



### Language Link

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Your Pass to Spanish Learning

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# Language Link Online

July 2012

Tips and information about learning Spanish and the people who speak it. Published every other month

### *What's in this edition*

Online Lesson, Cocina Cooking, Culture Clips, Language Link's Latest, OJO (real deals), Rhythm & Reads, Been There, Loved That (reports from participants), Likeable Links

Deadline soon in September!– Join our small group On The Road to Chiapas November 4 – 11, with deadline Sept 15. See details following about two fascinating one week all inclusive programs in Cuernavaca – Fiesta of Day of the Dead Oct 27 – Nov 3. Spanish Thanksgiving Nov 17 - 24

### **Rhythm and Reads**

*Music from the Coffee Lands* by Putumayo presents - a compilation of areas of the world that reflect multi-cultural connections that sound and coffee share. The liner notes are very good.

*Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World* – Mark Pendergrast -eminently readable and captivating. The characters in the saga are fascinating - from American industrialists to Latin American peasants to African warlords to European consumers. There are people involved in this story, not just money.

### **OJO (real deals)**

A NEW contest on our website for a *gratis* one week study at Intercultura of either Heredia or Playa Sámara, Costa Rica. Air is on you, but we include one week of small group classes and a homestay with a single and two daily meals. Just click our contest box to enter. All we ask is a brief comment from you. You'll then be included in the general drawing for a winner. *¡Suerte!*

### **Language Link's Latest**

**Meredith Butler becomes Meredith Popp!** Many of you know Meredith

### **Online Lesson**

A frequent comment is about difficulty in Spanish listening comprehension. These are a few tips which you may find helpful.

Stop talking and start listening...a lot! It's really helpful to find something to listen to, spoken at normal speed, which you can pause and repeat. The telenovelas offered on Netflix and other services are terrific for this. If you want to see the acting career of the soon to be first lady of Mexico, watch one called *Destilando Amor*. You'll also learn something about the production of Mexico's national drink. Sometimes you can listen to the same sentence 10 times before the light dawns, and then it will be completely clear. Practice writing in your head what you are hearing. If you can visualize the writing of the sounds, you can often see the logic of those vowels sliding together.

Learn to listen in what I call clumps. You don't have to hear every little word to understand a phrase. Just listen for the key words and let your mind slide over the little ones. There's really no time to have every syllable register in the speed of normal conversation. If you've ever filled in words you assume are a part of an English conversation in a noisy bar, you'll know what I mean. Educate your mind to listen for the main concepts, not the details.

When you're listening to Spanish, put on your "Spanish hat" and don't allow your mind to think or interpret in English. I was reminded of this recently when some intermediate speakers were following a dinner conversation. The key word in the Spanish situation was *caos*. In writing it's clear that this word is chaos in English. But the intermediates were hearing the sound of

through the phone or email correspondence. Our best wishes and congratulations go to her and new husband Tim.

**CUBA** – We're still waiting on our license approval for a Language Link Cuba viaje, although we are tentatively thinking February 2013. If you're interested without having full details yet, write [kay@langlink.com](mailto:kay@langlink.com). We now have an ongoing list of interested people.

Our **Internet Spanish** using Skype is still in development, as we want it to be an excellent, comprehensive program which will be technically user friendly. It will be launched in September. Watch for our announcement!

**FALL IS A GREAT TIME TO STUDY...FEWER STUDENTS, SMALLER CLASSES AND PERFECT WEATHER EVERYWHERE.**

FALL PROGRAMS IN CUERNAVACA  
Many of you enjoy a short all inclusive study program with many cultural activities. Cuernavaca is offering two great ones:

**Fiesta of Day of the Dead – Oct. 27 – Nov. 3**, \$700 shared, \$800 single for 7 days host family including all meals and all the fascinating events associated with this major Mexican cultural phenomena. Not gruesome in the least, but in contrast, life affirming. See a full schedule of this and following program at <http://www.langlink.com/cuernavaca-course-info>

**Thanksgiving in Cuernavaca – Nov. 17 – 24**, all inclusive \$700 shared, \$800 single and bath. With spa options, an included temazcal and Mayan ceremony, and many other cultural experiences. Enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with a beautiful view of the mountains.

Our On The Road one week viajes, including daily Spanish class. We need registrations 6 – 8 weeks in advance. You can see itineraries and upcoming ones in our On The Road section <http://langlink.com/ON%20THE%20ROAD>

**Chiapas: November 4 – 11, \$1100**  
We have had two highly successful viajes to Chiapas, as it is a fascinating destination. There are still spaces available, but our registration deadline is Sept. 15.

**Likeable Links**

CA – OS and thinking that the conversation was about bovine animals or cows. It was amusing, and a good example of letting English interfere, instead of visualizing a word pronounced with your “Spanish hat”. Laughter reigned at the table when we all figured out what had happened.

*If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart. Nelson Mandela*

### **Culture Clips**

Most likely with the heat wave being experienced in many parts of the U.S., some of you are sipping iced coffee. (Personally I love living in the cool mountains of Mexico at this time of year...sleeping with windows open, no AC, and under a light down quilt. It's delicious!) Regardless of the weather, none of us seems to get far away from coffee. This product is so important in many Latin American countries that seeing coffee plantations and coffee processing is an interesting part of many of our students' study experiences. It's one of those things which puts us directly in contact with a part of our everyday life. And it illustrates so well why so many people are attracted to Latin American life. It's the close connections, which are so evident in people relationships and the transactions of everyday life. Life is not sterilized and compartmentalized, and language learning takes you directly into the heart of things. So how does coffee figure into all this?

If you're in Costa Rica, you can't escape coffee. Every hillside seems to be covered with green and luxuriant coffee bushes. There are 78,000 coffee producers in Costa Rica, chiefly small-scale farmers. Coffee grows on more than 100,000 hectares in the country. Costa Rica produces 2.5 million sacks of coffee weighing 60 kilograms each. The soil in Costa Rica contains a light grade of tropical acidity, the product of land enriched by volcanic ash. More than 70% of national production comes from the mountains at elevations from 1,000 to 1,700 meters above sea level. At that elevation sunlight is stable, and the amount of rain is optimal. The country exports 90% of its coffee harvests, whose sales represent 15% of the country's total exports. Costa Rica ranks 13th among world coffee producers, with 1.82% of the world's coffee production coming from Tico soil.

In Guatemala outside of Antigua it is possible to see both a coffee *museo* and an old coffee hacienda, Finca Filadelfia. Antigua has long been recognized for growing the highest quality coffees in the world. Its climate, high

[http://www.streetdirectory.com/food\\_editorials/beverages/coffee/the\\_history\\_and\\_facts\\_of\\_costa\\_rica\\_and\\_coffee.html](http://www.streetdirectory.com/food_editorials/beverages/coffee/the_history_and_facts_of_costa_rica_and_coffee.html) - Costa Rica  
coffee <http://www.avivara.org/aboutguatemala/coffeeinguatemala.html> -Coffee in Guatemala  
<http://cookinginmexico.com/2010/09/06/the-mystique-of-making-mexican-coffee-cafe-de-olla/> - how to make the Mexican coffee delicacy called *café de olla*.

### **Been There Loved That**

PLFM in Antigua, Guatemala *I had a great host family, very good teacher at PLFM, and was treated well throughout my 3 week stay by school staff. The people of Antigua, though confronting many challenges, were simply wonderful. I had the chance to work in a hospital while there and that experience also was quite extraordinary and beneficial.* - Name withheld by request, Legal Aid Attorney, Arlington, Massachusetts

Spanish Language Institute of Cuernavaca, Mexico *Awesome overall experience!Instructors really wanted you to learn, good guidance and help with grammar and pronunciation.* - Kari Kuen, Student University Wisconsin at Green Bay

Academia de Español Quito, Ecuador *The experience was great! The teachers were all very helpful in answering any questions we had and were very friendly. The activities we did were unique. The teachers and directors at the school are very knowledgeable about Quito, the transportation, and what stores have the best prices for different things. I would definitely suggest this school for students who wish to go in the future!* Kathy Georgson, college student majoring in teaching, Watertown, Wisconsin

altitude, fertile volcanic soils and traditional farming practices contribute to the making of the exceptional coffee. The owner of Finca Filadelfia's great-grandfather was one of the first farmers who turned his land to coffee to overcome the Guatemalan economic crisis of 1870. It wasn't long before he harvested his first coffee berries and set up a horse-powered mill to process both his own crop and the coffee from neighboring Antigua estates. Four years later he received a commission to grow one million coffee plants and distribute them to smaller farmers in the area, part of a plan to encourage coffee production.

Filadelfia Estate plantations have benefitted from the rich soil fed by the ashes of the very volcanoes that cause the earth to shake underfoot every so often. This combines with a climate which allows the coffee to mature slowly and gives the coffee its distinctive flavor and aroma.

The plantations bask under the bright blue skies and in the colonial beauty of a city that inspires its people to celebrate the baroque art of their buildings in their everyday activity – be it ringing the church bells, or picking coffee berries in the shady groves, strolling to work in the mornings under the purple outline of the volcanoes, or processing coffee beans in traditional mills.

So lift a *cafecito* to celebrate this wonderful part of Latin American life. Wake up to the wonder of directly connecting to a common element of everyday life.

### **Cocina Cooking**

**A Decadent Chocolate/Coffee Pecan Pie with Coffee Whipped Cream – ¡Riquísimo!** (from Frontera Grill)

Use your favorite standard pie crust recipe. Set aside one egg yolk for brushing crust.

**Filling:** 4 ½ ozs. (about 1 ½ C) pecan halves, toasted, 4 ½ oz. semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped  
2 T. all-purpose flour, 9 T. (1 stick plus 1 T. ) unsalted butter at warm temperature, ¾ C. packed dark brown sugar, 4 large eggs, unchilled, ½ C. light corn syrup, 3 T. dark molasses, 1 T. Kahlua, 2 tsp. vanilla extract, ¼ tsp. salt

**For coffee whipped cream:** 1 C/ heavy cream, 3-4 T. powdered sugar, 2 tsp. Kahlúa Using a fork, pierce the bottom and sides of the pie shell all over then chill for 30 minutes. Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 400°F. Lightly butter a 15-inch round of foil and lay it, butter-side-down, inside the chilled pie shell then gently press to line the shell snugly. Fill the pie shell with dried beans and bake until the pastry is set and pale golden along the edge, about 15 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 350°F. Carefully remove the weights or beans and the foil and bake the shell until pale golden all over, 8 to 10 minutes more. Brush the entire pastry surface with lightly broken up egg yolk, and cool completely.

**Make the filling:** Arrange a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat to 350°F. In a large vessel, combine the pecans, chocolate, and flour, and toss to combine. With a

mixer combine the butter and brown sugar and process on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add the corn syrup, molasses, Kahlúa, vanilla, and salt and mix until incorporated. Pour over the chocolate-pecan mixture and stir well to combine. Pour the mixture into the cooled pie shell and bake until an insertion into the center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. *DO AHEAD: The pie can be baked, cooled, and stored, wrapped in a double-layer of plastic and refrigerated up to 3 days.*

**Make the coffee whipped cream:** With a mixer, whip the cream, sugar, and Kahlúa until the cream holds soft peaks.

**To serve:** Just before serving, cut slices into the pie then warm the whole pie in a 325°F oven until just heated through, about 8 minutes. Serve slices topped with dollops of coffee whipped cream.

We hope you enjoyed our news. Please see us at

[www.langlink.com](http://www.langlink.com).

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