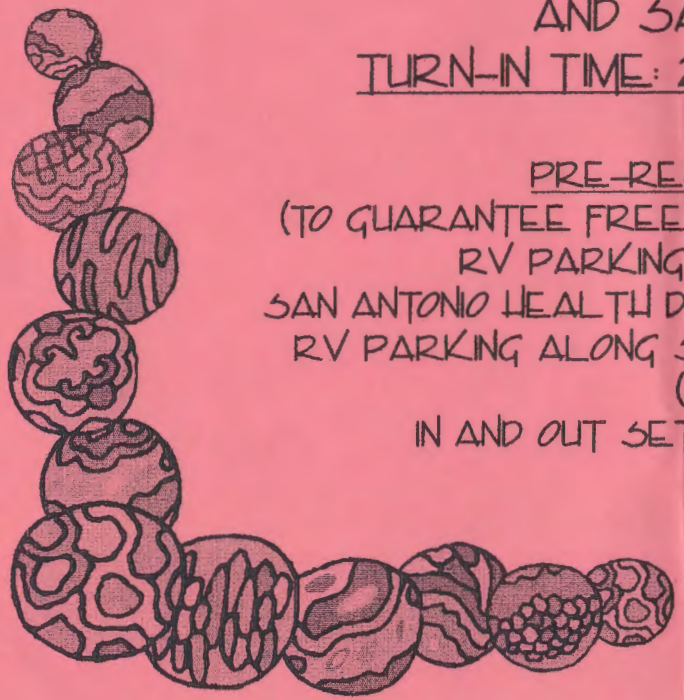
Monday, Memorial Day
May 29, 2000

In Historic El Mercado/Market Square
Santa Rosa between Dolorosa & Commerce
In Beautiful Downtown San Antonio, Texas

Food Booths, Shopping, 9 Bands on 3 Stages,
Entertainment, More Shopping, Games
and Much More!

1st Annual "The Return of The Chili Queens"
CASI Chili Cookoff and 12th. Annual Festival

BENEFITS LULAC SCHOLARSHIP FUND
AND SANTA ROSA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
TURN-IN TIME: 2PM; ENTRY FEE: $20., CHILI GRIND ONLY!



PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE: WED. MAY 24, 2000.
(TO GUARANTEE FREE PARKING, AND AVOID $8 EVENT FEE IN DOWNTOWN LOTS!)
RV PARKING AND LOCAL COOKS: SETUP FROM 8:AM TO 10:AM
SAN ANTONIO HEALTH DEPT. & MINIMAL SA FIRE DEPT. REQUIREMENTS ENFORCED
RV PARKING ALONG SAN SABA, BETWEEN OLD AND NEW FARMERS MARKETS
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For Information: Nora Casias, CASI Representative, 210-622-3011,
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WOMEN FOR ALL SEASONS

SAN ANTONIO'S

CHILI QUEENS

BY FRANK W. JENNINGS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN DAVENPORT

The Chili Queens of San Antonio gave up their reign more than 50 years ago, but their role in Alamo City history lives on in legend and lore. Rightly so, for the women's spicy cuisine and open-air "restaurants" once rivaled the Alamo in visitors' interest and acclaim.

In their heyday—the 1880s into the 1930s—the Chili Queens presided over food stands erected each night in one or another of the city's plazas. While neighboring vendors hawked wares as diverse as poultry, shoestrings, jewelry, and patent medicines, the Chili Queens served up pungent, peppery dishes to patrons more accustomed to bland meals of roasted meats and boiled vegetables.

For as little as a dime a plate, adventurous diners seared their palates on tamales, enchiladas, *chili con carne* (meat chunks simmered in savory, chili-hot broth), and *frijoles* (beans) spiked with cumin and garlic, accompanied by soft, warm corn tortillas. Newcomers and residents alike thrilled to the food's delightfully biting flavors.

Each evening, guitar-strumming troubadours entertained the crowds with festive and soulful tunes, as the Chili Queens bantered with their customers. Well-chaperoned and assisted by family members, the women set up the often-rickety benches and oilcloth-covered tables of their cafes at dusk each day and served patrons throughout the night. Mesquite-wood fires glowed under sturdy *ollas* (cooking pots) and *comales* (griddles), where the food steamed and sizzled. As day broke, the Chili Queens and their helpers snuffed out flickering fires and oil lanterns, packed up their pots, pans, furniture, and dishware, and carted them home, where they would soon begin cooking the evening menu.

Early on, only a few of the women who sold Mexican food in the plazas bore the title Chili Queen. Some books about old San Antonio picture women such as Sadie, who was an Anglo-Celtic, and Martha, a Hispanic, as being among the first of the Chili Queens. Eventually, all of the women, mostly young Hispanics, carried the royal moniker.

In his book *Glamorous Days in Old San Antonio*, published in 1934, Frank H. Bushick includes a chapter about the Chili Queens:

"Everybody dined al fresco with Martha, or Rosa, or Sadie, or Jovita or Josefina—whatever the name was of the reigning divinity serving the table under which you stuck your legs. . . . The girls put themselves out to be agreeable to all, but they could hold their own easily in sharp badinage with the kidders, and if necessary they could make effective use of a few swear words to slow down any rough stuff or undue familiarity attempted by some rowdy. . . . The Chili Queen would take an order . . . then she'd sing out to the old crone: *'Un medio tamales y chile gravey* [sic] *un plato frijoles en enchiladas y tassa cafe,'*" wrote Bushick (whose English was apparently better than his Spanish).

"Travelers and tourists . . . usually got around to these open air Mexican restaurants before they took time to visit our world-famous patriotic shrine, which so many of our visitors mispronounce as 'the A-lay-mo,'" Bushick also observed.

Earlier visitors and writers, such as Stephen Crane, author of *The Red Badge of Courage*, also made note of the Chili Queens and the fiery dishes they served. In a report written for a newspaper syndicate in 1895, Crane described the food as tasting "exactly like pounded firebrick from Hades," while he romanticized the setting:

"In the soft atmosphere of the southern night, the

San Antonio's Chili Queens return over Memorial Day weekend each year, recapturing the spirit of the women who sold spicy chili con carne *on various Alamo City plazas for more than 60 years. Juanita Alvarez (on the left), past president of the Modern Chili Queens del Mercado, and her daughter-in-law Laura Alvarez always participate in the re-creation.*

Above left, Sandra Lerma chops onions to flavor tripitas, while Alicia Zamarrippa (right) goes through the various stages of making gorditas. *Alicia pats out masa with lightning speed, fries it in lard, folds it to form a pocket, and stuffs it with beef or chicken and other ingredients, such as lettuce, tomatoes, and guacamole.*

Brochures aimed by railroad companies at potential San Antonio visitors in the 1890s ballyhooed the all-night "revelry and gormandizing" in Milam Square, where chili con carne was served "in the glare of numerous small bonfires and the uncertain light shed by lanterns of green, yellow, and red tissue paper. . . . Many of these tables are presided over by dark-eyed Mexican girls, chief among whom is one really handsome damsel with sloe-like eyes who is known and honored as the tamale queen."

And as late as 1930, a booklet published by city boosters described the night scene in Haymarket Square enticingly: ". . .There is no light on the plaza but that of lanterns and of the distant street lamps, which shines garishly through bottles of highly colored soda pop along the tables and picks out pleasing patterns of color. Someone is sure to have a guitar. Proprietors of various tables pay the musicians with food to sing and draw trade. . . . The rhythm is waltz time or the characteristic lively Spanish dance music. . . ."

COURTESY INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES, ESTATE OF ROBERT MOSS AYRES

Shown here on Military Plaza, probably in the late 1880s, men also got into the chili-serving act. Will Rogers once described Texas chili (the official State Dish since 1977) as "a bowl of blessedness," and Harry James trumpeted the opinion that "Congress should pass a law making it mandatory for all restaurants serving chili to follow a Texas recipe."

The Chili Queens continued to entertain and feed locals and tourists alike during the 1930s. Though city officials shut down the stands at times for sanitary reasons, popular demand dictated that they eventually reopen.

Slowly, the number of Chili Queens dwindled. Finally, in the early 1940s, the city health department closed the stands once and for all because of inadequate dishwashing methods. The Chili Queen era had ended.

Could it be that today's nationally popular Tex-Mex cuisine springs from the mesquite-wood fires of San Antonio's Chili Queens? Who knows. But lovers of chili, tamales, and enchiladas everywhere can certainly thank these colorful, enterprising women for introducing their spicy concoctions to the world. ★

San Antonio historian FRANK W. JENNINGS specializes in articles on the Alamo City.

San Antonio photographer JOHN DAVENPORT especially enjoyed working on this story since it involved sampling a variety of *comidas deliciosas.*

"Somewhere Along the Trail"

by Bill Neely

Photo Courtesy Texas Institute of Texan Cultures

The Chili Queens reigned supreme at San Antonio's Military Plaza until City Hall shut them down in 1937.

ROBERT MARSH, president of the San Antonio Pod of the Chili Appreciation Society International (SAP-CASI) serves up a bowl of red to Councilmen Phil Pyndus and Rev. Claude Black as part of promotion for the 1975 National Invitational Tournament of Chili Champions, to be staged Saturday in Villita Assembly Hall. (Staff Photo.)

C. B. Martin-Invitational Winner 1975

WELCOME TO THE SAN ANTONIO CHILI POD

The San Antonio Pod is one of 54 pods affilated with CHILI APPRECIATION SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL scattered over some 20 states. San Antonio and Texas are rich in history with chili. Manny of the cattle drovers who made traildrives to Kansas during the 1800s have told stories of "chili stew" made from chopped beef and wild chili peppers. Most of the cattle drives orginated in towns such as Kenedy, Lockhart and San Antonio, Texas. We know that the traildrivers had thier version of chili.

Probally the first real "chili con carne" was made by the San Antonio chili queens. The Queens as they were known cooked the chili in thier homes and brought it to the squares and plazas to sell. The chili was heated by mesquete wood and sold to the public. Mexican musicans would serenade the queens as chili was sold. This custom was done from about 1860 till 1943.

SAP-CASI as we are known was the second pod to be chartered into Chili Appreciation Society International so when you cook with this club you are with a unique group indeed.

David Turner, Great Pepper

Bruce Jones, Membership Chairman

1975

Political Musician

U.S. Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez is surrounded by mariachis after his appearance at the first annual International Chili Convention. The convention, involving chili cookers from throughout the Southwest, was held Saturday at Pearl Brewery.

Return of the Chili Queens

Since the first Spanish expedition set up camp in 1718, San Antonio has been a market town. With the French and English establishing trade lines with the native Indians it was only natural that the Spanish government protect its interest in Texas. They quickly moved to establish a mission and a presidio, the Fort of *San Antonio de Bexar*. By 1730 San Antonio was mapped for permanent settlement.

Colonists from the Canary Islands arrived a year later. They were farmers from an agricultural land. It was by these people from Spain and Mexico that the character of the city was shaped, and it was from their tradition that San Antonio inherited its colorful market life.

In the *Plano de Poblacio*, the town plan, the colonists were given "squares and plazas . . . for their use and entertainment". The decree included orders for an *aduana*. San Antonio's first square was the *presidio*, the *Plaza de Armas*. Upon their arrival in 1731, the colonists marked off their own, the *Plaza de las Islas*.

The plazas were lively markets. Within a half century carts and covered wagons crowded the squares. Awnings shaded the vegetables, fruit, fresh beef, venison and wild trukeys. There were donkeys loaded with firewood and aquadores selling cool water from earthern jugs. Chili stands were presided over by the famous chili queens who "came out with the stars." And it has been said that "many a distinguished traveler detoured from his intended itinerary to visit the chili stands presided over by typical young Mexican women."

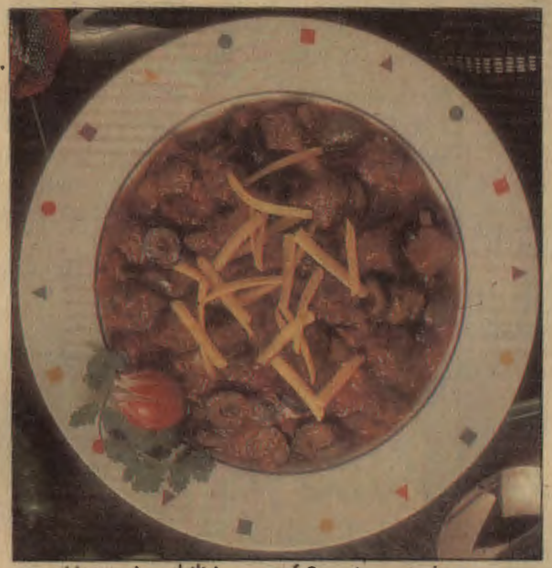
The chili queens served their customers at crude tables in the open air. The tables were covered with oil cloth and large lamps furnishing illumination. All of the equipment was carted to the plaza at nightfall and removed before the vegetable and forage vendors arrived to occupy the same ground in the morning - the plaza served as common marketplaces.

Kirk Munroe gave us this description in an article entitled "San Antonio de Bexar", Harper's Weekly, 1897. "Night in this quarter is even more interesting than in the daytime. Then there is music, dancing and laughter, while in the plazas appear scores of vendors of Mexican dishes . . . these are prepared by the uncertain light of small camp fires, lanterns, or flaring torches."

The chili queens became a common sight in San Antonio during the late 1870s. They began setting up their tables and lighting their pots at Military Plaza however,with the building of a city hall on the site in 1888 the chili queens moved to Alamo Plaza and then to the market area where the *El Mercado* is today.

In time shoppers moved from open-air markets to super markets and the chili queens and their chili stands thinned. In 1943 they disappeared, being forced to obey the same health codes as restaurants.

However, once a year, during Night in Old San Antonio, the chili queens reappear. They have their picnic tables, lanterns and kettles and they make their chili. This year, during the weekend of May 23-25 once again, in old San Antonio, at the *El Mercado*, the chili queens will set up their stands at night to sell their concoction, which has become to be known as chili. Plan to be there to blend the past with the present.



Hot, spicy chili is part of San Antonio history.

Early visitors chronicled Chili Queens' reign

By Frank W. Jennings
Special to the Express-News

For more than a century, when food experts anywhere have spoken of chili con carne, they've tended to mention San Antonio — the city where the fiery, highly spiced stew first came to the attention of the world at large.

In an article on the folk foods of the Rio Grande Valley and of Northern Mexico, published in 1895 in the Journal of American Folk-Lore, John G. Bourke, anthropologist and captain in the U.S. Army who'd been stationed in the early 1890s at various forts in Texas and farther west, told of fruits, vegetables, plants, drinks, sweets and foods of the region.

Some of his descriptions of eating in Mexico conjured up scenes in San Antonio during that period. In fact, he even mentioned the similarity, when talking about a plaza in Mexico reminiscent of San Antonio's Plaza de Armas — Military Plaza. But the variety of foods served must have been greater in Mexico than in San Antonio — and he must have missed the Chili Queens who helped make San Antonio's plaza viands famous.

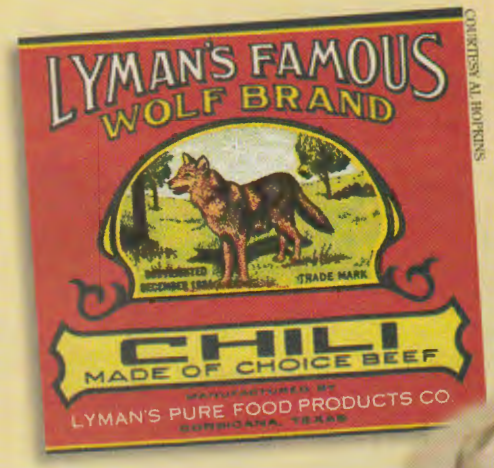
"In the center of the plaza — that is to say of the principal plaza, if there be more than one in a Mexican town — can always be seen rows of tables set out with some care, lighted with rather dingy oil lamps, and provided with hot coffee, hot chocolate, excellent bread, and many dishes, hot or cold, which are retailed in liberal portions at a moderate price; so moderate, indeed, that during the hotter months these tables serve all the purposes of the trattoria of Venice, and supply to families excellent food, already cooked, at prices which make it cheaper to patronize them than to depend upon servants," he wrote.

Bourke observed that "few tourists can have forgotten the 'chili stands' of San Antonio, Texas, once a most interesting feature of the life of that charming city, but abolished within the past two or three years in deference to the 'progressive' spirit of certain councilmen."

He was right. San Antonio's City Council closed down the chili stands several times over the years for sanitary reasons but, because of public demand, they always reopened. That is, until the early 1940s, when they were permanently closed.

As night began to fall, San Antonio's Chili Queens and their family assistants would bring to the plaza their portable tables and benches and oil lanterns and kettles and pots and food to be warmed or cooked and served on colorful oilcloths. Long after midnight, vendors and customers were bathed in the light of the torches and table lanterns, and serenaded by strolling musicians. At dawn they

See **HISTORY/3F**



COURTESY AL HOPKINS

Lyman T. Davis (below) began selling chili in Corsicana in 1895. Later, he put a picture of his pet wolf on the label and changed the name to Wolf Brand. In 1924, Fred Slauson and J.C. West bought Wolf Brand Chili from Lyman. The company remained Texan-owned and -run until Quaker Oats bought it in 1957.

PHOTO OF LYMAN DAVIS COURTESY BOB BRENDLE

For Lyman T. Davis of Navarro County, the wolf at the door meant good luck, not bad. In 1895 in Corsicana, Lyman began selling chili made from his Aunt Epsie Davis' recipe. Lyman brought the spicy concoction into town in a farm wagon, kept it hot over a charcoal fire, and sold it for a nickel a bowl in front of the Blue Front Saloon. As the chili's popularity quickly spread, he began selling it in bricks.

At first, Davis called the product Lyman's Famous Homemade Chili, but after a while, he got the idea of putting a picture of his pet wolf, Kaiser Bill, on the label and changing the name. Thus, Wolf Brand Chili got its start.

Though Davis family stories say Lyman found the wolf while plowing fields near the family farm at Emhouse, according to Wallace O. Chariton's 1995 book about Wolf Brand Chili, *Neighbor, How Long Has It Been?*, Lyman acquired the wolf pup from a circus that came through town. (The book also gives a Mexican cook credit for the chili recipe.) Whatever his roots, Kaiser Bill was destined for fame. Lyman tried harnessing the wolf to a small goat wagon to take around town, but Kaiser Bill would have none of it. In later years, new company owners built a car in the shape of a can of chili and mounted a cage for Kaiser Bill in back. (Sometimes, a fattened-up coyote did "wolf duty.") Two can-cars advertised the chili in various Texas towns.

In 1921, Lyman bought equipment to begin canning his chili in the back of a Corsicana market. By 1923, he had opened Lyman's Pure Food Products Company and installed machinery that turned out 2,000 cans of chili a day. He sold the recipe and the business in 1924 when his oil leases and other business interests began to prosper. The buyers, J.C. West and Fred Slauson, built a new factory nearby that produced 8,000 cans of chili daily. During World War II, the company sent free chili to any service personnel who wrote and requested it.

In 1957, the Quaker Oats Company bought Wolf Brand Chili and eventually moved its headquarters to Dallas. In 1995, Quaker Oats sold Wolf Brand to California-based Hunt-Wesson Inc., which still produces Texans' longtime-favorite "bowl of red."

—Ann Gallaway

If you approach the Palestine National Scientific Balloon Facility (NSBF) when a launch is imminent, you'll hear an ominous hissing as if something primordial is about to lurch out of the East Texas Piney Woods. Slowly, a gargantuan silver bubble fills with helium, extends to its full height of 800 feet, and floats away, carrying with it thousands of pounds of cameras, telescopes, and other expensive astrophysical equipment.

For 30 years, the NASA-sponsored facility, a major site for investigating ways to stop depletion of the earth's ozone layer, has served as an important field-test location for such universities as MIT, Cal Tech, Harvard, and the Max Planck Research Institute of Germany. Over the years, instruments carried on the balloons have collected meteorite and comet dust, studied the stars, and taken high-resolution photographs of the sun. In coordination with the McMurdo launch site in Antarctica, NSBF scientists have also conducted experiments on cosmic radiation, supernovas, and solar flares. And all at a fraction of the cost of tests conducted with satellites.

A team of 78 engineers and technicians, who set up the experiments according to specifications of visiting scientists, spends months preparing for a launch. For a launch to occur, conditions must be precise or the mission will be delayed or scrubbed—a relatively expensive procedure, since the $80,000 balloon is delicate and can be used only once. But when the wind, the parachute, the lead lines, and the helium containers work perfectly, the go-ahead is given.

COURTESY PALESTINE NATL. SCIENTIFIC BALLOON FACILITY

Except during launches, the Palestine National Scientific Balloon Facility opens by appointment for tours (903/729-0271). The site lies west of Palestine on Farm-to-Market Road 3224. Launches are visible from nearby roads.

Launch time brings a beehive of activity, as astrophysicists, telemetry experts, meteorologists, mathematicians, and electronic engineers track, record, and study the balloon, which reaches a diameter of some 500 feet, a volume of 30 million cubic feet, and an altitude of up to 23 miles. NSBF personnel retrieve the payload wherever it happens to land.

Though visible to the naked eye, the huge, polyethylene bags at full inflation aloft usually go unobserved. People who do spot them sometimes mistake them for weather balloons or UFOs.

—Dee Jacques Moynihan, San Antonio

BY CARLA McKEOWN

TEXAS CHILI

A good pot of Texas chili isn't a hit-or-miss kind of thing. Cooks often experiment for years to create what they deem to be the perfect blend of beef, chili peppers, chili powder, and other spices.

But despite its seemingly simple nature, chili—the official dish of the State of Texas since the Texas Legislature proclaimed it so in 1977—inspires debate and differences of opinions that run as deep as Texas history and as thick as chili itself. Beans or no beans, chopped beef or ground, origins in San Antonio or on the trails of Texas' cowboys, the choice of secret ingredients... the list of chili-related arguments seems endless.

"Most people seem to believe that chili has to have a secret ingredient," says Dr. Kenneth Davis, professor emeritus of English at Texas Tech University and past president of the Texas Folklore Society. "What that ingredient would be, I don't know. I've heard everything from mushrooms to powdered rattlesnake. I've even heard that there's a man down at one of the chili cookoffs who puts an old cowboy boot in his chili every year, but I don't know if that's true."

Although most Texans believe that chili—secret ingredient or not—originated in Texas, they don't always agree on where or when it was first created. According to Dotty Griffith, dining editor and restaurant critic of *The Dallas Morning News*, one faction maintains that chili really got going on the plazas of San Antonio in the 1880s, when women known as "chili queens" made big pots of the stuff and sold it on the streets (see "Women for All Seasons—San Antonio's Chili Queens," January 1996).

Another argument maintains that chili was born out of necessity with the early cowboys and settlers of Texas. "Every region has its own indigenous food that was absolutely wonderful survival food at a time when people probably didn't have a lot," says Dotty, author of *Wild About Chili*, a cookbook that covers the history of both chili and chili cookoffs. "The one thing Texans did have a lot of was rangy old Longhorns and chili peppers growing wild. There wasn't any refrigeration, and chili peppers kept spoiled meat from tasting so spoiled. Chili just was a natural food to occur in this part of the country."

Hut Brown, an accomplished chili cook who serves as executive director of the 58-year-old, Texas-based Chili Appreciation Society International (CASI), leans toward the cowboy/settler theory. "Some people say that chili was born with the chili queens, but it probably originated much earlier," says Hut. "The early people—cowboys and settlers—were traveling with their little iron tripods and their pots and had to cook a meal every evening when they stopped the wagons. They just threw a lot of stuff in a pot and boiled it."

Gussied-up or plain, chili is revered with a fiery passion. Many strive to concoct the perfect bowl of red, competing in cookoffs across the state in order to claim braggin' rights.

A WAY OF LIFE

History of Texas food includes chili

Continued from 1F

were gone. Bourke observed that in Mexico one always could find chili con carne, tamales, tortillas, chili relleno, huevos revueltos, lengua lampreada, many other kids of pucheros and ollas, with leathery cheese, burning peppers, stewed tomatoes, and many other items.

He explained the huevos revueltos were eggs fried on both sides and served with chili sauce. Also lengua lampreada or cabra lampreada were tongue or goat meat fried in egg. Puchero, he said, "is a stew of some kind." It resembles an olla, a dish made of boiled meat and vegetables. When made of tripe it is called menudo, he said.

He wrote that: "Chili, called aji and quauhchilli by the Aztecs, was the condiment in all the feasts ... at the time of the landing of Cortez; there were several varieties — the red, white, green, sweet and bitter.

"No Mexican dish or meat or vegetables is deemed complete without it, and its supremacy as a table adjunct is conceded by both garlic and tomato, which also bob up serenely in nearly every effort of the culinary art.

... the dish got its first national publicity more than a century ago, when the "San Antonio Chili Stand" was set up on the grounds of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.

"The chilichipin is the fiery berry forming the basis of tabasco sauce; it can be found in a wild state just after you cross the Nueces, going south ... It is used both in the green and ripe, or red, state."

Chili con carne was first described in Texas by J.C. Clopper, a visitor in 1828. He wrote, "When they (poor families in San Antonio) have to pay for their meat in a market, a very little is made to suffice for a family; it is generally cut into a kind of hash with nearly as many peppers as there are pieces of meat — this is all stewed together."

This seems very much like the chili con carne described by Bourke in Mexico. But San Antonio chili con carne, as it was eventually served in the plazas, was probably influenced by the Canary Islanders who came in 1731. It contained oregano, ground cumin seeds and chopped garlic cloves.

The late Frank X. Tolbert, a leading Texas expert on chili con carne, wrote in "A Bowl of Red," that the original Texas-style chili contained no tomatoes or chopped onions or beans — only meat, chilies and garlic. The meat was bite-size or coarsely ground mature meats. Oregano, cumin and garlic added to the zest of the hot peppers.

The local chili con carne was popular with San Antonians and relished by visitors. William S. Porter, better known as O. Henry, mentioned it in one of his famous short stories. He had visited San Antonio often in the 1880s and '90s. He told of "delectable chili con carne," saying that "crowds thronged the Alamo Plaza all night."

It was, he said, "a carnival, a saturnalia that was renowned throughout the land."

A visitors' guide to the city, published in 1894, recommended a visit to Milam Square, where the chili was served "in the glare of numerous small bonfires and the uncertain light shed by lanterns of green, yellow and red tissue paper."

In some years, the Chili Queens set up their stands in Alamo Plaza, at other times in Military Plaza — before the main public market was moved from Military Plaza to the area of today's Market Square around 1893.

But the dish got its first national publicity more than a century ago, when the "San Antonio Chili Stand" was set up on the grounds of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.

The women who served the chili in Alamo and Military Plazas and at El Mercado in San Antonio were never imitated in Mexico or anywhere else that chili con carne was served. The Chili Queens of San Antonio were "a Texas original."

'Mounty' chili world's best

Nov. - 1978

Richard Simon, an electronic technician in the Test Equipment Section of the Technology Repair Division in Maintenance, has been declared winner of the 11th annual World Championship Chili Cookoff held Saturday at Terlingua, Tex.

Simon, who has participated in 33 chili cookoffs, including the one sponsored by the Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA) at Lindbergh Park during the Labor Day weekend, was selected winner after judges found his "County Mounty" recipe the best among 51 other entries.

The entries were anonymous, since judges made their selections from numbered entries. Simon was presented a 15-inch trophy with a silver bowl and spoon mounted on a wood base.

The surprised Simon said that his 14-year-old son and nephew helped him prepare the prized chili. He has also taken first and second places in cookoffs held in Helotes, Port Aransas, Flatonia and Pearsall. Simon placed second during the AFSA cookoff at Kelly.

Swarmed with telephone calls from friends and neighbors, Simon could not get over the fact that he was selected from so many qualified chefs. He said, "A friend got me interested in cookoffs and it has been an on-going hobby with me, but I never realized it would come to this."

The festival drew several thousand people from as far as California, Arkansas, Louisiana, Seattle, Washington, Canada, Mexico and England.

RICHARD SIMON -- world's chili cookoff champion

Simon's recipe: rump roast, no fat, jalapeno chili without the seeds, white onion, chili powder, oregano, comino, salt, black pepper, garlic and tomato sauce.

The trick: you figure out how much of each.

ROBERT MARSH, president of the San Antonio Pod of the Chili Appreciation Society International (SAP-CASI) serves up a bowl of red to Councilmen Phil Pyndus and Rev. Claude Black as part of promotion for the 1975 National Invitational Tournament of Chili Champions, to be staged Saturday in Villita Assembly Hall. (Staff Photo.)

COURTESY INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES, *THE SAN ANTONIO LIGHT* COLLECTION

Chili Queens, family members, friends, and a young guitarist gathered beside a chili stand in 1936. The women, mostly young Hispanics, brought almost as much fame to the Alamo City as its namesake shrine. The spicy viand they served nightly by lamplight and firelight gained its first international publicity via a "San Antonio Chili Stand" at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.