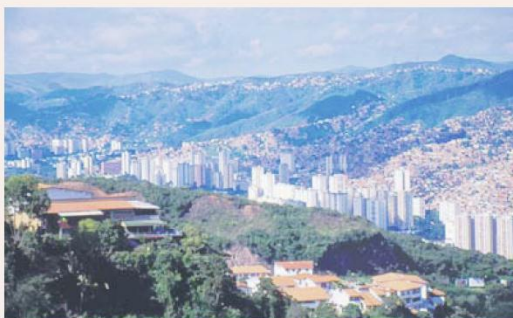




Cultura viva

Explorando Venezuela

When European explorers came to the shores of Lake Maracaibo, they named the area Venezuela (meaning "Little Venice") because the homes that were located along the shores of the lake reminded them of Venice, Italy. Venezuela is a land of varied geography, with wonderful beaches (*Playa Medina*, *Playa Colorada*), mountains



Caracas, Venezuela.

(*Andes*), plains and deserts (*Médanos de Coro*). One of the most sensational natural attractions found in the country is Angel Falls (*el Salto del Ángel*), the highest waterfall in the world. Venezuela also has big industrialized cities, such as Caracas, the capital and economic and political center of the nation. Other large cities include Maracaibo, known for its petroleum production, Mérida, a cultural and intellectual center, and Puerto Cruz, a very popular destination for tourists from all over the world.

At one time Venezuela had one of the highest standards of living in South America due to its many natural resources, especially the vast abundance of oil (*el petróleo*) found near Lake Maracaibo. The country is one of the world's principal producers of oil and an important member of OPEC (in Spanish, *OPEP*, or *Organización de Países Exportadores de Petróleo*). Venezuela is also known for its pearl industry. In addition to exporting big quantities of oil and pearls (*las perlas*), the country is one of the world's largest exporters of cocoa beans (*el cacao*), the basic ingredient for chocolate.

When Venezuelans gather, they enjoy talking, laughing and sharing good food, such as *arepas*, *ropa vieja* and *cachapas*. Investigate this fascinating South American country. You may be surprised by what you find!



6 Explorando Venezuela

Completa las siguientes oraciones sobre Venezuela.

1. *Venezuela* quiere decir...
2. Dos playas famosas en Venezuela son...
3. Una de las atracciones más importantes de Venezuela es...
4. La capital de Venezuela es...
5. Tres productos de exportación de Venezuela son...
6. Tres comidas famosas de Venezuela son *ropa vieja*, *cachapas* y...

Venezuela exporta petróleo, perlas y cacao.



Cultura viva



Las arepas venezolanas

Arepas are perhaps the most common food in Venezuela. Originally they were made from corn that was ground to make corn meal. As with many everyday foods in the United States, however, *arepas* today are usually prepared using packaged, precooked white corn flour, salt and water. The resulting easy-to-make buns can be eaten alone or as a kind of bread to accompany a meal. *Arepas* can also be stuffed with meat, cheese, scrambled eggs or other fillings, much like *tortillas* or *empanadas*. Another very popular Venezuelan dish is *hallaca*, which is served in nearly every Venezuelan home at Christmas. This typical food consists of a corn-flour pie filled with pork, chicken, vegetables and spices. It is cooked in plantain leaves from a variety of bananas called *plátano*.



Las arepas son populares en Venezuela.



Preparando arepas.

De la cocina de _____

Las arepas

2 tazas de harina de maíz

2 cucharitas de sal

2 tazas de agua caliente

Preparación

Para empezar, poner la harina de maíz¹ en una taza grande y poco a poco poner el agua con sal. Luego, mezclar² el agua con la harina hasta que se convierta en masa. Después, dejar³ la masa en reposo⁴ por cinco minutos. Hacer con la masa unos rollos⁵ de tres pulgadas⁶ de diámetro y de una pulgada a dos pulgadas de ancho⁷. En una sartén⁸ con un poco de aceite, freír⁹ las arepas hasta ver los rollos dorados¹⁰. Después, poner las arepas en el horno a 350 grados para cocinar por aproximadamente treinta minutos, hasta tener arepas crujientes¹¹.

¹corn flour ²mix ³leave ⁴rest ⁵rolls ⁶inches ⁷thick ⁸frying pan ⁹fry ¹⁰golden ¹¹crunchy

You can easily prepare the recipe at home for a taste of this typical Venezuelan bread. Look at the recipe for *arepas* and answer these questions.

1. ¿Cuáles son los ingredientes para hacer arepas?
2. ¿Qué debes hacer para empezar?
3. ¿Qué diámetro deben tener los rollos?
4. Después de hacer rollos con la masa, ¿qué debes hacer?
5. ¿A qué temperatura tiene que estar el horno?
6. ¿Cuánto tiempo deben estar las arepas en el horno?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____