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.

Puerto Rican literature evolved from the art of oral story telling to its present day status. Written works by the native islanders of Puerto Rico were prohibited and repressed by the Spanish colonial government. Only those who were commissioned by the Spanish Crown to document the chronological history of the island were allowed to write.

In January we celebrate our poets and writers. Enjoy!

Siempre Boricua, Ivonne Figueroa

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Puerto Rico
patría de mis amores, isla de flores solo pienso en tí.

Puerto Rico
de bellos palmares, tus dulces cantares viven en mí.

Puerto Rico
isla primorosa, isla preciosa donde yo nací,

En tu suelo ví la luz del cielo, y entre tus palmas quiero morir.

JANUARY 2015
Nemesio R Canales Rivera, 1878 - 1923

Writer, politician, and political activist Nemesio R. Canales Rivera was born in Jayuya, Puerto Rico on December 18, 1878. In addition to founding Puerto Rico’s most widely circulated newspaper, as one of his greatest feats, although rejected, Canales proposed one of the first bills intending to grant Puerto Rican women their full civil rights, including the right to vote.

Canales initially pursued his undergraduate studies in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico and the attended the University of Zaragoza in Spain to commence legal and medicinal studies. In 1903, however, due to the Spanish-American War, Canales left Spain and enrolled in Baltimore’s College of Law.

Upon obtaining his ID degree and returning to his native Puerto Rico, Canales founded El Día, now known as El Nuevo Día, arguably the most successful Puerto Rican periodical in history, and joined the law firm of the already renown Luis Lloréns Torres. Shortly thereafter, Canales became an active member of the Unionist Party and served in the Puerto Rican House of Representatives.

Throughout his political career, Canales wrote extensively, producing columns for his newspaper, poetry, short novels, a screenplay, and philosophical essays. Prominent features of his work include deep understanding for human sentiment, humoristic elements, and unwavering pride for his beloved Puerto Rico.

On September 14, 1923, while bound for New York City on a steamer with the intention of later heading to Washington, D.C. as a legal assistant to a legislative Puerto Rican commission, Canales passed away.

Today, every year Puerto Rico awards the Nemesio Canales Award in Literature to outstanding young writers and there now exists a public housing project in San Juan bearing his name.

His statue (sculpted by Tomás Batista) stands in “La Plaza de Recreo Nemesio R. Canales” in his hometown of Jayuya and the house in which he was raised has been preserved is now open to the public as a museum.

Although Canales’ works are not as well-read as those of other Puerto Rican writers, Canales has left us voluminous, qualitatively rich anthologies, and set precedents for political objectives which, now realized, contribute to the greatness of his legacy, and demonstrate his value as a progressive visionary.

Throughout his lifetime, studies, and travels, Nemesio Canales never forgot his adored country and people, let us not forget him.

Natalie Rios
Boquerón Beach is on the southwest side of the island, and one of the top scenic Puerto Rico Beaches. The tropical escape will provide you some of the best photography anywhere on the island, and the numerous amenities will keep you here for hours. Whether you’re looking for calm swimming water, snorkeling, sailing, or fishing, you will find it all at Boquerón Beach. This is a state-run beach, so there are lifeguards, lockers, public bathrooms, showers, and places to eat. Take in some of the best food in Puerto Rico at any one of the seaside cabanas. Some of the best seafood and catch of the day can be found along with some more American foods such as burgers, fries, and more.

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

Lisa Santiago Brochu
Puerto Rico Restaurant Reviews

Buena Vibra Restaurant
Cabo Rojo
787-718-0024
Cuisines: Caribbean

Everything was very fresh, and you could tell they took great care to search for the food and prepare it. A beautiful and simple presentation with a great and simple taste.

Buena Vibra is the perfect place if you want to chill wearing your beachwear without losing great tasty food. Starting with the ambience, very close to the street, amongst palm trees and a farm, its vibrant green and fun, quirky decorations accompanied by great music every time will make you feel right at home. Everybody makes sure you have the best time, including the owner that greets and check on you during you night, the servers that pay great attention to details and the bar that provides a great variety of craft beers. The first time I visited I had the plantain crusted salmon and it was so delicious and very moist with the most delicious salad I’ve ever had in a restaurant.

* Lisa Santiago Brochu, is a trained professional Chef and a former restaurant owner in New York. She travels to Puerto Rico on business often. Her island roots are in Caguas.

Those from Cabo Rojo are known as caborrojeños.

Trivia
Cabo Rojo is also known as El Pueblo de Cofresí Being the homebase of Puerto Rico’s best known pirate.

Cabo Rojo’s name is due to the considerable amount of minerals in its coasts that made the waters look reddish. Cabo means headland and rojo, means the color red.

Refrán . . .
Donde fueres, haz lo que vieres.

Speaking Puerto Rican . . .
Alcahuete: commonly used among Puerto Ricans to describe a parent or guardian who is too permissive and often leads to the child’s or young person’s demise or failure.

Writers needed on a 6 month basis or more. Guest Articles are always welcomed, just email to elboricua_email@yahoo.com

BORICUA . . .
It 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.
¿Qué me importan las riquezas?
que a todo el mundo pregunto,
¿Do está? la hermosa Cacica
el que heredé de mis padres,
Le he prometido a quien diga
mi castillo de Cacique,
¿Do está? la hermosa Cacica
la de los ojos muy grandes;
Los honores, equé me valen
mis más hermosos aretes,
Mis guerreros ya no tocan
la de los ojos muy grandes?
¿Qué me importan las riquezas?
Mis guerreros ya no tocan
del nombre de la Cacica
mis más hermosos aretes,
Nos prometía mi Cacique
la de los ojos muy grandes.
¿Qué me importan las riquezas?
Mis guerreros ya no tocan
del nombre de la Cacica
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del nombre de la Cacica
mis más hermosos aretes,
**Arrópame com mi bandera**  
**Zuleika Merced**

Cuando mi cuerpo muera arrópame con mi bandera  
En el camposanto acuesta mi cuerpo inérté mirando al sol.  
No me brindes por piedad ausente, una corona de flores.  
Solo mi bandera, que con sus colores brindan suficiente amor.  
Déja que mi cuerpo descanse en algún lejano monte,  
Déja que los verdes verdes, se acuesten mirándolos yo.  
Déja que la lluvia sutilmente bese siempre mi frente,  
y el coquí me acompañe a mi tumba con su mejor canción.  
Déja que aunque este muerta y aparente estar mi alma ausente,  
déja que la montaña vierta en mi su llanto y su dolor.  
Déja que mis luceros esten también en mi presente.  

Este cielo mío que amo, su suelo Borincano de esplendor.  
No quiero ver en tus ojos las lágrimas que se vierten,  
Perfuma mi cuerpo inérté con gardenias silvestres.  
Y con flores de moriviví adorna, si quieres mis manos.  
Para aún así cuando este muerta sienta que las estoy pisando.  
Para abrirse nuevamente en otro cielo quizás esta vez más lejano,  
y la neblina del Yunque me abraze y me esté esperando.  
A derramárse en mi, luz de luna y de madrúgada levantar el gallo.  
Cuando me muera no llores.  
¡Arrópame con mi bandera!  

Mi cabello peinalo con las caricias suaves del árbol.  
Y mi vestido sea las noches de ópalo de mi tierra,  
mi almohada sea la playa para dormirme en sus brazos.  
¡Arrópame con mi bandera!  

Será el sueño absoluto sacro-santo.  
Que me acompañen, las palmas, los flamboyanes, los jíbaros del campo  
¡Arrópame con mi bandera!  

En las tardes hagan fiesta los cucúbanos.  
Apacible recuerdo cuando la arena y mi cuerpo con el mar se besan,  
cuando la ola insiste siempre de nuevo y en la noche nos alejamos.  
Como lloran en mis versos en la noche ardiente mis luceros  
¡Arrópame con mi bandera!  

Será el abrazo de todos los boricuas mis hermanos  
Me quedará en la poesía loca, de lluvia de mis versos amados.  
¡Arrópame con mi bandera!  

Cubre mi cuerpo con malojillo verde, verde.  
Mirando siempre a mi cielo azul de mi tierra en el ocaso.  
Cuando el mar ajeno en el horizonte se pierde y se duerme.  
Donde en silencio las nubes cantan con los angeles, hermosos su canto.  
Corona mi frente con amapolas, rosas, café y una danza de laureles.  
¡Que se quede mi cuerpo al fin para siempre, en mi bendito suelo Borincano!

---

**Taino Cocktail**

1 part Grenadine  
1 part pineapple juice  
1 part Curacao blue  
1 part White Bacardi  

Mix ingredients slowly in an ice filled highball glass. Pour slowly in order to insure best color spread.

---

* Diego Matos Dupree, born in Bayamón, is a tavernero for a popular cruise line and lives on board most of the year. He gets to travel the world for free.
Moros y Cristianos . . . Black beans and white rice.

2 cans (15.5 oz.) black beans, undrained
1 tbsp olive oil
¼ cup recaito
¼ tsp. cumin
1 bay leaf
1 packet Sazón con achiote

2 tbsp. Cooking Wine
1 tsp. White Vinegar
½ tsp. brown sugar
1 tsp. Sazonador Total
¼ cup chopped red peppers
½ cup water

In a small caldero, combine all ingredients and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer uncovered for about 10 minutes or so. Remove bay leaf. Serve over white rice.

Enough books have been written about Cuba to fill an entire library, but few take the approach Chen Lizra does with “My Seductive Cuba.” Deeply personal and always engaging, Lizra — an Israeli-born dance instructor and entrepreneur now living in Canada — fuses history and politics with her real-life experiences among the people of this often-visited but little-understood island. The result is a moving portrayal of Cuba on the verge of historic change. Packed with practical information on where to go in Cuba, what to pack and the best ways to get there, “My Seductive Cuba” also helps readers ferret out persistent opportunists while finding Havana’s best reggaetón, flamenco, jazz and salsa clubs. A glossary of Cuban slang and a description of the Santería religion — along with a vivid chapter titled “Getting Possessed” — makes Lizra’s humorous travel guide even more compelling. This is one book you won’t want to be without, even if you don’t plan on going anywhere! Available online.

*I wouldn’t mind having a Cuban cigar and a cup of Cuban coffee in the old streets of Havana.

**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.*
You don’t hear much about Almojabanas but they are a delicious cheese fritter popular in the interior of Puerto Rico, in the mountains. A true jíbaro favorite. They are simple to make and this recipe can make about 40 fritters in no time at all. Rice flour is available where they sell Goya products. This is one of my favorite party foods when I entertain. Just prepare the dough ahead of time. Then drop by spoonfuls into the hot oil – no measuring. Some people say they won’t eat fried foods but they eat this. Delicioso!

Almojabanas

MAKES ABOUT 40 CHEESE FRITTERS

Canola oil, for frying
2 cups milk
4 tbsp. unsalted butter
1 tsp. kosher salt

In a medium size caldero boil milk, butter, and salt over high heat; let cool for 10 minutes. Stir in flour, baking powder, and eggs; return to heat and cook, stirring, until dough thickens, about 8 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in cheese. Heat 2” of oil in a heavy pan like a cast iron skillet. Drop tablespoons of dough into oil; fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes.

*Anna, born in Bayamón and raised in Aibonito, 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 knew my youngest daughter Mari was stopping by Saturday morning about two weeks ago, so I cooked something to tempt her into staying longer. My kids love their Puerto Rican pop and his cooking. I know their weak point – so I decided to make Revoltillo de bacalao. When Mari arrived to just say hi for a few minutes and give her old man a hug she said…. ‘something smells gooood Papi, what are you making’? To make a long story short, I was able to enjoy her company for almost two hours, then ended up going shopping with her too. Never mind that we all went out to the movies the night before. Here’s a true Puerto Rican dish can be breakfast, lunch or dinner – at least in my house.

Revoltillo de Bacalao

3 tablespoons oil
1 medium yellow onion, sliced
½ red bell pepper, seeded and cut into strips
½ green bell pepper, seeded and cut into strips
1 small tomato, seeded and chopped small
1-1/2 pounds bacalao (salt codfish), desalted and shredded
6 eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste

Process the bacalao as usual. Rinse and boil for 30 minutes, change the water; boil for 20 minutes, change the water; boil once more for about 15 minutes. Drain and let the fish cool down, then shred with your fingers.

Heat the oil in a skillet and saute the onion and bell pepper over medium heat until the onion just browns. Add tomato and cook another 2 minutes or so. Add the codfish and eggs and cook until the eggs are set. Season with black pepper. Serve with toasted and buttered French bread.

*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.
**Seared Caribbean Salmon**

1 ½ teaspoons olive oil  
4 pieces, 6-ounce salmon fillets, about 1 1/4 inches thick  
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 pkt Sazón with achiote  
1 tsp Sazonador Total (Goya)

Set a large cast-iron skillet over high heat. When a drop of water skitters on the surface, after about 3 minutes, add the oil. Tilt the pan to coat the bottom evenly and heat until the oil is almost smoking, about 30 seconds.

Season the salmon with the salt, Sazón, and Sazonador and add to the skillet, skinned side down. Cook until golden brown on the bottom, about 5 minutes, pressing down with a flat instrument now and then. Turn the salmon, lower the heat to moderate and sear until just cooked, 2 to 3 minutes longer.

Serve with rice and tostones and a green salad.

**Ropa Vieja**

* A Cuban recipe adopted by Puerto Ricans

2 ½ lbs Flank steak, cut in approx. 3 inch x 4 inch strips  
2 tbsp olive oil  
Adobo with Pepper, to taste  
6 cloves fresh garlic, minced  
2 ½ cups onions, finely diced  
1 ½ cups green bell pepper, finely diced  
¼ tsp. ground black pepper  
1 can (8oz.) tomato sauce  
6 oz. sofrito  
3 cups water  
1 packet Sazón with coriander and annatto  
1 packet powered beef bouillon  
2 oz. capers, drained  
1 cup Manzanilla stuffed olives, sliced

Season meat with Adobo. In skillet, heat oil on medium high. Brown meat on both sides. Remove and keep warm. Lower heat to medium, stir in garlic, onion, and green pepper and cook stirring often until vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes. Stir in black pepper and tomato sauce and cook, stirring often for 5 minutes. Stir in Sofrito, water, Sazón and Bouillon and bring to a boil. Return meat to pan, cover, lower heat and simmer for 45 minutes stirring occasionally. Stir in the Capers and Olives and continue to simmer, covered until meat is very tender and shreds easily, about 1-1 ½ hours. Add more water, ¼ cup at a time, if sauce gets too dry. To serve, shred meat with 2 forks, mix back into sauce. Serve over rice.

**Olive Dip**

1 jar (6.75 oz.) Manzanilla olives with pimientos, drained and finely chopped  
2 pkgs. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, at room temperature  
½ cup mayo  
½ small yellow onion, finely chopped (about ½ cup)  
1 tsp. GOYA® Sazonador Total  
2 tbsp. finely chopped chives, divided

In medium bowl, using whisk, beat together cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Stir in olives, onions, Sazonador and 1 tbsp. chives. Transfer dip to refrigerator; chill until cold and firm, about 30 minutes. Sprinkle dip with remaining chives.
**Garbanzo Salad**

1 can chickpeas  
2 tbp chopped celery  
2 tbp chopped red pepper  
1/4 cup chopped broccoli  
2 tbp thinly sliced carrot  
1 thinly sliced green onion  
1.5 tbp chopped sun dried tomato (form jar)  
3/4 tsp cumin powder  
2 tsp Dijon mustard  
2 tsp red wine vinegar  
1 tbp extra virgin olive oil  
2 shakes Goya Sazonador Total  
1tbp chopped cilantro  
½ tsp crushed pepper flakes  
1 avocado sliced  

Salt and black pepper as per taste

Drain and rinse the chickpeas in colander and let them drain.

In a bowl, whisk together olive oil, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard and Sazonador Total.

In a large bowl warm chickpeas in microwave for 1 minute.
Toss with chopped red pepper, broccoli, carrot, sun dried tomato, celery, cilantro, crushed pepper flakes, green onion and cumin powder.

Drizzle dressing over Chickpea Salad. Mix nicely. Season with salt and pepper. Garnish with sliced avocado.

**Budín de Amarillos**

**Sweet Plantain Bread Pudding**

**For the Bread Pudding:**
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ lb. French bread, torn into bite-size pieces (5 cups), and dried out overnight

**For the caramel:**
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup water

Heat oven to 350°F. Add sugar and water to small saucepan set over medium-high heat. Bring water to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Using pastry brush dipped in water, clean off any sugar stuck to sides of pan. Continue to boil, without stirring, swirling pan over even cooking, until sugar caramelizes, turning deep amber, 10-12 minutes. Carefully pour caramel into heatproof 9”-diameter round pan. Set pan aside until caramel hardens and cools.

In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, heat milk, condensed milk, cinnamon and vanilla, stirring occasionally, until sides of milk begin to bubble, but milk does not boil. Remove pan from heat. Crack eggs into large, heat-proof bowl. Using whisk, lightly beat eggs. Whisk warm milk mixture into eggs, ¼ cup at a time, whisking vigorously to combine after each addition, until smooth and combined. Add dried bread to bowl, mixing to coat completely; let sit until bread is completely saturated, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, remove plastic wrapping from tray of ripe plantains. Microwave on high power until defrosted. Coarsely chop plantains; transfer to bowl with bread, stirring to combine.

Pour plantain mixture into prepared pan. Set pan in larger, deep baking pan. Add enough hot (not boiling) water to come half-way up the sides of round pan. Cover tightly with foil. Bake until bread pudding is puffed and thin knife inserted into center comes out clean, about 45 minutes.

Transfer bread pudding pan to cooling rack; cool to room temperature. To unmold, run thin knife around sides of pan. Invert onto serving plate. Cut into wedges; serve warm with vanilla ice cream, if desired.

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**Nuestra Cocina Criolla**

**Budín de Amarillos**

**Sweet Plantain Bread Pudding**

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Miguel Piñero, December 19, 1946 – June 16, 1988, was the first Puerto Rico to have a play debut on Broadway. The play was titled “Short Eyes” and ran on the stage in the 1970’s, after famous director Joseph Papp saw it performed at a church. It is the story of the lives of prison inmates. It is written from the memories of Mr. Piñero’s own history.

He lived a difficult childhood. Originally from Gurabo, Puerto Rico, he arrived on Manhattan’s Lower East side in 1950 at the age of four. A troubled upbringing landed him behind prison walls. The play “Short Eyes” was actually written while incarcerated. I suppose talent knows no barrier and the poet is a poet wherever he is.

The play went on to gain phenomenal acclaim. It was nominated for six Tony awards and won the Obie for best play of the year. “Short Eyes” was also made into a book, movie, and had great success in Europe as well.

Mr. Piñero was also the co-founder of the famous Nuyorican Poets Café on Lower Manhattan. The café prides itself on presenting the poetry that sings of the Nuyorican experience till this day.

He was a talented writer, playwright, and poet who unfortunately continued to live a troubled life. However, he made history on the Broadway stage. Perhaps, that is how he should be remembered.

Mr. Piñero’s other works for the theater included “Straight From the Ghetto,” “Eulogy for a Small-Time Thief,” “The Sun Always Shines for the Cool,” and “A Midnight Moon at the Greasy Spoon.” His Art Imitated His Life.

Miguel Piñero died of cirrhosis of the liver at Bellevue Hospital in NYC. He was 41 years old and lived in the Bronx.

*Betty is a literacy teacher in Harlem and writes children’s books. She is publishing her first, “La Despeinada” in late spring. Betty lives with her two children Natasha and Xavier in Brooklyn, New York.