

"MY CROSS CULTURAL EXPERIENCE"

BY:

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MY HERITAGE

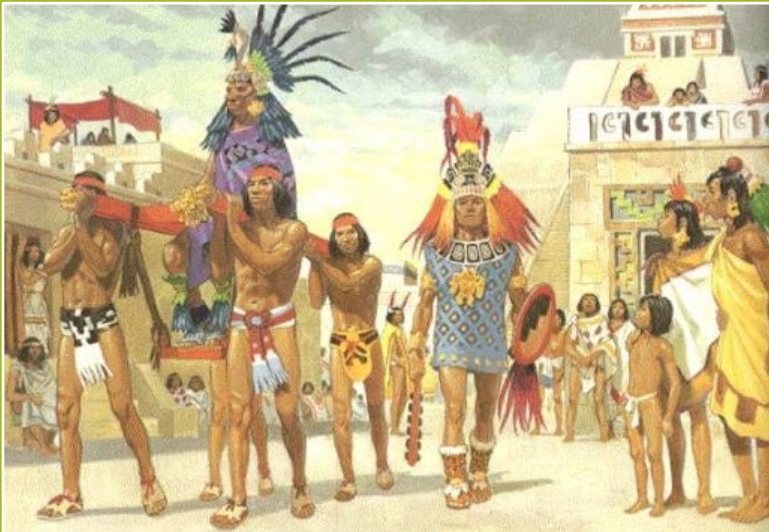
MEXICO

Founded on September 16, 1810, gaining independence from Spain after a decade of fighting.

It had been a thriving land built of multiple civilizations, such as the Aztec empire made up of numerous states, including Tlaxcala, Mixtec, and its core state Tenochtitlan.

Mexico holds thousands of dialects, Nahuatl, Maya, Otomí, Mixteco, Zapoteco, Totonaco, Chol and Mazateco. The most commonly spoken one is Nahuatl, a beautiful dialect primarily spoken and taught in the southern region of Mexico.

Indigenous tribes still exist within Mexico within Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Chiapas, allowing for much deeper connections to be built with one's ancient culture and traditions.



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

My country of origin would be the United States of America; it's what's shown on my passport and every document I hold. Though born here, it's never truly felt like home.

When I was two, my mom sent me to stay in Mexico for about 8 months, I learned Spanish, and it became my first language. Ever since then, I've gone back to Mexico every summer. Being there truly feels like where I belong. Even though I love Mexico, I will forever be grateful to my mother for coming to the States.

Thankfully, the United States has a huge Mexican population in every corner of it, allowing me to still participate in my culture and traditions with my people.



FAMILY & CULTURE

My culture consists of:

- Dia de los Muertos
- Dia de la Independencia
- Los tres Reyes Magos
- Ofrendas
- Mariache
- Mexican Cuisine
- Bailes Folklorico
- Murals
- Feast of the Lady de Gadalupe
- History
- Semana Santa
- Folk Art

Though there are a million other contributing factors to Mexican culture, the ones mentioned are the most prominent. Each one grants Mexico a part in someone's mind that be its delicious food, colorful dresses, or glorious music.

My Family's from **Morelos, Mexico**, in a small town near Cuernavaca.

It's known for its beautiful weather and gorgeous views. Additionally it's known for being the birthing place of Emiliano Zapata, a revolutionary who encouraged the native people to fight against the Spanish.



RELIGIOUN & BELIETS



The most prominent religion in Mexico is Catholicism; though not the original religion of the land, it has been deeply engraved ever since the Spanish pillaged and destroyed the Aztec empire.

Spanish colonists introduced Roman Catholicism to Mexico in the 16th century.

The primary religion practiced before was "syncretistic, absorbing elements from many other Mesoamerican cultures." Aztec religion believed in multiple gods such as Huitzilopochtli, the god of war and the sun, Mictlantecuhtli, the god of death, and Metztli goddess/ god of the moon, and farmers.

Native towns still follow Aztec tradition and worship the old gods; they host religious gatherings that outsiders are welcome to observe and enjoy.





(Picture to the left) La
Basilica de Guadalupe,
Mexico City, Mexico



(Picture to right) SAINT JEAN
BAPTISTE CATHOLIC
CHURCH NEW YORK CITY

Having been raised in Queen's, Catholicism has been a massive part of my life. Throughout Queen's catholic churches are in every other neighborhood, creating a sense of community and belonging.

Every Sunday, my family meet's up to attend church. Though the experience from attending church in NYC is different than when attending it in Mexico, it still holds the majority of the rituals.

Attending church in Mexico on a Sunday is a grand event; the churches are enormous and decorated with beautiful statues of the virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and other saints. Food and goodies would be sold outside in the garden's.

The overall acceptance of every individual's religion and beliefs has been extremely amazing and heartwarming. I and many others have had the opportunity to experience and witness living in NYC.

COMMON PRACTICES



Mexico is a country full of culture and generation-long traditions and practices.

-**El baile Folklorico** is an umbrella term for the many traditional Mexican dances. Where women wear long and colorful dresses that, when moved in, give the illusion of a flower, and men wear matching outfits. The dress and dance all depend on what region of Mexico it is being danced in.



-**The Chinelos of Morelos**, Mexico. A group of men and women dress up as men with overly exaggerated features with colorful outfits and feathery hats. They dance around to specific music, which has been a tradition ever since the invasion from the Spanish.

-**La Catrina**, Painting your face to look like a feminine sugar skull and dressing in color dresses along with flower crowns and earrings is a tradition among Mexican women. Throughout the Dia de Los Muertos celebration.

-**El Mariachi**, A group of men/women who dress in the charro outfit. Which is the most common Mexican outfit known worldwide. It's meant to represent pride and love for one's heritage. The songs they often play are deeply tied to Mexican culture and made by Mexican artists.

FOOD

Food always has and will always be integrated deeply into our culture and traditions. It symbolizes a sense of togetherness and familiar bond, meant to be made and eaten with those you love the most. Modern Mexican food has Aztec, Mayan, and Spanish influence though the majority of main Mexican plates originate from the Aztec empire.

Mexican cuisine and pastries often contain a much deeper and cultural meaning.

Dia de Los Muertos is a massive holiday in Mexico and Mexican households in the USA. It is a celebration of life that brings families together to cook huge meals and dishes that the deceased loved and enjoyed. Some of these dishes are mole, pan de Muertos, and tamales.

During **Christmas**, the typical dishes are tamales, posole, champurrado, ponche, and marranitos (pig-shaped gingerbread cookies).

The majority of Mexican food is made through a process and precise measurements with spices.

Tortillas are a staple in Mexico, made with a tortilla press and heated up on a comal.

Black beans are heavily incorporated into dishes, such as rice, chicken, or beef. Chile peppers, chile guajillo, Chile de Arbol, habanero, and chile poblano are used in almost every salsa, soup, and seasoning meat.

Herbs are also mixed in with every dish; it's what creates the authentic and splendid taste most Mexican food holds.



TRADITIONAL CLOTHING

Traditional Mexican clothing is overall referring to the colorful dresses men and women wear within each state. In Mexico, depending on the state you reside in, they will have their "typical dress." Each state creates and tailor's its dresses according to traditions that are home to that state.

-Dresses from Chiapas, Mexico, are vast and colorful made of handmade crocheted flowers.

-Yucatan, Mexico, has dresses made of canvas-like material that has flowers painted and embroidered onto them.

-In Oaxaca, Mexico, traditional dresses are made from scratch by Native women. They follow an entriquite technique passed down from one generation to the next.





*Traditional Oaxaca dress
from southwestern Mexico*



*Traditional Chiapas dress
from southeastern Mexico*



Traditional Dress & outfit from Jalisco, west central Mexico



Traditional Dress & outfit Yucatan, southwest Mexico



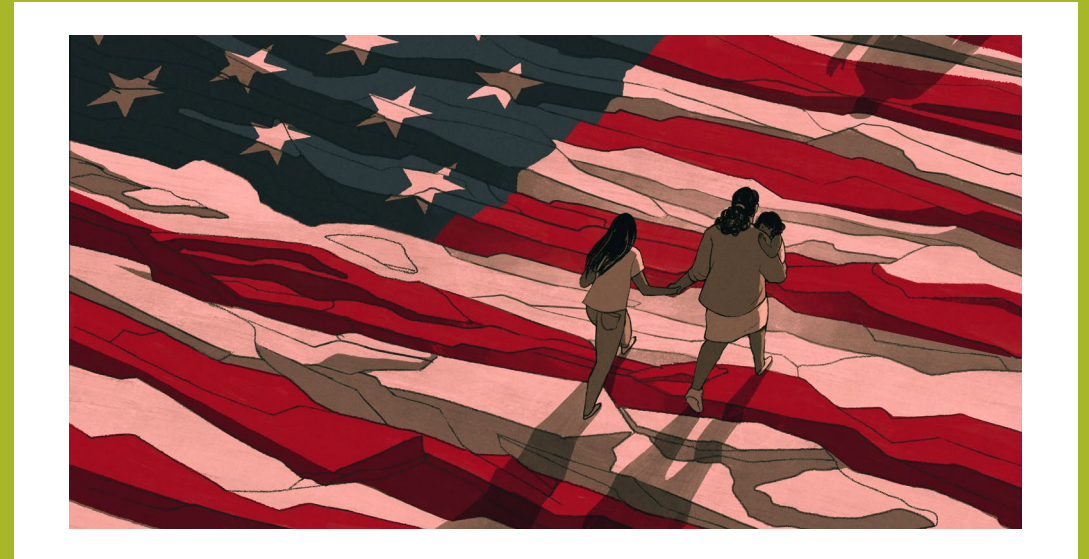
GROWING UP FIRST GENERATION AMERICAN

Having been born First-generation American, I've been granted nothing but an abundance of blessings, as well as challenges. However, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Being born in the U.S, I've interacted with people from so many different backgrounds. Growing fond of the melting pot that NYC is, many kids my age are first-generation as well.

We are all trying to achieve the American dream our parents imagined for their children in such a vast city. Going through all the ups and downs this world has cast, we can find refuge in the idea that there are other children like yourself going through the same ordeals.

Growing up a first-generation American, I believe it has given me a much more profound love for my ancestral roots and culture. Allowing me to have many thorough cross-cultural experiences with other individuals.



Cross-cultural experiences within NYC neighborhoods



I have been born and raised in NYC my whole life; the diversity in this city is incredible. When I was little, my family lived in East Elmhurst, full of culture and a vast, diverse group of people. From a Colombian restaurant to a Peruvian one to a Jamaican one, east Elmhurst is a haven for food from all over. The variety of food is overwhelming, and the blend of cultures is highly evident.

In my apartment building, a Bengali family would always invite us over for dinner; the food they made was incredible; it would be a variety of plates lined up on the table. The food ranged from spicy to sweet, such as Alu Posto, Kanchkolar Kofta, and cham cham. Moreover, just as they invited us, we would invite them over for big family gatherings; my mom would cook posole, birria, tacos de Lengua, and tamales.

Cross Cultural Experience

(Conclusion)

Overall, having been born into such a rich culture has allowed me to enjoy and love all other cultures thoroughly. Growing and learning more about every individual's culture is an incredible experience that I wish to expand on by traveling much more and investing a long time reading and understanding of the countries rich culture and traditions.

I believe acknowledging and learning about the culture of those who surround you is extremely valuable. Not only are you showing the individual that you are invested in learning more about what makes them who they are but will feed you valuable knowledge. Living in a melting pot will have you interacting with all types of people; you get to learn various ways people interact with.

Living in NYC has allowed me to become much more aware of who I interact with every day and has opened so many doors to new cultures and traditions. Having parade's in the city that celebrates all the different bodies that live within this city is incredible.

I will forever be thankful to my parents for choosing this city to be born into and grow within.

CITATIONS

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