

Rochester Institute of Technology

## RIT Digital Institutional Repository

---

### Theses

---

1994

## The Feasibility of a market for a Puerto Rican/ Caribbean restaurant in Rochester, New York: A Pilot study

Yvonne Battistini

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.rit.edu/theses>

---

### Recommended Citation

Battistini, Yvonne, "The Feasibility of a market for a Puerto Rican/ Caribbean restaurant in Rochester, New York: A Pilot study" (1994). Thesis. Rochester Institute of Technology. Accessed from

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the RIT Libraries. For more information, please contact [repository@rit.edu](mailto:repository@rit.edu).

**THE FEASIBILITY OF A MARKET FOR A  
PUERTO RICAN / CARIBBEAN RESTAURANT  
IN ROCHESTER , NEW YORK: A PILOT STUDY**

by  
Yvonne Battistini

A Project submitted to the  
Faculty of the School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management  
at  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree  
of  
Master of Science

November, 1994

**ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management**  
**Department of Graduate Studies**

**M.S. Hospitality-Tourism Management**  
**Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings**

Name: yvonne Battistini Date: 6/15/99 SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Research: The Feasibility of a market for a Puerto Rican/  
Carribean Restaurant in ROchester, NY: A pilot Study

Specific Recommendations: (Use other side if necessary.)

Thesis Committee: (1) Dr. Richard Marecki (Chairperson)

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

OR (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Credits Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

6/15/99 \_\_\_\_\_

Date Committee Chairperson's Signature

6/15/99 \_\_\_\_\_

Date Department Chairperson's Signature

Note: This form will not be signed by the Department Chairperson until all corrections, as suggested in the specific recommendations (above) are completed.

cc: Departmental Student Record File - Original  
Student

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management  
Department of Graduate Studies

M.S. Hospitality-Tourism Management  
Statement Granting or Denying Permission to Reproduce Thesis/Project

The author of a thesis or project should complete one of the following statements and include this statement as the page following the title page.

Title of thesis/project:

*The Feasibility of a Market  
for a Puerto Rican/Caribbean  
Restaurant in Rochester, New York:  
A Pilot Study*

I, Yvonne Battistoni, hereby (grant, deny) permission to the

Wallace Memorial Library of R.I.T., to reproduce the document titled above in whole or part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

OR

I, \_\_\_\_\_, prefer to be contacted each time a request for reproduction is made. I can be reached at the following address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5/3/99  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## ABSTRACT

### The feasibility of a Market for a Puerto Rican / Caribbean Restaurant in Rochester, New York: A Pilot Study

by

Yvonne C. Battistini

The purpose of the study was to find out if there was a market for a Puerto Rican / Caribbean restaurant in the targeted areas. The surveys were gathered in a SPSS format (Statistical Package for the Social Science) in order to obtain objective analysis from the food consumer on their knowledge of Puerto Rican / Caribbean food. The findings of the study were based upon primary research conducted through a questionnaire. The sample was randomly selected from the white pages of the 1993 Rochester phone book. The questionnaire was mailed out targeting the higher income residential areas. Six hundred surveys were mailed and they were equally divided among people with American and Hispanic last names.

From the sample of 600, only 132 questionnaires were answered and returned. The survey results showed that the knowledge about Puerto Rican / Caribbean food is very poor and that there is no market for this kind of food the particular demographic that was surveyed.

The study recommends to look for the proper ethnic market, and conduct a study to find out if there is a market for a Puerto Rican / Caribbean restaurant among the ethnic population.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION .....	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	IV
 Chapter I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE STUDY .....	 1
Background .....	1
Problem Statement .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	3
Significance .....	4
Scope and Limitations .....	4
Assumptions .....	4
 Chapter II. LITERATURE REVIEW	
Caribbean .....	5
Cuban .....	6
Dominican Republic .....	6
Haiti .....	7
Jamaica .....	7
Trinidad and Tobago .....	8
Bahamas .....	9
Latin America .....	11
Mexico .....	11
Bolivia .....	14
Ecuador .....	15
El Salvador .....	15
Panama .....	16
Costa Rica .....	17
Honduras .....	17
Italy .....	20
Africa .....	23
Tanzania .....	23

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Ethiopia .....	24
Central African Republic .....	24
Spain .....	27
 Chapter III.    METHODODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS	
Sample Population .....	29
Survey Design .....	29
Survey Methods .....	30
Secondary Data Source .....	30
Data Analysis .....	30
 Chapter IV.    RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	
Survey Results .....	32
 Chapter V.    CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	
Conclusions .....	50
Recommendations .....	51
 REFERENCES AND BIBLOGRAPHY .....	52
 APPENDIX	
A. Questionnaire .....	A-1

## DEDICATION

To my beloved mother, Matilde Mulero,  
my father Humberto A. Battistini, and my brother  
Humberto A. Battistini, M.D. for their support and for believing in me.

And for all of those that in one way  
or another had offered me a wonderful  
motivation to accomplish my Graduate studies in United States.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Richard Marecki,  
for his guidance, patience and understanding.

To Maria Aglietti for her assistance, encouragements and  
advices in good and in bad times.

To Gale Kordzikowski, Tom Pulliam and Mark Winkelbauer  
for their interest and support.

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

Want to be successful at trying to be different?. The United States is the greatest amalgam of people of any single nation where everyone comes with a different preference in taste. In most cases, after living in the States for a number of years, people from other countries begin to blend their background with the American culture. That is when the Americanization sets in. Consequently, they forget or combine their own cultural preferences. I consider the loss of culture as a natural adjustment process and as a survival tool for such reasons as the following:

1. the domain of the American culture
2. the adjustment to the American civilization
3. the lack of original ethnic places where foreigners can find their supplies or satisfy their native cravings.

This research pretends to address the restaurant business as an example of the cultural loss and needs in the food market industry for the Rochester area. Rochester is considered a very conservative area, therefore variety is not one of its most distinguishing characteristics. As a result, most of the restaurants follow the same pattern, basic and typical food. Rochester offers a considerable number of restaurants with different themes, decorations and characteristics that make them special in a certain way. But when it comes to variety in the menus, most of them are pretty much the same. The question to be asked is *Are Rochesterians conservative in their food tastes?*

The lack of variety in restaurant's menus can be a result of different reasons. One may be that restaurateurs understand that the basic menu has a positive response, therefore there is no need to try anything different. Another reason may be that restaurateurs do not want to veer from tradition and put their business at

simply because the food market has always been the same, and Rochesterians are being accustomed to the basic menu, are not willing to try anything different.

Success in some places comes as a result of being innovative and willing to risk trying something different. But *is Rochester one of those places?*. Experimenting with innovation may have one of two results, either the people like it because is different, new, and out of the ordinary. Or, the concept is too bold, the taste is too different and they are not interested in discovering new flavors.

To open an ethnic food restaurant in the Rochester area a study must be conducted, due to the fact that Rochester is known as a conservative city. It is also advisable due to the fact that reality speaks by itself. Look around and you will see that there are not that many ethnic food restaurants or better said there is not one restaurant known to be very popular for their difference in flavor, for being really ethnic. Word of mouth advertisement is very important. Unfortunately, you do not hear too much about non-American food restaurants in Rochester.

The actual non-American food restaurants have over modified the native flavor in accordance with the American taste preference. This has created a situation in which in order to be successful the restaurant owner must modify the native flavor in order to satisfy the clientele. So *why bother opening an ethnic food restaurant if is not authentic?*. Lets discuss an example of the above mentioned situation. The restaurant to be mentioned is Chi-Chis. Chi-Chis is known as a Mexican food restaurant. In reality the food taste is far from authentic Mexican. Ironically although far from authentic the restaurant seems to be successful.

An important fact to be mentioned is that when a Mexican, Italian, Chinese or any other type of non-American restaurant opens, the food flavor is modified to the American taste. To get customers for these type of modified flavor restaurants will not be a hard task as long it does not create an impact. As a result, we have a new

kind of restaurant that does not serve the typical hamburgers, steaks and potatoes, but we are still missing the innovation and authenticity.

All of these questions and ideas created a new concept for the restaurant business in the Rochester area. The concept is to open an authentic Puerto Rican/Caribbean food restaurant. Why a Puerto Rican/Caribbean food restaurant among all the other options? First, because the Puerto Rican/Caribbean food is not too hot or spicy. It is just tasty (seasoned). Second, most of their dishes have tomato sauce or a tomato base which seem to be highly accepted among Americans. Third, most of P.R. dishes are accompanied with rice, and there is a wide variety of rice flavors in the Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine which appeals to Americans. Four, rice and beans is considered a vegetarian dish for those who watch their diet or nutrition. Fifth, meats, poultry, fish and stews are lightly seasoned with salt and pepper as well as other spices and flavors which make Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine tasty but not overly spicy or salty. Six, and last Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine has a lot of dishes with plantains (green bananas) which would be something new for most Rochesterians.

### **Problem statement**

This study is designed to determine whether or not is there a market for a Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine in the Rochester, N.Y. area.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a market for Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine in the Rochester area. The study also intends to determine customers expectations and concerns of the restaurant business.

### **Significance of the study**

The results of this study will offer a lead to the weaknesses and strengths of this type of restaurant. The data collection will reveal how often people dine out, what prices they want to pay, what they look for when they dine out as well as other variables that are important to develop this new concept.

### **Scope and Limitations**

The study is limited to a random selection of names from the white pages of the 1993 Rochester phone book. The sample included 300 people with American last names and 300 people with Hispanic last names. The fact that Hispanics surnames were selected does not necessarily mean that these people where Hispanic or have any knowledge of Puerto Rican cuisine. Another limitation is the number of surveys returned. Out of 600 surveys, only 132 were returned.

### **Assumptions**

The basic assumptions of this study are as follows: 1) people like to dine out and try different types of cuisine 2) restaurateurs are afraid to venture far from the traditional and conservative taste of Rochesterians 3) with the proper marketing ploy opening in summer and marketing the place as a Caribbean restaurant, (since everybody loves the Caribbean) a Puerto Rican restaurant will be successful.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Trying different cooking can be interesting, unfortunately not that many of us are willing to try. Sometimes some of us may regard the food we are unacustomed to food with suspicion and even dislike. We may feel sure that certain foods will not agree with us, but once that prejudice is overcome, we can discover a whole field of fascinating new possibilities and delights borrowing from all over the world those recipes we like the best and preparing them in our kitchens or trying them out at foreign restaurants.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the history and background of the foreign foods that are related somehow to the Puerto Rican/Caribbean cuisine. This relationship may be either by the ingredients used in the dishes (suchs as Italian food) of just by mere competition (like Mexican food).

#### Caribbean

The Caribbean islands are a large group of islands running from the southern coast of North America to the northern coast of South America. They are comprised of the islands of Aruba, the Bahamas , Cuba, Curacao, the Greater Antilles, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and many smaller islands.

Caribbean cooking is a blend of many cultures that have influenced the region,making it unique. It is a mixture of the traditions of the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English who colonized the islands, and the methods of the involuntary migrants the West Africans brought in as slaves and the Chinese and East Indians brought in as cheap labor for the plantations. Pinpointing cooking differences between the islands is difficult. The same fruits, vegetables, animals, and

seafood thrive on all the islands, and native cooks frequently move from island to island preparing the same dishes (Albyn, 1993). The most common Caribbean ingredients are coconuts, squash, tomatoes, corn, the green leaf from the taro root, and tubers - yams, cassava and sweet potatoes. The main spices are allspice, thyme, chilies, curry powder and coriander.

## **Cuba**

Fishing, sugar plantations, coffee plantations and cattle raising are the main food industries of Cuba. Potatoes and rice are grown as well as vegetables and fruits. The people of Cuba today are poor, but they are not undernourished. A major culinary difference between countries is how herbs and spices are used. Tropical limes and aromatic bitter-orange concentrate are distinctive Cuban seasonings. They add a mild and blander flavor to traditional Spanish-style cooking used through out Latin America. Black beans are the national food of Cuba, and in almost every Cuban household a pot of black beans is simmering on the stove, either soupy or thick. Sofrito, a mixture of sauteed garlic, onions, green pepper, and tomatoes, dominates Cuban cooking. Tamarind is used as a flavoring for beverages, candies, meat sauces, and salsa. It comes from a tropical tree and is popular in Latin America countries, Italy, and India as a flavoring in cooking and refreshing drinks (Engel, 1991).

## **Dominican Republic**

The Dominican Republic is located on the Eastern half of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with Haiti. Rule of Dominican Republic has passed among French, Spanish, Haitians, and the United States, but it is now an independent country. Chief foods crops include rice, sugar cane, coffee, and corn (Lambert, 1992). The best land goes to the big sugar plantations, and the smaller farmers contend

with small hillside lots that are likely to erode when the trees are removed for farming. Conditions in the rural communities are poor, and many people migrate to the cities in the hope of finding work and better life. Unfortunately, work is hard to find, and city living standards tend to be low. People are predominantly Spanish-speaking Catholic and are of mixed European and African descent.

## Haiti

Haiti occupies the western half of the Hispaniola Island, which also is home to the Dominican Republic. Haitian farmers till the soil on their own plots, which are remnants of the old plantations that have been divided among the many. There they grow their own food, usually garden vegetables such as black-eyed peas, squash, pumpkins, and cassava.

Haiti is a poor nation and many Haitians barely get by the growing season with enough food. They have been known to subsist on only one food item such as mangoes, until the crop is ready to harvest. Cassava, made into a flour material and baked into a bread, and coffee are breakfast for most rural people. Cassava is mostly starch, though, and is not very nutritious by itself (L.C., 1988). Dinner is the main meal of the day and usually consists of rice and beans or a stew.

A surprising fact is that even though Haiti is surrounded by waters full of fish, the Haitian fleet is not seaworthy enough to gain the full benefit of the ocean. Inland waters have fish but getting them to the people is a problem because of the lack of refrigeration.

## Jamaica

When traveling around the kitchens of the world, it is surprising to learn there are so many different fruits and vegetables that have never made it to U.S. gardens or supermarkets. For instance, in Jamaica there is a fruit so common and plentiful



that is nicknamed "free food". The fruit is ackee, and is the basic ingredient in one of Jamaica's national dishes. Although it grows well on other Caribbean Islands, the fruit is not considered edible; perhaps because if not fully ripe when picked, the fruit is poisonous (Lambert, 1992).

The unusual ackee has an equally unusual history. It was brought to Jamaica from West Africa in 1778 by a slave ship. It was Captain William Bligh of "Mutiny on the Bounty" fame who brought the unknown plant to England, where the botanical name (*Blighia sapida*) was given in his honor. Ackee is used as a vegetable, often mixing with savory ingredients such as pork, salt fish, onions, green peppers, eggs, and tomatoes.

Breadfruit, another favorite of Jamaicans, is usually baked, and served at almost all meals. A few of others interesting tropical fruits are jack fruit, soursop, tangelos, pawpaw (another name for papaya, which is used as a meat tenderizer), and ugli, a cross between tangerine, grapefruit, and orange. It is called ugly because of its ugly, lumpy appearance.

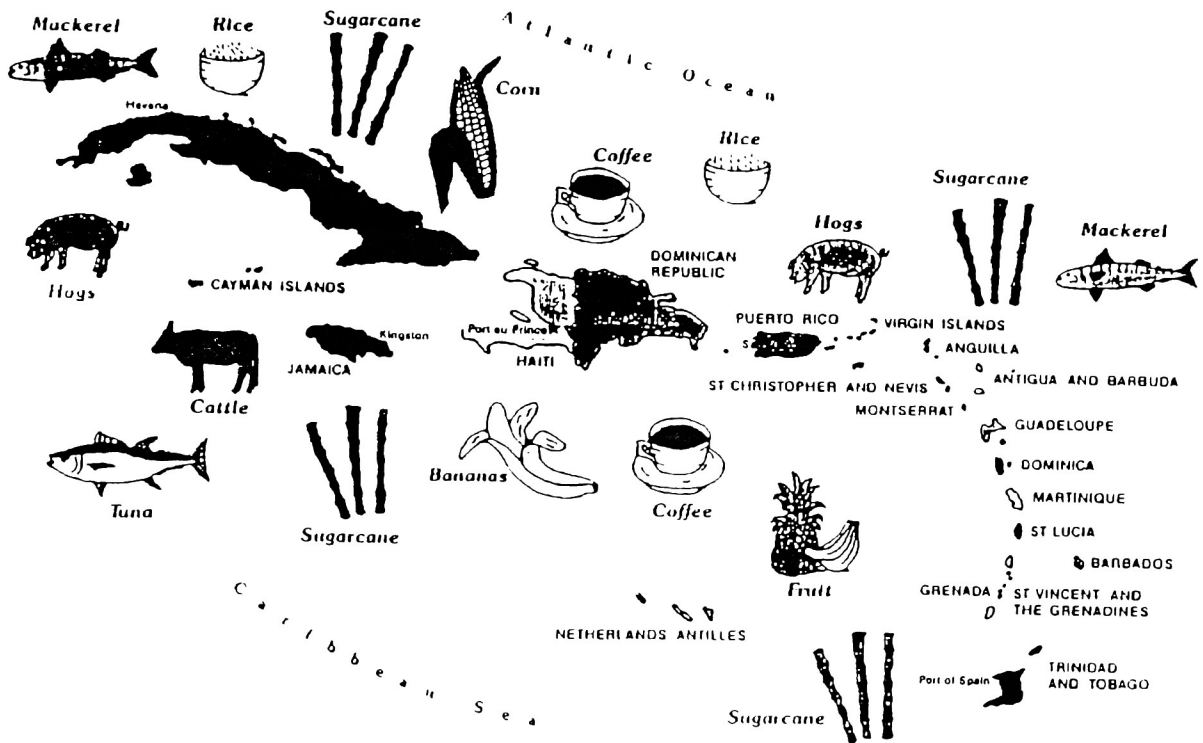
### Trinidad and Tobago

Carib and Arawk Indians, among the first Native Americans to inhabit the islands, still live on Trinidad and Tobago. The islands have a long history of migration of varied peoples including Spanish, French, English and Asians from India and China. Customs from each of these countries are part of the unique makeup of Trinidad and Tobago. The British were the last to rule the islands before granting independence in 1962.

## Bahamas

The Bahamas are a group of 700 sparsely settled islands that stretch for 590 miles just off the southeast tip of Florida. It is populated mostly by people of African descent. The British established a colony in the Bahamas in 1629 and granted full independence in 1973. British foods such as pickled onions have red pepper added to them and the fruitcake has rum added for that zing Bahamians appreciate. The very British tradition of tea time has not carried over for the general population. Most of the islands will not support very much agriculture, and so the people rely on earning money from tourism to purchase food (Albyn, 1993). On the southeastern islands, small-scale farming and fishing are practiced. People raise fruits and vegetables, goats, pigs, turkeys, and sheep.

# Caribbean



## **Latin America**

Latin America includes South and Central America and Mexico. The geography, as much as the history, has influenced the development of each country and its culture. At one time the Andes, the 4,000 mile mountain range that runs parallel with the Pacific coast, kept not only the countries isolated from one another but also kept apart different cultures within each country. The foods of Latin America are a blend of Native American with Portuguese and Spanish techniques and flavors . In most large cities the life style of the people is very continental. The cooking has a strong European influence, and foods are imported from all over the world (L.C., 1988). The rural and village people cook and eat very much as their ancestors have for centuries. In South America the llama has played an important role in the lives of farmers and is a beast of burden as well as a source of wool for clothes, meat, and milk. Today Latin America is a melting-pot of the ancient with the new, of indigenous foods prepared in hundreds of different ways.

## **Mexico**

Mexican cookery includes the oldest known indigenous cuisine. Authentic dishes are essentially derived from the Mexican Aztecs with some traced back to about 7000 B.C. Corn, beans, peppers, and roots have existed for thousands of years and still staples of the country. Tomatoes were cultivated around 700 A.D. Good crops were vital for the development of the complex agrarian society. Religious symbols took form in corn, the food that stills dominate the Mexican diet. Ancient legends tells that humans were born from corn. For many, it still remains sacred, considered a gift from the gods. It is featured in many foods including the staple, tortilla, a flat bread eaten at most meals, even breakfast.

There are regional differences in Mexican cooking. In northern Mexico, as in the Southwestern United States, cattle and goats are raised, cheese is produced, and

wheat is grown. In central Mexico, corn, beans, capsiums and roots, goat, pork, turkey, chicken, fruits and vegetables are grown. Small patches of corn are even grown on steep mountain sides throughout this region. In the southern regions of Mexico and the Yucantan peninsula, cooks integrate tropical fruits, vegetables, and seafood in a style derived from the ancient Aztec and Mayan cultures (Lambert, 1992). Along the Pacific coast tropical fruits, vegetables, fish and seafood prevail. The flavor of the Orient has also affected the cooking because of the ships with Asian crews that have stopped and traded in their ports.

Mexico is not only divided by regions but even more so by class. The foods of the wealthy are very continental, with definitive French flavors, sauces, and cooking techniques. Spain contributed a substantial amount toward the Mexican food that we know. For example the Spanish conquerors introduced frying. Beans became more flavorful with introduction of frying from the Spaniards, but the exchange worked both ways. Many foods identified with certain countries were brought to Europe from Mexico, and Central and South America. Potatoes to Ireland and tomatoes to Italy are two examples of food that originally came from Latin America, but are now strongly identified with their adoptive countries (Engel, 1991).

Native American foods that have traveled the world are pineapples, pumpkins, peanuts, sweet potatoes, squashes, and cocoa. Cocoa (chocolate) is a good example of how foods travel. The conquistadors found the Aztecs eating the cocoa bean which was a chili chocolate sauce still eaten today in Mexico. The conquistadors brought it back to Spain. Sugar was added to the cocoa, making chocolate as we know it. Now cocoa beans are a vital export crop in West Africa and are shipped to the major chocolate consuming countries in Europe and the Americas. Spain brought garlic, onions, cinnamon, and rice to Mexico, where they became part of many dishes (Engel, 1991). Mexican food if properly prepared, is neither greasy or

fatty. It is actually low in calories , high in nutrition, flavorful, and not necessarily hot (spicy).

Mexicans eat three meals a day, but their timing is different from the North Americans. The purpose of a meal in Mexico is primarily social. A Mexican meal can take two to three hours (the courses come slowly).

An *almuerzo*, usually consist of orange juice coffee or whipped chocolate, and sweet cakes. At one o' clock business closes down for siesta until three or four. Then, comes the two hour dinner called the *comida*. The entire family gathers at home with the exception of those who are far away (Sinaiko, 1990). The *comida* consist of seven courses which are listed below:

1. Entremés - is a canapé or appetizer.
2. Sopa - is a regular soup or broth.
3. Pasta or dry soup is any form of rice macaroni, spaghetti, noodle or vermicelli;
4. Fish is always supplemented with lots of sliced lime.
5. Flow of meat with salad meat is provided in a wide range with constant fresh methods of dressing. Vegetables are rarely featured by themselves: they come in the soup, in the pasta, in the meat sauce, or flank the steak on the serving platter.
6. Postre is a dessert which varies from a candied yam to a popular flan or custard, ice cream or cake. You can be certain that the coffee will not be served until every crumb of the postre is gone.

The *cena* or supper usually starts at eight o' clock is the meal that follows the *comida*. The *cena* is lighter, shorter and oftenly eaten more quickly. The supper has six courses.

1. Entremés
2. Sopa

3. Fish
4. Fowl or meat
5. Postre
6. Coffee or chocolate

The Mexican version of the coffee break is the *merienda*, a little bonus lunch. The merienda usually goes from 10:30am to 11:30am and generally consist of a small steak with coffee and sweet bread.

To achieve the Mexican style flavor, a mix of spices and vegetables called *recaudo*, must be added to the dishes. The recaudo is made in a clay cazuela. To prepare a recaudo chopped onions, garlic and sliced chiles must be sauté in peanut oil. then peeled, mashed tomatoes are stirred in with salt and pepper and cooked until tender (Montagné, 1989). Herbs are usually added to the recaudo. The most common and popular herbs in Mexican cookery are oregano and coriander. The most common method of cooking is with pork fat.

## **Bolivia**

Bolivia is a landlocked country that had been part of the rich Inca empire thousands of years ago. Today it is a struggling country, underdeveloped in almost every way. Most Bolivians are Native Americans, living much as their ancestors have for centuries. They grow potatoes, corn, rice, sugar cane, yucca and plantains. Two important crops native to Bolivia and not found elsewhere are quinoa seeds and oca roots. These two foods provide the mainstay in many Bolivian's diet. Cheese sauce is used in both potatoes and oca. Quinoa seeds are roasted and boiled into porridge that has a nutty flavor.

## Ecuador

Ecuador is a small country in South America that sits right on the equator. It is hot on the areas close to the Pacific Ocean, but in the higher mountains is cooler. There are three main regions of Ecuador, each producing its own food. Along the coast and rivers, fishing is the main source of food. Potatoes, corn, and barley grow in the fertile fields between the two ranges of the Andes mountains. In the jungle east of the Andes bananas and plantains grow along with other tropical foods such as cassava, which will grow even in poor thin soil (Sinaiko, 1990).

The main food crops of Ecuador are bananas, corn, barley, rice, sugar cane, cacao, wheat and vegetables. Cattle are raised as well. Just as elsewhere, diet is affected by what food is available. The people who live in the mountains primarily eat corn, potatoes, and beans. Meat is rarely eaten by people living in the country. Coastal people have fish in their diet; it is cooked in stews along with peas or fried. Jungle dwellers prepare plantains by frying or roasting them. Soups and stews made with cassava are common, and fried rice with onions and herbs is frequently prepared.

## El Salvador

El Salvador was at one time part of the Mayan territory. It was invaded by the Aztecs and then the Spanish. The El Salvadorians are predominantly a mestizo people, that is, a mix between the Spanish and Native Americans. Just as the people have blended, so too has the cooking. A good example of this is the refried bean dish, beans native to the area that are cooked in a Spanish way (Montagné, 1989).

Even though it is small, El Salvador has a lot of people, and people put demands on the land to produce food. Sixty percent of the people living in El Salvador are farmers, living on what they raise, for example: rice, corn, beans,



tomatoes, onions, potatoes , peppers, chickens, and for the most fortunate, pigs and goats. Export crops include coffee, shrimp, and sugar.

Life is hard in El Salvador. Many people do not get enough food every day. Long term low calorie intake results in shorter life spans (Sosa, 1989). Sanitary drinking water is not available in some parts of El Salvador. People have to carry water from other regions to have something to drink. Compounding the problems of food and water shortages is the internal fighting (civil war) between the people who do not have the money or power and those who do. This fighting has slowed the production of food and many farmers have had to leave the land to escape the fighting.

### Panama

The tiny country of Panama has emerged as a focal point in the world of trade and commerce since the digging of the "Big Ditch", the canal joining the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific. The majority of agriculture takes place on the eastern side of the country, where mountains give ways to plains, making cattle raising and farming possible. Panama has a large banana plantations, and other crops include rice, sugar cane, corn and citrus fruits. The country is self-sufficient in basic foods but has to import more than it exports. Shrimping is a big industry along the Pacific coast. Many people fish for a living. Farmers for the most part own small farms and still work the land as their ancestors did before them, using primitive hand tools, trying to produce enough food to feed their families (Albyn, 1993).

Native Panamians are a mix of Spanish and Native American ancestry. Their cooking is a blending of the two cultures. Corn is ground and made into tortillas and beans are popular food. Rice is a staple in the Panamian diet. Seviche, fish cooked in lime juice, is popular. A stew-like soup called sancocho, with chicken, cassava root, plantains, corn and potatoes in it, is very popular. In spite of the thousands of ships

passing through the canal loaded with people from every country on earth, there is less foreign influence on Panamanian cooking than on the recipes of most other Latin American countries.

### **Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is known as a land of peace and democracy, and it is one of the most stable democracies in the region. It is a fertile country, and people successfully grow coffee, bananas, sugar cane, rice corn and cocoa. The coffee, which is of very high quality, sugar, and bananas are all exported around the world. Geographically, the country is a fisher's paradise, having 125 miles of coastline along the Caribbean Sea and over 600 along the Pacific Ocean. Seafood is an important part of the diet, and it is commonly served at dinner. Dinners usually consist of salad, soup, meat such as fish or roasted beef, rice or corn, fruit juice to drink, and dessert which may be ice cream with fruited jello, pudding or cake (Sinaiko, 1990). Salads may be palm hearts with a little vinegar and oil dressing or lemon juice. The corn grown has large white kernels, and is never served on the cob but is ground up to make tortillas. Tortilla soup is their most common way to start dinner.

### **Honduras**

Bananas are the back bone of the Honduran economy. Most Hondurans work either on the banana plantations or on their own small farms raising food with the help of primitive tools and oxen. Other food products exported include sugar, lobster, shrimp, coffee, and meat. Food crops include beans, corn, and rice (Albyn, 1993).

In the cities a wider variety of foods is available, depending on income and cost of food. Dinner is served between 5:30 and 7:00pm and usually consist of soup, rice, and meat, fresh vegetable salad, and dessert of fruit or cake. Sometimes potatoes

and bread and butter are served. The bread will usually be purchased from the local bakery, called panaderia. A typical diet of people who live in the country is exactly what they raise corn, beans, and rice together with cottage cheese. Cottage cheese is locally made. Pork eggs, fruit such as mangos, pineapples, papaya, and bananas are other common foods. Bananas are fried, and the corn is made into tortillas. Everything is made spicy with salsa, a chili sauce. Chili peppers come in all sizes and all degrees of hotness the smaller the pepper the hotter it is.

## South America



## Italy

Italy is a boot-shaped peninsula that extends into the Mediterranean Sea. The majestic Alps link Italy to the rest of Europe. Many valleys are located in the mountains and before modern transportation the people who lived in them were isolated. The lack of communication between the Italian people made Italy a divided nation for a long time. Because the people of each region were loyal to their own area rather than Italy as a whole, it was easy for other powerful nations to take control of the Italian government. Italy passed through periods of Spanish, Austrian, and French rule before becoming an independent country. Not until 1861 did the Italian become united under one ruler, Victor Emmanuel II.

Even after this unification, however, regional differences remained. The people of each region had developed their own ways of doing things, especially in the kitchen. They were very proud of their distinctive cooking styles and passed down recipes from generation to generation. Although Italy was unified since 1861 from its gastronomical point of view still a group of independent regions or municipalities. For example, the best parmesan cheese can be found in Parma or the best mozzarella cheese can be found in Battipaglia.

Italy's diversity is also influenced by geography. In the north olive trees do not grow, therefore dishes will be prepared with butter, olive oil is used in southern cooking. Rice is not grown in the south, therefore does not figure in the southern cuisine. That is why Milano is known by their Risotto alla Milanese. The best eggplant dishes are from the south, where eggplants grow, while the best asparagus is grown in the north.

Herbs play an integral part in Italian cuisine and like other aspects of Italian cooking tend to be regional in their use. Italian cooking does not rely heavily on sauces and the sauces Italians do use are not for the most part heavy (Dec. 1993).

They are used primarily for pasta, boiled meats, vegetables and some egg dishes. A formal Italian meal consist of five courses:

1. Antipasto
2. Pasta or soup
3. Main dish
4. Salad
5. Fruit or dessert

A bowl of fresh fruit, and a bottle of wine is usually present at every meal except breakfast. Diners help themselves to slices from the large hunks of cheese, rolls of sausage, and loaves of bread (served without butter) that are often placed on the table.

The Italian table is set with all the silver and glasses to be used during the meal. Each diner sits before a flat plate with a soup plate placed on top of it (Bisignano, 1990),. The soup or pasta is served into the top dish, which is then removed for the following courses. Italians always eat their meals in stages (one course at a time). In the Italian home, eating is a leisure affair. Family members of all ages gather around the table to enjoy a delicious meal. Italian cooks take pride in presenting their finest dishes to their families an close friends.

# Italy



## Africa

Africa is a large continent with a wide variety of soils, climates, people, and economic conditions. For these reasons, there are many foods and styles in eating in Africa, although there are few foods that cut across borders and nationalities. Dried meat is very common throughout Africa.

In most African countries serving utensils are simple things from nature. Dried gourds are made into bowls of all shapes and sizes and are great for holding and serving food. Much of the cooking is performed over open fires (Albyn, 1993). Frying is a very popular method of cooking all over Africa. Baking is done, but not in ovens with temperatures gauges and plugged into electricity or gas; rather, covered barbeque pits are used.

## Tanzania

Tanzania is located on the eastern coast of Africa. The country's residents are fortunate to have many natural resources and a climate suited to agriculture. Many people are involved with agriculture both to provide their own food and to produce cash crops. The staple foods are cassava, corn, sorghum, millet, bananas, plantains, rice, potatoes, wheat, sweet potatoes, and papayas (Engel, 1991). One pot meals are created from combining these foods, and a little spiced meat is usually added whenever possible. Usually, though, the people combine grains and beans or peas, such as millet with lentils, to replace meat. These combinations make protein rich meals.

Cash crops include coffee, cloves, cashews, and tea. People in western countries such as those in Europe and the United States, love the flavor of the Tanzanian coffee. The money Tanzanians gain from these exports is very important since it helps them buy goods that they can not grow or make their own. The rivers, lakes and coastal waters are great for fishing. Fish is very important in the Tanzanian



diet, providing a great source of protein. Fish is used in sauces, soups, and stews, and is fried or plainly grilled.

### Ethiopia

Ethiopia is an independent nation on the coast of east central Africa. Ethiopians have their own unique, world famous style of cooking that has remained independent of European influence.

Ethiopia has a variety of terrains ranging from high plateaus to lowland valleys. The best are for agriculture are the plateaus. These plateaus provide a fertile soil and a year -round growing season, which allows most people to farm in Ethiopia. Crops include millet, sorghum, barley, wheat, corn, plantains, potatoes, peanuts, sugar cane, and peas. An important cash crop is coffee, which grows wild and is cultivated here (Albyn, 1993). It comes from the Kaffa province, which is where coffee got its name. In fact, the first known coffee plant was found in this area. Teff, a millet unique to Ethiopia, is what the bread injera is made from (Montagné, 1989). Wats, fiery hot stews, are served on injera.

### Central African Republic

Central African Republic takes its names in part from its location, smack in the middle of Africa. The land consist of a high plateau that covers most of the country with rain forest in the south. Even though Central African Republic is just north of the Equator, the high altitudes of the plateau keep it for the most part from being a hot country. Agricultural work is done by 85 percent of the people, mostly livestock raising and subsistence farming. The most common method of farming is the slash and burn technique. Staples grown are millets, cassava, peanuts, beans, sesame, and corn. Bananas are grown in the rain forests (Lambert, 1992). Cassava is served at almost every meal for many Central Africans. Cassava roots are pounded, grated,

and dried to make flour and then mixed with water to make the sour-tasting dough. Dried cassava keeps several weeks. Even though cassava grows easily and well, it does not have the nutritional value that other harder-to grow crops have, such as peanuts. Millet porridge is made from pounded millet. People who live in the cities have a more balanced diet including meat and fruits and assorted vegetables (Sinaiko, 1990). Fishing along the rivers provides a needed source of protein for the people, who supplement their diets through hunting as well.



## Spain

In a country where being thin was once a sign of poverty, every meal except breakfast is robust and filling. Spanish food is colorful but not too spicy hot. Main flavorings include garlic, paprika, olives, and olive oil (1988, Spain). Favorite main course foods are seafood, in particular salted cod, smoked sausages, and stewed meat. Rice, beans, and fresh produce are also served in abundance. Spanish wine is well received around the world, and wine grapes are an important crop. Other important crops include grains, citrus fruits, and vegetables. Livestock include pigs, sheep, cattle, horses and mules.

History has played an important role in the development of food in Spain. The occupation of the country from 711 A.D. to 1492 by the Moors, who were Muslims from Northwestern Africa, brought great agricultural treasures and methods to the Iberian Peninsula. For example, the Moors introduced advanced irrigation techniques, which made increased agricultural production possible. They also brought rice, figs, almonds, citrus fruits, peaches, and bananas and planted them in Spain. The Muslim Moors introduced the spices of the East, including cumin and aniseed, which are still used extensively (Montagné, 1989). In turn, the Spanish Conquistadors introduced these things to the areas that they conquered and brought back peppers, tomatoes, and chocolate from the Americas, along with many other indigenous plants and animals.

## Spain



## Chapter III

### METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS

The findings of the study were based upon primary research conducted through three-page written survey.

#### Sample Population

The sample was selected from the whites pages of the 1992 Rochester telephone book. From 600 hundred surveys mailed out (300 to Americans, and 300 to Hispanics) only 132 were returned.

#### Survey Design

The questionnaire consist of fourteen sections, with each section focusing on specific issues. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix. Questions 1 to 4 sought to identify dining patterns. Questions number one and number two asks the respondent to identify how frequently they went out for lunch, and approximately how much they spend per person. Similarly, question three and four sought information pertaining the respondents dinner frequency and spending per person.

Question 5 asked the respondents to identify the importance of several variables that might influence their dinning patterns. Among these items rated were: Restaurant atmosphere/decor, Menu prices, Size of portions, Quality of food, Diversity of menu items, Specialty food items, Service attitude of employees, Length of service time, Restaurant cleanliness, Restaurant location, and Parking facilities.

Question 6 asked the respondents to rate their interest in eating different kind of foods like: American, Caribbean, Chinese, French, Greek, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, and Puerto Rican.

Question 7 asked the respondents to rank the type of restaurant that they most often go to. These were: Buffet style, Cafeteria, Family/casual chain restaurants, Family / casual independent restaurants, Fast food, Fine dining, and Food courts.

Question 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 asked the respondents about their knowledge between Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Mexican food. Similarly, question 10 and 11 asked the respondents if they ever been in a Puerto Rican or Caribbean restaurant. Question 12 and 13 asked the respondents to rank their interest in going to a Puerto Rican or Caribbean buffet style restaurant.

Section 6 sought to identify demographic data. There were 4 different questions pertaining sex, age, ethnic origin, and income levels. And finally, section 7 or question 14 asked the respondents to rate their familiarity and like or dislike with series of certain types of food that might appear on various types of restaurants.

### **Survey Methods**

A three pages written survey was mailed out with a prepaid return envelope.

### **Secondary Data Source**

The main secondary data sources were from the libraries of RIT, Cornell, Henrietta and Rochester public libraries.

### **Data Analysis**

The data gathered in the survey was analyzed by SPSS-X. The statistical reports and other findings would be presented and interpreted by tables. Return envelopes were coded in an attempt to locate where the major concentration of potential customers were located.

The methodology of the study is going to be action research. Action research is a program designed to bring about some socially desirable effect, investigate how

well the program works, and routinely modify it to meet its objectives. To bring out some socially desirable effect, the study broaden the variety of ethnic restaurants to Mexican and Italian. To investigate how well the program works, a mail survey will be conduct to find what type of flavors Rochesterians prefer. To find if Rochesterians known or like Puerto Rican/Caribbean food some dishes will be mentioned



## Chapter IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study are presented and discussed in this chapter. From the sample of 132 mailed surveys, 56.8% ate lunch between 1 to 5 times a month, and 22.7% (the second highest frequency) ate lunch between 6 to 10 times a month.

**TABLE #1            FREQUENCY OF LUNCH**

	Frequency	Percent
Not answered	1	0.8%
Never	10	7.6%
1-5 times/month	75	56.8%
6-10 times/month	30	22.7%
11-15 times/month	8	6.1%
16-20 times/month	6	4.5%
21 or more	2	1.5%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

In the second question the respondent was asked the amount of money spent at lunch, 55.3% spent between \$3.00 to \$5.99 and the second highest frequency which is 28.8% spent between \$6.00 to \$8.99.

**TABLE #2      TYPICAL AMOUNT SPENT ON LUNCH**

	Frequency	Percent
Not answered	9	6.8%
\$3.00 or less	7	5.3%
\$3.00 to \$5.99	73	55.3%
\$6.00 to \$8.99	38	28.8%
\$9.00 or more	5	3.8%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

Question three showed that 39.4% dine out 4 to 6 times a month and 35.6% (the second highest frequency) dine out 1 to 3 times a month.

**TABLE #3      FREQUENCY OF DINING OUT**

	Frequency	Percent
Not answered	1	0.8%
Never	4	3.0%
1-3 times/month	47	35.6%
4-6 times/month	52	39.4%
7-9 times/month	19	14.4%
10-12 times/month	5	3.8%
13 or more times/month	4	3.0%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

Question four showed that 29.5% spent between \$10.01 to \$15.00, and 2.7% spent between \$15.01 to \$20.00.

**TABLE #4    AMOUNT TYPICALLY SPENT ON DINNER**

	Frequency	Percent
Not answered	7	5.3%
\$10.00 or less	29	22.0%
\$10.01 - \$15.00	39	29.5%
\$15.01 - \$20.00	30	22.7%
\$20.01 - \$25.00	17	12.9%
\$25.01 - \$30.00	7	5.3%
\$30.01 or more	3	2.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

Question five asked the respondents to identify the important factors in determining a restaurant selection. The main factor is food quality (78.0%), cleanliness came second (74.2%), and the third one but not the least important is the service attitude ( 56.1%).

**TABLE #5 IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS IN DETERMINING RESTAURANT SELECTION**

Factor	Frequency / Percentage					
	Not Answered	Not Important	Slightly Important	Average	More Important	Very Important
Atmosphere / Decor	1 0.8%	3 2.3%	11 8.3%	53 40.2%	42 31.8%	22 16.7%
Menu prices	–	3 2.3%	6 4.5%	30 22.7%	42 31.8%	51 38.6%
Portion size	–	2 1.5%	11 8.3%	52 39.4%	45 34.1%	22 16.7%
★Quality of food	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	–	2 1.5%	25 18.9%	103 78.0%
Diversity of menu prices	2 1.5%	1 0.8%	9 6.8%	36 27.3%	56 42.4%	28 21.2%
Specialty food items	–	9 6.8%	18 13.6%	43 32.6%	41 31.1%	21 15.9%
Service attitude	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	2 1.5%	13 9.8%	41 31.1%	74 56.1%
Length of service	1 0.8%	–	8 6.1%	24 18.2%	57 43.2%	42 31.8%
Cleanliness	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	–	3 2.3%	29 22.0%	98 74.2%
Location	1 0.8%	6 4.5%	15 11.4%	41 31.1%	49 37.1%	20 15.2%
Parking	2 1.5%	2 1.5%	13 9.8%	49 37.1%	38 28.8%	28 21.2%

Question six asked the respondent the interest in ethnic foods, 23.5% prefer Italian cuisine, 20.5% like American cuisine, and 18.9% like Chinese cuisine. This question also showed that people are not aware of the difference between Puerto Rican and Mexican cuisine the frequency was the same for both types of cuisine (16.7%). Caribbean and Indian cuisine figure among the lowest cuisines appealing to people.

**TABLE #6 INTEREST IN ETHNIC FOODS**

Food Type	Frequency / Percentage					
	Never 0	Low 1	Moderate 2	Above Average 3	High 4	Very High 5
American	6 4.5%	4 3.0%	10 7.6%	36 27.3%	49 37.1%	27 20.5%
Caribbean	43 32.6%	26 19.7%	16 12.1%	22 16.7%	17 12.9%	7 5.3%
Chinese	10 7.6%	8 6.1%	17 12.9%	34 25.8%	38 28.8%	25 18.9%
French	24 18.2%	25 18.9%	27 20.5%	28 21.2%	23 17.4%	5 3.8%
Greek	32 24.2%	27 20.5%	24 18.2%	32 24.2%	15 11.4%	2 1.5%
Indian	55 41.7%	29 22.0%	16 12.1%	9 6.8%	16 12.1%	7 5.3%
Italian	5 3.8%	8 6.1%	10 7.6%	24 18.2%	54 40.9%	31 23.5%
Japanese	36 27.3%	19 14.4%	31 23.5%	26 19.7%	12 9.1%	8 6.1%
Mexican	13 9.8%	8 6.1%	19 14.4%	33 25.0%	37 28.0%	22 16.7%
Puerto Rican	46 34.8%	13 9.8%	15 11.4%	22 16.7%	14 10.6%	22 16.7%

In response to question seven 17.4% prefer fine dinning, 12.1% like Family / Independent restaurants, and 9.1% like fast food restaurants .

**TABLE #7 TYPES OF RESTAURANT SERVICE PREFERRED**

Food Type	Percentage					
	Never	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High
Buffet	29 22.0%	39 29.5%	22 16.7%	22 16.7%	10 7.6%	10 7.6%
Cafeteria	52 39.4%	42 31.8%	19 14.4%	12 9.1%	3 2.3%	4 3.0%
Family / chain	13 9.8%	14 10.6%	25 18.9%	43 32.6%	27 20.5%	10 7.6%
Family / independent	6 4.5%	8 6.1%	19 14.4%	42 31.8%	41 31.1%	16 12.1%
Fast food	14 10.6%	29 22.0%	30 22.7%	20 15.2%	27 20.5%	12 9.1%
Fine dinning	9 6.8%	9 6.8%	17 12.9%	35 26.5%	39 29.5%	23 17.4%
Food courts	37 28.0%	45 34.1%	23 17.4%	17 12.9%	7 5.3%	3 2.3%

Question eight showed the fact that people can not tell the difference between Puerto Rican and Mexican cuisine (42.4%).

**TABLE #8**                      **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
PUERTO RICAN & MEXICAN**

	Frequency	Percentage
Not Answered	1	0.8%
Poor	56	42.4%
Low	18	13.6%
Average	13	9.8%
Above Average	8	6.1%
Strong	36	27.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%



In question nine the knowledge between Puerto Rican and Caribbean is also very poor (48.5%).

**TABLE #9**                      **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN**  
**PUERTO RICAN & CARRIBEAN**

	Frequency	Percentage
Not Answered	1	0.8%
Poor	64	48.5%
Low	19	14.4%
Average	11	8.3%
Above Average	16	12.1%
Strong	21	15.9%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

Question 10 shows a familiarity problem with Puerto Rican or Caribbean cuisine, due to the fact, that a high percentage have not been in either one of this ethnic food restaurants (65.9% Puerto Rican, 52.3% Caribbean).

**TABLE #10                      BEEN TO A PUERTO RICAN /  
CARRIBEAN RESTAURANT**

	Yes	No	Not answered
PUERTO RICAN	44 33.3%	87 65.9%	1 0.8%
CARRIBEAN	63 47.7%	69 52.3%	–

In other hand, question number 11 showed that the interest in going to a Puerto Rican or Caribbean buffet style restaurant is not very strong (19.7% Puerto Rican, 12.9% Caribbean).

**TABLE #11            INTEREST IN GOING TO A PUERTO RICAN / CARRIBEAN  
BUFFET**

Food Type	Frequency / Percentage					
	Not answered	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High
PUERTO RICAN	2 1.5%	31 23.5%	25 18.9%	27 20.5%	21 15.9%	26 19.7%
CARRIBEAN	1 0.8%	34 25.8%	28 21.2%	31 23.5%	21 15.9%	17 12.9%

The sex frequency for the respondents is almost even, 45.5% female, 52.3% male.

**TABLE #12**

**SEX**

	Frequency	Percent
Not answered	3	2.2%
Female	60	45.5%
Male	69	52.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

The age frequency for the respondents is mostly between 30 to 34 years of age followed by and even frequency between 20 to 24 and 35 to 39 years of age.

**TABLE #13**

**AGE**

	Frequency	Percent
20 to 24	18	13.6%
25 to 29	12	9.1%
30 to 34	24	18.2%
35 to 39	18	13.6%
40 to 44	11	8.3%
45 to 49	20	15.2%
50 to 54	9	6.8%
55 to 59	3	2.3%
60 or more	17	12.9%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

The ethnic origin question showed a high percentage (60.6%) of white respondents followed by 31.8% of Hispanics respondents.

**TABLE #14**                      **ETHNIC ORIGIN**

	Frequency	Percentage
White	80	60.6%
Black	4	3.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0.8%
Hispanic	42	31.8%
Asian	1	0.8%
Other	1	0.8%
Not answered	3	2.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

The income level of 38.6% of the respondents is \$50,000 or more, and the income level for the second highest percentage of respondents (10.6%) is \$15,000 or less.

**TABLE #15** **INCOME LEVELS**

	Frequency	Percentage
Not Answered	3	2.3%
\$15,000 or less	14	10.6%
\$15,000 to \$20,000	8	6.1%
\$20,000 to \$25,000	11	8.3%
\$25,000 to \$30,000	8	6.1%
\$30,000 to \$35,000	10	7.6%
\$35,000 to \$40,000	10	7.6%
\$40,000 to \$45,000	9	6.8%
\$45,000 to \$50,000	8	6.1%
\$50,000 or more	51	38.6%
<i>TOTAL</i>	132	100%

In question sixteen the respondents were asked to identify their familiarity with different kinds of ethnic foods. Among the dishes mentioned in the survey Italian, Mexican, Chinese, American and Puerto Rican cuisine are the most predominant. In response to question 16, 47.7% is highly familiar with manicotti marinara, 68.9% is highly familiar with paella , 87.1% is highly familiar with minestrone soup, 62.1 % is highly familiar with rice and pigeon peas, 67.4% is highly familiar with lasagna, 50.8% is highly familiar with chicken in escabeche, 56.8% is highly familiar with soft tacos, 62.1% is highly familiar with Pepper Steak, 73.5% is highly familiar with corned beef, 68.9% is highly familiar with crab salad, 42.4% is not familiar with chicken fricase, 71.2% is highly familiar with spaghetti and meatballs, 56.8% is familiar (average) with bacalaitos, 70.5% is highly familiar with rice and beans, 47.7% is highly familiar with burritos, 44.7% are not familiar with fried plantains, 61.4% is not familiar with rice with chicken, 32.6% is highly familiar with sauteed codfish, 33.3% is highly familiar with kidney beans, 57.6% is highly familiar lobster soup, 25.0% is highly familiar with white yam, 28.0% is highly familiar with chicken parmigiana, 33.3% did not answered the question about mofongo and 23.5% is not familiar with it, 31.1% is highly familiar with fajitas, 25.0% is highly familiar with meat stew, 37.1% is moderately familiar with shrimp escabeche, 35.6% is highly familiar with onion soup, 31.8% is highly familiar with Pionono, 28.8% is not familiar with spanish omelette, 25.0% is highly familiar with ravioli, 37.1% is highly familiar with soupy rice, 34.8% is chili beans, 30.3% did not answered the question about relleno de papa, 43.2% did not answered the question about cuban sandwich, 39.4% is highly familiar with mexican rice, 23.5% is familiar (average) with Tanier, 36.4% did not answered the question about breaded clams, 47.0% is not familiar with alcapurrias, 40.2% is highly familiar with guacamole.



**TABLE #16      FAMILIARITY AND PREFERENCE OF VARIOUS ETHNIC FOOD ITEMS**  
**FREQUENCY / PERCENTAGE**

FAMILIARITY						PREFERENCE					
Not Ans	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High	Not Ans	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High
3 2.3%	17 12.9%	5 3.8%	22 16.7%	22 16.7%	63 47.7%						
3 2.3%	4 3.0%	3 2.3%	9 6.8%	22 16.7%	91 68.9%	Manicotti Marinara	51 38.6%	6 4.5%	13 9.8%	6 4.5%	51 38.6%
						Paella	62 47.0%	11 8.3%	13 9.8%	12 9.1%	30 22.7%
3 2.3%	2 1.5%	1 0.8%	2 1.5%	9 6.8%	115 87.1%	Minestrone Soup	71 53.8%	12 9.1%	9 6.8%	13 9.8%	23 17.4%
4 3.0%	7 5.3%	5 3.8%	10 7.6%	24 18.2%	82 62.1%	Rice/Pigeon Peas	3 2.3%	3 2.3%	13 9.8%	25 18.9%	84 63.6%
4 3.0%	5 3.8%	2 1.5%	11 8.3%	21 15.9%	89 67.4%	Lasagna	7 5.3%	2 1.5%	14 10.6%	16 12.1%	88 66.7%
5 3.8%	14 10.6%	9 6.8%	16 12.1%	21 15.9%	67 50.8%	Chicken in Escabeche	3 2.3%	-	3 2.3%	5 3.8%	118 89.4%
5 3.8%	3 2.3%	11 8.3%	9 6.8%	29 22.0%	75 56.8%	Soft Tacos	11 8.3%	10 7.6%	11 8.3%	18 13.6%	79 59.8%
3 2.3%	7 5.3%	5 3.8%	10 7.6%	25 18.9%	82 62.1%	Pepper Steak	40 30.3%	8 6.1%	6 4.5%	12 9.1%	62 47.0%
3 2.3%	6 4.5%	-	8 6.1%	18 13.6%	97 73.5%	Cornd Beef	31 23.5%	13 9.8%	18 13.6%	21 15.9%	43 32.6%
3 2.3%	8 6.1%	3 2.3%	13 9.8%	14 10.6%	91 68.9%	Crab Salad	21 15.9%	12 9.1%	16 12.1%	21 15.9%	58 43.9%
3 2.3%	56 42.4%	16 12.1%	23 17.4%	11 8.3%	23 17.4%	Chicken Fricassee	8 6.1%	-	2 1.5%	20 15.2%	3 2.3%
3 2.3%	4 3.0%	4 3.0%	7 5.3%	20 15.2%	94 71.2%	Spaghetti & Meatballs	17 12.9%	6 4.5%	14 10.6%	21 15.9%	70 53.0%
3 2.3%	9 6.8%	3 2.3%	75 56.8%	33 25.0%	9 6.8%	Bacalaitos	66 50.0%	13 9.8%	10 7.6%	13 9.8%	27 20.5%
3 2.3%	4 3.0%	2 1.5%	8 6.1%	22 16.7%	93 70.5%	Rice with Beans	105 79.5%	4 3.0%	3 2.3%	3 2.3%	12 9.1%
5 3.8%	22 16.7%	5 3.8%	9 6.8%	28 21.2%	63 47.7%	Burritos	2 1.5%	1 0.8%	4 3.0%	13 9.8%	107 81.1%
4 3.0%	59 44.7%	13 9.8%	13 9.8%	15 11.4%	28 21.2%	Fried Plantains	78 59.1%	3 2.3%	12 9.1%	29 22.0%	7 5.3%
3 2.3%	81 61.4%	6 4.5%	6 4.5%	8 6.1%	28 21.2%	Rice with Chicken	84 63.6%	6 4.5%	7 5.3%	8 6.1%	24 18.2%
4 3.0%	30 22.7%	10 7.6%	18 13.6%	27 20.5%	43 32.6%	Sauteed Codfish	111 84.1%	5 3.8%	7 5.3%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%
4 3.0%	37 28.0%	11 8.3%	19 14.4%	17 12.9%	44 33.3%	Kidney Beans	99 75.0%	2 1.5%	4 3.0%	2 1.5%	21 15.9%
3 2.3%	24 18.2%	3 2.3%	11 8.3%	15 11.4%	76 57.6%	Lobster Soup	13 9.8%	16 12.1%	30 22.7%	29 22.0%	30 22.7%

**TABLE #16      FAMILIARITY AND PREFERENCE OF VARIOUS ETHNIC FOOD ITEMS**  
**FREQUENCY / PERCENTAGE**

FAMILIARITY							PREFERENCE					
Not Ans	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High		Not Ans	Low	Moderate	Average	Above Average	High
28 21.2%	32 24.2%	10 7.6%	13 9.8%	16 12.1%	33 25.0%	White Yam	10 7.6%	14 10.6%	17 12.9%	31 23.5%	26 19.7%	34 25.8%
11 8.3%	13 9.8%	17 12.9%	21 15.9%	33 25.0%	37 28.0%	Chicken Parmigiana	2 1.5%	4 3.0%	7 5.3%	19 14.4%	26 19.7%	74 56.1%
44 33.3%	31 23.5%	14 10.6%	13 9.8%	13 9.8%	17 12.9%	Mofongo	38 28.8%	14 10.6%	19 14.4%	23 17.4%	27 20.5%	11 8.3%
7 5.3%	14 10.6%	14 10.6%	34 16.7%	34 25.8%	41 31.1%	Fajitas	7 5.3%	32 24.2%	25 18.9%	26 19.7%	25 18.9%	17 12.9%
8 6.1%	12 9.1%	25 18.9%	25 18.9%	29 22.0%	33 25.0%	Meat Stew	13 9.8%	19 14.4%	14 10.6%	33 25.0%	27 20.5%	26 19.7%
8 6.1%	11 8.3%	49 37.1%	31 23.5%	24 18.2%	9 6.8%	Shrimp Escabeche	44 33.3%	39 29.5%	12 9.1%	14 10.6%	17 12.9%	6 4.5%
10 7.6%	14 10.6%	16 12.1%	20 15.2%	25 18.9%	47 35.6%	Onion Soup	9 6.8%	17 12.9%	13 9.8%	26 19.7%	24 18.2%	43 32.6%
19 14.4%	30 22.7%	15 11.4%	8 6.1%	18 13.6%	42 31.8%	Pionono	6 4.5%	7 5.3%	9 6.8%	18 13.6%	31 23.5%	61 46.2%
15 11.4%	38 28.8%	17 12.9%	33 25.0%	15 11.4%	14 10.6%	Spanish Omelette	6 4.5%	25 18.9%	29 22.0%	31 23.5%	23 17.4%	18 13.6%
15 11.4%	11 8.3%	24 18.2%	23 17.4%	26 19.7%	33 25.0%	Ravioli	31 23.5%	41 31.1%	15 11.4%	23 17.4%	7 5.3%	15 11.4%
8 6.1%	8 6.1%	10 7.6%	23 17.4%	34 25.8%	49 37.1%	Soupy Rice	50 37.9%	51 38.6%	6 4.5%	8 6.1%	3 2.3%	14 10.6%
13 9.8%	12 9.1%	13 9.8%	26 19.7%	22 16.7%	46 34.8%	Chili & Beans	9 6.8%	15 11.4%	16 12.1%	33 25.0%	30 22.7%	29 22.0%
40 30.3%	30 22.7%	12 9.1%	16 12.1%	18 13.6%	16 12.1%	Relleno de papa	9 6.8%	19 14.4%	19 14.4%	25 18.9%	23 17.4%	37 28.0%
57 43.2%	51 38.6%	4 3.0%	7 5.3%	4 3.0%	9 6.8%	Cuban Sandwich	20 15.2%	30 22.7%	26 19.7%	23 17.4%	19 14.4%	14 10.6%
8 6.1%	9 6.8%	10 7.6%	27 20.5%	26 19.7%	52 39.4%	Mexican Rice	38 28.8%	40 30.3%	12 9.1%	19 14.4%	11 8.3%	12 9.1%
9 6.8%	18 13.6%	14 10.6%	31 23.5%	30 22.7%	30 22.7%	Tanier	45 34.1%	42 31.8%	7 5.3%	8 6.1%	11 8.3%	19 14.4%
48 36.4%	2 1.5%	8 6.1%	10 7.6%	41 31.1%	23 17.4%	Breaded Clams	21 15.9%	19 14.4%	18 13.6%	32 24.2%	20 15.2%	22 16.7%
56 42.4%	62 47.0%	7 5.3%	5 3.8%	2 1.5%	-	Alcapurrias	22 16.7%	37 28.0%	22 16.7%	19 14.4%	16 12.1%	16 12.1%
50 37.9%	12 9.1%	7 5.3%	5 3.8%	5 3.8%	53 40.2%	Guacamole	12 9.1%	42 31.8%	9 6.8%	18 13.6%	14 10.6%	37 28.0%

## Chapter V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the survey results the highest frequency for dining out is at lunch and the typical amount spent is in between \$3.00 to \$6.00. The main factor to select a restaurant is the quality of food followed by the service attitude and the cleanliness of the restaurant. Unfortunately, Rochesterians are not too interested in trying other kinds of ethnic food, other than Italian or Chinese. It seems that there is a common believe that Puerto Rican and Mexican cuisine are the same and they are not interested in that kind of cuisine. The advantage is that if they like rice (Chinese cuisine) and tomato sauces (Italian cuisine) chances are that if they try Puerto Rican or Caribbean cuisine they will like it. The problem is that Rochester is a very conservative area and the people must be educated about this kind of cuisine. They need to know what is involved in the cooking process and the nutritional content of this cuisine.

To present this kind of cuisine it must be in a fine dinning restaurant or in an independent family restaurant, due to the fact, that those are the kind kind of enviroments preferred among the respondents. The fact that most of the respondents have not been either in a Puerto Rican or a Caribbean restaurant could be a good chance to have them to try, if the correct marketing strategy is used. Otherwise it might appear like another mexican restaurant that serves hot food when Puerto Rican or Caribbean cuisine is not hot is seasoned with spices.

Most of the respondents were white males in between the ages of 30 to 34 with an income level of \$50,000 or more. These surveys were sent out targeting the areas of Pittsford, Fairport, and Penfield which are considered areas habited by white people with high income level. The original purpose was to address a Puerto Rican / Caribbean cuisine restaurant for this group of people, but the study shows

that they are not the best market for this kind of restaurant. This leads to new considerations, ideas and concepts for this kind of restaurant.

## **Recommendations**

According to the findings and the purpose of the study the following recommendations will be given 1) Educate your customers, let them know what Puerto Rican and Caribbean cuisine is all about. 2) Develop an aggressive marketing campaign. 3) Try to open the restaurant during the summer and offer a big Caribbean fiesta as an opening activity to create the correct ambiance. 4) If possible look for a location where most of the business can be done at lunch. 5) Keep under consideration the price range that people are willing to pay. 6) Target another kind of market one that is more relaxed and willing to try new things or the professional hispanic community, and if that doesn't work discard the idea of opening this kind of restaurant in Rochester, New York.

## REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albyn, Carole Lisa (1993). The Multinational Cookbook for Students. Oryx Press. Arizona. pp. 18-96.

Bisignano, Alphonse (1990). Cooking the Italian Way. Lerner Publications Company. Minneapolis.

Engel, Allison (1991). Food finds. Harpers Collins Publishers. New York. pp. 35-51.

Europa y sus Hábitos Alimenticios. (1988). España.

Lambert Ortiz, Elizabeth (1992). The Encyclopedia of Herbs, Spices and Flavors. Dorling Kindersley, Inc. New York.

Latinoamérica y sus Costumbres. (1988) México.

Montagné Prosper (1989). The New Larousse Gastronomique. Crown Publishers. New York.

Pizarro J. (May 1991). Hábitos en la cocina Italiana. Buen Hogar, pp. 132-140.

Roma la Capitale della Cucina. (1993, December 19). Corriere della Sera. p. 13.

Sinaiko Lois (1990). Food Habits. Prentice Hall. New York.



**APPENDIX A-1**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PUERTO RICAN CUISINE & ETHNIC FOOD SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to measure your familiarity with ethnic food (specially Puerto Rican food) and your like or dislikes in menu items that you will find in ethnic food restaurants. Please return by mail (using the enclosed envelope) or fax it (716-475-5099) by **November 10, 1992.**

1) How often do you lunch out? (Check one)

- ☐ Never ☐ 6-10 times per month ☐ 16-20 times per month  
☐ 1-5 times per month ☐ 11-15 times per month ☐ 21 or more times per month

2) If you lunch out at least once per month, how much do you typically spend per person? (Check one)

- ☐ Less than \$3 ☐ \$7 to \$9  
☐ \$4 to \$6 ☐ \$10 or more

3) How often do you dine out? (Check one)

- ☐ Never ☐ 7-9 times per month  
☐ 1-3 times per month ☐ 10-12 times per month  
☐ 4-6 times per month ☐ 13 or more times per month

4) If you dine out at least once per month, how much do you typically spend per person? (Check one)

- ☐ Less than \$10 ☐ \$15 to \$20 ☐ \$25 to \$30  
☐ \$10 to \$15 ☐ \$20 to \$25 ☐ More than \$30

5) When selecting a restaurant, which of the following do you feel are important? (Circle 1 for not important, 5 for very important)

	Not Important			Very Important	
Rest. Atmosphere/Decor	1	2	3	4	5
Menu Prices	1	2	3	4	5
Size of Portions	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Food	1	2	3	4	5
Diversity of Menu Items	1	2	3	4	5
Specialty Food Items	1	2	3	4	5
Service Attitude of Employees	1	2	3	4	5
Length of Service Time	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurant Cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurant Location	1	2	3	4	5
Parking Facilities	1	2	3	4	5

6) When you go out to eat, rate your interest in eating the following kind of food.

	Never	Low			HI	
American	0	1	2	3	4	5
Caribbean	0	1	2	3	4	5
Chinesse	0	1	2	3	4	5
French	0	1	2	3	4	5
Greek	0	1	2	3	4	5
Indian	0	1	2	3	4	5
Italian	0	1	2	3	4	5
Japanesse	0	1	2	3	4	5
Mexican	0	1	2	3	4	5
Puerto Rican	0	1	2	3	4	5



7) When you go out to eat, rank the type of restaurant that you most often go to.

	Never	Low				Hi
Buffet Style-	0	1	2	3	4	5
Cafeteria	0	1	2	3	4	5
Family/Casual Chain Restaurants	0	1	2	3	4	5
Family/Casual Independent Restaurants	0	1	2	3	4	5
Fast Food	0	1	2	3	4	5
Fine Dining	0	1	2	3	4	5
Food Courts	0	1	2	3	4	5

8) How would you rate your knowledge of the difference between Puerto Rican and Mexican food?

Poor Strong

1 2 3 4 5

9) How would you rate your knowledge of the difference between Puerto Rican and Caribbean food?

Poor Strong

1 2 3 4 5

10) Have you ever been to a Puerto Rican Restaurant?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

11) Have you ever been to a Caribbean Restaurant?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

12) How would you rank your interest in going if a Buffet Style Puerto Rican Restaurant were to open in your area?

Low Hi

1 2 3 4 5

13) How would you rank your interest in going if a Buffet Style Caribbean Restaurant were to open in your area?

Low Hi

1 2 3 4 5

### Demographic Data:

Are you? \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Male

Age: \_\_\_ 20-24 \_\_\_ 45-49  
 \_\_\_ 25-29 \_\_\_ 50-54  
 \_\_\_ 30-34 \_\_\_ 55-59  
 \_\_\_ 35-39 \_\_\_ 60 or more  
 \_\_\_ 40-44

Ethnic Origin: \_\_\_ White (non-hispanic origin) \_\_\_ Hispanic  
 \_\_\_ Black (non hispanic origin) \_\_\_ Asian or Pacific Islander  
 \_\_\_ American Indian or Alaskan Native \_\_\_ Other

Income Levels: \_\_\_ Less than \$15,000 \_\_\_ \$25,000-\$30,000 \_\_\_ \$40,000-\$45,000  
 \_\_\_ \$15,000- \$20,000 \_\_\_ \$30,000-\$35,000 \_\_\_ \$45,000-\$50,000  
 \_\_\_ \$ 20,000-\$25,000 \_\_\_ \$35,000-\$40,000 \_\_\_ \$50,000 or more

14) Listed below are a series of food items that might appear on the menu of a restaurant. Circle the appropriate number of the right hand column to indicate your like or dislike of the some item

Familiarity						Like				
Lo				Hi		Lo				Hi
1	2	3	4	5	Manicotti Marinara	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Paella	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Minestrone Soup	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Rice with Pigeon Peas	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Lasagna	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Chicken in Escabeche	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Soft Tacos	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Pepper Steak	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Corned Beef	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Crab Salad	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Chicken Fricassee	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Spaghetti & Meatballs	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Bacalaitos	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Rice with Beans	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Burritos	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Fried Plantains	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Rice with Chicken	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Sauteed Codfish	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Kidney Beans	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Lobster Soup	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	White Yam	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Chicken Parmigiana	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Mofongo	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Fajitas	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Meat Stew	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Shrimp Escabeche	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Onion Soup	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Pionono	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Spanish Omelette	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Ravioli	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Soupy Rice	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Chili & Beans	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Relleno de Papa	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Cuban Sandwich	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Mexican Rice	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Tanier	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Breaded Clams	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Alcapurrias	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	Guacamole	1	2	3	4	5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_