



Rita's Test Kitchen

# COOKING CLASS





# WELCOME!

Howdy y'all

Today, we'll embark on a culinary adventure through some most beloved Tex-Mex dishes.

But even more importantly—we'll explore how food, place, and history are all connected.







# THE STORY OF TEX-MEX

*Where Flavor Meets Freedom*

Our journey begins right here in San Antonio –home to the River Walk, the Alamo, and the heart of Tex-Mex cuisine. So, grab your apron, and let's stir up some history."



# THE BIRTH OF TEX-MEX

Tex-Mex isn't just tacos and queso—it's a cultural mashup that began in borderlands kitchens like those right here in San Antonio.

The term Tex-Mex was first used as shorthand for the Texas Mexican Railway in the late 1800s—but by the 20th century, it described a cuisine born from Tejano home cooks adapting Mexican recipes with American ingredients: cheddar instead of cotija, ground beef instead of barbacoa, canned goods like tomatoes and beans becoming pantry staples.





# CHILI QUEENS

Dishes like chili con carne actually originated in San Antonio and were sold by 'chili queens' in outdoor plazas as early as the 1880s.

The Chili Queens of San Antonio were pioneering women who played a pivotal role in shaping the city's culinary and cultural landscape.

In plazas, air food stalls served chili con carne, tamales, and enchiladas. With colorful tablecloths and lantern light, they became lively hubs for food, music, and community.





# LASTING LEGACY

Despite their disappearance in 1943, the legacy of the Chili Queens endures.

They are celebrated as early entrepreneurs who laid the groundwork for what would become Tex-Mex cuisine.

Their story is a testament to the rich cultural tapestry of San Antonio and the enduring impact of these culinary trailblazers.



*Notice how this chili base uses cumin, which isn't traditional in central Mexican cooking but became a hallmark in Tex-Mex because of its popularity among German and Czech immigrants in Texas.*



*Cooking tip!*



# The Riverwalk

After a deadly flood in 1921, architect Robert Hugman proposed turning it into an urban oasis. It took decades, but by the 1940s and '60s, the River Walk began to bloom into the cultural and culinary corridor we know today.



Many of the oldest Tex-Mex institutions, like Ritas on the River, still serve enchiladas and margaritas right along those waters.





# TEXAS INDEPENDENCE

In 1836, during the Battle of the Alamo Texians, Tejanos, and settlers fought against the central Mexican government for independence. The victory at San Jacinto sealed the deal, and the Republic of Texas was born.





# What does that have to do with food?



After independence, and later U.S. statehood, the cuisine of native Mexicans (Tejanos) began blending with Anglo influences.



Over time, food became one of the last remaining cultural connections—one that told the story of identity, resilience, and belonging.





# LAYERS OF HISTORY

With every bite you're tasting  
centuries of woven history.  
Tex-Mex is more than a cuisine

from indigenous roots

to Spanish missions

Mexican traditions

to Texas independence

to your plate



survival



adaptation



cultural



pride



# Our Pricing

## \$85 - \$150 PER GUEST

Rita's Test Kitchen classes will range from \$75 to \$150, with a Standard Option and VIP Packages available

## Class Size

### 4 - 12

Standard Rita's Test Kitchen Classes will serve groups of 4-12



VIP Packages will include exclusive Rita's Spice Blends, branded Test Kitchen aprons and hats, signature coffee mugs, and more. Plus, VIP guests will be treated to a freshly crafted margarita from the bar!





# GRACIAS!

*Now Let's Eat!*

