



A Cultural Publication for Puerto Ricans

From the editor . . .



Tuesday, June 14, 2011 - SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Wooing Hispanic voters back home, President Barack Obama kept his campaign pledge to become the first president since John F. Kennedy to make an official visit to this recession-battered U.S. territory. "The aspirations and the struggles on this island mirror those across America," Obama declared Tuesday.

On a sweltering day, thousands crowded the main roads and waved flags as Obama's motorcade roared by. A huge banner filled eight stories of a building, featuring the images of Kennedy and Obama. "We are proud to be part of history," it said.

Que bonita bandera!

Siempre Boricua, Ivonne Figueroa

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Revelers flooded Fifth Avenue in New York on Sunday, June 12th for the 54th annual Puerto Rican Day Parade. Fifth Avenue exploded with rhythm Sunday for the 54 annual Puerto Rican Day Parade. Nearly two million spectators lined the street as 80,000 participants marched down the parade route. It's all part of a weekend long celebration of Puerto Rican heritage and culture. On hand were proud Puerto Rican bystanders as well as costumed dancers, marching bands, floats, flags and the usual colorful cast that comes with all NYC parades. John Leguizamo was named the global ambassador to the arts for the parade. The Puerto Rican day parade has been an annual event in New York City since 1958.



EL BORICUA is a monthly cultural publication, established in 1995, that is Puerto Rican owned and operated. We are NOT sponsored by any club or organization. Our goal is to present and promote our "treasure" which is our Cultural Identity - "the Puerto Rican experience." EL BORICUA is presented in English and is dedicated to the descendants of Puerto Ricans wherever they may be.

C R E D I T S

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Staff

Ivonne Figueroa

Executive Editor & Gen. Mgr.

Javier Figueroa

Publisher

Anna María Vélez de Blas, Chef
Recipe Tester and Writer

Jaime Garibay Rivera, PhD
Jaime in the Kitchen, Food Blog

Guillermo 'Don Guillo' Andares, PhD
Gardening Tips for Puerto Ricans

Alberto González

Music Reviews

Elena Cintrón Colón

Primos Editor

Diego Matos Dupree
Tavernero

Joe Román Santos
Editor

Lisa Santiago Brochu, Chef
Restaurant Reviews

Luisa Yaliz Alaniz Cintrón, MD
Guest Writer

Support Staff

Fernando Alemán Jr - Web Consultant

José Rubén de Castro -Photo Editor

María Yisel Mateo Ortiz -Development

Special Thanks to . . .

Tayna Miranda Zayas of
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George Collazo -PhotosofPuertoRico.com

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Visit Puerto Rico
Joe Roman Santos, Editor

In Puerto Rico, each town celebrates its *fiestas patronales* or patron saint festivals, in honor of the town’s patron saint. The festivities include religious processions, booths selling local foods and arts and crafts, cultural events, and a variety of performances. Although the processions originated as Catholic rites, they are imbued with African traditions, indigenous (Taíno) elements, and many other cultural details that have been woven in throughout years of social and historical transformations.

In July the town of Loíza celebrates their patron saint, Santiago Apóstol (St James). The actual saint holiday is July 25th and I will be there for sure. This festival includes the three processions, *correr el santo*, and the traditional carnival characters— *caballeros* (knights or gentlemen), *vejigantes* (demon-tricksters), *locas* (cross-dressed crazy women with blackened faces), and *viejos* (old men, sometimes called *locos*). There’s a lot of food and music and a lot of street dancing. I love to madrugarme allí.

Other towns in Puerto Rico— Aibonito, Fajardo, Guánica, and Santa Isabel— share the same patron saint, but Loiza Aldea’s Fiestas de Santiago have become renowned on the island and beyond and are very heavily attended. It blends folk and religious ceremonies including costumes, colorful masks, floats, drumming, and *bomba* and *plena* dancing.

Joe is a schoolteacher in Houston and spends most of his holidays and summers in Puerto Rico.



Island Festival Trivia . . .

- *There are 3 mask festivals in PR where costumes are used; Loiza, Ponce and Hatillo.
- *The Caribbean's largest beach festival is held in the summer in Manati.
- *Each Patron Saint festival lasts 10 days.
- *Aside from Patron Saint festivals there are many more including, Noche de San Juan.

If you don't know what " Hay bendito !" is, you are not from Puerto Rico.

Speaking Puerto Rican . . .

Empache – A digestive disorder which occurs after the consumption of a large Puerto Rican meal.

Refrán . . .

Es mejor precaver que tener que remediar.

Trivia

Of the seventy-eight Patron Saint Festivals in Puerto Rico, one for each municipio or town, Loíza’s fiestas patronales de Santiago Apóstol are the best known and attended in the island, the most ‘searched’ festival on the internet, and the one that has the most articles written about.



http://www.elboricua.com/CCNOW_Calderos.html

BORICUA . . .
is a powerful word.
It is our history,
it is our cultural affirmation,
it is a declaration,
it is a term of endearment,
it is poetic . . .
. it is us.

Tainos

The Taíno believed everything in the universe is interconnected and spiritually alive.

They viewed the Earth as a flat disk suspended between the cosmos above and the watery underworld below. The realms are connected by a supernatural shaft rising from the bottom of the underworld, passing through a hole in the center of the Earth and extending upward to the heavens.

The souls of the dead lived in the otherworld. They are ruled by the Zemi Maquetaurie Guayaba, Lord of the Land of the Dead. The Zemis of the underworld are often made in the form of night flying creatures, such as bats or owls.

The dead were usually buried in caves, and on occasion the head and certain bones were placed in a pottery bowl. Anthropologists have found such burial remnants to be some of the finest pottery and best-preserved skulls.

The Taínos believed in life after death, which led them to take extreme care in burying their dead. Personal belongings of the deceased were placed in the cave/tomb with the newly dead, and bodies were carefully arranged in a squatting position.



My name is Kita Santos

I live in Trenton, New Jersey with my new family. My new Mom is Rosie and she is pregnant with a set of twin pups. She is busy buying two of everything, cribs, strollers and more. It is my job to take care and watch over my big brother Raul who just turned 6 and will go to school in August. I love my family and they love me.

I have other friends in PR that also need to find a home.

<http://www.saveasato.org>

Boricua Calendar

- July 3, 1935 b. Cheo Feliciano, musician
- July 4, 1943 b. Gerardo Rivera, Lawyer and TV personality
- July 9, 1909 b. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia was a founder and first president of the Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño. Born in Vega Alta Concepción received several degrees in Puerto Rico and the US. He died in San Juan on March 15, 1968.
- July 17, 1859 b. Luis Muñoz Rivera, poet, speaker, journalist, politician, head of the pro-statehood Liberal Party. Muñoz Rivera served as Resident Commissioner in Washington. He was born in Barranquitas and died in San Juan in 1916.
- July 17, 1886 b. José S. Alegría, poet, writer, lawyer, and politician, became the president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, and director of the Puerto Rican Institute of Hispanic Culture. Alegría died in San Juan in 1965.
- July 17, 1757 b. Juan Alejo de Arizmendi y de la Torre was a Catholic priest who became Puerto Rico's first native Bishop.
- July 21, 1946 b. Jesús T. Piñero is appointed first native governor of Puerto Rico.
- July 22, 1949 b. Aida Alvarez was appointed by President Clinton in 1997 to head the Small Business Administration or SBA. She became the first Latina to head the SBA and the first Boricua to be appointed to a cabinet position. Alvarez is from Aguadilla.
- July 25, 1898 U.S. invades Puerto Rico through the port at Guánica
- July 25, 1952 The Puerto Rican Flag, designed in the later part of the 1800's, becomes the island's Official Flag
- July 25, 1952 Puerto Rico's Constitution Day
- July 27, 1857 b. Dr. José Celso Barbosa, physician, journalist, and politician, was a founder and head of the pro-statehood Puerto Rican Republican Party



Don Guillo, the gardener . . .

Gandules or Pigeon Peas are a stand alone legume crop SUPER easy in Florida in summer...can be perennial if winters are mild. It gets 6-8 feet tall fast in fertile soil that is not too heavily acid, but a light sprinkling of dolomite annually would correct that. Just buy a bag of fresh beans in the Hispanic foods section and sow them 1 inch deep and 2-3 feet apart. They grow FAST and thus can be a great emergency privacy screen around a hot tub or outdoor shower.



Rita Moreno

Rita Moreno is back on TV co-starring in TV Land’s new sitcom ‘Happily Divorced.’ *Happily Divorced* centers around Los Angeles florist Fran (Drescher) as she deals with dating after finding out her realtor husband of 18 years (John Michael Higgins) is gay. Fran juggles her new relationships, while still living under the same roof with her ex-husband. Rita is her mother.

Rita Moreno is the only female performer to have won all four of the most prestigious show business awards: the Oscar, the Emmy, the Tony and the Grammy. She has, in fact been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for this achievement. She earned the Oscar for her performance as Anita in the 1962 motion picture, *West Side Story*, the two Emmys for her 1977 appearance on *The Muppet Show*, and for a dramatic guest appearance on *The Rockford Files* in 1978. She won the Tony for her 1975 triumph on Broadway as *Googie Gomez* in *The Ritz*, the Grammy for her 1972 performance on *The Electric Company* Album for children, which was based on the long running television show of the same name.

Along the way she received dozens of other show business awards, most notably, The Golden Globe Award, The Golden Apple Award, and the Joseph Jefferson Award as best actress in Chicago’s theatrical season In 1968 for her brilliant performance as *Serafina* in *The Rose Tattoo*. In 1995 Ms. Moreno received a star on The Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Ms. Moreno was born Rosa Dolores Alverio in Humacao, a small town near the famous rain forest of Puerto Rico.



Aibonito Champagne-Guaya Party Punch

- 2 quarts chilled guava nectar
3 fresh guavas, cut into 1/8-inch-thick slices, for garnish (optional)
- 2 chilled bottles Champagne or sparkling wine

Combine guava nectar and champagne in a punch bowl. Add guava slices; serve over ice.



* Diego Matos Dupree, born in Bayamón, is a bartender (tavernero) for a popular cruise line. He lives on board most of the year and gets to travel the world.

PRIMOS



Our PRIMOS section journeys through Latin America celebrating our cousins.

- 1 lb. beef top round, diced
- 1 lb. lean pork, diced
- ¼ lb. bacon strips, diced into 1" pieces
- 3 medium tomatoes, peeled and seeded
- 1 onion, peeled
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. marjoram
- 1 medium-sized leek, diced
- ¼ cup capers
- 1 tbsp. mustard relish pickles, minced
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1½ tsp. dark brown sugar
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- ½ cup raisins

- Dough
- 2/3 cup vegetable shortening
 - 1 tsp. annatto (achiote) seeds
 - 2 cups Masa Harina flour
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
 - 1-1/3 cups warm water

- Additional Fillings
- 24 fresh plantain leaves
 - 1 lb. cooked chicken, shredded
 - 4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
 - ¼ cup blanched almonds
 - 2 oz. pimentos, sliced
 - 5 oz. pimento-stuffed olives, cut in half
 - Tabasco sauce

FILLING: Put beef, pork, and bacon in a large pan. Puree the tomatoes with the peeled onion and garlic. Add mixture to the meat pan along with the salt, marjoram, and leek. Cover and bring to a boil. Lower heat and continue cooking until all meat is tender, about 2 hours.

When meat is tender, add to the meat mixture the capers, mustard pickles, vinegar, bell pepper, Worcestershire sauce, and sugar. Salt and pepper to taste.

Raise the heat to high and cook the filling, stirring, until almost all liquid in the pan has evaporated, about 10 minutes. Add the raisins and set filling aside.

DOUGH: Over a low heat, melt 1/3 shortening alongside the annatto seeds. Simmer 2 to 3 minutes. Low heat, should not overcook. Strain and toss seeds.

Whip remaining shortening until fluffy. Beat in Masa Harina, salt, cayenne pepper, and water. Finally, beat in melted, strained shortening. Form dough into 24 balls.

Finally, put a ball of dough in the center of each leaf and flatten to 1/8-inch thickness. Top with an equal distribution of the meat mixture, chicken, eggs, almonds, pimentos, and olives. Sprinkle on Tabasco sauce to taste.

In Venezuelan cuisine, an **hallaca** (alt. spelling, "hayaca") typically involves a mixture of beef, pork chicken, capers, raisins and olives wrapped in maize, a cornmeal dough, bound with string in plantain leaves, and boiled or steamed.

It is typically served during Christmas.



Hallacas



Elena Cintrón Colón
Primos Editor

* Elena, born and raised in Puerto Rico to Brazilian and Peruvian parents, lives in Buenos Aires most of the year. She works for a large South American firm and travels throughout Latin America.

Fold leaves over completely encase the filling. Tie each hallaca with kitchen string. When tightly assembled, steam or boil halacas for 1 hour. Serve hot.

NOTE: Hallacas are easily refrigerated or frozen. Reheat by steaming again until hot.

Hallacas [ay-YAH-kahs] are served as both an appetizer (cut in half) and as a main dish.



Colorful houses of Guatapé - Colombia



Cocina Criolla – Cooking Hints

By: Anna María Vélez de Blas

When Mami visits from Puerto Rico during the holidays she usually gets up with 'las gallinas' and likes to prepare a warm breakfast for everyone.

My favorite is Funche, a warm breakfast cereal made with cornmeal. I grew up eating this delicious Puerto Rican dish, but wait . . . actually it's Italian. Funche is Polenta.

Puerto Rican funche is dead simple to make: Mix equal parts (by volume) cornmeal, milk and water (add a little salt). For a small family, a good starting point for proportions is 1.5 cups each cornmeal, milk, water, and sugar sprinkled on top.

Dump all ingredients together into a pot. Bring to a boil then simmer on a low burner, stirring occasionally, until it's thickened, about 20 minutes or so. She prepares it so that it has the consistency of oatmeal – so she adds more milk at the end. You can add anything you like, but it's especially good with a few pats of butter, a few tablespoons of brown sugar, and a 1/2 cup of raisins. If it gets too thick, add more milk.

It should be eaten warm. Mami likes to sprinkle it with granulated sugar and add a bit of butter and milk on top. She makes the best Funche, has that special touch.



**Anna is a Recipe Tester for EL BORICUA and is also a professional Chef, she lives in California with her husband, Joe and their three children.*



Jaime in the Kitchen

A Food Blog

I love to cook while watching sports, that's a given. My son, RG, will sit in the kitchen bar and watch me cook and we taste this and that, and watch whatever is on ESPN but my daughters . . . that's another story. They are not interested in learning to cook, only eating, and when they do eat they blame me for cooking food that tempt them so much (they have to watch their figure, anything about a size 2 is tragic). They will come down when the aroma hits their noses but what they really want to do is spend all their time on FaceBook and on the cell phones.

A few years ago my mother gave my daughter Lori her very own pilón, it is a family heirloom, having belonged to my own grandmother, then my mother, and now it was handed down to Lori. However, Lori is in college and is not interested in the small, dark and plain, old, worn out, pilón. It is perfectly smooth inside from use and smells like garlic. On the bottom on the base the initials, RMG, were handcarved by my own grandfather for his wife Rosa María Garibay with a pocket knife.

Lori's disinterest in her family heirloom and little piece of family history does not upset me. I know someday she will understand and appreciate this small worn out pilón, that looks like it was once brown and has turned almost black, and I'm sure she will come to cherish it someday. But in the meantime RG and I make good use of it weekly, or rather I use it and RG watches me use it. What do I do with this little thing? I make one hell of a mofongo! Thanks to my mamita in Mayagüez who taught me to cook over the phone.

First I dice up some bacon and cook it crispy. Then I peel the plantains to make tostones. The next step is peeling fresh garlic and mashing it one at a time, adding about 3 tostones and mashing those down into the garlic, adding a bit of bacon grease to make it smooth, and then some bacon pieces to enhance the flavor. Ha! The aroma is intoxicating and the girls run to the kitchen.

What goes good with mofongo? Anything and everything, but a cold beer is great for me alongside fried pork.

Hasta la proxima. Jaime Garibay Rivera

Nuestra Cocina Criolla



Guava and Cream Cheese Crisp
makes 3 servings

- 1 large can guavas, drained and seeds removed
 - 1/4 c flour
 - 1/4 c + 2 T sugar, divided
 - 2 T brown sugar
 - 2 T butter, melted
 - 2 T shredded coconut
 - pinch kosher salt
 - 2/3 c non-fat or light cream cheese, softened
 - 1/4 tsp cinnamon
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix flour, 2 T sugar, brown sugar, and coconut. Gradually mix in butter, combining until a crumble is formed.
 2. Flatten crumble in the ramekins with the back of a spoon.
 3. With an electric mixer, combine the cream cheese, 1/4 c sugar, and cinnamon. Divide cream cheese mixture evenly among the ramekins as the next layer.
 4. Add in about 2 guavas worth of the chopped guava in each ramekin as the next layer.
 5. Top the ramekins with the crumble to your liking. Bake 15-20 minutes, until mixture inside is bubbling.



Can a pork roast be cooked in a crock-pot? The answer is yes. Of course there will be no cueritos, but the meat will be tender and delicious if you season it right.

What is the right seasoning for pernil? 3 parts fresh, minced and mashed garlic; 1 part coarse salt, 1 part coarse black pepper, and 1 part oregano leaf. No need to add any oil or liquid to this dry rub. The meat has enough grease.

Season the meat as usual. Place in crock pot, side fat up, cook on low for 8-10 hours. When done, carefully remove from pot and place to drain using what best tools you have. I place the meat in a colander and in the sink to drain. Just needs to drain enough so it is not dripping. Then slice or shred.

What can you do with this meat? Serve it as the meat to accompany Puerto Rican rice. Make Puerto Rican or Cuban Sandwiches. Use some of it to make fried rice. Save a bit of it to add to bean soups.

Yum!

Nuestra Cocina Criolla



Papas Rellenas de Queso

- 6 washed potatoes (check out a tip of what I do with the potatoes at the bottom)
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine (you can use a light butter or margarine spread substitute)
- 1 1/2 cup milk (I use 2% low fat milk)
- 1 cup low fat mozzarella shredded cheese
- 1 cup low fat cheddar cheese cut into small cubes
- 1/2 cup wheat flour
- 2 beaten eggs
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- Extra virgin olive oil or vegetable oil to fry

Boil your potatoes in a saucepan until soft. Drain and let them cool down. Peel the potatoes and mash them with the butter or margarine to make a purée. Add the milk and the mozzarella cheese, and mix well.

Cook this mixture over low heat until thick. Let it cool down, then make little balls with a small holes in the center. Stuff your potato balls with cheddar cheese and close the holes.

Coat each the potato balls with wheat flour, then with the eggs and finally with breadcrumbs. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the balls until golden brown. Put them on a plate with paper towels to drain any remaining oil, then serve and enjoy.

These stuffed potatoes are really easy to prepare and make delicious appetizers.

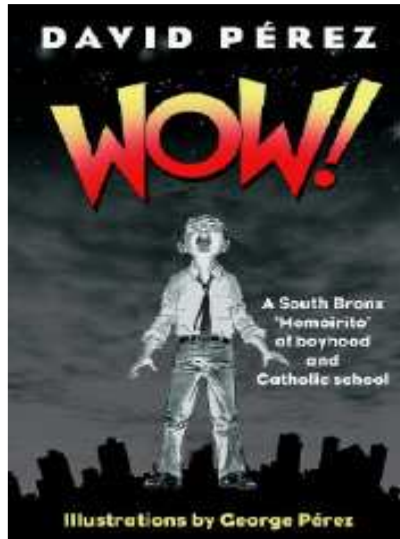


Arroz con Salchichas

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 med yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 med. green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves minced & mashed in a pilón
- 1/2 cup sofrito
- 1 (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 small jar diced red pimientos w/ liquid
- 2 pkts Sazón con achiote
- 1 Bay leaf
- 2 cups uncooked rice
- 1 cup cold water
- 2 cup chicken broth
- 2 drained cans Vienna sausage cut into 1 inch slices
- 1 small can peas, drained
- Salt and pepper to taste

- 1) Heat the olive oil in a medium caldero over medium high heat.
- 2) Add the onion, garlic, and green pepper and sauté about 5 minutes or until onion is translucent. Add sofrito and cook a few more minutes.
- 3) Add tomato sauce, white wine, pimientos with their liquid, Sazón and bay leaf and simmer together over low heat for about 10 minutes.
- 4) In a medium pot, bring water and chicken broth to a rolling boil.
- 5) While the liquid is boiling, wash rice and drain well.
- 6) Add the rice to the caldero. Add the sliced sausage and stir.
- 7) Continue cooking over low heat, covered, for about 20-25 minutes or until liquid is absorbed.
- 8) After the rice is done, quickly add the can of peas, stirring them into the cooked rice - let it sit for a minute or two, just until the peas get hot.

Book Reviews



'Wow!' a South Bronx "memoirito" of boyhood and Catholic school.

Vividly candid recollections of rough childhood experiences living in a 'project' in the South Bronx and going to Catholic school.

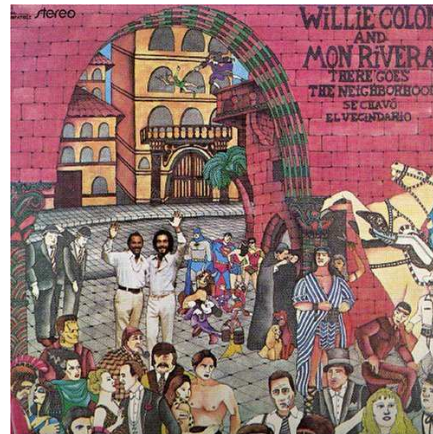
The author easily keeps readers entertained with interesting fluid story lines of different episodes in his childhood, trying to be cool and fit in with the crowd, etc. Pérez is certainly a gifted and talented writer.

Certainly not for children. Funny and entertaining.

Available at Amazon.com



Nuestra Música



Mon Rivera
(with Willie Colón)

"Se Chavó el Vecindario" (1975)

Efraín "Mon" Rivera, Mayagüez, P.R., was known as "El rey del trabalenguas" for his peculiar singing style of mumbling words fast, making some parts of the lyrics hard to understand but funny to listen. This recording was made after Mon's career peak, as a special project with successful bandleader, arranger and trombone player, Nuyorican Willie Colón, who also was the producer and was part of the chorus along with two other big artists, singer Héctor LaVoe from Ponce and singer/writer Rubén Blades from Panama.

In his golden years, Mon used to lead his own band, singing a variety of songs in Plena, Bomba, and other Caribbean rhythms, empowered by a strong trombone section, being some of them part of don Mon Rivera's repertoire (Efraín's father).

"Se chavó el vecindario" is for sure what could be called a "party-maker" production. Most of the songs are Plenas and the entire production counts with superior and contagious musical arrangements by both Mon and Willie. New versions of Mon's previously recorded popular hits like "Qué será" and "Askarakatiskis" are part of the song selection in this album. The rest of the band's line-up includes top Puerto Rican musicians Papo Lucca on piano, Eddie Rivera on bass, and Willie's steady percussionists Milton Cardona and José Mangual.

-Alberto González lives in South Florida and works in Spanish & ESL education. Graduated from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico and attended the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico-