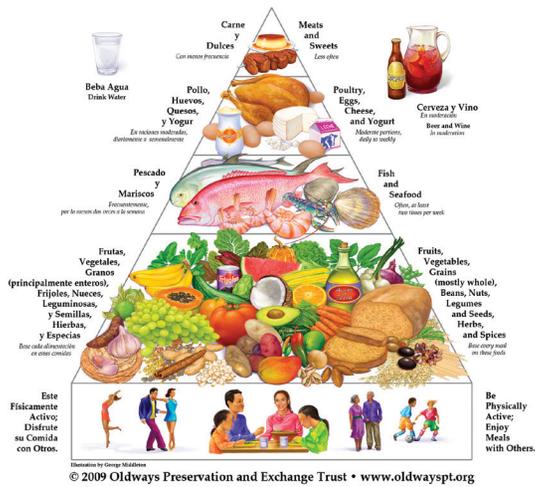


Latin American Heritage Diet Pyramid



The Latin American Heritage Diet Pyramid is a guide to the healthy traditional diets of people throughout Latin America. Base your meals mostly on a variety of foods closest to the bottom layer of the pyramid.

- **Cook at home and eat with others** as often as possible; move, stretch, dance, and play throughout your day for daily low-impact exercise and enjoyment.
- **Eat plant-based foods every day!** Enjoy vegetables, fruits, whole grains and cereals, beans, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices, tubers, and healthy fats, like avocados and olive oil, in abundance. These are the core Latin American heritage foods to shop for, prepare, and eat most often.
- **Enjoy fish and seafood at least two times per week** combined with the plant-based foods. Enjoy seafood grilled, broiled, lightly pan cooked in water, herbs, and healthy oil, or cured in citrus like in Latin America's popular *ceviche*.
- **Eat eggs, poultry and dairy modestly**, in small portions, or used as garnishes. *Queso fresco* is a fresh cheese staple added to soups or crumbled on salads in South American cooking. If you are lactose intolerant, enjoy other calcium-rich foods like leafy greens and beans.
- **Meats and sweets**, at the top of the pyramid, are foods to **eat less often**, maybe once a week or at special meals in smaller portions.
- **Drink plenty of water throughout the day.** If you drink alcohol, stop at one glass per day for women, two glasses for men.

Health Through Heritage

The chronic diseases we know today, like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity, were much less common in earlier times when people ate traditional diets. Scientific studies show that conditions like these skyrocket as traditional diets are left behind.

The Latin American Diet Pyramid is based on scientific research that shows eating traditional diets, more like our ancestors, can help to:

- Lower your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke
- Prevent or slow the risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- Fight certain cancers and many chronic diseases
- Reduce asthma, glaucoma, and kidney disease
- Achieve a healthy weight and avoid obesity
- And more!

Easy Latin Heritage Recipes

You can use healthy Latin American heritage ingredients to create simple, beautiful dishes like:

- Black Bean Soup
- Sweet Potato Pumpkin Seed Casserole
- Spicy Vegetable Tostadas
- Peruvian Quinoa & Orange Salad
- Plus dozens more!



To find recipes and details on the latest scientific studies for enjoying health through heritage, visit the Oldways website and browse "Latin American Diet" (under "Traditional Diets") at:

www.oldwayspt.org

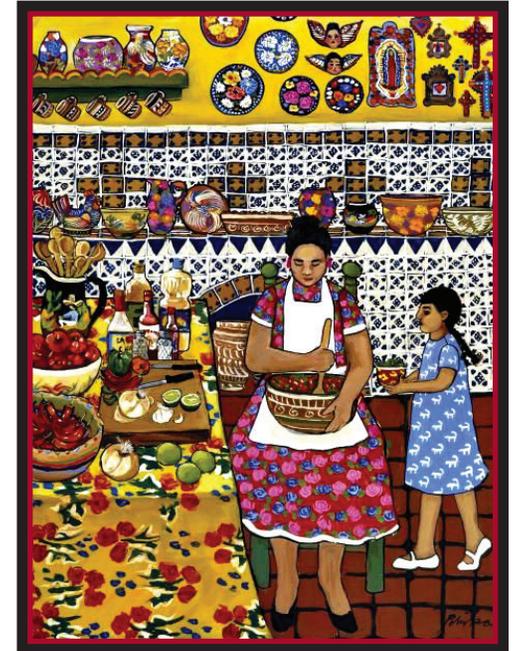


266 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02116 USA
617-421-5500

© 2016 Oldways Preservation Trust

Welcome to the Latin American Heritage Diet

Claiming Your Health by Claiming Your History



My Grandmother's Kitchen

Donna Polvika

Let the best of the old ways—the best of our ancestors—be our guide to good health and well-being.

By eating like our ancestors, we can have a healthy heart, a strong body, lots of energy, and a long, healthy life.

We have the power to claim all of this using heritage as our guide.

Brought to you by



Latin Americans' Healthy Heritage

Latin America includes the states and territories that stretch from the southern border of the United States to the southern tip of South America, including the Caribbean. It is home to three romance languages—Spanish, Portuguese and French—and many different ancestries and ethnicities, making it one of the most diverse regions in the world.

The traditional foods and cuisines found across Latin America come from a blend of traditions from four major cultures: the native inhabitants (Aztecs, Incas, Mayans, and other Native Americans), the Spanish, the Portuguese, and continental Africans. These traditions share many common staple foods and cooking practices, stemming from the local agriculture and cultures.

The **Latin American Heritage Diet Pyramid** illustrates the foods and eating patterns shared across the regions. Throughout Latin America, you will find maize-based dishes (tortillas, tamales, polenta to name a few); colorful salsas made from various chilies, seeds and nuts; beans of all kinds; tubers like sweet potatoes and yams; fragrant fruits; savory seafood cuisines; and, vegetables in abundance, like zucchini, squash, okra, and *nopales* (cactus).

The Latin American Heritage Diet Pyramid is an important tool to address health conditions like heart disease, obesity and diabetes, which in the U.S. are experienced disproportionately by people of Latin American and Hispanic descent. Like many others, Latin Americans who come to the U.S. often lose their traditions to unhealthy eating habits like high-calorie, low-nutrition meals, fast-food, and getting less exercise than they once did in their home countries. By celebrating and reclaiming the healthy foods and eating traditions found across Latin America, we hope to see nutrition and good health rise in the Latino and Hispanic communities.



10 Steps to Enjoy Health Through Latin American Heritage

1. Load Up Your Plate with Vegetables. Latin America is home to countless vegetables. Zucchini, carrots, tomatillos, squash, leafy greens, eggplant, okra, chilies, and cactus are just a few of the vegetables that make soups, tamales, empanadas, and other traditional dishes sing.



2. Go for Bold Flavors with Herbs, Spices, Citrus, and Pickled Vegetables. With so many regional cuisines to choose from—from Mexico to Chile to Brazil to the Caribbean Islands—you'll meet lots of flavors with Latin heritage as your guide. Fresh herbs like cilantro and oregano, chili peppers, lime juice, and pickled onions are all traditional ways to add fabulous flavor to grains, beans, vegetables, and seafood.



3. Explore Latin America's Whole Grains. Amaranth, quinoa, whole corn and cornmeal, wild rice, and wheat berries are some of the many whole grains native to Latin America. The whole grain quinoa (pronounced keen-wah) has been grown in the Andean regions of Peru, Chile and Bolivia for thousands of years. With a cook time of only 15 minutes, this ancient Latin American grain is a wonderful addition to any healthy meal.



4. Change the Way You Think About Meat. Traditionally, meat was eaten in very small amounts or saved for special occasions, such as holidays or festive family meals. Use meat as a garnish or as a small-portion ingredient combined with lots of vegetables, herbs and spices, like in Mexico's enchiladas or Brazil's *feijoada*, a black bean stew.



5. Enjoy Fresh Fish and Seafood. Latin American cuisine features bright *ceviches*, grilled fish tacos, seafood paella, shrimp salads, and fish stews, and you can enjoy them too! A high-fiber traditional diet of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, combined with fish twice a week, has been linked to lower rates of obesity, heart disease and diabetes around the world.



6. Get Back to Your Roots. Potatoes rival corn as the oldest and most important Latin American crop and they are full of fiber and nutrition. There are over 8,000 varieties—from white to purple to sweet potatoes—in the Andean region alone. Potatoes aren't the only roots to dig into—taro, cassava and yams are just a few other Latin American tubers to try.



7. Celebrate the "Three Sisters." For many indigenous people in the Americas, the three main agricultural crops—corn (or maize), beans, and squash—were called the Three Sisters. These high-fiber, nutritious crops were all interdependent on one another and these are at the heart of a traditional Latin American diet.



8. Enjoy Fruits Every Day. Fruits burst with flavor and nutrients, and can satisfy our cravings for sweets. Mangoes, guava, pineapple, cherimoya, papayas, and passionfruit are just the beginning of a long list of Latin American fruits to enjoy for breakfasts, snacks and desserts.



9. La Familia and Mealtimes. Enjoying traditional foods is an expression of who we are and where we come from. "To cook this food is to help knit the fabric of family," writes cookbook author Maricel Presilla. Sharing healthy heritage meals with friends and family invites all to celebrate culture, history, family, and good health.

10. Find Real Foods Everywhere. At a corner store, buy peanuts or fruit; at a lunch buffet, load your plate with salad, veggies, grains, and beans. Look to Latin American heritage whole foods, in their natural state, to crowd out processed and packaged "convenience foods" whenever you can.