

Pupusas & Arepas

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Corn is a key ingredient in dishes across Latin America. While simple corn tortillas are eaten in every Latin American country, there are many ways in which corn and corn dough are used. One of these is the *pupusa*, which is eaten through Central America but considered Salvadoran. Pupusas are thick corn tortillas stuffed with fillings, such as meat, refried beans, cheese, and squash flowers. Then they are cooked on a traditional grill called a *comal*. Traditionally, pupusas are topped with a spicy coleslaw (called *curtido*) made of cabbage, onions, carrots, and spices. It is believed that pupusas were created by the indigenous Pipil tribe, who lived in what is now known as El Salvador over 2000 years ago.

When El Salvadorans fled their country during its civil war in the 1980s, they brought their pupusas with them, introducing pupusas to the United States, Canada, and Australia. In 2005, the pupusa was declared the official national food of El Salvador, and the second Sunday in November is National Pupusa Day in El Salvador. On this day, people gather in the capital to try to create the world's largest pupusa. Currently, the record was set in 2012 with a pupusa that was 4.25 meters across and fed thousands of people.



Venezuela and Colombia, two countries in South America, have their own version of the corn tortilla called *arepas*. Arepas are made from corn dough and cooked on a traditional iron griddle called a *budare*. While sometimes arepas are eaten plain as a substitute for bread with stews, they are traditionally sliced open after cooking and stuffed with fillings such as fried pork skin (*chicharrón*), black beans, cheese, avocado, peas, and various meats. In areas near the coast, people fill arepas with seafood including shark and shrimp. A special arepa in Venezuela (called the *pabellón*) incorporates the elements of the national dish by stuffing arepas with fried plantains, black beans, chicken, and cheese. Often, arepas are topped with a spicy sauce called *guasaca* that is made from blending together avocado, parsley, green bell pepper, onion, garlic, oil, and vinegar. The Timoto-Cuica people, an indigenous group living in the Andes mountains in what is now known as western Venezuela hundreds of years ago, are credited with creating the arepa.

First image link: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pupusas_\(1\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pupusas_(1).jpg)

Second image link:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Arepas_of_Venezuela#/media/File:Arepa_de_pabellon.jpg