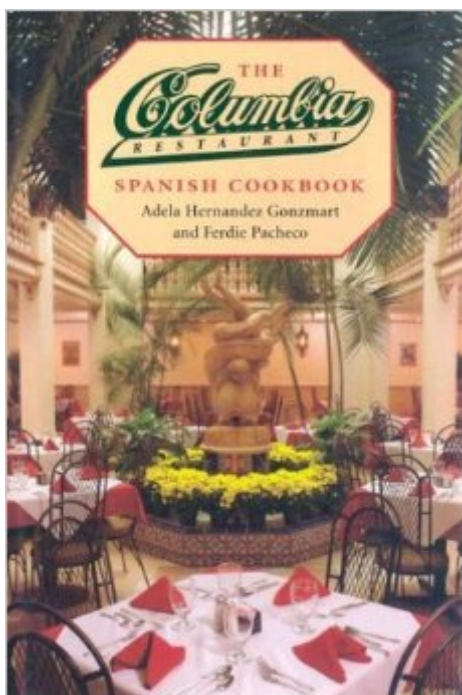


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The Columbia Restaurant Spanish Cookbook



Synopsis

*"Five Forks"--Spanish government ranking**"Recommended"--AAA Travel Guide and Mobil Travel Guide*Golden Spoon Award--Florida Trend**"A Spanish happening not to be found elsewhere."--Holiday Magazine*Epicurean Rendezvous Award for "The best restaurant in Tampa, Florida"--Fortune Magazine*Fine Dining Hall of Fame Award--Nation's Restaurant News

Out of secrets and dreams and romance, Adela Hernandez Gonzmart and Ferdie Pacheco memorialize their passion for the Columbia in this narrated cookbook inspired by the nation's largest Spanish restaurant and Florida's oldest restaurant. Adela's affair with food is a family legacy that began more than 90 years ago, when her beloved grandfather Casimiro emigrated from Cuba to Tampa, then a little town on Florida's west coast. There, amid scrub palmettos and rattlesnakes, an enclave of Cubans, Spaniards, and Italians worked in the growing cigar industry in a neighborhood known as Ybor City. Casimiro Hernandez found work, saved his money, and in 1905 purchased a bar, where he started selling soup, sandwiches, and coffee. Out of gratitude to his new country, he named his small café the Columbia, after the personification of America in the popular song "Columbia, Gem of the Ocean." Prophetically, he added this motto to his sign: "The Gem of All Spanish Restaurants." This book is both a history of the elegant family restaurant, which now boasts six locations in Florida, and a cookbook of 178 recipes that make them famous. It is also the biography of Adela, the heart of the Columbia, with commentary by Ferdie Pacheco, television's "fight doctor," Ybor City's famous raconteur, and Adela's neighbor as they grew up together in Ybor City. Casimiro became known for dishes that the Columbia still serves--Spanish bean soup, his lusty creation that combines sausage, garbanzo beans, and potatoes in a beef stock; arroz con pollo, a classic chicken and rice dish; an authentic Cuban sandwich; and the 1905 salad, dressed with the family's special blend of fresh garlic, oregano, wine vinegar, lemon juice, and Spanish olive oil. Pijuan, Casimiro's fabled chef from the kitchen of King Alfonso XIII of Spain, contributed numerous works of art, such as pompano papillot and steak capuchina. Adela and Ferdie now reveal the best of these recipes and offer many others, giving lovers of good food the opportunity to bring home the aroma, the seasonings, and the glamour of the Columbia, the gem of all Spanish restaurants. Adela Hernandez Gonzmart was born two blocks from the Columbia Restaurant. After graduating from the Juilliard School of Music, she toured the United States and Cuba as a concert pianist. After her marriage to violinist Cesar Gonzmart, she performed with such entertainers as Liberace, Ernesto Lecuona, and Amparo Hurb. She was instrumental in forming the Tampa Symphony Orchestra and has received countless honors from organizations in the Tampa community: Outstanding Citizen of the Year awards from the Tampa Museum Society and

the Optimist Club, Hispanic Woman of the Year from the Hispanic Heritage League, Paulo Longo Award from the Italian Club, and the Centro Asturiano Award for contributions to the Latin community, as well as awards from the community Red Cross, Salvation Army, Girl Scouts, and Arts Council and other awards for civic service. Ferdie Pacheco, who as a teenager worked in the Columbia Restaurant as a waiter, is the author of *Ybor City Chronicles* (UPF, 1994), *Muhammad Ali: A View from the Corner*, *Fight Doctor*, and *Renegade Lightning*. He served as Muhammad Ali's personal physician from 1963 to 1977. He is also a painter, exhibiting one-man shows in London, Paris, New York, and Miami (where he now lives), and a boxing color commentator on television. He is married to Luisita Sevilla, who danced flamenco with Los Chavales de España until Ferdie booked her into his house "for a lifetime run."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Columbia Restaurant is a historic and famous restaurant in Florida. Located in historic St. Augustine and in Tampa, restaurant connoisseurs are sure to talk about the fine Spanish cuisine served here. The cookbook lists many of the Columbia's most popular recipes. From traditional tapas to a delectable flan, the book is absolutely loaded with exquisite recipes. The book also gives a detailed history with pictures of this infamous restaurant. If you cannot make it out to this fantastic restaurant for yourself, the cookbook will be a close second to capturing the Spanish ambiance and fine cuisine.

I've had the pleasure of eating at this restaurant in historic Ybor City and even bought my autographed copy of this book there. It's one of the many reasons to want to live in Tampa; the

food, the culture and so many entertaining stories are expressed thoroughly in this cookbook. It's very simple to understand and follow and even if you never make one dish from all of the delicious recipes you will enjoy it for the great recollection of the childhoods of the authors. I highly recommend buying this book (and visiting the actual restaurant if you ever get the chance!)

The Columbia restaurant is the oldest Spanish restaurant in the US and the very best! Their succulent recipes are all here and I have tried them. My dishes tasted just like the ones I have eaten there! The history of the restaurant, told in this book, has tears, laughter, romance, tragedy, triumph and above all, and incredible love for this, our country. This book is indispensable in my kitchen and my house is always full of company because of it. Recipes that are many generations old, made with love. Beautiful book.

I visited both the Columbia restaurant in Ybor City and in Clearwater, and I had to buy the book, the recipes are wonderful, especially the seafood dishes, but, what I liked the most was the actual story about Tampa and the family that owns the restaurants, I finished the book feeling like I knew the family since ever!!!. If you are not around Florida right now, I'll suggest you to buy the book, and if you are in Florida and anywhere close to any of the Columbia restaurants, make a dinner reservation right now!!, and then, buy the book.

The recipes are just one reason to buy this book, the history is the other. The family's story made me laugh and cry. I read this book on the plane ride home from Tampa to Boston and my mouth actually started watering when I got to the Rum Omelette recipe. I had no idea how far back the history of this restaurant and Ybor City went, I've already decided that Tampa is the place for me and am moving there in the near future. I already miss the cafe con leche and Cuban bread that tastes like nothing I've ever had before and upon reading the book, now I know why.

This is a great book, with delicious recipes. It is very well written, provides some history about the author and the restaurant called the Columbia. The name of the dishes are written in both English and Spanish. I was able to find a few recipes for items I have ordered from a local Latin restaurant and give them a try, and my family loved them. What I love the most about this book is that the recipes are simple and require few ingredients, so trying new dishes doesn't require too much advance planning. If you like Latin food but were afraid to cook it this is the book for you!!!!

I went to the Columbia restaurant in Ybor City a few years ago, and the food was divine. I bought the cookbook hoping, originally, to recreate the dishes I had eaten. Sadly, not *every* dish I had was covered, but those that were came out perfectly, and I discovered many, MANY new favorites in exploring these delicious recipes.

This cookbook is from one of my favorite restaurants. Have tried some of the recipes with great success but leave my favorites to the restaurant chef. Wonderful recipes. The tapas/appetizers alone can really upgrade dinner parties if you don't want to get into anything more involved. But do try some of the fancier recipes too. The instructions are clear and results fantastic-this from a self described 'non cook'

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