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Spice Up Mealtime with a Cinco de Mayo-Themed Menu

*The Other White Meat Enlists Celebrity Entertainers/ Authors,
Carolina Buia and Isabel Gonzalez to Help Families Celebrate in Style*

Des Moines, Iowa (April 4, 2008) – A recent survey of more than 1,000 chefs across the country reveals: Latin American cuisine is one of the “hottest” ethnic cuisines in 2008¹. Cinco de Mayo, a holiday that historically celebrates the defeat of the French army by the Mexicans at the Battle of Puebla in 1862, has fast become one of America’s most popular occasions for general celebration and entertaining. It is the perfect occasion to bring the dynamic flavor of Latin food to your family’s dinner table.

To help home cooks create their own Latin fanfare at home, the National Pork Board has teamed up with entertaining experts and co-authors of *Latin Chic: Entertaining with Style and Sass*, Carolina Buia and Isabel Gonzalez, to offer tips for Cinco de Mayo cooking and entertaining.

“Requiring little preparation, pork is the ideal menu choice for Latin cuisine because the wide arrays of cuts are versatile enough to pair with nearly every flavor,” said Buia. “For example, pork chops or tenderloins can be paired with pre-made fruit or vegetable-based salsas and spice rubs with Caribbean and Latin themes.” Pork’s role in New World cuisine dates back to 1539, when Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto landed in Tampa Bay, Fla. with America’s first 13 pigs, beginning a flavorful tradition that we continue to enjoy today.

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¹ National Restaurant Association. “What Hot, What’s Not” chef survey, Dec. 2007 (survey addressed hot cuisine for 2008)

Delicioso Edible Essentials

“The secret to spicing up mealtime with Latin-style dishes is choosing simple, yet delicious dishes. Pork recipes are the perfect fit -- preparation is as easy as uno, dos, tres so you spend less time in the kitchen and more time with your family and friends,” said Gonzalez.

Buia and Gonzalez created two recipes that incorporate the spirited flavor of Mexican street-food fare and require less than 45 minutes in the kitchen:

- **Velveting Pork Tacos** - a unique and fun alternative to traditional chicken or beef tacos; the self-serve style of this dish makes it the perfect choice for feeding the family or a large crowd!
- **Pork Medallions with Mirasol and Cherry Cream Sauce** – not only do the moist pork tenderloin medallions meld the piquant bite of Peruvian Mirasol peppers with the candied hint of dried cherries, but pork tenderloin is the leanest cut of pork with only 2.98 grams of fat per 3-ounce serving, making it as lean as a skinless chicken breast.

Serve these delicious pork dishes with grilled corn on the cob with chipotle butter or black beans garnished with cilantro.

Fixings for a Fabulous Fiesta

In addition to eating with zing, set the mood for your Latin-infused dinner by creating a fun atmosphere with these do-it-yourself décor tips from Buia and Gonzalez.

- **Charming Centerpieces** - For a truly special table presentation, place several de-stemmed Hibiscus flowers in large, shallow bowls filled with water. Hibiscus flowers are everywhere in Mexico and are often found growing in front and back yards.

- **Enjoyable Ambiance** - Play some regional music and decorate with festive lights to create the perfect Latin setting.
- **Tricks and Treats** – Close the night with a piñata for a truly memorable fiesta, for adults and kids alike!

These recipes and entertaining tips are perfect for Cinco de Mayo (May 5), Mexican Independence Day (Sept. 16) or *any occasion* throughout the year.

For more inspirational recipe ideas and Latin American entertaining tips, visit TheOtherWhiteMeat.com. Photography for the recipes mentioned above are available for download within the Internet Press Kit and/or upon request.

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