

Chapter Sampler

THE ANTIRACIST KITCHEN

edited by
**Nadia
L. Hohn**

illustrated by
**Roza
Nozari**

21 Stories (and Recipes)



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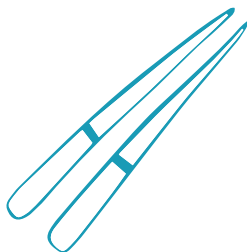
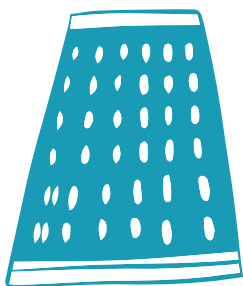
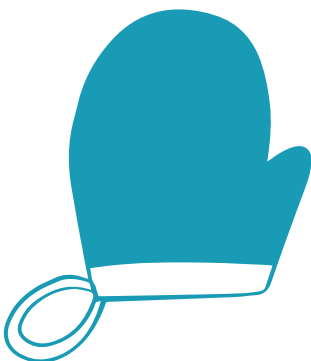
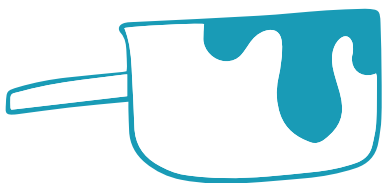
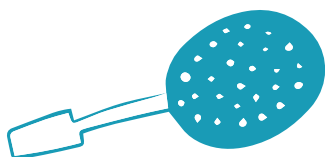
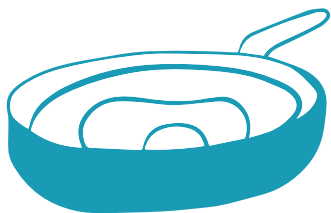
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As a 13-year-old who loves to read and learn about different cultures, I am excited to introduce *The Antiracist Kitchen: 21 Stories (and Recipes)* to you. This is not your typical cookbook. Not only will you find delicious recipes from different cultures but this middle-grade antiracist anthology will also inspire you to have important conversations about racial justice with your friends and family.

Food and culture are intertwined. Each culture has its own unique cuisine that has been shaped by a combination of factors, including geography, climate and the availability of local ingredients. These dishes are not just nourishment for the body but also play a central role in many traditions and customs.

Exploring the food of a culture different from our own can be a powerful way to break down barriers and prejudices. When we sit down to a meal prepared by someone else, we are given the opportunity to learn about their way of life and taste new flavors and ingredients. This can help expand our understanding of the world and foster a sense of connection with others.

The unique smell of the spices at Chefette, a local restaurant in Barbados, and the aroma of fish cakes and flying fish takes me back to my annual summer trips to the island. Those smells unlock memories of sharing yummy meals with my family, specifically my grandparents. There might be baked picnic ham and fish cakes for breakfast, roasted breadfruit for lunch and macaroni pie for dinner. Every meal I enjoyed in Barbados that came from the hands of my grandparents made my heart warm and put a huge smile on my face.

Everyone has traditions that involve food, and almost all involve coming together. When we share a meal, we are able to have conversations and exchange ideas in a way that is often more intimate and personal than at other times. This environment can help break down stereotypes and challenge our preconceived notions about different cultures.

I believe that *The Antiracist Kitchen* is a great addition to any young person's bookshelf. I hope that as you add a new recipe to your list of favorites or a new spice to your cabinet, you also add empathy for people and understanding.

Ainara Alleyne,
Ainara's Bookshelf





INTRODUCTION

What if talking about **racism** was as easy as baking a cake, frying plantains or cooking rice? Just picture it. You add a cup each of understanding and active listening, a tablespoon of **tolerance**, sprinkle in community, while freely adding in **allyship**, **empathy**, apologies and **restoration**. Everyone gets a turn to stir the pot. Let it simmer and when it's ready, you have antiracism. And everyone gets a helping. Sounds easy, right?

When I was a child, this is what racism looked like for me:

Some children excluded me or did not want to be my friend.

I was called mean names.

People believed negative things about me because they had **stereotypes**.

I was teased about my full lips, skin tone and hair texture.

Garbage was thrown at my family's house when we had just moved into a new, predominantly white neighborhood.

I was ignored, overlooked or treated unfairly by some of my teachers.

All because I was Black.

I knew that racism was wrong. It hurt and made me feel alone, powerless and invisible. But racism wasn't talked about at my school. I didn't learn about how to stop it or what to do if it happened to me.

DEALING WITH IT

Some things helped me when I experienced this racism. My parents **emigrated** from Saint Ann, Jamaica, in the 1970s to Toronto, where I was born and grew up. When I would tell them what happened to me at school, usually my dad would talk to the teacher or principal.

My parents told me about the racism they had experienced. They also taught me about Black heroes like Martin Luther King Jr., who was a leader in the US civil rights movement. I borrowed books from the library to learn about Black history since it wasn't taught in my school.

When I was in the fifth grade, I got a chance to write a speech about a topic I cared about. I chose racism. Although I was nervous, it was the first chance I'd had to talk about this issue in front of my whole school.

This helped me, but racism in the world continued.

THE STORIES IN OUR FOOD

Whether they are forcibly displaced or **exiled**, **immigrate**, **seek refuge** or **migrate**, people who move bring their cultures with them—language, music, customs, beliefs and food. Sometimes policies and systems make it difficult for them to hold on to their cultures. From the 1600s to the 1800s, my **ancestors** in West Africa were taken from there to Xaymaca, the **Indigenous** name for Jamaica, and **enslaved** by English people. In the 1900s most of my relatives immigrated to the United Kingdom and the United States, first as **migrant workers**, then as immigrants.

The food I grew up with came from different cultures. I love to eat. Whether it was the Jamaican foods my parents made or other foods



they introduced to me and my siblings, I loved them all. Eventually this led to a love of cooking. I started out by helping my parents prepare, season, thaw, chop and stir. Because I have a few allergies and I became a **vegetarian** as an adult, learning to cook foods I could eat became essential. Cooking helps me nourish my body and express love.

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

As I got older, I discovered that talking about racism can make some people feel uncomfortable, deny that it's happening or even try to avoid or stop you from discussing it. But ignoring a problem doesn't make it disappear.

I want to make it easier to have conversations about the “tough stuff” that comes up when we discuss racism, such as **cultural genocide, slavery, assimilation**, violence and **discrimination**, which can affect people in different ways for many **generations**.

An important thing we can do is listen to people who are different from us or from other parts of the world. When we pay attention to each other's stories, we can start to care, an important step in ending racism.

I feel like the more we talk about these issues, the more we can heal ourselves and our communities, and find solutions.

Maybe sharing a meal can make it just a little easier to do this. Sometimes the act of cooking can “break the ice.” It’s a lot easier to listen and share when our taste buds are awake and our tummies are full.

As a classroom teacher, I enjoy cooking with my students. Through making sugar cookies, Haitian soup joumou and hot chocolate, Jamaican corn soup, fondue, crêpes and fried plantains, I have been able to build community and teach about slavery, ***emancipation*** and ***decolonization***.

These are the reasons I wanted to create *The Antiracist Kitchen: 21 Stories (and Recipes)*. I asked many diverse authors to share their recipes and stories. In these pages you have the very best from across Turtle Island (an Indigenous name for Canada, the United States and Mexico) and the world. The book is arranged into four chapters—reclaim, resist, restore and rejoice, all different approaches to fight racism.

You will notice that many words are written in boldface italics. You’ll find their meanings in the glossary of this book. I’ve included words that grown-ups often use when talking about racism. This will help you to become part of the conversation. I encourage you to read more about these topics.

Asking an adult for help in preparing these recipes is a great way to keep safe, learn and taste delicious food together. Let’s get started. Here is one of my favorite dishes from my own culture.

Enjoy!



CORNMEAL PORRIDGE

Makes 2-4 servings

Ingredients:

1½ cups (192 g) cornmeal

3 cups (750 ml) water

1 cup (250 ml) dairy or non-dairy milk

½ tsp pure vanilla extract

½ tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp ground nutmeg

½ tsp ground allspice

½ tsp salt

⅓ cup (80 ml) sweetened condensed milk, plus more to taste

Directions:

1. Add the cornmeal and water to a pot over medium heat.
2. Stirring constantly, cook until the cornmeal starts to thicken, about 2 minutes.
3. Add the milk and continue to stir until the cornmeal is completely cooked and the mixture is thick and smooth, another 3-5 minutes. Add more milk or water to create the consistency you like.
4. Stir in the vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, salt and sweetened condensed milk until smooth and creamy.
5. Divide the porridge among bowls and serve with additional sweetened condensed milk.







ONE

RECLAIM

HOW WE TAKE BACK
WHAT IS OURS

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history racism has caused people to hurt, destroy or take over other communities through **colonization**, **white supremacy**, war, violence and **genocide**. Racism can also result in wrongful imprisonment, **mass incarceration** and enslavement, causing generations of people to lose their financial independence, livelihoods, lands, languages, cultures, belief systems, **traditions** and food sources, often forever. Racism can also result in people being taught to be ashamed of their own cultural identities.

Today many **descendants** make tremendous efforts to reclaim cultures, languages, lands and culinary traditions that were lost.

This is often possible thanks to ethnic restaurants and food markets that bring the familiar foods from “back home.” In most major North American cities, you will be able to find markets that carry food from China, India, the Caribbean, Africa and countries with Hispanic/Latinx peoples and other nationalities.

Making a meal is a way to reclaim the culinary traditions that are passed down to us by our elders and ancestors. For me, an example of this practice is preparing bammy, one of my favorite foods that comes from Jamaica.

Bammy is a flatbread made from *cassava*. I like to eat it fried—it is simple, crispy and so delicious. Bammy comes from the Taíno, a subgroup of the Arawak, the Indigenous peoples of Jamaica. Some estimates say that there were possibly hundreds of thousands, maybe up to a million, of Arawak living in the Caribbean and South America. After Christopher Columbus and his crew arrived in Jamaica in 1494, most Arawak died of disease or were killed. The few survivors were forced into slavery, alongside my enslaved African ancestors, to harvest sugar-cane and other crops in Jamaica. I imagine the allyship between these Taíno and Africans and how they had to work together to survive this *oppressive* system.

The Taíno had important knowledge about surviving in Jamaica. We still cook some of their foods, like the famous jerk chicken and bammy, using their methods. Arawakan culture survives today in Caribbean and South American descendants who are mixed with Taíno ancestry. Words like *hurricane*, *canoe*, *hammock*, *potato* and *barbecue* originate from their language.

And although I live thousands of miles from Jamaica, I can continue these food traditions, like the authors you will find in this chapter.







Beans on the Stove, Corn Bread on the Table

by Andrea L. Rogers

“You eat yet, Andy?”

No matter when I showed up at my parents’ house, that was one of the first questions my dad asked. My dad grew up poor and, sometimes, hungry. He always had a pot of beans ready to share with anyone who came to our house. Whether I was hungry or not, I sat down to eat with him. If I was lucky there was also corn bread—warm, yellow corn muffins that I covered in butter and honey. If you were hungry at our house, well, that was your own fault.

It was only as an adult that I learned how important beans had been in the lives of Cherokees and other Indigenous people for thousands of years. Beans are nutrient-dense, provide a lot of fiber, may lower blood sugar and cholesterol, and pack loads of vitamins and minerals. And in the garden, rather than depleting the soils in which they grow, the bean plants share the nitrogen they produce.

For me beans are a comfort food, a food that is easily shared. Beans aren’t fancy, but they’re healthy, they taste good, and they can feed a crowd. This year I’m planting some small black Cherokee Trail of Tears beans in my garden. This bean is so named because Cherokees carried it with them when they were illegally forced to leave their ancestral homelands and walk more than a thousand miles to Indian Territory. Fortunately, like the Cherokee people themselves, the small jet-black bean has been able to survive in this new environment—so far. The Cherokee were forced to leave their gardens

full of harvests they would never get to gather. But they arrived in a strange new land carrying the seeds that would feed their children and their children's children.

My goal is to grow enough to share a meal with friends and family. Sitting down at a table and eating with my father was a lesson without words. To feed others is to show that you care for their health and happiness. When we gather and eat together, we feed each other's bodies in more ways than one. When we share our foods and histories and cultures, we share something larger than ourselves. I never shared a pot of Trail of Tears beans with my father. He passed in 2011. However, Cherokee tradition holds that our ancestors are always with us. When we grow the same foods they grew, cook the same meals they cooked, we honor their lives. When we sit down and thank them for what they have given us, they are at the table with us.



Phillip Robbins



Andrea L. Rogers is Cherokee. She grew up in Tulsa, OK, but now lives in Fayetteville, AR, where she is enjoying being a student again, spending time outside and wishing she had more time to make art and cookies. Her three wonderful kids are the best things in her life. Her writing for children includes the book *Mary and the Trail of Tears: A Cherokee Removal Survival Story* and the story “The Ballad of Maggie Wilson,” which appeared in *Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids*. She has also written a YA book of scary stories called *Man Made Monsters*. She believes everyone has a story to tell.





BEAN SOUP (TUYA UGAMA)

Serves 8-10

This recipe can be adapted to be vegetarian or vegan by replacing the meat with 1-2 tbsp of olive oil. It can also easily be reduced or increased for sharing if you wish. Like many things we love, it requires patience and attention, but the results are worth the effort.

Ingredients:

2 cups (450 g) dried pinto beans

8 cups (2 L) water (for soaking beans)

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb (340 g) salt pork or bacon, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces

1 large onion, diced

Olive oil (optional)

8 cups (2 L) water (for cooking beans)

2 bouillon cubes of choice (chicken, vegetable or beef)

$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (optional)

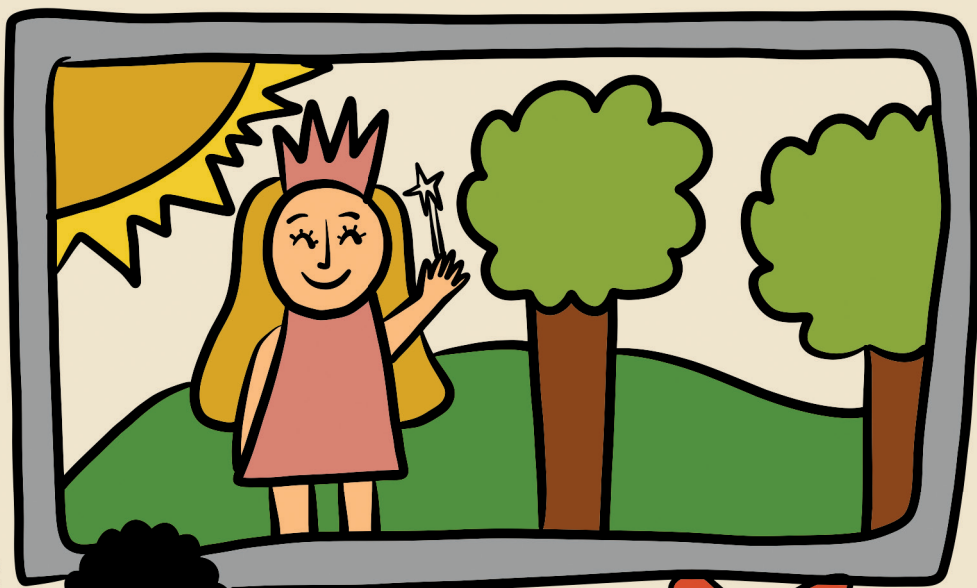
Directions:

1. Rinse the beans and discard any pebbles.
2. Place the beans in a large pot and cover with about 8 cups of cold water. If you planned ahead, cover with a lid and allow the beans to soak overnight. If not, bring the water and beans to a rapid boil for 2 minutes, remove from heat, cover with a lid and let sit for at least 1 hour.
3. Drain the beans and rinse well. Set aside.
4. Add the salt pork or bacon to a large pot over medium heat. Cook until the fat is rendered down, then add the diced onion.
5. Lower the heat to low and cook the onion until translucent, 7-10 minutes. Do not pour off the grease. You should have about 1-2 tbsp of grease left in the pot. Add a bit of olive oil if necessary.
6. Carefully add the beans and 8 cups of water to the pot. The beans should be covered by at least 1 inch of water throughout the cooking process, so if 8 cups isn't enough, add more water.
7. Turn the heat up to high and bring the beans to a rapid boil. Periodically, stir to make sure the beans aren't sticking to the bottom of the pan. The beans must boil for at least 10 minutes. Stir and add water, if needed.
8. While boiling, stir in the bouillon cubes.
9. After 10 minutes, turn the heat down to low and cover with a lid. Simmer beans for 1-2 hours or until they are as soft as you like. If this is the first time you have made beans, check every 15 minutes to make sure the heat is not too high, the water has not gotten too low and the beans aren't sticking to the bottom of the pan. Remember—water should cover the beans by at least an inch. If the beans are sticking to the bottom of the pan, it is a sign they're burning. Few things smell worse than burned beans.
10. Once the beans are as soft as you like them, turn off the heat. Taste and add a bit of salt if needed before serving. Let cool before placing in the refrigerator.

Notes:

- If you are only serving a little at a time, you can reheat the bowls individually in the microwave. Otherwise, reheat the whole pot on the stove over low heat and keep an eye on liquid levels, stirring occasionally.
- Pairs well with corn bread or biscuits.







Love Me, Love My Banana Fritters

by **Hasani Claxton**

One of my favorite things to do with my two daughters is playing video games. When my older daughter, Cassie, was about five years old, I got her a princess adventure game in which you can create your own character. Cassie was really into princesses at the time, but I was frustrated that none of the characters she loved looked like her, with brown skin, brown eyes and kinky black hair. Instead all the princesses had white skin, blue eyes and straight hair. I was so excited that her new video game would let her make a princess that looked like her. I showed her how to use the game's character creator and stepped away for a while so she could do her thing. When I came back, she had made a character with white skin, blue eyes and long blond hair.

"Don't you want your princess to have brown skin like you?" I asked her.

"No, Daddy. I want it to be pretty," Cassie replied.

Of course, I think my daughters are the most beautiful girls in the world, so I was shocked that she thought people who looked like her weren't pretty. I began to come up with ways to teach my daughter to love herself and people like her. I found as many books, comics, movies and television shows as I could with Black characters (which wasn't many). Most important, I tried to connect her with our culture. I grew up in Saint Kitts, a small island in the Caribbean, where most of the people are of African descent. My dad was from there, and my mom is from Jamaica. I began cooking recipes from back home to get her excited about where we're from. When I was little, I always loved my

mother's banana fritters. They're like pancakes, but so sweet and full of banana flavor that you don't need any syrup.

I encouraged my children to help me make them. They mashed the bananas while I measured out the flour, sugar and other ingredients. Banana fritters quickly became one of their favorites. By the time Cassie was 13, she was a confident and proud Black teenager. She keeps her hair **natural** and wears her Jamaican flag T-shirt every chance she gets. Now she wants to learn how to make other Caribbean snacks, like festival and johnnycakes, because for her, and for many children of immigrants, food is a gateway to learning to love her culture and herself.

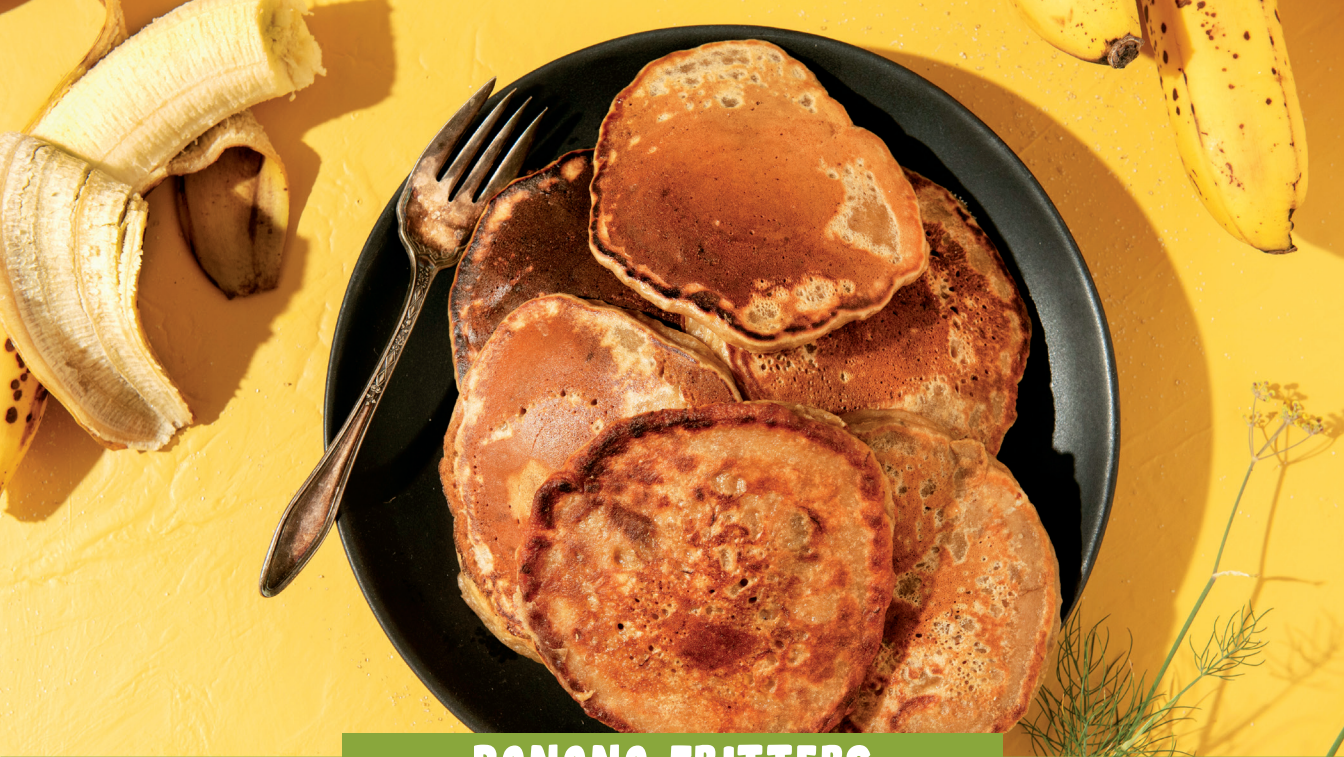


Courtesy of Hasani Claxton



Hasani Claxton was an attorney in New York City. When he began to take art classes at night, he realized he really wanted to become an artist. He has always loved science fiction and fantasy but was frustrated by the lack of diversity. This inspired him to start creating stories and art starring people who look like him. When he's not writing, painting, showing his artwork or teaching art at Bowie State University, he is probably reading comics or watching anime.





BANANA FRITTERS

Makes 8-10 fritters

Ingredients:

2 large, very ripe to overripe bananas

½ cup (100 g) brown sugar

1 egg, lightly whisked

½ cup (125 mL) milk

1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla

1 cup (120 g) flour

½ tsp cinnamon

A pinch of salt (optional)

Vegetable oil for frying



Directions:



1. Mash the bananas in a large bowl then add the sugar, egg, milk and vanilla. Mix well until all ingredients are well incorporated.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, cinnamon and salt.
3. Add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture a little at a time until well mixed. The batter will be a little runny.
4. Heat a skillet or griddle over medium heat.
5. Add about 1 tbsp (15 mL) vegetable oil to the skillet and spread it evenly to cover the surface of the skillet.
6. Pour about ¼ cup of the batter into the skillet and cook until the edges are golden brown, 1-2 minutes, Flip and cook the other side, another minute or two. Repeat with the remaining batter, adding more oil to the pan as needed.
7. Cool on a plate lined with paper towels to soak up any extra oil. Serve warm.





Tortillas con Queso (and Love)

by Jennifer De Leon

Growing up, amid the loud laughter and chairs scraping to make room for more at the table, the smell of meat sizzling on the stove and my abuela's constant urging "¡Ven a comer!" inviting us to come eat, there was always a bag of MASECA on the kitchen counter.

Whether it was in my house, my grandmother's tiny apartment in Boston or the homes of endless tías and tíos (aunts and uncles) in Massachusetts, California, Texas and New York, the bag of corn flour was a **staple**. In fact, MASECA might be in every Latinx family's kitchen throughout the world. For my family, this was a way of holding on to the tradition of eating tortillas with every meal in our homeland of Guatemala, a country in Central America.

The bag is white with green-outlined yellow letters announcing itself, proud and mighty: *MASECA: Masa instantánea de maíz/instant corn masa flour*. An image of an ear of corn stretches behind the capital letters, and below them, in a smaller font, it reads *tortillas, tamales, pupusas, atoles, empanadas, gorditas, sopes*. Oh, what possibilities! So many ways that masa can dance on the plate!

But here's a secret. When I was in middle and high school, I didn't think too much about this bag of corn flour. It was just always...there. It wasn't until later, in college and graduate school and in my first apartment in the city, which I shared with friends, that a little pang in my chest made me realize I missed it. And I missed it as a young adult in my twenties, while I lived and studied all over the world. So when I started a family of my own, I knew I wanted a bag of MASECA to have a place on my kitchen countertop.

But here's another secret. My husband is the cook in our family, not me. He *loves* to cook. I always joke that even though he is Jewish and from a small town in New Hampshire, his heart and his stomach are Guatemalan. So together, and of course with the help of *their* abuela, we are raising our young boys to love and appreciate MASECA too—specifically, tortillas con queso. Beside us, they stand on chairs at the kitchen counter and proudly stir and mix and assemble the ball of corn flour with grated cheese. “Mama! Look!” they announce proudly. It is part of their **cultural heritage**. Part of our history. Part of our family bond.

Making tortillas con queso has been a wonderful way to continue our Guatemalan traditions. Abuela helps our sons make this recipe all the time, and in doing so, we all celebrate our culture, our community. It helps that the tortillas con queso are absolutely delicious! They are best when eaten right off the stove—hot and blackened and when the cheese stretches as you gently pull the tortilla apart. The smell of tortillas con queso is the part I love best, though. It is the smell of the past mixed with the future and of love moving across generations—and countertops.



Matthew Guillory



Born in the Boston area to Guatemalan parents, **Jennifer De Leon** was often asked, “Where are you from?” This question inspired her to write the YA novel *Don’t Ask Me Where I’m From*, about a Latinx teen girl trying to fit in at her new high school. Jenn also loves writing essays and children’s books and has won the Juniper Prize for Creative Nonfiction, a Walter Dean Myers grant from We Need Diverse Books, and an International Latino Book Award. When she is not writing, she is presenting at schools across the United States, coaching her son’s soccer team or brewing her next cup of coffee.







TORTILLAS CON QUESO

Makes 6–8 tortillas

Ingredients:

2 cups (200 g) of MASECA (instant corn masa flour)

1 cup (250 mL) water

½ tsp salt

1½ cups (200 g) grated mozzarella cheese

Butter for frying (optional)

Love

Directions:

1. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the MASECA, water and salt.
2. Using your hands, mix into a dough. Add a touch more water if the dough is too dry to hold together.
3. Fold in the mozzarella cheese, distributing evenly throughout the dough.
4. Divide the dough into 6–8 balls, depending on how many tortillas you want to make. Use your palms to flatten the balls evenly into thin disks.
5. Heat a heavy skillet over medium-high heat and add a small amount of butter if using. If you use butter, the tortillas will be lighter in color. If you set the tortillas directly in the skillet without butter, they will become a little blackened in spots, which is my preference.
6. Cook for about 2 minutes. Flip and cook for another 2 minutes or so, until the cheese is melted, and the tortillas are nicely browned.
7. Repeat with the remaining dough, then share!

