



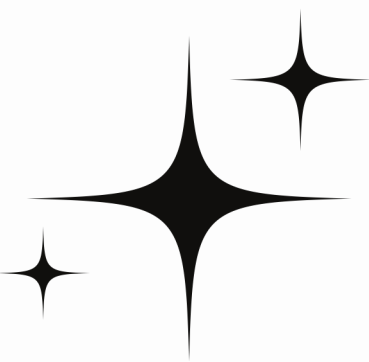
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

Beyond Tortillas & Beans: Using Cultural Awareness, an enriching ingredient when working with Hispanic/Latino populations

Presenter: Yanine Pedrazas Terrazas
Registered Dietitian

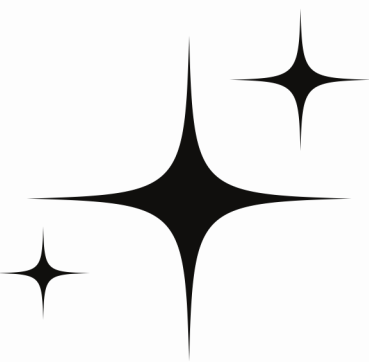
Disclosure

No conflicts of interest to disclose.



Demographical Considerations when Working with Hispanic/Latino Populations

- *Though statistically, most Hispanics/Latinos come from Mexico, this ethnic group also includes anyone whose origin is from Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and other countries in South and Central America, which means **Hispanics are very diverse as a group encompassing multiple nationalities, ethnicities, and cultures.***¹



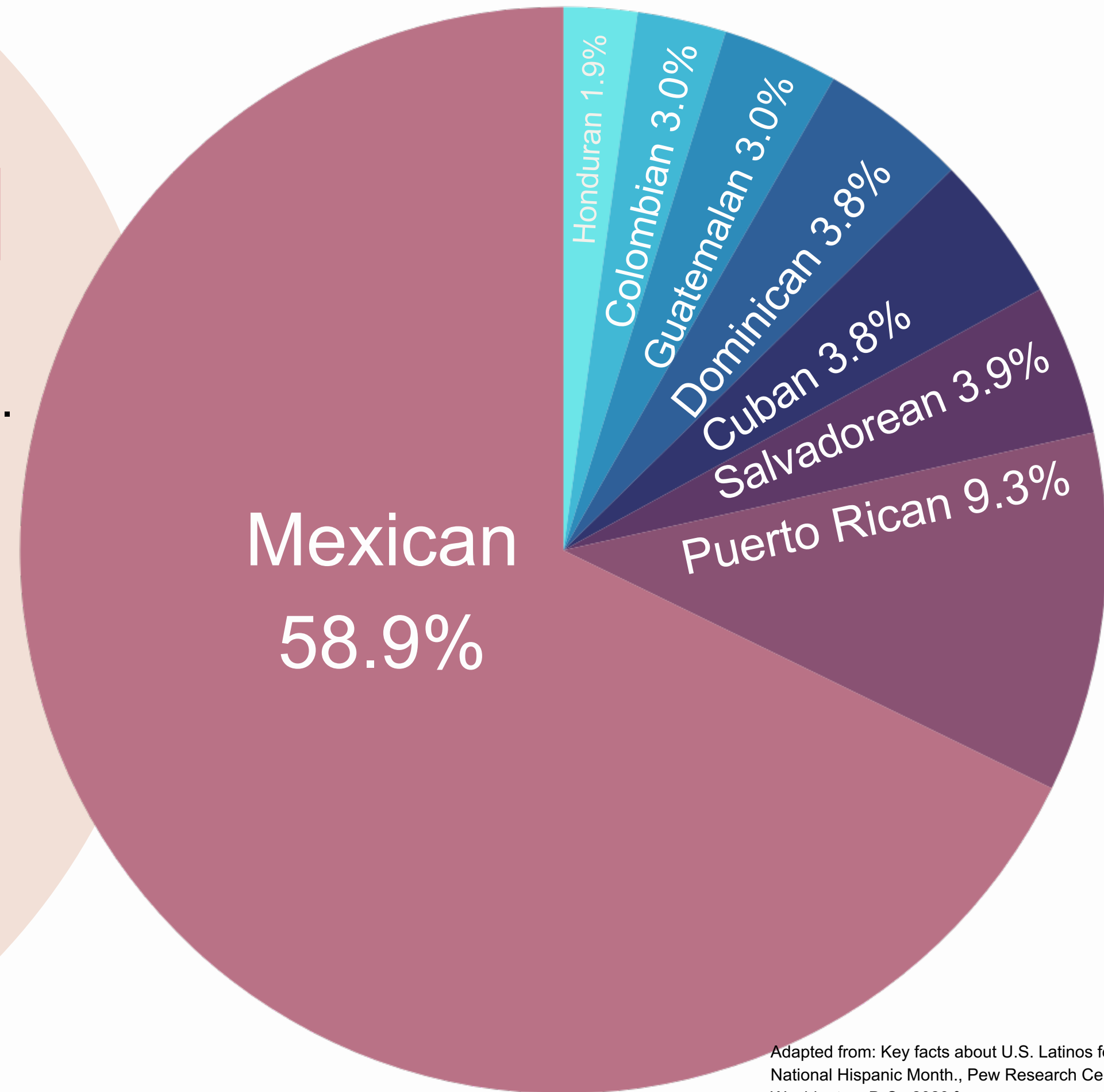
Statistical Representation of Hispanics in the U.S.^{2,3,4,5}

63.7 million Hispanics (2022)

19.1 % of the total population in the U.S.

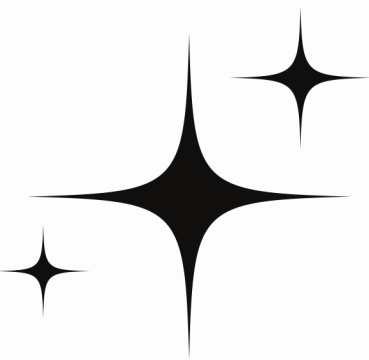
- **Mexicans** are nearly **60%** of the Hispanic population in the U.S. (~37.4 million people).
- **Puerto Ricans: 9.3%** (5.9 million people).
- **Cubans: 3.8%**
- **Dominicans: 3.8%**
- **Central Americans: 10.4%**
- **South Americans: 7.4%**
(Venezuelan 1.3%) ▲

Hispanic Origin Groups in the U.S., 2022²



Staple Ingredients and Dishes Among U.S. Hispanic Subgroups

- Ethnic Diversity among Hispanics leads to regional variations within each country's cuisine, flavors, heritage foods, and staple dishes.





Staple Ingredients: Mexico & Central America 6,7,8,9,10,11

Photo cred: getty images; bergserg

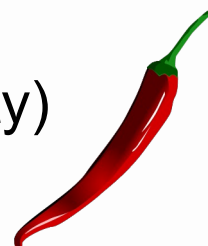


Fruits & Vegetables



Photo cred: Delish Deliveries

- **Avocado***
- Tomatoes
- Onions
- Peppers
- Chiles (wide variety)
- Corn*
- Yuca (cassava)
- **Plantains**
- **Squash**
- Zucchini
- Cabbage
- Citrus fruits
- Bananas
- Pineapples
- Mangoes
- Papaya



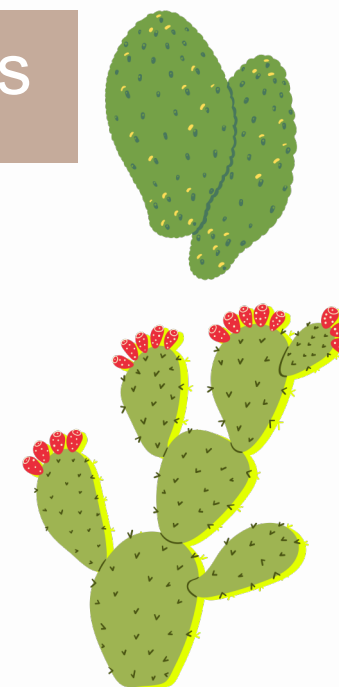
Grains



- Rice*
- **Tortillas*** (corn or flour)
- Flour- corn/maize “masa harina,” all-purpose flour

Unusual Ingredients

- Nopales (Cactus)
- Tomatillos
- Jicama
 - (white root vegetable)



Dairy

- Milk
- **Cheese***white varieties:
 - cotija, queso blanco/fresco
- **Crema*** (buttermilk & heavy cream)

Spices/Herbs

- Mexican oregano
- Cumin
- Marjoram
- Cilantro
- Epazote
- Achiote
- Bay leaves
- Cinnamon
- Cloves
- **Cacao** (used in Moles)



Protein

- Seafood
- Fish
- Beef
- Pork
- Chicken
- Chorizo (ground pork)
- Beans*
 - black, pinto, red, kidney
- Eggs
- Pumpkin seeds
 - Pepitas



Staple Ingredients of the Caribbean: Cuba, Puerto Rico, The Dominican Republic¹²



Protein

- Seafood
- Red meats
- Pork
- Ham
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Chorizo (ground pork)
- Beans* (red/pink kidney)
 - Pigeon Peas (gandules)

Fruits & Vegetables



Photo cred: Delish Deliveries

- Yuca (Cassava)*
- Sweet Potatoes*
- Caribbean yams*
- Plantains*
- Tomatoes
- Onions
- Peppers
- Cucumbers
- Iceberg Lettuce
- Avocado



- Tayota *DR
- Pigeon peas
- Okra
- Chayote squash
- Malanga/Tanier
- Passion fruit
- Guava
- Mamey
- Passion fruit

Grains

- Rice*
- White/sweet bread
- Oatmeal



Coffee



Dairy

- Cheese-white varieties:
 - cotija, queso blanco/fresco
- Crema (buttermilk & heavy cream)

Spices/herbs

- Cilantro
- Bay leaves
- Cumin/Saffron
- Mojo (garlic marinade served over yuca)
- Sofrito (mixed herbs & spices)



Staple Ingredients: South America⁶

Protein

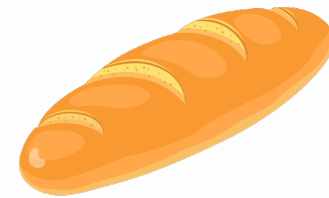
- Seafood
- Red meats
- Pork
- Poultry
- Goat
- Quail
- Eggs

Fruits & Vegetables



- Potatoes*
- Corn*
- Yuca (Cassava)*
- Plantains*
- Tomatoes/tomatillos
- Onions
- Green peppers
- Avocado
- Lemons/Limes
- Cherimoya (custard apple)
- Papayas
- Mangoes

Grains



- Rice*
- Quinoa
- Pan “white bread”

Arepas



Dairy

- Cheese-white varieties:
 - queso blanco/fresco
- Yogurt/milk

Spices/Herbs

- Annatto
- Coriander
- Garlic
- Oregano
- Parsley
- Cilantro
- Cinnamon
- Sofrito

Hispanic Staple Dishes

Mexican Tacos



Photo cred: Canvas

Salvadoran Pupusas



Photo cred: Tastemade

Puerto Rican: Pastelón
“Plantain Lasagna”



Photo cred: QuéRicaVida

Colombian Bandeja Paisa



Photo cred: Damián Serrano, Bon Viveur

Sancocho



Photo cred: MyColombianRecipes

Empanadas



Bolivian Salteñas



Photo cred: Casa de Campos

Tamales

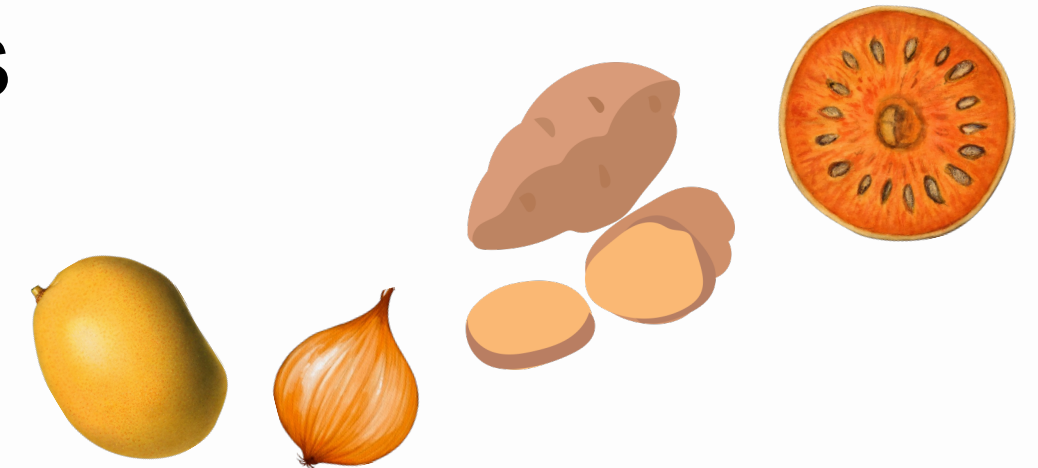


Dietary Patterns: Favorable Factors

*Variety of Nutrient-Dense Traditional Food Staples

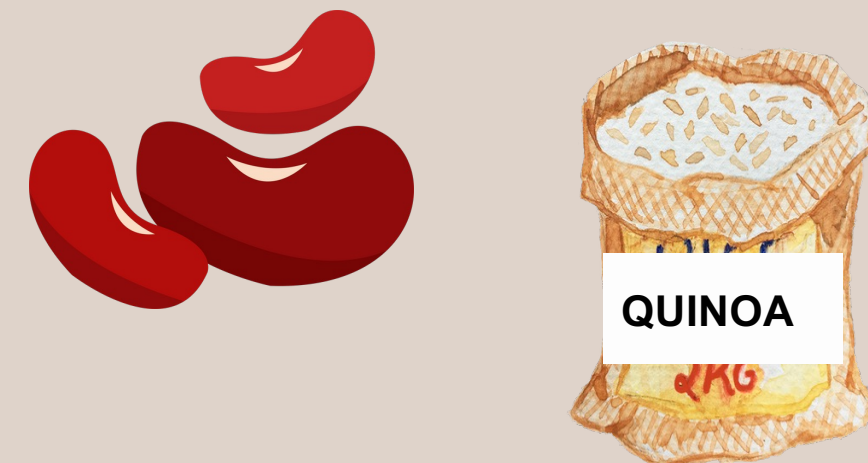
Fruits & Vegetables

- Offer many health benefits: vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
 - Phytonutrients & Antioxidants:
 - Carotenoids (sweet potatoes, onions, squash, mangoes)



Grains & Legumes

- Source of plant-based protein, fiber, and minerals.
- Quinoa “superfood”: source of complete protein



Healthy Fats

- Avocado, nuts & seeds
 - Sources of fiber, protein



Dietary Patterns: Unfavorable Factors

Cooking methods

- Deep-frying
 - Tostones are “twice fried” green plantains, refried beans (cooked with lard/bacon).
- Animal/other fats used in recipes: Manteca or lard (pig fat), tocineta (bacon), butter

*Drinkable Carbohydrates: Sugary Drinks



- Batidos, Atol (corn-based), and Oatmeal-based drinks.
- Sodas, juice, and fruit-flavored drinks (Tang), nectars.



Portion Distortion

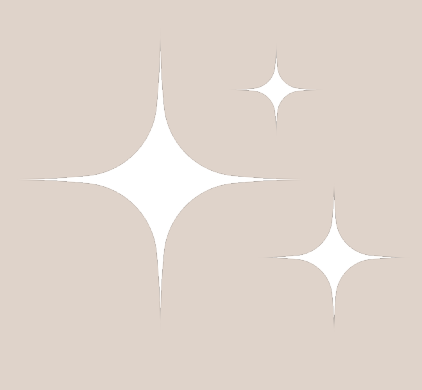
- Multiple sources of starchy carbohydrates in a single dish
- Large nutrient/calorie-dense plate servings
- Vegetables served as a small side or as garnish

Bolivian Majadito



Photo cred: Casa de Campos

Cultural Considerations When Discussing Food and Nutrition



Appropriate approaches in this population should focus on:

- Substitution over elimination and/or restriction (goes a long way!).
- Small and gradual modifications to traditional dietary patterns over time are recommended (especially for older generations who may be hesitant or resistant to change).
- Cutting down on the consumption of sugary drinks.
- Portion control (even if food is deemed “healthy”).





Ethnically Oriented Dietary Modifications

- Low-fat cooking methods: baking, grilling, roasting, or baking over deep frying.
- Lean protein: lean beef cuts, well-trimmed poultry, fish instead of beef
- Healthy fats: olive or canola oil over lard, butter, or bacon (saturated fats).

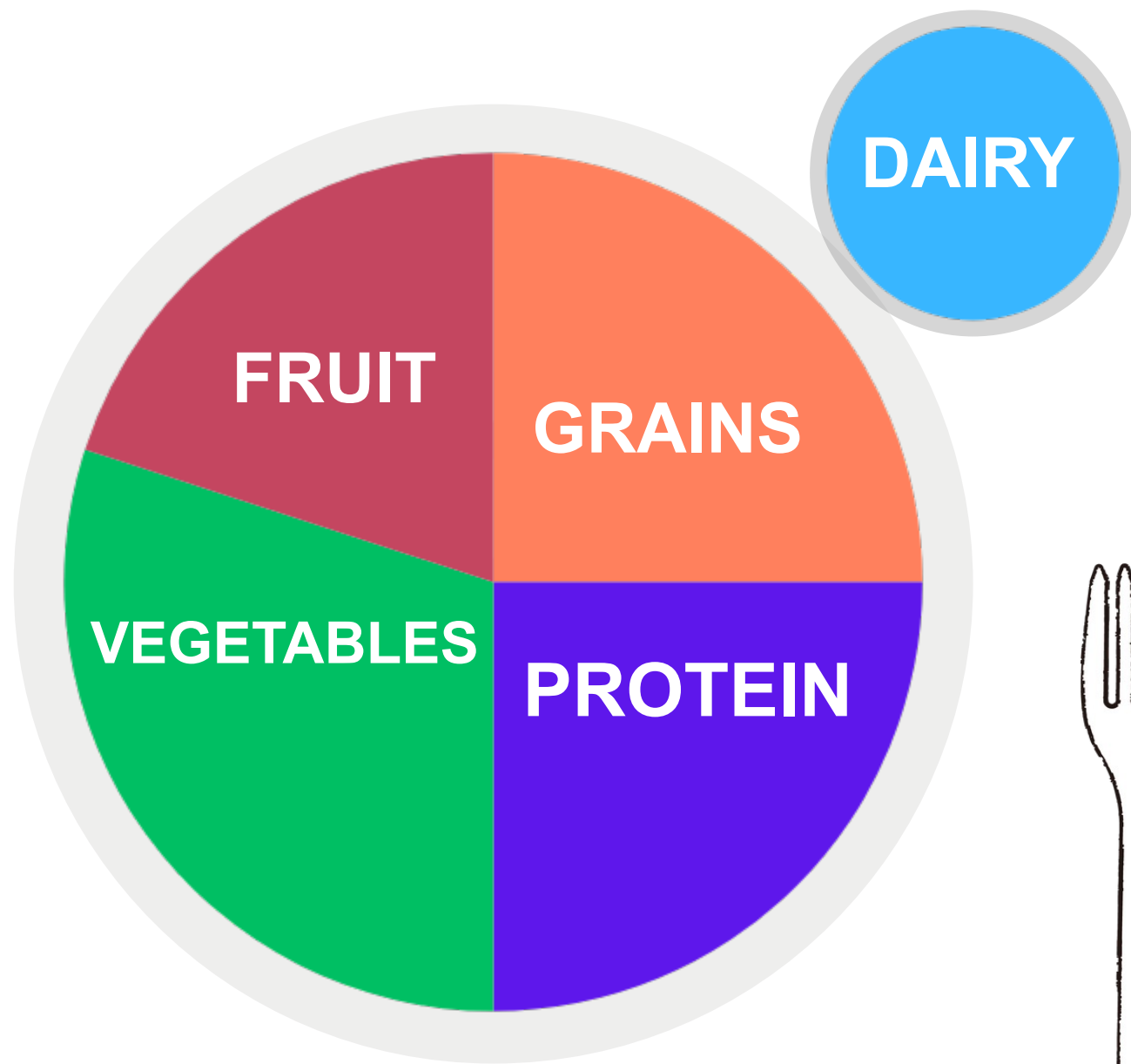


Avocado (guacamole) for toppings or spread as a condiment on tortillas over crema and fatty cheeses.

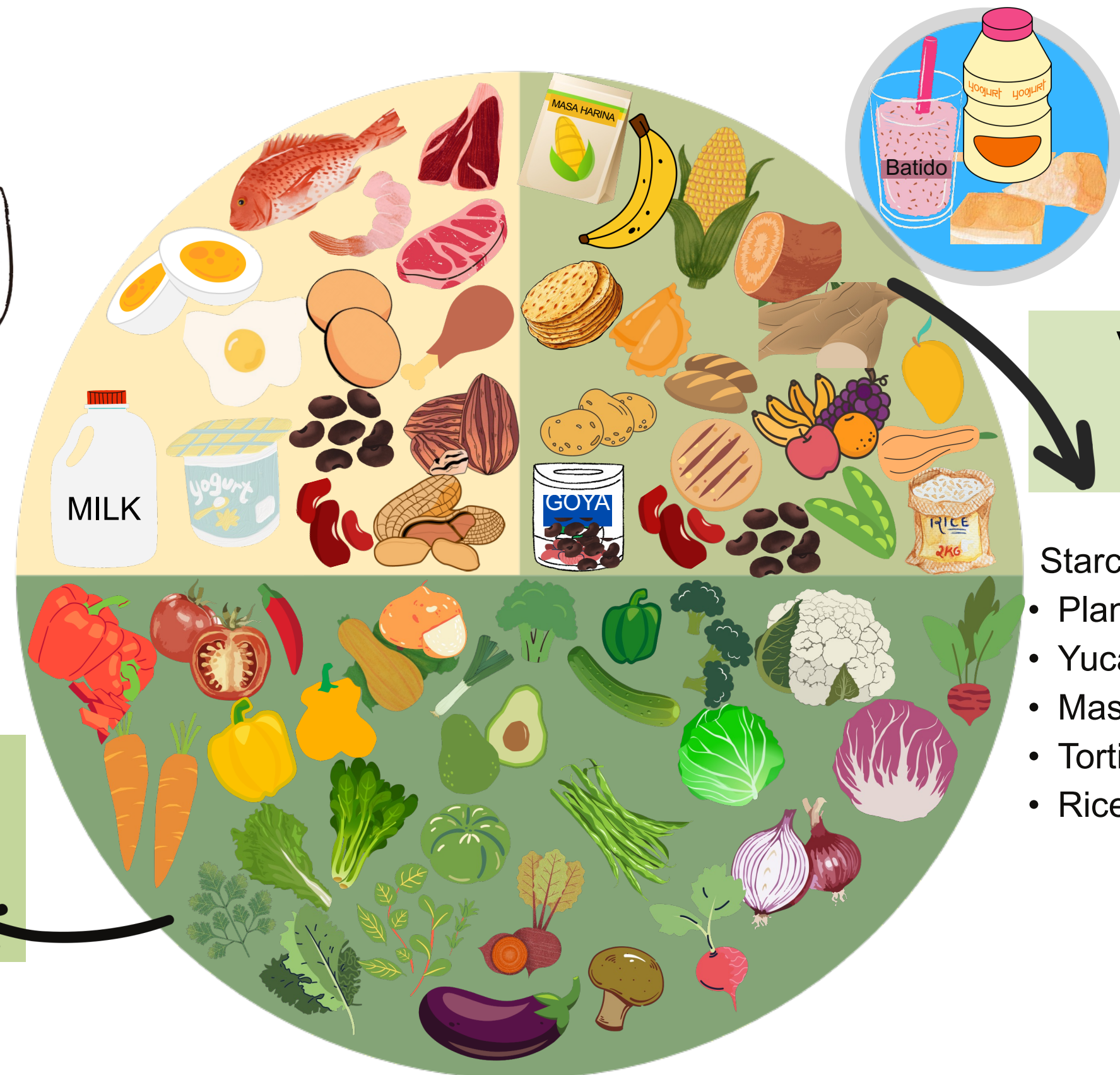
- Staple carbohydrates: bring awareness to the impact of starchy vegetables on blood sugars.
 - Use nutrition labels and “hand method” to guide appropriate portions and aid with portion control.
- Swaps for sweet beverages:
 - Fruit Juice/nectar concentrates  Water with fresh fruit in it
 - Soda  Sparkling water with a splash of 100% fruit juice.
 - Batidos: add water and low-fat milk/yogurt; replace added sugar with a sugar substitute.



Diversifying MyPlate



Adapted from MyPlate.gov¹³



Viandas
or
Viveres

Starches & Grains

- Plantains
- Yuca (Cassava)
- Masa Harina
- Tortillas
- Rice

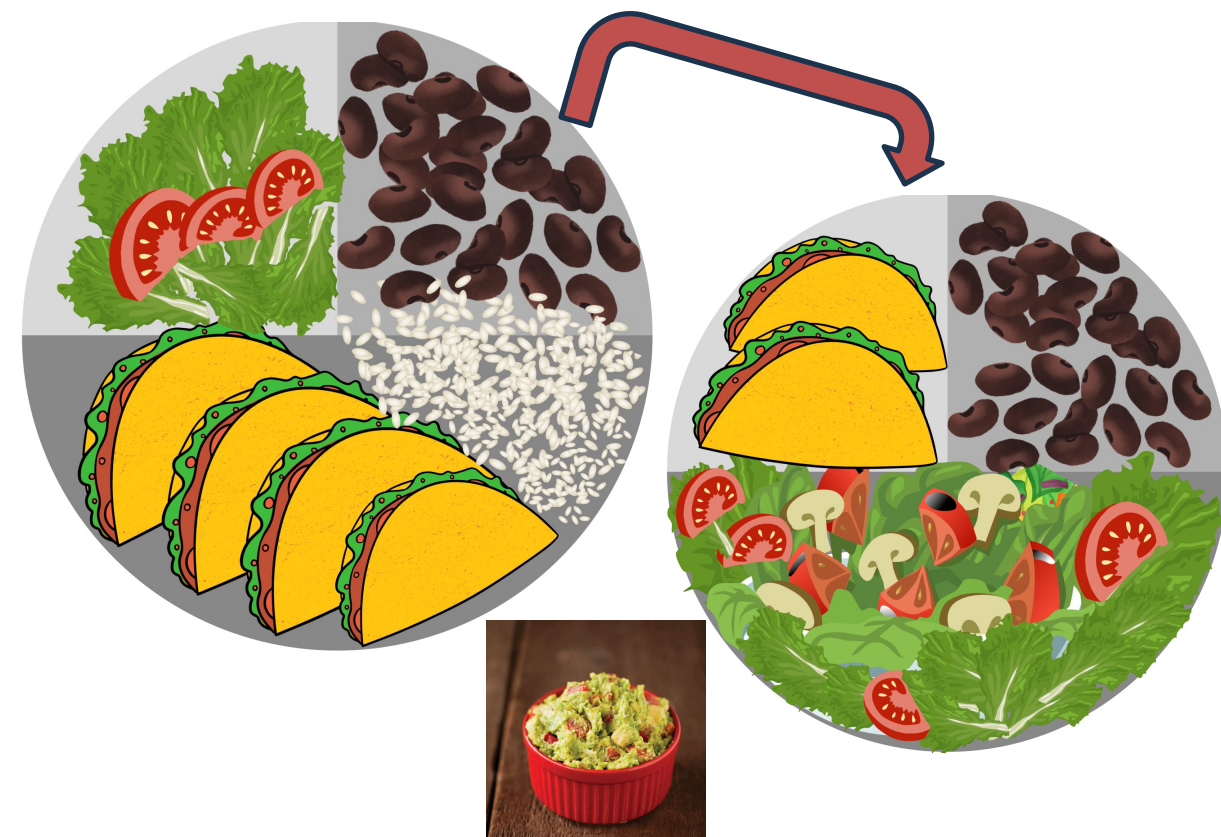
Quelites
(edible greens)
Verdolaga
(Purslane)



Bolivian Majadito

Photo cred: Casa de Campos

MyPlate: Diversified & Balanced



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Taco Platter

- **Grain:** tortilla, rice
- **Protein:** meat, fish, beans
- **Vegetables:** mixed salad and salsa
- ***Starch/complex CHO:** beans



Photo cred: Instant Culinary Team; Instapot

Photo cred: Fueled by Instapot

Ropa Vieja (*Old Clothes*)

- **Grain:** rice
- **Protein:** pulled beef + beans
- **Vegetables:** salad
- ***Starch/complex CHO:** beans, plantains



Photo cred: Blue Apron

Arepas

- **Grain:** cornmeal
- **Protein:** eggs, meat, beans
- **Vegetables:** peppers + salad
- **Fruit:** oranges

Takeaways



- Though speaking the same language helps us bridge our relationship with our patients and participants, cultural humility encourages us to go a step further to overcome cultural barriers.
- Cultural competence, an ongoing process, requires cultural humility to recognize that Hispanics/Latinos are not culturally homogenous.



Thank You!

**“The journey of a thousand
miles begins with a single step.”
– Lao Tzu**

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

References

1. Hispanic/Latino Health. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Minority Health (OMH). <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/>. Accessed March 9, 2024.
2. Moslimani M, Lopez MH, Noe-Bustamante L. 11 facts about Hispanic origin groups in the U.S. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/08/16/11-facts-about-hispanic-origin-groups-in-the-us/>. Accessed March 10, 2024.
3. Bureau UC. Hispanic heritage month: 2023. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2023/hispanic-heritage-month.html>. Accessed March 9, 2024.
4. Krogstad JM, Passel JS, Moslimani M, Noe-Bustamante L. Key facts about U. S. Latinos for national Hispanic heritage month. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/09/22/key-facts-about-us-latinos-for-national-hispanic-heritage-month/>. Accessed March 9, 2024.
5. Center PR. 1. A brief statistical portrait of U. S. Hispanics. Pew Research Center Science & Society. June 2022. <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2022/06/14/a-brief-statistical-portrait-of-u-s-hispanics/>. Accessed March 10, 2024.
6. Cultural food guide for pantries. NutritionHub. <http://www.gleanersnutritionhub.org/culturalfoodguide.html>. Accessed March 12, 2024.
7. Insight F. Diversifying MyPlate: Latin American cuisine. Food Insight. <https://foodinsight.org/diversifying-myplate-latin-american-cuisine/>. Published March 1, 2022. Accessed March 10, 2024.
8. The beauty of grilled nopales. Food & Wine. <https://www.foodandwine.com/cooking-techniques/grilled-nopales-recipe-angie-vargas>. Accessed March 10, 2024.
9. Gordon J, published KAZ from AB. Mexican culture: customs & traditions. livescience.com. <https://www.livescience.com/38647-mexican-culture.html>. Published January 27, 2022. Accessed March 10, 2024.
10. Familiarize yourself with the common ingredients in Mexican cuisine. The Spruce Eats. <https://www.thespruceeats.com/ingredients-used-in-mexican-food-2342811>. Accessed March 10, 2024.
11. Guevara M, Nguyen A. 5 essential ingredients for Mexican cooking (Plus one you can't buy at the store). NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2022/10/28/1132205161/mexican-cooking-ingredients-expert-tips>. Published November 9, 2022. Accessed March 10, 2024.
12. Drago L. Más allá del arroz y las habichuelas: la guía latino-caribeña para comer sano con diabetes = Beyond rice and beans: the Caribbean Latino guide to eating healthy with diabetes. Alexandria: American Diabetes Association; 2006.
13. MyPlate. U. S. Department of Agriculture. <https://www.myplate.gov/>. Accessed March 12, 2024.
14. Drago, L. Nutrition for Hispanic Cultures webinar. Accessed March 9, 2023. <https://lorenadrigo.com/nutrition-for-hispanic-cultures-webinar/>.