

Traditional Cuisine

Each country in the Spanish-speaking world has food and dishes which they are known for.

Here are some examples:



Spain: The most famous cuisine in Spain are "tapas." Tapas, or small plates, consist of a variety of appetizers including olives, cheese, meats, eggs, bread, etc. There are many theories as to the origin of tapas. One theory says to have come from a Spanish King who arrived at a restaurant after a long voyage, where he was served a **glass of wine with a slice of cheese over top** (some say it was ham or bread). Although the King knew that the slice was being used as a *tapadera*, a cover to protect the wine from bugs or dust, he ate it anyways, as did his entire court. Following this event, it is said that the King continued to ask for "tapas" with his wine everywhere he went. Nowadays, restaurants serving tapas are becoming more and more popular around the world showcasing a variety of "small plates" meant to be shared among friends.

Puerto Rico: The most traditional Puerto Rican dish is **asopao**, a hearty gumbo made with either chicken or shellfish. Every Puerto Rican chef has his or her own recipe for asopao. *Asopao de pollo* (chicken asopao) takes a whole chicken, which is then flavored with spices such as oregano, garlic, and paprika, along with salted pork, cured ham, green peppers, chile peppers, onions, cilantro, olives, tomatoes, chorizos, and pimientos. For a final touch, green peas or asparagus might be added.



Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru- Believe it or not,

guinea pigs originated in the Andean region and were originally raised specifically for eating. It wasn't until the Spanish came and started sending guinea pigs to Europe that the furry creatures were treated as pets. Guinea pig meat is special because it's higher in protein and lower in cholesterol than chicken, pork, or beef. There are two main ways that cuy is prepared: Cuy al horno (Baked Cuy) and Cuy Chactado (Fried Cuy).

Spain, Chile and Perú- Empanadas are found in bakeries, stores, supermarkets, gas stations, and many other establishments where people gather. Because of their flavor and relatively modest price, empanadas are wildly popular. Empanadas are made from a pastry dough, like a puff pastry. The dough is rolled out and then cut into circles. The empanada is then stuff with chicken, beef, or other mixtures depending on the country. The dough is closed in the form of a half moon and sealed on the edges.



(Follow up: Assign a traditional food from a country to each student or pairs/groups of students. The students are then responsible for finding a menu describing it in detail in Spanish or a recipe. They can then present it to the class. For example: Colombian arepa, El Salvadorian pupusa, a Mexican sope, Argentine alfajores, etc.)