were operating fully of their own accord. The footwork was not as complicated as I imagined, and halfway through class, I caught myself shaking it like nothin's been shaken in a while. I get why Zumba is a global phenomenon: It's a heck of a lot of fun.

The beginnings of Zumba are nearly as unexpected as my enjoyment of it. Born in a Colombian fitness facility, Zumba, like so many of life's good things, was stumbled upon by accident. Sixteen-year-old aerobics instructor Alberto "Beto" Perez went to class one fateful day without his music, so he grabbed a few traditional Latin salsa and merengue tunes from his car. Challenging as it was to improvise a whole class on the spot using nontraditional aerobics music, Perez cha-chaed, mamboed and just flat-out boogied his way through, and the class became the favorite at his fitness facility. Perez realized that by mixing slow and fast rhythms, he could create an interval-training workout that raised and lowered the heart rate for maximum fat burning and total body toning. The Zumba (Spanish slang for "to move fast and have fun") phenomenon had begun.

Perez danced his way to Miami, where Zumba caught fire in the local fitness clubs. Envisioning a bigger retinue for his foundling, Perez joined forces with two businessmen who had grown up together in Colombia, Alberto Perlman and Alberto Aghion, to create Zumba® Fitness. The trio recognized the marketing potential that an infomercial might hold for Zumba, and came up with an ingenious promotional concept to fund the production: They sold 200 tickets to a Zumba class on a Miami beach at \$20 a person.

"The night before, we stayed up all night hammering wood planks to create the platform on which the class would be taught," Perlman laughs. The infomercial sold \$20 million worth of DVDs in six months. People from all over dialed up Zumba, asking how they could rock their own fitness clubs with classes, so the burgeoning company launched an educational division. By 2007, Zumba® Fitness hosted more than 200 instructor-training workshops around the world.

Today, nearly 1 million people take Zumba classes weekly with 12,000 trained instructors in 35 countries. Many more are dancing at home to more than 3 million DVDs sold worldwide. Family classes are sprouting up for parents and kids to get down and get fit together. "I feel like Forrest Gump," says Perez. "You know how in the movie, Forrest Gump started running and people started following him? Well, I feel like I started dancing and people started following me."

*Unity* is a celebration of the food, art and culture of diverse communities throughout North America. Published seven times per year, its stories are positive, inspiring and offer new perspectives on America's changing culture. *Unity* is exclusively distributed to clients of Thompson Hospitality and Compass Group, both leaders in foodservice who are proud to serve you. For more information about *Unity*, or to offer feedback or suggest story ideas, send an e-mail to [unity@thompsonhospitality.com](mailto:unity@thompsonhospitality.com).

© 2008 Thompson Hospitality and Compass Group. Produced by Philatás Marketing Group, [www.philatlas.com](http://www.philatlas.com).

This Publication Brought To You By:

