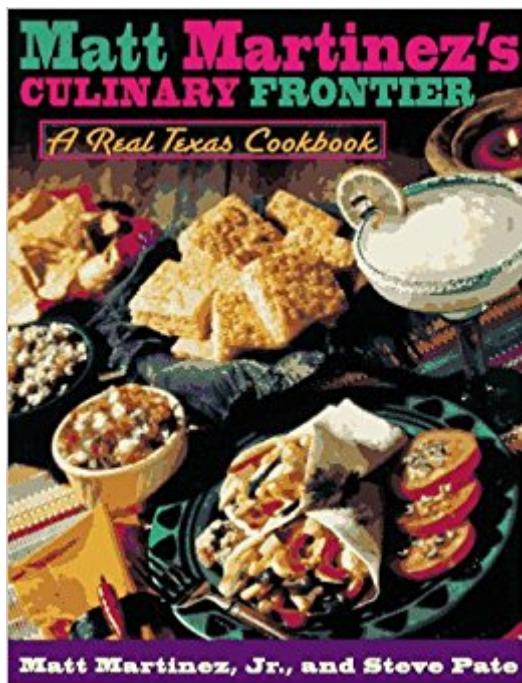


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Matt Martinez's Culinary Frontier



Synopsis

Matt Martinez, Jr., has his paternal grandfather to thank for his culinary success. A soldier in Pancho Villa's army, Delphino Martinez was captured by the Federales, but managed to escape across the Texas border, and eventually open, in 1925, Austin's first Tex-Mex restaurant, called El Original. The Martinez family has been in the restaurant business ever since. In Matt Martinez's Culinary Frontier, Matt has gathered all of the recipes that are closest to his heart, for cooking "the way it's been done in the Southwest since the days of the vaqueros and real cowboys, whose cast-iron skillets were used and used and used some more." Here you will find classics for every time of day, from breakfast Huevos Rancheros (as they were served to young Matt in the kitchen by his maternal grandmother) to Matt's Competition Chili (Chili, he claims, originated in San Antonio in the 1900s, and he has the story to prove it.), to Chile Rellenos (Lyndon Johnson's favorite), to Standard South Texas Fried Chicken (which his mother served at Matt's El Rancho from the day it opened in 1952) to Early Texas Chicken Fried Steak. And for each recipe there's a story, of Matt, his family, or of the dish itself. Not only are Matt's recipes easy and delicious, they are authentic and untouched by modern trends. As Matt says, "Dancing with the one that brought us has always been a rule of thumb in Texas. Staying close to what you hold dear, to what makes your little ol' heart pitter-patter, is what this cookbook is all about."

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Customer Reviews

Reading Matt Martinez's Culinary Frontier is like digging into heaps of the best food you've ever eaten while listening as a kicked-back, sleepy-eyed hombre tells you how his Mexican grandfather fled to the U.S. to escape hanging, then started the first Tex-Mex restaurant in Austin, Texas.

Martinez, who spices up his volume with old family photos, talks about feeding the local politicians and famous sports figures who come through town. You want him to keep talking while you keep eating. Martinez practices true cowboy and prairie cooking. He claims that all dishes can be prepared in a cast-iron skillet. He believes in lard and homemade chorizo, but also cooks lean food. Carne Gasado, an elemental chicken stew, Matt's Jalapeno Coleslaw, and creamy King Ranch Casserole made with sirloin are evidence of his cooking style. Catch the recipes for smoky and hot Chipotle Sauce, unusual Corn Tortilla Quesadillas, and incendiary Prairie Mary Cocktail. If you get to Dallas, the Smoked Baked Potato served at Matt's No Place, one of the four restaurants Martinez has in Texas, is an experience long remembered. Thanks to Culinary Frontier, you can try to duplicate it at home.

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I have purchased all of Matt Martinez's cookbooks due to my love of his restaurants. My husband and I drive from Houston to Austin about every 6 weeks just to eat at "Matt's Famous El Rancho" Restaurant. I purchased his cookbooks to make some of our favorites at home and while the recipes are great and everything made from his cookbooks is delicious and easy to prepare, it doesn't compare to the experience of going to one of his restaurants! It does give me a quick fix

when I have a hankering for good tex-mex until we can make the roadtrip back to Austin to get the real thing.

I bought this book for my daughter, who lives in Canada. We are from Austin, & she has to cook her own Mexican food there in Canada. I ate at the original Martinez restaurants in Austin in the 50s, when I was a child. In addition to the recipes, there are lots of stories about the family, etc. I highly recommend.

Reading this cookbook brings back memories of the many meals at El Rancho in Austin (1st street location) and our favorite waitress Lupe. Happy to get recipe for stuffed jalapenos (our family "automatic" plus margarita) and chili rellenos. Can't wait to try them!!! The stories are fun and interesting as well.

For those not familiar with Matt Martinez, he is one of the foremost experts on Tex-Mex and cowboy cooking. I originally picked up this book years ago and have gone to it again and again for both a great set of Tex-Mex (if you don't know the difference between this and the cuisines of Mexico, you're in for some surprises), and a great set of anecdotes about the "original" Tex-Mex restaurant in Austin that include Texas legends such as LBJ and Lady Bird Johnson. The best compliment that makes me recommend this is that our family uses several recipes for our Christmas Eve dinner every year (including the rice and chili recipes). This is a part of our Texas Christmas tradition. The recipes call for easy-to-find ingredients, and represent the flavors that you would expect from this type of cuisine. PS - if you come to the Dallas area, you HAVE to eat the Bob Armstrong dip at one of his restaurants - AWESOME. (Recipe is also in the book).

After enjoying one of the best mexican meals we've ever eaten at "Matt's Famous El Rancho Restaurant" in Austin, my wife just had to have the cookbooks. This is the 1st in a series of 3 cookbooks, that we are aware of, by Matt Martinez Jr., whose grandfather opened the very first Tex-Mex restaurant in Austin, "El Original", and whose father, Matt Martinez Sr., opened El Rancho, Austin's most popular. . Along with many delicious and authentic recipes, this book has lots of interesting family stories and the history and evolution of "Tex-Mex" cuisine. While all 3 books are good, her favorite, by far, is his newest "MexTex: Traditional Tex-Mex Taste".

I was first introduced to Matt's family restaurant, El Rancho, in Austin 20 years ago during college

and still make a point of going there when visiting. I grew up in TX and now live in the wilds of NJ with nary a Tex-Mex joint in sight - or within a days drive. I can make the very simple recipes from this book, close my eyes and feel like I'm home again. After making several of these dishes for a very Italian NY friend of mine she demanded I spend an afternoon showing her how to make her favorites from this book. Very high praise indeed. If you are interested in Tex-Mex cooking, do yourself a favor and buy this book. You won't regret it.

What I love about this cookbook is not only the recipes but also the snippets about his heritage. It makes for a good read. I've made a number of these recipes with good success and they do not take exotic ingredients except for one: ROASTED ARMADILLO (Poor Man's Pig) Now that one I will pass on... even if it does taste like pork!

This is a simple to use, easy to read, enjoyable cook book that is not only a pleasure to work out of, but is interesting and fun to read. The recipes are straight forward, Martha Stewart would hate this book. For years I have been trying to make enchiladas for my family without them having the consistently of tree bark. Matt has shown me how to share the recipes I enjoyed so much growing up in Texas to my family being raised in New York City.

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