



A Cultural Publication for Puerto Ricans

From the editor . . .

Growing up in Puerto Rico we ate plenty of bananas. Papi grew them in the back yard! Mostly he raised plantains and my sister and I played tag around those palms. They do not have solid trunks like trees, but sort of layered branches that opened into leaves at the top. Quickly the palms spread and little bananas trees would grow around the main palm. Papi always had a big cosecha de plátanos to share with friends and neighbors – and he never had to plant new palms.

If you are Puerto Rican, they you eat more bananas than the average person. We fry them, boil them, bake them, have them for breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as snacks and beverages, both alcoholic and not. We eat fried or baked bananas, and banana omelets for breakfast, bananas shakes, banana bread, banana flan, and so much more.

There are the ‘regular’ yellow bananas we often eat, but there are a bunch more we are not so familiar with in the states. There are many different types such as apple bananas that taste like apples, and Rose Bananas that taste lemony. My favorite is the finger bananas or guineitos niños – these are short and sweeter, yes we can eat these fresh or fry them. Did you know you can bake or fry a regular yellow banana? Some people will fry a banana and serve it as a side dish next to rice and beans. Delish!



Siempre Boricua, Ivonne Figueroa




YOUR AD



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Nature and Adventure

Joe Roman Santos
Editor

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

Located in Guánica on the southern coast, **Copamarina Beach Resort** offers all inclusive vacations. A tropical resort with a crescent beach is the perfect place to soak up the Caribbean sun. An exclusive retreat, your all inclusive holidays include breakfast and lunch at their open air Las Palmas café, and dinner at Alexandra- the main dining room that features Puerto Rican cuisines. Apart from that, you will have night entertainment and unlimited drinks at regular bar hours. The packages start from \$398 per person per night including house wine, unlimited juices, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and 3 meals a day. The resort offers deluxe rooms with garden and ocean views, along with suites that are perfect for families and older children. These rooms are spacious, comfortable and equipped with modern A wonderful, tranquil and isolated location. I found the hotel to be clean and nicely furnished. There was a small refrigerator in the room which was nice for keeping drinks cold and available on demand. The grounds around the hotel are very nice with lots of blooming plants, coconut trees, and mango trees around.



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.

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There are three Puerto Rico's you need to learn about; the old, the new and the natural. Learn about our little *terruño*. Subscribe to EL BORICUA, a monthly cultural publication for Puerto Ricans.

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In Puerto Rico a Sunday 'drive' is to go '**domingueando**'. It is a special event. This usually means a drive around coastal areas with a stop at the beach or a drive around antique colonial narrow mountain roads – no matter, it always ends up being a culinary event.

Around many island roads are hundreds of established roadside kitchens (food stalls) called 'kioscos' and they always serve comida criolla.

The menu varies from one kiosco to another, but the selection is great and is mostly traditional food, comida criolla, that usually includes, but not limited to, bacalaitos, and alcapurrias, there are lechoneras that specialize in lechón asado and they usually also serve rice and beans, etc. You can also find kioscos with traditional food that is not so common for kioscos such as salmorejo de jueyes, arepas, stuffed tostones and much more. It must be mentioned that recently kioscos that serve foreign food such as Chinese have cropped up, but those are few. More recently also there is a crop of young entrepreneurs offering fancier atmosphere and food all at a higher price. You really never know what delicacies you will find.

Kiosco construction differs greatly. There is the basic (and traditional, if you will) kiosco built from wood and palm branches, others have aluminum or zinc roofs, and a few - more permanent stalls are made with cinder block. Of course, some are larger than others. They cook on a pit using good for fire. The ovens are makeshift some using old metal barrels and the basic fryer is usually a giant caldero.

The owners of these small enterprises are usually women, who in their field, can compete and beat any European Chef.

There is one thing in common in these kioscos – the food is traditional and delicious and the lines for these establishments are very long.

Sally Rubio Canales is a guest writer with roots in Ponce. She lives in St Louis with her two daughters and spends the summers in Puerto Rico.



Kioskos are out of this world!

Delicious, authentic, and memorable Puerto Rican cuisine is what you get at food vendor stands all over the island. We started with a conch an octopus salad that was fresh as could be! I had the steak mofongo which was outstanding and sausage and plantain skewers which were equally delicious. Don't forget the bacalaitos are a must have! Local fresh cuisine with a flair!

Land and Leisure Travel Magazine

Speaking Puerto Rican . . .

Mi madre me enseñó sobre anticipación

#1 - 'Deja que lleguemos a la casa!!!'

#2 - 'Deja que tu padre se entere!!!'

Refrán . . .

Donde comen dos, comen tres.

Trivia

Budget Travel just named Puerto Rico as the 5th best destination for street food in the world, citing Piñones as one of the best places on the island for frituras.



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

It was Columbus who called the Tainos "Indians", an identification that has grown to encompass all the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. The word "Indian" was an invention of Christopher Columbus, who erroneously thought that he had arrived in the East Indies. The misnomer remains, and has served to imagine a kind of racial or cultural unity for the autochthonous peoples of the Americas.

The unitary idea of "Indians" was not one shared by most indigenous peoples, who saw themselves as diverse. But the "Indian" gave Europeans a fixed person who could be labeled (as "primitive" or "heathen," for example), given a legal designation, and classified. Thus, the word "Indian" gave Europeans a valuable tool for colonization. Today, many native peoples have proudly embraced an imagined spiritual, ethnic, or cultural unity of "Indians."

The indigenous people he encountered in his first voyage described themselves "Taino", meaning "good" or "noble", to differentiate themselves from Caribs. This name applied to all the Island Tainos including those in the Lesser Antilles.

Locally, the Tainos referred to themselves by the name of their location. For example, those in Puerto Rico are known as Boricua (which means people from the island of the valiant noble lords) their island was called Borike'n (Great land of the valiant noble lord) and those occupying the Bahamas are known as Lucayo (small islands).



Boricua Calendar

- July 9, 1909 Born: 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 Born: 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 Born: 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 Born: Juan Alejo de Arizmendi y de la Torre was a Catholic priest who became Puerto Rico's first native Bishop.
- July 21, 1946 Born: Jesús T. Piñero is appointed first native governor of Puerto Rico.
- July 22, 1949 Born: 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 of Guánica
- July 25, 1952 Puerto Rico's Constitution Day



Acerola – West Indian cherry



Don Guillo, the gardener . . .

I grew up eating acerolas. There were bushes everywhere you turned, by the river, next to the road, in everyone's yard, etc. These delicious, juicy, rich in Vitamin C, cherries can grow in warm climates (Florida, South Texas) and propagates from seeds or cuttings. This is a medium sized shrub. Buy seeds online – easy to grow.

Poemas Riqueños

PARIÓ LA LUNA

Altamar del Mar Caribe.
Noche azul. Blanca goleta.
Una voz grita en la noche:

-¡Marineros! ¡A cubierta!

Es el aullido del lobo
capitán de la velera.
Aúlla porque ha parido
su novia la luna nueva.

Y todos yen el lucero
que en el azul va tras ella:
ven el corderito blanco
detrás de la blanca oveja.

El piloto de la nave,
que a la baranda se acerca,
al ver el mar, todo espuma,
canta con voz de poeta:

-En sus azules hamacas
mece el mar sus azucenas.
Y entredice el sobrecargo:

-Es que las marinas yeguas
van al escape y sus crines
se vuelven sargas de perlas.

Y otra vez aúlla el lobo
capitán de la goleta:

-No son espumas de olas,
ni albas crines, ni azucenas:
es que en el mar cae la leche
del pecho que saca afuera,
porque ha parido un lucero,
mi novia la luna nueva.

Luis Llorens Torres

LUIS LLORENS TORRES
(1876-1944)

Luis Lloréns Torres, 1876-1944, was born in Collores in the municipality of Juana Díaz, Puerto Rico on May 14, 1876. A multi-talented gentleman, Luis studied in Spain and became a lawyer by profession but also dwelled into politics and drama as a writer and poet. His work is nationalistic and is known as "criollismo," because it tells of customs and traditions of the island. Lloréns Torres founded La Revista de las Antillas, a literary publication in 1913. His books include; Al Pie de la Alhambra, Sonetos Sinfónicos, Voces de la Campana Mayor and Alturas de America. His "décimas" are works not only of art but of love. Lloréns died in San Juan on June 16, 1944.

**Fajardo Cocktail**

1 quart unsweetened pineapple juice
1 quart unsweetened orange juice
1 quart Puerto Rican rum (dark)
16 oz Mango Juice (canned)
2 cans Sprite soda
2 cups coconut milk
2 cups pineapple chunks
1 cup maraschino cherries, without stems

Mix all ingredients in a punch bowl. Add lots of ice just before serving. Use a ladle to serve and include a piece of fruit in each glass.

* 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.



These **Cheese-Stuffed Venezuelan Corn Cakes** (Cachapas) are a Venezuelan staple. Typically made with fresh corn, this unique version combines canned creamed corn, pancake mix and cornmeal. While a mozzarella-type cheese, queso guayanés, is traditional in this dish, any type of cheese works well. For a heartier version, add thinly sliced ham to the filling.

1 can (14 3/4 oz.) creamed corn
 3/4 cup all-purpose baking mix (BISQUICK)
 1/4 cup yellow corn meal
 1 large egg
 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
 vegetable oil
 5 slices of cheese
 5 slices of ham (optional)

Place creamed corn, baking mix, corn meal, egg, butter and sugar in blender container; cover. Blend until smooth. Pour batter into medium bowl. Let rest for 5 minutes.

Heat griddle or skillet over medium heat; brush lightly with vegetable oil. Pour 1/4 cup of batter onto hot griddle; cook until bubbles form on surface and bottom turns golden. Turn and cook about 1 minute longer or until golden. Place slices of cheese and ham, if desired, on pancakes and fold over. Remove to serving platter. Keep warm in oven. Repeat with *remaining* batter. Serve warm.



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. She comes home to San Juan.



Mount Avila
 Caracas, Venezuela

Along the northern side of Caracas is the mountain range Cordillera de Ávila. Here there is a national park with hiking trails and great diversity of wildlife.

On a hot day, take the teleferico/cable car to get to the Avila Magica, it's pretty cool up there and you might get some rain so don't forget a sweater or jacket! There are plenty of activities for children like ice-skating, playground, live animation etc. For adults there is the beautiful view over Caracas (all the way to the beach!) and live music, people dancing in the open air. You can have a quick bite at one of the stands. At the top, there is a hotel, which is the highest hotel in Caracas. You can never see the entire hotel because of the fog it's constantly surrounded by. A nice place for a family outing!



Cocina Criolla – Cooking Hints

By: Anna María Vélez de Blas

Another great way to prepare fish – Criollo style is fried fish in Mojito Isleño. This sauce came from the small town of Salinas and has become a staple recipe for islanders. The recipe is pretty simple, just has a long list of ingredients, but putting it together is ‘un guame.’ This sauce is used over fish, pork, chicken, even viandas sometimes, or even tostones.

1/3 cup corn oil
 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
 1 cup tomato sauce
 1/3 cup alcaparrado (mixture of olives, pimientos strips and capers), drained, or manzanilla olives
 2 bay leaves
 2 Italian frying peppers, seeded and chopped
 1 teaspoon salt
 2 teaspoons black pepper
 2 roasted red peppers, drained and cut into strips

Heat the oil in a heavy pot. Add the onion and saute over medium heat until translucent. Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 15 minutes.

Puerto Ricans use Italian frying peppers to cook. If you can't find those substitute with green bell peppers. Refrigerate in a glass jar until needed.

For Pescado en Salsa de Mojito Isleño, just season the fish fillets with Adobo and fry until golden on both sides. Transfer the fish to a second frying pan, add sauce, bring to a boil then simmer for about 15 minutes. Serve over white rice with fried amarillos.

**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

Puerto Rico is an island and islanders eat plenty of fish and not just bacalao, but freshly caught Caribbean fish as well. I love food, as everyone else does, I'm sure. But I especially love Pescado en Escabeche, which is pickled fish, and is made with fish that has been fried and cooked through. It should be made ahead and refrigerated for at least 24 hours before serving to allow the fish to pick up the flavors from the marinade and let the flavors blend together. This is the perfect dish to prepare ahead of time for a hot summer day picnic, or a romantic evening on the beach (not too many of those for me), or for when you're expecting company because the dish is prepared ahead. I like preparing this for cover dish parties because most people never eat stuff like this, and they think I'm such a big and important chef. This recipe serves about 4 hungry people or 6 not so hungry friends. Bien facil!



Pescado en Escabeche

For the sauce combine in a saucepan: 1 cup olive oil, ½ cup vinegar, 7 peppercorns, ¼ tsp salt, 1 bay leaf, ¾ lb sliced onions, 1 red and 1 green bell pepper (sliced), and about half a cup of stuffed olives with pimientos. Simmer 45 minutes. Let this cool and refrigerate.

For the fish you will need 1½ lbs fish fillets (red snapper for me), 2 to 3 tbsps lemon juice, about 2 cups of flour mixed with 3 heaping tbsps Goya Adobo ‘Sazonador Total’ with the green lid, another ½ cup olive oil for frying and about 1 tbsps minced garlic.

Clean the fish and rub with lemon and salt and cover them in the seasoned flour. Heat the ½ cup oil, add the minced garlic then fry the fish until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels. Set the fish in a glass bowl and pour the escabeche sauce over it. Let it marinate for at least 24 hours, covered in the fridge.

Serve this at room temperature over spinach salad with garlic bread. Sabroso!

I have to thank Mami in Mayagüez for guiding me with this recipe ten years ago. Hasta la proxima! Jaime Garibay Rivera

** Jaime Garibay Rivera, Ph.D. is a retired college professor (Aerophysics), now living in Miami. He has three children and his family roots are in Mayagüez.*

Nuestra Cocina Criolla



Cabrito en Fricase

Puerto Rican Goat Stew

(A)
4 lbs young goat (kid) meat, cut in small pieces
1 Seville or sour orange (*citrus aurantium*)

(B)
2 tbps salt
2 tps crushed garlic
¼ tps ground black pepper
¼ tps oregano (ground or leaf)
2 tbps wine vinegar

(c)
8 to 10 very small cooking onions, peeled
¼ lb cooking bacon
¼ lb cooking ham
½ cup olives
1/3 cup raisins
¼ cup capers
1 cup olive oil
1 cup diced tomatoes
1 bay leaf
¼ cup Spanish red peppers
3 cups chicken broth

1/2 cup White Rum
1 cup Red Wine



Soak the meat in sour orange juice and let stand for at least thirty minutes. Drain the sour orange juice and mix with the ingredients listed under (B). Baste the meat with the resulting paste. If possible, allow to stand in the refrigerator for several hours before cooking.

Heat two tbps of olive in a deep pan. When hot, add the meat slowly and turn the pieces frequently to sear the meat. Add the White Rum and carefully apply a match to light the rum. It should extinguish itself after a few seconds.

Add the cooking bacon, turning frequently. After one or two minutes, add the cooking ham. Add the ingredients included in (C), bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover and slow cook until the meat is tender. If necessary, add some water to assure a thick gravy. Add the red wine shortly before serving.

Serve with white rice and boiled root vegetables.



Arroz Mamposteo

A Traditional Puerto Rican dish . . .

Left-overs with style

3 cups cooked white rice
¼ cup olive oil
6 ajies dulces, minced
½ cup diced cooking ham
½ cup green pepper, diced
5 fresh recajo leaves, chopped
1½ cups habichuelas guisadas

Heat oil in large frying pan, add ham and sauté until golden. Add the rice and beans and mix well. The rice will turn brownish from the bean liquid. Finally add the peppers and recajo (or cilantro). Saute this for a few more minutes. Serve with salad and tostones.

Nuestra Cocina Criolla



Polvorones

2 cups flour, sifted
 2/3 cup sugar
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 1 egg at room temperature
 2 tbsps butter, softened
 pinch of salt

Blend sugar slowly into the oil. Add the egg, salt and butter and blend thoroughly. Blend the flour in, slowly and thoroughly.

Roll the resulting dough into 1-inch balls and place in an ungreased cookie sheet, flattening each ball slightly with the palm of your hand.

Bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.
 Makes about 60 1-inch cookies

* Traditional Polvorones are served as is, but they can also be topped with colorful sprinkles, rolled in granulated sugar or my favorite, dusted with powdered sugar (right out of the oven).



'Niditos' Guineitos Niños en Coco

10 Finger bananas
 10 tbsps all-purpose flour
 10 tbsps water
 dash of salt
 1/2 cup sweetened shredded coconut
 1/3 cup vegetable oil
 Puerto Rican rum



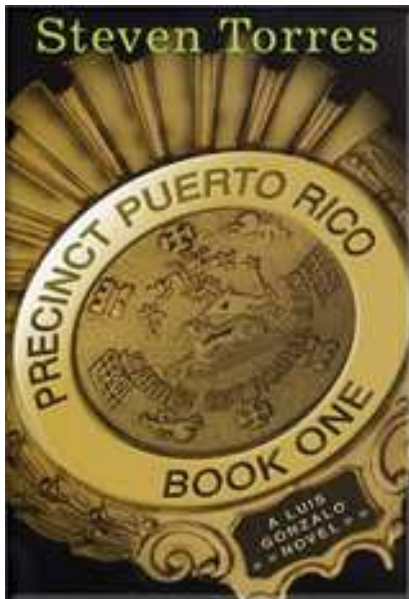
Prepare batter by mixing the flour, water, and salt in a medium sized bowl. Dip the peeled guineitos niños (bananas) in the batter then coat them with the shredded coconut.

Fry in a deep medium sauce pan in oil for 2 minutes each side, or until bananas are light golden brown.

Transfer bananas onto a plate covered with paper towel to absorb the excess oil from the bananas. Serve warm, drizzled with rum. *Also good for breakfast with syrup instead of rum.*

Serves 6 people.

Book Reviews



PRECINCT PUERTO RICO: BOOK ONE

A Luis Gonzalo Novel
By: Steven Torres
Thomas Dunne Books

“Revenge is pointless. It’s like the candy the kids eat at ‘las fiestas patronales’—it tastes sweet at first, but it dissolves as you eat it and leaves you empty.”

“Can a gandule arrest a Metropolitano?”

Nuestra Música



Ismael Miranda “Éxitos de los ‘50” (1982)

The municipality of Aguada, P.R., has a son that has been singing since the 1960s. While growing up in New York City, the Latin music revolution picked up and Ismael Miranda was an integral part of it. In the Big Apple, he joined Larry Harlow, a Jewish pianist, arranger and director from Russian descent; one of the main characters in this, by the time, growing musical trend, who was very attracted to the Afro-Latin rhythms that were developing in the American continent. Both, Miranda and Harlow, were part of the big musical enterprise, FANIA, in its golden years.

In 1982, Ismael released a Bolero collection that includes the super hit “La última copa” and “Rebeldía”, both popularized by Felipe “La Voz” Rodríguez, “Copas y amigos”, “Cárcel sin rejas”, “Golondrina viajera”, “Amor robado”, and others. The music was arranged with guitars, violins, brass section, piano, bass and percussion by the immortal big band arranger and director, Mandy Vizoso; host musical director of local TV channels in Puerto Rico, who also led and accompanied basically all the most important and popular bolero and ballad singers during decades.

Anyone who would like to have his/her mind flying back in time, should listen to this recording.

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

Luis Gonzalo is the Sheriff of Angustias, a small town whose whole police force consists of six officers and one squad car. Gonzalo is in Rincón, one of the bigger towns on the island, on family business, when there is a ship wreck and bodies wash up on shore. He jumps in to help rescue the victims and stumbles upon a ring of illegal trafficking in humans from the Dominican Republic. When he discovers that Puerto Rican cops are responsible for the murders of the illegal immigrants, Gonzalo finds his life and those of his wife and daughter threatened. When he refuses to give up his investigation—one other law enforcement agencies refuse to help solve—he finds his town under siege.

Fascinating, powerful, gripping, exciting, nail biting. PRECINCT PUERTO RICO: BOOK ONE is a wonderful introduction to a new police crime mystery series and a new literary hero, Luis Gonzalo.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Steve Torres is a native New Yorker but spent part of his childhood in Puerto Rico visiting family in small towns like the fictional Angustias. He also writes short stories and urban mysteries.