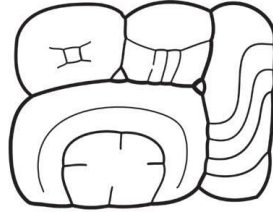


**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE AMERICAS:  
MAYA CULTURES ACROSS TIME**



**Yale Peabody Museum-PIER-CLAIS 2012 Summer Institute for High School Teachers,  
Yale University, New Haven, CT, July 9-13, 2012**

**Cultural Heritage: Traditional Mexican Cuisine Across Time**



San Lorenzo Zinacantán, Chiapas, MX (E. Weisenbach, 2012)

**Cultural Heritage: Traditional Mexican Cuisine Across Time**

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**Subject Area:** Art, Social Studies, Spanish

**Grade Level(s):** 11-12

**Number of Lessons in the Unit:** 4

***Unit Description***

In 2010, Traditional Mexican Cuisine was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Intangible cultural heritage represents inherited traditions from the past as well as contemporary practices. In this unit, students will learn about the cultural importance of Mexican cuisine across time by studying Pre-columbian Maya artifacts, colonial codices, contemporary posters, street art and other primary sources. Indigenous ethnic diversity, combined with the infusion of Old World foods upon the arrival of the Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, has created a cuisine worthy of a place on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This unit is in English for use in Art or Social Studies classes and can be adapted to the proficiency level of the Spanish language learners. Many of the online sources recommended in this unit are available in English and Spanish.

***Objectives***

Students will discuss the importance of traditional Mexican cuisine across time as depicted in Pre-columbian artifacts, colonial documents and contemporary arts.

Students will write an essay explaining the significance of the National Day of Corn and the expression "Sin Maíz No Hay País".

Students will debate the positive and negative impact of NAFTA and Genetically Modified corn on Mexican culture.

***Essential Questions***

How can we understand the cultural characteristics of ancient civilizations by studying artifacts in museum collections?

How can we use virtual archives and databases to locate images of Mexican cuisine across time?

How can an interpretation of the past help us examine and understand the present?

What are the factors that threaten our cultural heritage?

How do people preserve their most important customs and values?

## Note to Teachers

Preparation for teaching this unit, *Cultural Heritage: Traditional Mexican Cuisine Across Time* should include a review of Mexican ethnic diversity, indigenous foods and the impact of the Spanish Conquest on the Americas. The PBS production, *When Worlds Collide: The Untold Story of the Americas After Columbus*, funded by The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the National Endowment for the Humanities, The Delux Corporation, and Tour España, traces the impact of the Conquest on the Americas as well as American influences on Europe. The video gives an overview of early New World Civilizations. It explores identity, ethnicity and also foods native to the Americas, and those introduced by the Europeans. The video is an excellent new look at the Old World and the New for teachers and students alike. Byker, Carl. *When Worlds Collide: The Untold Story of the Americas After Columbus*.

Other sites for background on the diversity of the indigenous populations of the Americas are: *Native Languages of the Americas: Preserving and Promoting American Indian Languages* <http://www.native-languages.org/mexico.htm>. In addition to information on language, it features a history and culture link.

*Mexconnect*, an electronic magazine with articles on indigenous peoples, ethnic diversity and traditional food.

<http://www.mexconnect.com/search?search%5Btext%5D=indigenous+people&commit=Search>

<http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/371-the-indigenous-people-of-oaxaca>

<http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1932-ethnic-diversity-in-mexico>

Mexican cuisine has evolved over thousands of years and reflects the influence of diverse indigenous traditions, which have blended with European foods creating unique flavors. Useful sources include:

Barros, Christina. "Cocina Prehispanica Recetario." *Edicion Especial Arqueologia Mexicana* Nov. 2002: n. pag. Web. <http://arqueomex.com> . Spanish and English

Coe, Sophie D. *America's First Cuisines*. Austin: University of Texas, 1994. Print.

A description of Aztec, Maya and Inca cuisine based on original accounts by Europeans and Native Americans.

*Cultura Gastronomica De Mexico*. N.p., n.d. Web. <https://www.facebook.com/CultGastMex/>  
Facebook page with the history of Mexican cuisine. Spanish.

*Food Timeline* includes information about Aztec, Inca, Maya and traditional food  
<http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodmexican.html>.



## **Cultural Heritage Traditional Mexican Cuisine Across Time**

### **Lesson 1 Cultural Heritage**

**Activity 1** Defining Cultural Identity and Cultural Heritage

**Activity 2** Identifying Traditional Cultural Heritage: Focus on Food

#### **Handouts**

1.1 Cultural Heritage- Cultural Identity Organizer

1.1 Patrimonio Cultural-Hoja para Identidad cultural

1.2 UNESCO Traditional Mexican Cuisine –Video- Questions

1.2 UNESCO Traditional Mexican Cuisine -Video-preguntas; Español

1.3 Moctezuma's Dinner English or Spanish

1.4 Cumbia del Mole- Lila Downs-preguntas; Español

1.5 El Maíz, poema de Gasparo Pedro Gonzalez- preguntas; Español

### **Lesson 2 Using Ancient Maya Artifacts to Learn About Indigenous Contributions to Mexican Cuisine**

**Activity 1** Small Group Analysis of Maya Vase

**Activity 2** Field Trip to Yale University Art Gallery Ancient Americas Collection

**Activity 3** Web Based Search for Images

#### **Handouts**

2.1 Guided Observation and Object Based Learning Strategies

2.2 Museum Activity Sheet

2.3 Hoja para actividades en un museum

### **Lesson 3 Tracing Mexican Cuisine During the Colonial Period **UPDATE****

**Activity 1** On-line Collections of Colonial Documents

**Activity 2** Presenting Colonial Documents Using 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Tools

### **Lesson 4 Threats to Traditional Mexican Cuisine **NEED TO RE-WRITE****

**Activity 1** Genetically Modified Foods and NAFTA

**Activity 2** Street Art and Contemporary Expression

**Activity 3** Food Sovereignty Tour to Chiapas

**Special Resources REMOVE??**

**Technology Tools**

**Vocabulary**