



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Luz Maria Aguirre
Interviewer: Meredith E. Abarca
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Transcriber / Summary: Meredith E. Abarca

Luz María Aguirre was born in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. As she reflects on her early childhood memories, what she shares in this story is growing up in Ciudad Juárez in the 1950s selling food. She and her two siblings were raised by their grandparents. Her grandmother worked in El Paso, Texas cleaning houses. Her grandfather, along with the grandchildren, helped support the family by selling *raspados* (shaved ice with homemade syrup) and homemade *burros* (burritos). She, at the age of 12, was responsible for making the flour tortillas; her grandfather made the fillings of *mole*, *chile relleno*, *carne con chile verde*, *desebrada*, and *frijoles con queso*. Her brother was responsible for selling the *burros*. At this early age, from her grandfather, she learned that good cooking is always based in quality ingredients. She also recalls making *tamales verdes*, *rojos y dulces* for the Christmas holidays and the lesson her grandmother taught her of always sharing food with the neighbors as a form of community communion. Once married, she moved to El Paso in 1980 and has lived there ever since. With her mother-in-law, she eventually learned to make typical food from Leon Guanajuato, Mexico. In particular she speaks of *tortitas de carne*, *mole de olla*, and *arroz*. She recalls that in the early 1980s, it was difficult finding good Mexican quality products as those she often found in the food markets in Juárez, such as El Mercado Cuahtemoc. While Luz María and her family are not in the habit of eating out much, she does mention her experience of eating at the Shangrila, a Chinese restaurant in Cd. Juárez; going for good Mexican food to Mi Pueblo Nuevo in El Paso, Texas, and to Cattleman's in Fabens, Texas for special occasions.

Length of interview: 34:36 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a