

# Foods of Latin America:

## A Spanish Cultural Lesson



# University of Arizona- Center for Latin American Studies

For additional outreach information and resources visit:

<https://las.arizona.edu/curriculum>

This lesson is designed for elementary and middle school students and can be adapted as needed.



COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
**Latin American Studies**

**Spanish Language Class**  
**Latin American Food Project**  
**Elementary/ Middle School**

**Lesson Summary:**

This lesson is designed for those new to the Spanish language. Students will be learning about different foods in Latin America while also having the opportunity to share what they find with their classmates. There is a mix of cultural learning as well as opportunities to expand grammar and vocabulary of students. The lesson is designed to be 5-7 days but can be adjusted to the needs of the students. Below is list of dishes with provided resources, however, students should know that they can chose their own dish if they desire.

- Mole- Mexico
- Arepa- Venezuela/Columbia
- Empanada- Argentina
- Pupusa- El Salvador
- Encebollado- Ecuador
- Soup Joumou- Haiti

**Arizona Department of Education: World and Native Languages Standards**

Proficiency Level

- Novice: The student communicates with words/characters and phrases to express basic needs on familiar topics that have been highly practiced and memorized. The learner controls the accuracy within the memorized and practiced context and can be understood by one accustomed to dealing with language learners (a sympathetic listener)

Cultural Competencies

- Recognize basic practices, products, and perspectives of cultures where the target language is spoken (e.g., greetings, holiday celebrations, body language, gestures, traditions).
- Participate in age-appropriate and culturally authentic activities such as celebrations, songs, games, and dances; recognize products of culture (e.g., **food**, shelter, clothing, transportation, toys).

Presentational Skills

- Present basic information on familiar topics using learned phrases and simple sentences.

## Lesson Overview:

NOTE: The grammar and vocabulary resources suggested are minimal, using additional resources like textbooks or technology (apps, games, etc.) can help the students get the most out of this lesson

Day 1: Introduction to Food and Culture	
Materials	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="https://www.nps.gov/articles/latinot-hemefood.htm">https://www.nps.gov/articles/latinot-hemefood.htm</a></li><li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEr14he7eMw&amp;ab_channel=Netflix">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEr14he7eMw&amp;ab_channel=Netflix</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use sections of the article to discuss as a class the importance of food in our own culture as well as in Latin America. Students can analyze the cultural role that food plays in their own lives</li><li>• Watch excerpts from the Netflix series Street Foods: Latin America if possible, if not the trailer will suffice to give an idea of the role of food in Latin America</li></ul>

Day 2: Group Assignments and Individual Research	
Materials	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Project Sheet</li><li>• Student Note Sheet</li><li>• Internet/library access</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assign students into groups to work together researching information about a specific dish. Group sizes can be flexible depending on number of students and their choice of food</li><li>• Allow students to begin researching their dish on their own, using the internet or library resources</li></ul>

Day 3: Incorporation of Grammar and Vocab	
Materials	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Textbook, internet, whatever method you have found effective.</li><li>• Possible resources:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Food Vocabulary <a href="https://www.lawlessspanish.com/vocabulary/food/">https://www.lawlessspanish.com/vocabulary/food/</a></li><li>○ Comparison <a href="https://www.thespanishexperiment.com/learn-spanish/comparisons">https://www.thespanishexperiment.com/learn-spanish/comparisons</a></li><li>○ Ordering food <a href="https://spanishandgo.com/learn/how-to-order-food-in-spanish">https://spanishandgo.com/learn/how-to-order-food-in-spanish</a></li><li>○ Pedir</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grammar and Vocabulary instruction according to the proficiency level of the students</li></ul>

<p><a href="https://www.spanish.academy/blog/pedir-conjugation-free-spanish-lesson-exercises-and-pdf/">https://www.spanish.academy/blog/pedir-conjugation-free-spanish-lesson-exercises-and-pdf/</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conditional</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.realfastspanish.com/grammar/the-spanish-conditional-tense-5-uses">https://www.realfastspanish.com/grammar/the-spanish-conditional-tense-5-uses</a></p>	
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Day 4-5: Group Research and Project Planning	
Materials	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Note Sheet</li> <li>• Project Materials (digital with PowerPoint or physical with posterboard, markers etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will come together as a group and share what they each learned about their food</li> <li>• Students may research together if needed any additional information about their dish</li> <li>• Together students will begin to discuss and plan how they will present the cultural significance of their dish to their peers</li> </ul>

Day 6-7: Finish Project and Present	
Material	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will finish creating their projects and present to the rest of the class</li> <li>• Students can use as much Spanish as they feel comfortable with in the presentation</li> <li>• Facilitate a discussion after the presentations about the cultural significance of food in Latin America</li> </ul>

## Suggested Research Materials:

- Mole- Mexico
  - <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/09/colonial-history-mole-mexicos-national-dish/597880/>
  - <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/mexico/articles/a-brief-history-of-mole-mexicos-national-dish/>
  - <https://www.epicurious.com/archive/blogs/editor/2014/09/the-7-definitive-types-oaxacan-mole.html>
  - <https://www.thecuriousmexican.com/mole/>
  - <https://time.com/3742067/history-mexican-immigration/>
- Arepa- Venezuela/ Columbia
  - <https://www.telesurenglish.net/bloggers/Brief-History-About-the-Arepa-and-its-Versatility-20150312-0001.html>
  - <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/07/26/538515889/arepas-are-conquering-the-world-but-dying-at-home-in-venezuela>
  - <https://www.thespruceeats.com/masarepa-precooked-corn-flour-for-making-arepas-3029290>
  - <https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/national-traditions/venezuelan-tradition1.htm>
  - <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/bogota/el-festival-de-la-arepa-colombiana/>
- Empanada- Argentina
  - <https://blog.amigofoods.com/index.php/argentine-foods/history-of-argentinian-empanadas/#:~:text=The%20History%20of%20Argentinian%20Empanadas&text=It's%20believed%20that%20early%20Spanish,and%20different%20types%20of%20meat.&text=Historically%2C%20an%20empanada%20was%20a,meat%2C%20pork%2C%20or%20beef>
  - <https://vamospanish.com/discover/the-story-of-argentine-empanada/>
  - <http://www.peperonatapasta.com/history-of-empanadas-in-argentina/#:~:text=In%20Argentinian%20culture%2C%20empanadas%20are,easy%20to%20carry%20dough%20pocket!>
  - <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/lifestyle/el-mapa-definitivo-empanadas-argentinas-sus-14-nid2175466>
  - <https://wander-argentina.com/empanadas-the-tasty-pastry-that-everybody-loves/>
- Pupusa- El Salvador
  - <https://www.thefooddictator.com/the-hirshon-el-salvadoran-pupusas/#:~:text=Pupusas%20were%20first%20created%20centuries,now%20kno wn%20as%20El%20Salvador.&text=In%20the%20late%201940s%2C%20pupu sas,and%20cities%20of%20the%20country>
  - <https://elsalvadorinfo.net/salvadoran-pupusas/>
  - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/pupusas-through-thick-and-thin/2012/04/03/gIQAxmG1sS\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/pupusas-through-thick-and-thin/2012/04/03/gIQAxmG1sS_story.html)
  - <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/1535>

- <https://web.archive.org/web/20150716020748/http://losangeles.univision.com/mesa-de-la-hispanidad/article/2011-07-27/origen-de-las-pupusas-salvador-honduras>
- Encebollado- Ecuador
  - <https://weblogtheworld.com/countries/southern-america/encebollado-ecuadors-national-dish>
  - <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Encebollado-Voted-Ecuadors-Most-Emblematic-Food-for-2015-20150508-0020.html>
  - <http://www.gastronomiaperu.com/noticias/detalles.php?d=2534>
  - <https://www.laylita.com/recipes/encebollado-de-pescado-or-tuna-soup/>
  - [https://www.adventure-life.com/ecuador/articles/history-and-culture-of-ecuador#:~:text=Ecuadorian%20food%20consists%20mainly%20of,rice%2C%20eggs%2C%20and%20vegetables.&text=Tubers%2C%20like%20potatoes%20and%20yuca,guinea%20pig\)%20are%20popular%20delicacies.](https://www.adventure-life.com/ecuador/articles/history-and-culture-of-ecuador#:~:text=Ecuadorian%20food%20consists%20mainly%20of,rice%2C%20eggs%2C%20and%20vegetables.&text=Tubers%2C%20like%20potatoes%20and%20yuca,guinea%20pig)%20are%20popular%20delicacies.)
- Soup Joumou- Haiti
  - <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes-menus/haitian-independence-soup-joumou-recipe-article>
  - <https://haitian-recipes.com/history-soup-joumou/>
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEdM3xS7JCY&ab\\_channel=MyHaitiInside](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEdM3xS7JCY&ab_channel=MyHaitiInside)
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A\\_o-nU5s2U&ab\\_channel=CrashCourse](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A_o-nU5s2U&ab_channel=CrashCourse)
  - <https://visithaiti.com/food-drink/soup-joumou/>

## **Student Project Sheet**

### **Food in Latin America Project**



#### **Project Overview:**

You have already learned a little about how important food is in Latin America. Together as a group you will learn more specific dishes in Latin America and what they mean to each country they are from. After researching more, you and your group will put together a presentation about the dish for your class. Below is a selection of dishes you may choose from with provided resources, though you can research and present about a dish that is not on the list.

- Mole- Mexico
- Arepa- Venezuela/Columbia
- Empanada- Argentina
- Pupusa- El Salvador
- Encebollado- Ecuador
- Soup Joumou- Haiti

#### **Presentation Basics:**

Be creative on how you present your dish to your classmates! Each presentation should answer some basic questions, but there are many ways you can present additional interesting information.

Some things to include—

- History and origin of the dish
- Ingredients
- Cultural significance where the food is featured (holidays, traditions, etc.)
- Relation to other Latin American dishes
- Adaptations/ regional variations of the food

## Suggested Research Materials:

- Mole- Mexico
  - <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/09/colonial-history-mole-mexicos-national-dish/597880/>
  - <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/mexico/articles/a-brief-history-of-mole-mexicos-national-dish/>
  - <https://www.epicurious.com/archive/blogs/editor/2014/09/the-7-definitive-types-oaxacan-mole.html>
  - <https://www.thecuriousmexican.com/mole/>
  - <https://time.com/3742067/history-mexican-immigration/>
- Arepa- Venezuela/ Columbia
  - <https://www.telesurenglish.net/bloggers/Brief-History-About-the-Arepa-and-its-Versatility-20150312-0001.html>
  - <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/07/26/538515889/arepas-are-conquering-the-world-but-dying-at-home-in-venezuela>
  - <https://www.thespruceeats.com/masarepa-precooked-corn-flour-for-making-arepas-3029290>
  - <https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/national-traditions/venezuelan-tradition1.htm>
  - <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/bogota/el-festival-de-la-arepa-colombiana/>
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  - <https://blog.amigofoods.com/index.php/argentine-foods/history-of-argentinian-empanadas/#:~:text=The%20History%20of%20Argentinian%20Empanadas&text=It's%20believed%20that%20early%20Spanish,and%20different%20types%20of%20meat.&text=Historically%2C%20an%20empanada%20was%20a,meat%2C%20pork%2C%20or%20beef>
  - <https://vamospanish.com/discover/the-story-of-argentine-empanada/>
  - <http://www.peperonatapasta.com/history-of-empanadas-in-argentina/#:~:text=In%20Argentinian%20culture%2C%20empanadas%20are,easy%20to%20carry%20dough%20pocket!>
  - <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/lifestyle/el-mapa-definitivo-empanadas-argentinas-sus-14-nid2175466>
  - <https://wander-argentina.com/empanadas-the-tasty-pastry-that-everybody-loves/>
- Pupusa- El Salvador
  - <https://www.thefooddictator.com/the-hirshon-el-salvadoran-pupusas/#:~:text=Pupusas%20were%20first%20created%20centuries,now%20kno wn%20as%20El%20Salvador.&text=In%20the%20late%201940s%2C%20pupu sas,and%20cities%20of%20the%20country>
  - <https://elsalvadorinfo.net/salvadoran-pupusas/>
  - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/pupusas-through-thick-and-thin/2012/04/03/gIQAxmG1sS\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/pupusas-through-thick-and-thin/2012/04/03/gIQAxmG1sS_story.html)
  - <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/1535>

- <https://web.archive.org/web/20150716020748/http://losangeles.univision.com/mesa-de-la-hispanidad/article/2011-07-27/origen-de-las-pupusas-salvador-honduras>
- Encebollado- Ecuador
  - <https://weblogtheworld.com/countries/southern-america/encebollado-ecuadors-national-dish>
  - <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Encebollado-Voted-Ecuadors-Most-Emblematic-Food-for-2015-20150508-0020.html>
  - <http://www.gastronomiaperu.com/noticias/detalles.php?d=2534>
  - <https://www.laylita.com/recipes/encebollado-de-pescado-or-tuna-soup/>
  - [https://www.adventure-life.com/ecuador/articles/history-and-culture-of-ecuador#:~:text=Ecuadorian%20food%20consists%20mainly%20of,rice%2C%20eggs%2C%20and%20vegetables.&text=Tubers%2C%20like%20potatoes%20and%20yuca,guinea%20pig\)%20are%20popular%20delicacies.](https://www.adventure-life.com/ecuador/articles/history-and-culture-of-ecuador#:~:text=Ecuadorian%20food%20consists%20mainly%20of,rice%2C%20eggs%2C%20and%20vegetables.&text=Tubers%2C%20like%20potatoes%20and%20yuca,guinea%20pig)%20are%20popular%20delicacies.)
- Soup Joumou- Haiti
  - <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes-menus/haitian-independence-soup-joumou-recipe-article>
  - <https://haitian-recipes.com/history-soup-joumou/>
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEdM3xS7JCY&ab\\_channel=MyHaitiInside](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEdM3xS7JCY&ab_channel=MyHaitiInside)
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A\\_o-nU5s2U&ab\\_channel=CrashCourse](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A_o-nU5s2U&ab_channel=CrashCourse)
  - <https://visithaiti.com/food-drink/soup-joumou/>



- What are the regional differences in this food? Have there been any adaptations here in the United States?

- How long has the dish been around and has it changed over time?

- Why is this food so important to the people of this particular country?

