

## El Paso Food Voices Podcast

**Music** (keep playing as background when introduction begins)

(Music as transition)

Welcome, I'm your hostess Chyanne Smith for today's episode. El Paso Food Voices explores El Paso, Texas' food landscape by gathering food-based stories from El Paso's residents. EPFV offers a taste of a living history that speaks of ethnic and racial cross-cultural connections. If we're what we eat, we're committed to highlight the food-base culture and history of this city. In this spirit, let's begin our conversation on traditional Mexican baked goods with our guest Noel Gonzalez.

(Music as transition)

**Topic #1:** You've owned La Sevillana, which is located at here in El Paso at 508 Emerson St., by Carolina Skatepark in the Lower Valley for 26 years. Over the years you've gained many loyal customers from the surrounding neighborhood who enjoy the variety of bake goods and cooked meals La Sevillana offers.

I'm curious, what lead you to open a bakery and become bakers?

At the bakery, you sell more than just sweet breads, donuts, and cookies; it also has a small grocery store with medicine, cleaning supplies, spices, soups, cereals and other things. Can you tell me about the importance of having that in the bakery? (*note: how it benefits the community*)

**Topic #2:** I'm curious about the name of your bakery, La Sevillana. Sevillana is a song and dance that originated from the city of Seville in Spain around the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Over time, the dance itself has mixed with other Spanish dance styles, like the flamenco. It's usually danced at celebrations for many Spanish national holidays as well as during some Mexican holidays.

Why is your family owned bakery named La Sevillana?

**Topic #3:** Alongside being a bakery, La Sevillana also serves other foods besides baked goods. I've heard that your *menudo* is very popular, so much so that you prepare several vats on the weekends and they sell out very quickly. *Menudo* is an interesting dish because it's difficult to figure out where exactly it originated. Different regions in Mexico have varying versions of the dish. Guadalajara, for example, has a "*menudo rojo*" while in more central regions like the Sinaloa area have a white version.

Can you tell me about how you prepare your *menudo*?

How would you describe menudo in El Paso?

Do we have varying versions around the city or between El Paso and Juarez?

I've eaten *menudo* at *quinceñera* after-parties and on regular Sunday mornings. Aside from being over-all really delicious, what are some other reasons or benefits of eating *menudo*?

(Soft background music)

**Public Service Announcement:**

Thank you for joining us today at El Paso Food Voices. Alongside being the home to bakeries like La Sevillana, the Lower Valley of El Paso, Texas is also home to three of the oldest historic missions in the United States. If you're interested in learning more about the religious Mexican traditions and foods mentioned in this podcast, you can stop by the Ysleta, Socorro, or San Elizario Missions and visit La Sevillana Bakery. Let's get back with our guest, Juan Gonzalez. In this next segment we shift from cooking to exploring baking traditional Mexican *pan dulces*, or sweet breads, and cookies such as *biscochos*.

(Soft background music)

**Topic #4:** With the holidays right around the corner, there are many significant baked goods prepared and eaten on certain days. In November we have "*pan de muerto*" (bread of the dead) to celebrate All Souls Day and All Saints Day. In December we've *buñuelos*, (made with dough that is stretched with a rolling pin so it resembles a very thin flour tortilla which then gets fried). In January 6<sup>th</sup>, we've *rosca de reyes*, (Three Kings Bread) to celebrate the offering of gifts the three Kings brought to the newly born Jesus in Jerusalem. During lent is quite common to find *capirozada* (bread putting) in many bakeries and Mexican restaurants.

In particular, I'd like to speak a little about *rosca de reyes*, as it seems to be a tradition that many Christians around the world also celebrate *Dia de los Reyes Magos*, (Day of the Three Kings).

The holiday itself has different names depending on where you are. Along with being popular in Mexico and in El Paso, *Dia de Los Reyes Magos* is popular in Europe in places like Scandanavia where a bread similar to *rosca de reyes* is served. In fact, many of Mexico's *pan dulces* are evolutions of European, particularly French breads because when France occupied Mexico until the late 1800s, many French sweet breads were adopted by Mexico.

Can you tell me more about eating the *rosca de reyes* in Mexican tradition, such as the significance of discovering the baby Jesus in your bread?

How long have you and your parents been making *rosca de reyes* and would you mind sharing a bit about the process of preparing it?

How do you celebrate Dia de Los Magos? Have any of you ever ended up finding baby Jesus in your bread? (Note elaborate on the experience)

**Topic #5:** Speaking of foods eaten for specific traditions, I know there are also other desserts that are served for special occasions, like *biscochos* that are served at *quinceñeras* and weddings. In Spain, the *biscocho* is typically more of a sponge cake, but here along the border, our *biscochos* are more like tiny powdered sugar cookies.

How are *biscochos* prepared? What are some common ingredients?

Why these are served at weddings and *quinceñeras*?

Do you make *biscochos* for other special occasions?

**Topic #6:** Are there are other specialty breads, sweet breads, cookies that La Sevillana is known for?

**Topic #7:** Before we conclude our conversation, is there anything else that we've not covered that you'd like to add?

We want to thank once more our guest Juan Gonzalez for sharing his knowledge on traditional Mexican desserts, a fascinating El Paso food-based topic.

Music begins again (the section that will end the podcast)

El Paso Food Voices was created by Meredith E. Abarca, professor of Food Studies and Literature at the University of Texas at El Paso; the producer was Adrian Meza from UTEP's Creative Studios, and music composed by Jake Jacobs. To learn more about how food practices, memories, and stories shape a city's history, culture and its character, please visit us at El Paso Food Voices.

Ending with music