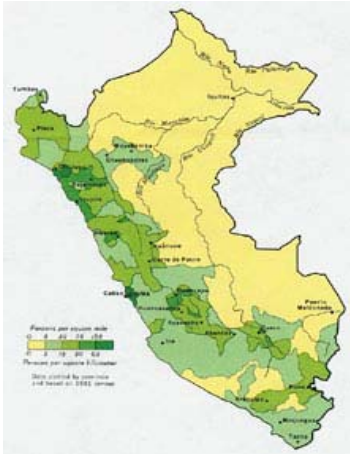


July 31, 2006.

For today's Geo Quiz, we're looking for a country with an eclectic cuisine.



It mixes foods from Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia -- on one plate. Potatoes, corn, and chili peppers are thrown together with citrus fruit, raw fish, and soy sauce. Does that whet your appetite?



The government of the country we're looking for hopes it will.

"The idea is to open 5,000, or maybe 10,000 restaurants featuring food from our country in the U.S."

Quite a boast.

Here's a final clue about our mystery country. The "conquistador" that brought this piece of South American real estate into Spain's domain was Francisco Pizarro.

We name the country, and reveal more about the food [here](#).

July 31, 2006

Our mouth-watering Geo Quiz had to do with a South American country that boasts a melting pot cuisine.

The answer is **Peru**.

The food there combines elements from all around the world. And it's good stuff, too. Problem is -- not many American restaurant-goers know about it.

Well, the Peruvian government wants to change that. The World's Jason Margolis reports on Peru's attempts to muscle in on America's restaurant rows:

The answer to our Geo Quiz. We're looking for a country that produces a cuisine that's a mix of South American, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and Italian, and Arab sweets for desserts. What country produces this culinary fusion? **Peru**.

Come to the Fresca Restaurant in San Francisco's Noe Valley neighborhood on a weekend night and expect to wait more than an hour for a table. [Fresca](#) is one of about two dozen Peruvian restaurants that have recently opened in San Francisco.

Owner and chef, Jose Calvo-Perez mans the wok.

"You get the smokiness, the flame, a lot of people, a lot of cuisines you don't like any flaming in their sauté pans. But in the wok, it's an essence to have that flame and that smokiness in the Lomo Saltado. That's what make that dish unique and sophisticated."

The Lomo Saltado is tenderloin steak strips, fried with onion, tomato, cilantro and soy sauce. It's served with French fries and rice. Another Peruvian specialty is ceviche.

"What makes a ceviche is the five elements: there's the fish, onion, sea salt, lime juice, and the chili pepper. That's what makes the ceviche. You just need those five simple ingredients and that will take care of it for you."



These meals tell the history of Peru. The chili peppers were grown by the Incas centuries ago. The Spanish brought over the citrus fruit and rice. Later came the Chinese. They built the railroads and introduced soy sauce and fresh ginger to Peruvian stir-fry. The Japanese came next to work on sugar plantations. They showed Peruvians the simple way to prepare fish, serving it raw. The meals also reflect Peru's unique geography: from the seashore to the mountains to the rainforest.

“In the world, they say there are about 104 ecosystems, from extreme heat to extreme cold, humidity dryness and so on. And in Peru, we have 84 out of those 104.”

That's Alejandro Riveros. He's the minister of public diplomacy at Peru's embassy in Washington. It's his job to promote Peruvian cuisine in America. The Peruvian government wants to help open 10,000 Peruvian restaurants in the United States. They're doing that by promoting partnerships between top chefs in Peru and would-be restaurant owners in this country. Riveros says the goal is to raise the profile of Peruvian cuisine in America, through media campaigns and food festivals.

“Peruvian cuisine has been hidden from the public for quite a long time. So that means people in the US know a lot about Chinese, Thai, Mexican, but not really much about Peruvian cuisine.”

That's what the Peruvian government is trying to change. Its efforts might be making a difference already, in cities like Miami and Chicago and San Francisco where Peruvian restaurants are taking off. In San Francisco, Chef Calvo-Perez has a vision for the future.

“I want Peruvian cuisine to get known just how Mexican cuisine is. Pretty soon out on the west coast, or nationwide they'll be thousands of Peruvian joints... ”

Peruvian cuisine links:

[Perumuchogusto](#)

[Peruvian Cooking](#)

[More links about Peruvian Gastronomy](#)

[Publicaciones en Gastronomía - Peruvian Restaurants in USA](#)

[Entremeses - Revista Gastronomic](#)