

Your Life & Food

Star-Telegram
Wednesday, February 17, 2010



THE COWGIRL CHEF



Pair jalapeño black-bean dip with a bowl of tortilla chips for party munching.

SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/ELLISE PIERCE

Street-food serenade

By ELLISE PIERCE Special to the Star-Telegram

PARIS — A couple of months ago, I was in Mexico City for culinary school, and as part of our education about the country's cuisine, we were shuttled around the capital — in somewhat sketchy taxis — to some of the city's top restaurants.

At Pujol in the upscale Polanco district, I sucked chicharrones, avocado and tomato out of a glass straw, served with a shooter of liquid quesadilla with avocado foam. Later that week at Ricardo Munoz's restaurant, Azul, I tasted a rich and creamy squash blossom soup with a delicate Frenchy pastry crust.

But my favorite food in Mexico City, hands down, was from the street vendors — near my hotel in the trendy Condesa district where I found crispy, fried quesadillas stuffed with picadillo, or in the San Juan mercado downtown, where I crunched on footlong, cigar-thin chicken flautas, covered with shredded cabbage, salsa verde and a generous squirt of crema.

If I had to do it all over again, I'd skip restaurants altogether and spend my days and nights

More on STREET FOOD on 2E

You can find fine cuisine in Mexico City, but some of the freshest flavors — and best party foods — are sold by vendors in stalls



Pile crispy pork carnitas and pickled red onions onto a Mexican-style bun.

SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/ELLISE PIERCE



Spoon Mexican shrimp cocktail into clear glasses.

SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/ELLISE PIERCE

OLYMPICS WATCH



The Vancouver Olympics' mascots serve as a backdrop for a woman riding a zip line.

Mascot montage

Have you met Miga, Quatchi and Sumi? No, they're not Olympic speedskaters or snowboarders, but the mascots of the Winter Games in Vancouver. And what would the Olympics be without those friendly, sometimes furry creatures that help boost merchandizing sales?

Olympic mascots date to 1972, when Waldi the dachshund made his debut at the Summer Games in Munich. They have been staples of the Olympics ever since. Often, there is just one mascot like Cobi the dog from Barcelona in 1992, Hodori the tiger from the 1988

Seoul Olympics and Izzy, the indefinable mascot from the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta.

But sometimes the job is too big for one mascot. The 1988 Winter Games in Calgary featured polar bears Howdy and Heidi. When the Olympics returned to Athens, their birthplace, in 2004, the mascots were the odd-looking brother and sister tandem of Athena and Phevos.

The trio representing these Vancouver Olympics represent the sea, mountains and land. Miga is a sea bear, which is part killer whale and part Kermodie bear, which is a rare white bear

that lives only in British Columbia.

Quatchi represents the legendary sasquatch, which lives in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, or so many people believe. According to Vancouver 2010, the official Olympic Web site, Quatchi is partial to hockey and wanted to be a goalie.

Sumi is described as an animal spirit that lives in the mountains of Whistler and has bearlike legs and wings that enable it to soar above the mountains. Sumi might want to avoid the airspace around the ski jump these next two weeks.

— Pete Alfano

OSCAR MOMENTS

Movie memories of this year's nominees

The category: Best Supporting Actress

The actress: Mo'Nique

The movie: *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire*
The moment: Comedian Mo'Nique is no laughing matter as Mary, the woman who should win the worst-mother-of-the-year award, in *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire*. As *Precious*' physically and emotionally abusive mom, Mo'Nique seems to tap into a level of anger and rage that she would never have reached in past roles in *Soul Plane* or on *The Parkers*. She hits rock bottom in what is the movie's most traumatic and harrowing scene when, disturbed by *Precious*' latest innocent infraction against her unfathomable and mercurial moral code, she picks up the television from its stand and sends it hurtling down a stairway toward *Precious* and her newborn baby. Fortunately, her aim is as off as her good sense.

— Cary Darling



Mo'Nique channels her rage as Mary in *Precious*.

THE OSCARS

Hit the red carpet for dfw.com's Oscars party

Get all the details about the evening at the Modern on 8E

TODAY'S AGENDA

Two of a kind

Merle Haggard and Kris Kristofferson should be all the incentive needed to make tracks to Bass Hall at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday. A ticket for an appearance by either man is money well-spent; the two of 'em onstage, doubtless swapping fascinating stories, well . . . we pity folks who are on the fence. Between them, Haggard and Kristofferson have inspired numerous singer-songwriters of all musical persuasions. The classics are many — Haggard's *Mama Tried* or *The Fightin' Side of Me*, Kristofferson's *Sunday Morning Coming Down* or *Help Me Make It Through the Night* — and the two continue to record. Kristofferson's *Closer to the Bone* dropped last year, and Haggard will offer *I Am What I Am* this spring. \$55-\$75. 817-212-4280; www.basshall.com

Donate a blanket

You have until Thursday to donate a new or gently used blanket to the Sears Operation Blanket program. Through the AMVETS veterans service organization, the blankets are distributed to homeless military veterans to make winter just a bit warmer. There's something in it for you, too: For each blanket you drop off at your nearest Sears store, you'll receive a store discount coupon (20 percent off fashion and home decor; 10 percent off housewares, luggage and furniture, excluding mattresses). To find the nearest store, go to www.sears.com.

Have an item for Agenda? Send it to listings@star-telegram.com.

CALL TO READERS

Were you on a roll? Show us your snowman photos 8E

CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS



Everage

Actor **Hal Holbrook** is 85. Comedian **Dame Edna Everage** (Barry Humphries) is 76. Actress **Rene Russo** is 56. Actor **Lou Diamond Phillips** is 48. Comedian **Larry the Cable Guy** is 47. Singer **Chante Moore** is 43. Guitarist **Tim Mahoney** of 311 is 40. Actor **Dominic Purcell** (*Prison Break*) is 40. Actress **Denise Richards** is 39. Actor **Jason Ritter** (*Joan of Arcadia*) is 30.

NOTABLE DEATH

1982 On this date, **Lee Strasberg**, artistic director of the Actors Studio who conceived the "method" school of acting, died at age 80.

WHAT'S AHEAD

THU Great kids' books about winter sports **In Your Family**

FRI Jay-Z is coming to Dallas; we muse on his nonrap collaborations **In Go!**

SAT Craft some homemade "ugly" dolls **In Your Home**

SUN We chat with Frankie Valli, who's coming to Bass Hall **In Your Life, Arts & Travel**



MON We go one-on-one with Dr. Oz **In Your Health**

Street food: Super-easy recipes make great fare for a casual weekend party

CONTINUED FROM 1E

grazing from stall to stall, street to street, and sample it all — the blue corn bean-stuffed tla-coyos; the sandal-shaped huachucas, and shawarma-style tacos al pastor — all served with the simplest of garnishes — chopped onion, jalapeño, and cilantro, and a choice of freshly made salsas, red or green.

“Mexican cuisine has a reputation for being heavy, but it’s not,” said Pujol chef/owner Enrique Olvera. “It’s very straightforward and balanced.”

There’s nothing fussy about it. Clean flavors and lotsa heat makes Mexican cuisine — especially street food — the world’s latest flavor-of-the-month. Chicago’s own Top Chef, Rick Bayless, just opened the newest sibling to his Frontera Grill and Topolobampo restaurants, Xoco, which focuses primarily on street food. On a larger scale, Chipotle recently announced plans to expand into the U.K. and Europe, too. (Come on! Hurry up!)

It’s also super-easy food to make at home, especially for a casual weekend party — just lay it out, and let folks build their own tacos, or tortas, while you pour yourself another mar-

garita.

Here’s a do-ahead menu that you can make Friday for a Saturday-night party. Tortas carnitas — Mexican-style barbecue pork sandwiches — are a great anchor and cook up in the slow cooker while you’re at work. Use precooked, peeled shrimp for the spicy Mexican shrimp cocktails and it takes less than 10 minutes to assemble.

Warm cups of corn with lime, chipotle sour cream and cilantro are my take on what you’ll find everywhere in Mexico, usually served in a plastic-foam cup, but taken up a notch — with sour cream instead of mayo, and a smoky chipotle bite. All you do is warm up the corn on the stove, and put it together. With a hand blender, and a couple of whirs, you’ve got jalapeño-black bean dip — a more modern take on the old school canned dip that we used to eat with big, fat Fritos (remember those?).

Simple and quick, this little Mexican street food menu is almost as fun to put together as the party itself. If you want to sing *La Cucaracha* while you’re in the kitchen, we won’t mind at all.

Tortas carnitas with pickled red onions

The beauty of this recipe (besides its deliciousness) is that you can make this in the slow cooker a day or two ahead of your party, and then cook the pork to perfect carnita crispness the day of. I serve this on a thick piece of bread, like a baguette, which can soak up lots of the juices, along with the traditional side, pickled red onions.

Serves 8

- 1 recipe carnitas, recipe follows
- 4 baguettes
- 1 recipe pickled red onions, recipe follows
- 4 medium avocados, halved and sliced

1. Slice the baguettes lengthwise, as you would for sandwiches. Warm up the carnitas in a 350-degree oven for 10-15 minutes, or until crispy, and heap the pork onto the bread.

2. Add avocado slices and red onions, and slice to your preferred sandwich size — this should make 2 good-size sandwiches per baguette, or 4 smaller ones.

Serve with a side of the yummy pork juice; it’ll make the bread all soggy, but who cares? **Nutritional analysis per serving:** 726 calories, 32 grams fat, 76 grams carbohydrates, 34 grams protein, 62 milligrams cholesterol, 698 milligrams sodium, 6 grams dietary fiber, 40 percent of calories from fat.

Carnitas

This is one of my favorite recipes — it elevates pork shoulder into something completely divine. The meat can be used in tacos, in a torta or as I also sometimes like to do, as a pizza topping (seriously!).

Serves 8

- 2 pounds pork shoulder, cut into 3-inch chunks
- 1 medium white onion, chopped into big pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and left whole
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon Mexican oregano
- 1 teaspoon Spanish paprika (see note) or chipotle powder
- Sea salt
- Black pepper
- Water

1. Place all of the ingredients in a slow cooker, including a generous (around 2 tablespoons) bit of salt and the pepper. Stir everything together, and add water, just to cover the pork by two-thirds. Cook on low 5-6 hours. Let cool and refrigerate until ready to eat, or: 2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put pork and just a tiny bit of the juice in a casserole dish, and cook for an additional 15-20 minutes, or until the pork gets crispy. Yum! (This really cooks down. I’d guess that this makes enough for 8 sandwiches, or 10-12 tacos.)

Note: You can find Spanish paprika (Santo Domingo is my absolute favorite for its unique smokiness) at www.cybercucina.com.

Nutritional analysis per serving: 266 calories, 18 grams fat, 2 grams carbohydrates, 23 grams protein, 62 milligrams cholesterol, 79 milligrams sodium, trace dietary fiber, 61 percent of calories from fat.

Pickled red onions

Although these onions are a staple in Mexican cuisine and work well on tortas and tacos, they add great color and flavor to any sandwich — burgers, grilled cheese, you name it — or salad.

Makes about 2 cups

- 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 20 whole peppercorns
- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 1/2 cup sugar
- Juice of 1 lime
- Sea salt

1. Toast cumin and peppercorns on a comal or in a cast-iron skillet. Set aside. When cool, crush peppercorns with back of a knife and rough chop the cumin, too. 2. Put kettle on to boil. Pour about 2 cups of boiling water over sliced onions and sugar in a medium bowl. Let sit for 30 seconds to 1 minute. 3. Now add lime juice, cumin, peppercorns and salt, and toss. Refrigerate for at least an hour before you eat these. The onions will keep in the fridge for a week or more.

Nutritional analysis per 1/4 cup serving: 65 calories, trace fat, 17 grams carbohydrates, 1 gram protein, no cholesterol, 2 milligrams sodium, 1 gram dietary fiber, 2 percent of calories from fat.



SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/ELLISE PIERCE

Mexican corn with chipotle crème fraîche

Mexican shrimp cocktail

When I’m in Dallas, I always order the shrimp cocktail at La Calle Doce, my neighborhood Tex-Mex place, served in a tall parfait glass and with saltine crackers on the side. Here’s my take on its cocktail, spiced up with chipotle and with chunks of avocado, for added color and flavor.

Makes 4 servings

- 1 1/2 cups tomato puree
- 1 chipotle chile (in adobo)
- 2 tablespoons red onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped
- Juice of 1 lime, plus slices for garnish
- Sea salt
- Pepper
- 8 ounces cooked, shelled shrimp
- 1 large avocado, 1/2-inch dice
- 1 Roma tomato, 1/2-inch dice

1. In a medium bowl, put in everything but the shrimp, avocado, and tomato. Stir to combine. Now, gently fold in the shrimp, avocado and tomato, and refrigerate for an hour before serving. 2. Serve in small glasses with a bit of cilantro on top, along with lime slices and tortilla chips.

Nutritional analysis per serving: 195 calories, 9 grams fat, 17 grams carbohydrates, 15 grams protein, 86 milligrams cholesterol, 490 milligrams sodium, 4 grams dietary fiber, 39 percent of calories from fat.

Mexican corn

I first tasted this street food staple in Patzcuaro, during a Day of the Dead celebration. This is traditionally served with mayonnaise and a sprinkle of chili powder, but I thought that it would be fun to make this with sour cream and chipotle. Cilantro and a squeeze of lime makes this even brighter. Would be great using grilled corn.

Makes 4 servings

- 14 ounces corn (canned or frozen)
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- 1 recipe chipotle crème fraîche, recipe follows
- Limes (for serving)

1. If using canned corn, first, drain the corn. Then, in a medium saucepan, heat the corn all the way through about 10-15 minutes. 2. In a medium bowl, mix the corn with the cilantro. Now, layer the corn halfway in the serving glasses, add a spoonful of the chipotle sour cream. Add more corn, and top with chipotle sour cream, and a sprinkle of cilantro. 3. Serve with limes. Can also be served cold or at room temperature. **Nutritional analysis per serving:** 409 calories, 34 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrates, 7 grams protein, 104 milligrams cholesterol, 101 milligrams sodium, 3 grams dietary fiber, 70 percent of calories from fat.

Chipotle crème fraîche

Makes 2 cups

- 16 ounces crème fraîche or sour cream
 - 2-3 chipotle chiles
- Put chipotles in food processor and pulse a few times to chop them up. Add crème fraîche and blend.

Nutritional analysis per 2-tablespoon serving: 82 calories, 8 grams fat, 2 grams carbohydrates, trace protein, 26 milligrams cholesterol, 24 milligrams sodium, 1 gram dietary fiber, 91 percent of calories from fat.

Jalapeño-black bean dip

For those who remember the cans of bean dip from the ‘70s, here’s an updated version that you’re gonna just love.

Makes 4-6 cups

- 4-6 cups cooked black beans
- 6-8 jalapeños (pickled)
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- Corn oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- Queso fresco or feta (for garnish)
- Cilantro (for garnish)

1. Drain black beans in a colander. Once the liquid is gone, pour beans into a bowl, and add jalapeños and cumin and blend with a hand blender. Don’t over-blend — you want this to be a bit chunky. 2. Drizzle a bit of corn oil or lard in a skillet and add the garlic. Turn on medium-high heat. Let the garlic cook a bit, then add the beans and cook for about 3-5 minutes. 3. Serve warm with a bit of queso fresco and cilantro and a big bowl of tortilla chips.

Nutritional analysis per 1-tablespoon serving, based on 4-cup yield: 17 calories, trace fat, 3 grams carbohydrates, 1 gram protein, no cholesterol, 4 milligrams sodium, 1 gram dietary fiber, 15 percent of calories from fat.

30-Year Anniversary Special
EUROPEAN SKINCARE INSTITUTE
 Spa Therapy
Purchase any 4 Body Treatments, Massages or Body Wraps and Receive 30% Off!
 Good through February 28, 2010
Fort Worth 817.731.0707 | 1.800.SKIN CARE | Colleyville 817.251.8484

ASK ABOUT SPRING SPECIALS
DON'T REPLACE - REFINISH!
 In Home • Without Removal! Full Warranty, Like New!
 www.bathsolutionsusa.com
 111 Melbourne Road, Hurst
 Tens of thousands in Tarrant Co. Since 1984
817.429.2318
BATH SOLUTIONS

LET THIS BE YOUR LAST "FAT TUESDAY"
BODY CONTOURING
 EMILY B. MCLAVGHLIN, M.D.
 COSMETIC PLASTIC SURGEON
 1200 W. MAGNOLIA, STE 110
817-870-4833

JKS International Salons
 High End Surroundings with Affordable Prices
\$68
 • Highlight & Haircut
 • Color & Haircut
 • Perm & Haircut
 Selected Stylists, Medium & Long Hair More
 Camp Bowie 817-731-7575
 Winthrop Ave. 817-732-1010
 Basswood-Keller 817-503-9494
 Lake Worth 817-238-1000
 Burleson 817-426-9292
 (book on line) www.jkssalon.com

FLAX
 Linen Clothing
 at **THE MERCANTILE**
Coming Soon
FLAX in RED HOT RED
 Pants • Tops • Jackets • Pants
 Petite thru Generous Sizes
 7200 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth, TX 76116
817-377-0910
 www.tinstarsampler.com

Hot Flashes?
 Ask about **Bio Identical Hormone Replacement Therapy.**
Spence Pharmacy
(817) 626-3744
 4821 River Oaks Blvd.

Unleash Your Creativity with Fired Arts
 Announcing Our New Class!
Beginning Sculpture
 Starts Feb. 22
 8 weeks
\$250
 Register Now!
 Pottery Wheel Sessions
 Start February 21
 6 weeks • \$180
 Glass Fusing Course
 Starts February 25
 6 weeks • \$200
Brushstrokes Studio & Gallery
 4400 W. Vickery Blvd • Ft. Worth
817-731-9249
 www.brushstrokesfiredarts.com

NEZHONI
 Contemporary Southwestern Jewelry and Gemstone Studio
30% OFF Consignment Continues
 www.NEZHONI.com
 Browse the sale online, and while you're here, Check out new jewelry by *Bev Etsate*.
 "on the bricks"
817-377-1140
 4319 Camp Bowie, Fort Worth, Texas
 Tues. - Fri. 10 - 6, Sat. 10 - 4

HOLIDAY DEPOT LIQUOR
UNBEEETABLE
5900 S. Freeway 817-293-2571
6520 Randol Mill 817-457-7545
FEB. 17-20

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| CHIVAS 12 YR 80° scotch 1.75L \$477 | RUSKOVA (RUSSIA) 80° vodka 1.75L \$177 | EVAN WILLIAM GREEN 80° bourbon 1.75L \$1299 |
| MACALLAN 12 YR 83° single malt 750ML \$399 | SVEDKA (SWEDEN) 80° vodka 1.75L \$177 | WINDSOR 80° whisky 1.75L \$1299 |
| DEWAR'S 80° scotch 1.75L \$339 | POLAR ICE (CANADA) 80° vodka 1.75L \$177 | BENCHMARK 80° bourbon 1.75L \$1399 |
| CUTTY SARK 80° scotch 1.75L \$244 | JIM BEAM 80° bourbon 1.75L \$237 | HIGHLAND MIST 80° scotch 1.75L \$1399 |
| BALLENTINE 80° scotch 1.75L \$199 | VIKING FJORD (NORWAY) 80° vodka 1.75L \$177 | AGAVALS 80° tequila 1.75L \$1677 |
| GLENLIVET 12 YR 80° single malt 750ML \$339 | JUAREZ 80° tequila 1.75L \$177 | RON RICO 80° rum 1.75L \$1399 |
| JACK DANIEL BLK 80° whisky 1.75L \$388 | DRIPPING SPRINGS 80° vodka 1.75L \$255 | FLEISHMAN'S 80° brandy 1.75L \$1299 |
| WELLER 90° bourbon 1.75L \$288 | RUSSIAN STANDARD 80° vodka 1.75L \$277 | RICH & RARE 80° whisky 1.75L \$1199 |
| HENNESSY V.S. 80° cognac 750ML \$299 | ABSOLUT 80° vodka 1.75L \$299 | BURNETT'S 80° vodka 1.75L \$1199 |
| EVAN WILLIAM BLK 80° bourbon 1.75L \$177 | REMY MARTIN V.S.O.P. 80° cognac 750ML \$299 | SKOL 80° rum 1.75L \$1099 |
| WILD TURKEY 101° bourbon 1.75L \$338 | EL JIMADOR BLA./REP. 80° tequila 1.75L \$299 | JAMES FOX 80° rum 1.75L \$1099 |
| BUFFALO TRACE 90° bourbon 1.75L \$329 | MARGARITAVILLE 80° tequila 1.75L \$249 | CARSTAIRS 80° whisky 1.75L \$999 |
| CROWN ROYAL 80° scotch 1.75L \$469 | SAUZA SILVER/GOLD 80° tequila 1.75L \$299 | SAILOR JERRY 92° rum 1.75L \$1999 |
| BOMBAY SAPPHIRE 94° gin 1.75L \$349 | HPNOTIQ 34° liqueur 750ML \$2199 | CLAN MACGREGOR 80° scotch 1.75L \$1373 |
| SEAGRAM'S 80° vodka/gin/rum 1.75L \$1699 | E&J V.S. 80° brandy 1.75L \$1499 | TAAKA 80° vodka/gin 1.75L \$899 |

DON'S BUTCHER SHOP
 - OPEN SUNDAY -
 4016 Mansfield Hwy.
817-535-0171

| | |
|---|--|
| CHICKEN LEG QUARTER \$4.99 | PORK BUTT 99¢ LB |
| ASSORTED PORK CHOPS \$1.29 | BOTTOM ROUND STEAK \$2.39 |
| STEW MEAT \$2.49 LB | FRYER THIGH 79¢ LB |
| COUNTRY STYLE PORK RIB \$1.19 LB | POLK HOT LINK SAUSAGE \$9.99 |
| COVERED WAGON BACON 5 LB BOX \$8.99 | SMOKEY CHICKEN DENMARK \$28.99 |

WE ACCEPT American Express, MasterCard, Visa & Discover
 Expires 2-24-10

\$10.00 OFF
Rayovac® Laptop Batteries
 Mail-In Rebate. Some exclusions may apply. Offer valid thru 2/28/10.
Batteries Plus
FORT WORTH 5825 Camp Bowie
817.377.2288
ARLINGTON 3430 S. Cooper St.
817.467.0613
N. RICHLAND HILLS 5041 Davis Blvd.
817.428.8658
OPENING SOON!
SOUTHLAKE 2757 E. Southlake Blvd.
817.428.8658
 BatteriesPlus.com

Pulido's
 In business over 40 years
February Special
Enchilada Dinner or Taco Dinner
\$3.99
 offer expires 2/28/10
 Dine in Only
 10 locations, see our website for the one nearest you!
 www.pulidosrestaurant.com