



Food Culture in Central America (Food Culture around the World)

Michael R. McDonald

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Food Culture in Central America illustrates the unique foodways of the region in depth—and in English—for the first time. Important foods and ingredients, techniques, and lore associated with food preparation are surveyed. Typical meals eaten at home are presented, with attention to the cultural context in which those meals take place, including regional or national differences. The book also examines various meal settings—street vendors, modest *comedors*, and fancy restaurants. The role of food in common festivals and life cycle rituals is explored as well, including Christmas, *Semana Santa*, and *Quincineras*.

Author Michael R. McDonald emphasizes the living process of "metatezation," referring to the use of the traditional *metate*, a stone platform used to grind ingredients, resulting in the unique flavors and textures of the cuisines. The process echoes the concept of "*mestizaje*," the intense hybrid mixture of identities throughout Latin America, which is also explained.

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