

**DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE. ALL WORK IS DUE AT THE END OF CLASS**

**Instructions: Read the article. Answer the questions and complete the activities.**

**Work must be given to the substitute at the end of class, finished or not, no exceptions.**

**Work may not be finished at home. Work not turned in will be given a 0. You have more than enough time to complete the assignment in class.**



### **Mexican Food: A History**

<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/mexican-food-history.html>



*To read ... about a country's cuisine isn't simply to go looking for 'good things'; it is also to better know by means of the recipes - the customs and the richness or poverty of a place, and the spirit of those who inhabit it. It is, above all, to participate in the symbolic celebration of the shared repast. ~ Ginette Olivesi-Lorenzias*

**Mexican food** is one of the most popular cuisines of the world with the famous Mexican tacos, nachos or enchiladas - Mexican foods have titillated the taste buds of food-lovers all over the world. Popular Mexican dishes are now available in multi-cuisine restaurants across the globe. However, Mexican cuisine is much more than spicy salsa and refreshing guacamole. Here is an attempt to fathom the various culinary influences that have led to the emergence of a rich and colorful cuisine.

#### ***Part 1: Mexican Food History: Culinary Influences on the Mexican Cuisines***

Mexican cuisine has a wide variety of influences from the colonization in the earlier period and later from trade functions between people from various countries and colonies. Mexican cuisine is thus a result of several, diverse culinary influences and hence is a concoction of diverse cooking styles and ingredients in various cultures.

#### ***Part 2: Mayan Influence on the Mexican cuisine: Comida Prehispánica***

One of the earliest influences on Mexican food came from the Mayan Indians who were traditionally nomadic hunters and gatherers. The Mayan Indians lived in the Yucatan area in Southeast Mexico. Owing to the fact that the Mayan Indians were hunters, their food basically included wildlife animals like raccoons (*mapache*), deer (*venado*), rabbits (*conejo*), armadillos, rattle snakes (*serpientes*), iguanas, spider monkeys (*monos*), pigeons (*paloma*), turtles (*tortuga*), frogs (*rana*), turkeys (*pavos*) and even several insects (*insectos*). Other accompaniments included tropical fruits (*frutas tropicales*), beans (*habichuelas*) and corn (*elote*). Although some of the influences are still retained, this kind of food in the Mexican cuisine is now known as pre-Hispanic cuisine or *comida prehispánica*, which is considered to be a rather exotic cuisine in Mexico.

#### ***Part 3: Mexican Cuisine in the Pre- Columbian Era***

*Yo soy como el chile verde, picante pero sabroso ...* (I am like the green chile, hot but tasty)

These are the lines borrowed from a famous folk song of Mexico. These lines very accurately describe the Mexican cuisine of the Pre-Columbian period. Before the influence of Europe, Mexican diet was quite simple and was limited to the locally grown agricultural products, especially corn, chilies and beans. Corn was the most popular and most widely used ingredient in the Mexican cuisine in this pre-Columbian period. Some of the popular cooking methods for consumption of corn were corn tortillas and tamales, which included the inclusion of corn into various, flour preparations. In addition, to this these corn products were often complemented with ingredients like tomatoes and chilies. Early Mexican cuisine also included a wide variety of herbs and mushrooms as well.

#### ***Part 4: Spanish Influence on the Mexican Cuisine***

The Spanish invasion in 1521 brought Spanish influence to the Mexican food in terms of the ingredients used and cooking methods. When the Spanish soldiers arrived in the Aztec capital *Tenochtitlan*, they found that the people's diet consisted largely of corn-based dishes with chilies and herbs accompanied by beans and tomatoes. The soldiers eventually combined their imported diet of rice (*arroz*), beef (*carne*), pork (*cerdo*), chicken (*pollo*), wine (*vino*), garlic (*ajo*) and onions (*cebollas*) with the native foods of pre-Columbian Mexico which included tomatoes (*tomates*), beans, chocolate, maize, vanilla, avocado, papaya, pineapple (*piña*), chili peppers, squash, sweet potato, peanut (*cacahuate*), fish (*pescado*) and turkey. Spanish influences lead to the emergence of dishes such as *lomo en adobo* (pork loin in a spicy sauce), *chile rellenos* (large, mild-flavored chilies stuffed with cheese, beef or pork), *quesadillas* and *guacamole* which have been a part of the traditional Mexican food ever since.

### ***Part 5: French Influence on Mexican Cuisine: La Comida Afrancesada***

When the French occupied Mexico, they introduced a wide variety of baked goods in the Mexican cuisine. The Mexican sweet breads and *bolillo* are some of the examples of French influences on the Mexican cuisine. It is believed that the French cooking techniques and the Mexican ingredients made an excellent gastronomic combination. Native Mexican ingredients like squash blossoms, and avocados were perfect for French style mousses, crepes and soups. The empire of *Maximilian* and the presidency of *Porfirio Díaz* were influential in promoting the French style of cooking in the Mexican cuisine. An interesting find about the French influence on Mexican cuisine is a menu dated March 29, 1865, which is written in French. It includes a five course meal including two soups, five fish and shellfish dishes, five meat dishes and side dishes, desserts, champagne and French, Hungarian and even Rhenish wines.

### ***Part 6: Other Minor Influences on the Mexican Cuisine***

In due course of time, the Mexican cuisine experienced a wide range of culinary experiences starting from the Caribbean, the South American, the West African as well as the Portuguese, which led to the emergence of a highly diverse cooking style which also varied from region to region. Mexican cuisine also has a minor Filipino influence owing to the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade from 1565 to 1815.

### ***Part 7: Popularity of Mexican Cuisine in America: Tex-Mex***

The popularity of the Mexican cuisine has led to emergence of several variations of this cuisine in other countries. The Tex-Mex cuisine evolved on the Texas-Mexico in the Southwestern United States and is a modification of the traditional Mexican cuisine with an American touch. One of the best examples of the Tex-Mex cuisine are 'refried beans' which is a term that has actually been coined in Texas and is the translation of the Mexican term *Frijoles refritos*. Tex-Mex cuisines is quite different from the original Mexican cuisine although it might include the same ingredients to a certain extent. Similarly there also exists a 'New Mexican Cuisine', which is type of regional cuisine originating in the state of New Mexico in USA and in southern Colorado and is a subset of Mexican-American cuisine.

### ***Part 8: Mexican Cuisine Today***

Mexican cuisine is a blend of all the above-mentioned influences, however there still exists diversity in the cuisine according to the regional differences in Mexico. Mexican food varies by region, and is influenced by the local climate, geography and ethnic differences among the inhabitants. The northern Mexico is famous for its beef production and meat dishes, whereas southeastern Mexico, is known for its spicy vegetable and chicken-based preparations. On the other hand, seafood is commonly prepared in the states of Mexico that border the Pacific Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico. Here is a list of some common dishes found in the authentic Mexican cuisine:

**Appetizers:** *Arroz Amarillo, Arroz con lima, Arroz Español (Spanish rice), Arroz Verde, Bolillos, Calabaza, Camote, Mexican Dry soup, sopa, Consomme, Curtido, Ensalada de fruta, Elote, Fideos, Frijoles pintos, Frijoles negros, Frijoles charros, Guacamole, Jicama, Lentejas, , Nopalitos, Frijoles Refritos Pambazos, Papas, Pico de gallo, Salsa, Yuca Cassava and Iris.*

**Main Course:** *Arroz con camarones, Arroz con pollo, barbacoa, birria, Bistec a la Mexicana, bistec picado, burrito, caldo(soup), carne asada, carnitas, cecina, cemitas (sandwiches), chapulines and escamoles, chilaquiles, chiles en nogada, chile rellenos, chilorio, chilpachole de jaiva, chimichangas, choriqueso, chorizo, churipo, coyotes, huaunzontles, empanadas, enchilada, gorditas, glorias, huevos divorciados, machaca, mancha manteles, mole, nachos, parilladas, pozole, quesadillas, rajas con crema, tacos, tamales, taquitos, tortillas, tortas, tripas, and venado.*

Nombre \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_









Hora \_\_\_\_\_








**Mexican Food: A history**  
**Answer Sheet – You should write and record all answers on this paper**

**Parte 2: Mayan Influence on the Mexican cuisine: Comida Prehispánica**

- 1.) Who were the earliest influences on Mexican food? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) If you are defined as a “hunter-gatherer” how do you get your food? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Do you think the things the Mayan people ate are strange? why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Why did they eat these things instead or “normal” foods like rice, pasta, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) How do you say “Pre-Hispanic Cuisine” in Spanish? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.) Do people in Mexico still eat these foods? What do they think of them? \_\_\_\_\_

Instrucciones: Write the Spanish word for each picture or vocabulary word.

1		venado
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**Parte 3: Mexican Cuisine in the Pre- Columbian Era**





- 1.) Before the European Influence, the Mexican diet mostly consisted of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2.) What is a tamale? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) In addition to corn, early Mexican cuisine also included the incorporation of herbs and \_\_\_\_\_.


**Parte 4: Spanish Influence on the Mexican Cuisine**


- 1.) What year was the Spanish invasion of Mexico? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) What was the name of the Aztec capital? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Name 5 of the foods the Spanish introduced to the Mexican cuisine (in English) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4.) If you were in a Mexican Restaurant, which dish would you order – *lomo en adobo* or *chiles rellenos*? \_\_\_\_\_ why? \_\_\_\_\_

Instrucciones: Write the Spanish word for each picture or vocabulary word.

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**Parte 5: French Influence on Mexican Cuisine: La Comida Afrancesada**

- 1.) What are two examples of French influence on Mexican Cuisine? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2.) What tow vegetables were ideal for making French soups and mousses? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3.) The empire of \_\_\_\_\_ and the presidency of \_\_\_\_\_ were influential in promoting the French style of cooking in the Mexican cuisine.

**Parte 6: Other Minor Influences on the Mexican**

Each of the scrambled words represents a country or region of the world that has had an influence on Mexican food. Unscramble the letters and place the circled letters from each phrase in the final squares to reveal a secret message.

SORPUTUGEE	□	□	□	□	○	□	□	□	□	□		
REBBANCIA	□	□	□	○	□	□	□	□	□	○		
PILNOIFI	□	○	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□		
TWSE NAFICR	□	○	○	□	□	□	□	□	□	□		
HOUST MEAACRIN	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	○	□	□

□	□	□	□	□	□	□
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**Parte 7: Popularity of Mexican Cuisine in America: Tex-Mex**

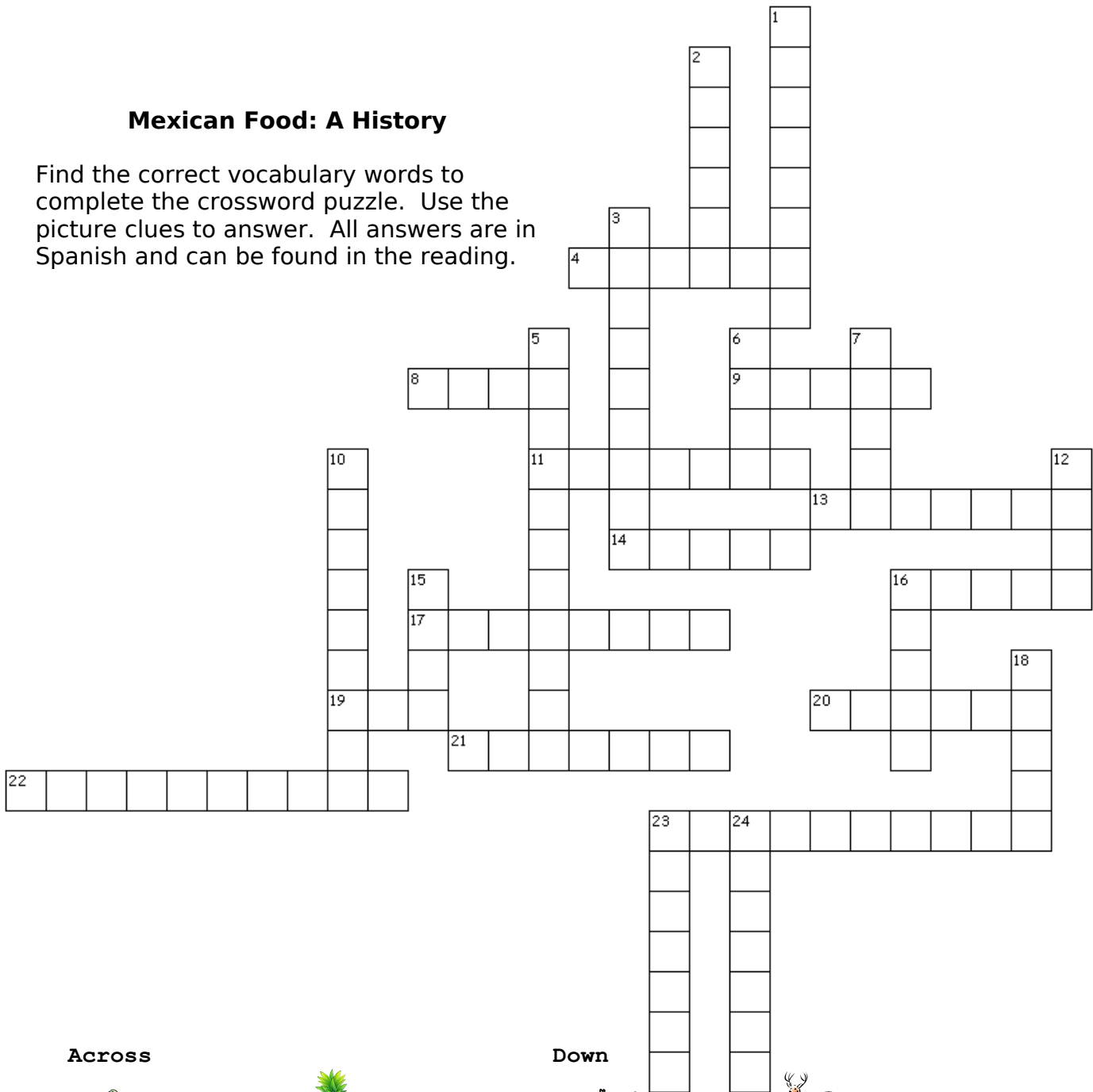
- 1.) Is Tex-Mex food from Mexico? If not, where is it from? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) What is the Spanish translation of refried beans? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Is Tex-Mex similar or different from Mexican cuisine? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Besides Tex-Mex, what is another offset of Mexican Cuisine that is becoming popular in the Southwestern United States? \_\_\_\_\_

**Parte 8: Mexican Cuisine Today**

- 1.) What are some of the influences of Mexican food that cause it to change from reagon to region? (name 3) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) What type of food is each region famous for?
  - Northern Mexico: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Southeastern Mexico: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Pacific Ocean/Gulf of Mexico: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) What are 3 appetizers that you either already know or can guess the meaning of because it is similar to English? Write the Spanish word, then write what you think it means in English
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) What are 3 main courses that you either already know or can guess the meaning of because it is similar to English? Write the Spanish word, then write what you think it means in English
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

## Mexican Food: A History

Find the correct vocabulary words to complete the crossword puzzle. Use the picture clues to answer. All answers are in Spanish and can be found in the reading.



### Across



### Down



21. 

22. 

18. 

23. 

23. 

24. 