

# Binding Identity: Chilean Palestinian Cookbooks and the Formation of a Diasporic Cuisine

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## Abstract

Foodways have long been at the heart of the long-distance and long-term cultural connection that the Palestinian diaspora in Chile has maintained with the Palestinian homeland and Palestinian identity. Recent years have seen the publication of several new Chilean Palestinian cookbooks that have translated embodied knowledge from diasporic home kitchens into globally accessible written recipes. In this article, we ask why have these cookbooks emerged in this particular historical moment, and what are the cultural implications of these cookbooks for the Chilean Palestinian diaspora? In our response, we draw on ethnographic observation within the Chilean Palestinian foodscape, analysis of several recently published Chilean Palestinian cookbooks, and interviews with cookbook authors. We argue that these cookbooks have emerged now due to three interrelated factors: author interest in documenting and retaining family histories, a market of young consumers looking to engage with Arab food culture, and increased global attention toward ongoing Israeli military violence in Palestine. Furthermore, we argue that unlike cookbooks that center on national cuisines, these diasporic cookbooks stake out a unique position by focusing on the transitory nature of cuisine and the intersection of tradition and innovation in creating and sharing recipes. In the process, these cookbook authors bind Chilean Palestinian identity and inscribe the formation of a distinctly diasporic cuisine.

## Keywords:

Diaspora; foodways; Chile; Palestine; cookbooks.

Chile hosts the largest Palestinian diaspora outside of the Middle East, with some demographic estimates putting the number of Palestinian migrants and their descendants in Chile at around 350,000 to 500,000.<sup>1</sup> Given the long-term and long-distance nature of the migratory relationship (the first migrants arrived in Chile as early as the 1850s and Chile and Palestine are separated by over eight thousand miles), most diasporans do not speak Arabic or maintain modern-day Palestinian cultural practices such as fashion, dance, or religious practices.<sup>2</sup> Foodways, however, tell a different story. Whether in restaurants or home kitchens, bakeries or grocery stores, Chilean Palestinians maintain a constant connection to Palestinianness through food and drink.<sup>3</sup>

The recipes and practices surrounding dishes such as stuffed grape leaves, *maqluba*, or hummus and falafel have been passed down across generations, traditionally in the form of embodied knowledge in home kitchens and frequently between women. However, in the last five years, several cookbooks dedicated to Chilean Palestinian cuisine have emerged and circulated throughout Chile (in print) and worldwide (via online platforms). These publications mark notable shifts: from the transmission of recipes predominantly via oral medium to written and visual ones; and from traditions historically available to only a select group of women connected to Chilean Palestinian families to recipes now readily available to a global audience, including cooks outside of the Palestinian diaspora community.

That print capitalism has shifted the relationship between migrants, foodways, and identity in general, and Chilean Palestinians, *comida árabe* (in Spanish: Arab cuisine), and Palestinianness more specifically, is not a new phenomenon nor is it of central interest in this article.<sup>4</sup> Instead, two questions drive our inquiry: Given the 150-year history of the Chilean Palestinian community, why have these cookbooks emerged at this particular moment? And what are the cultural implications of marketing these cookbooks as diasporic or migratory rather than mapping onto a specific national identity or cuisine? Or, phrased differently, what are the temporal, spatial, and flavor-based boundaries of national and transnational cuisines, and who asserts the authority to determine such parameters?

Cookbooks provide a situated lens into the nuances of identity, gender relations, and social values, and are increasingly examined as fundamental cultural texts.<sup>5</sup> In this article, we draw on interdisciplinary perspectives from food, area, and migration studies to frame ongoing negotiations around national and transnational identity formation.<sup>6</sup> Scholarship at the intersection of food and sensation, migration, and memory shows how quotidian forms of cultural production and consumption form the scaffolding of sociality.<sup>7</sup> Particularly within sociology and anthropology, tensions between tradition and innovation in commensality have taken center stage in diasporic contexts.<sup>8</sup> We build on existing conversations to show how (trans)nationalisms remain central to contemporary culture making and how diasporans contest and affirm these categorizations.

This article draws on research conducted by Bascuñan-Wiley between 2016 and 2023 and by Schwalb during a 2019 Fulbright research grant and subsequent study

of the Chilean Palestinian political community. Bascuñan-Wiley spent eighteen months conducting ethnography within Arab foodscapes in Chile's central region. He spent nine months working as a cook, server, and barista in a Palestinian restaurant in Patronato – an important neighborhood for the Palestinian diaspora located in Santiago, Chile's capital. He also cooked in Palestinian home kitchens, participated in online and in-person cooking classes, and shadowed various food workers in their daily routines. This project included interviews with sixty chefs, workers, and customers who frequented Arab restaurants in Chile and digital observation of social media sites central to the Palestinian diaspora community in Chile. Schwalb engaged in archival research of *Mundo Árabe*, an early Chilean Palestinian periodical, as well as interviews with community members involved in student activism, communal institution-building, and political organizing in the Palestine solidarity movement in Chile.

Using notes from both projects to provide context around the *comida árabe* foodscape, we focus on three contemporary Chilean Palestinian cookbooks and interviews with their authors. These cookbooks – *Cocina de la diáspora: Receta con herencia palestina* (2021) by Dalal Halabi; *Cocinando con Thermohabibi: Recetas con raíces palestinas* (2022) by Elizabeth Aduay; and *Nafas: Cuando el disfrute y goce suceden en torno a una buena mesa* (2024) by Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza (a group of Chilean Palestinian women) – can be found in bookstores throughout Chile in print and digital formats. In interviews, usually while cooking or eating together, Bascuñan-Wiley discussed with the cookbook authors their motivations for publishing and sharing their books and the reception their work received within the diaspora.

Analyzing these Chilean Palestinian cookbooks and the social worlds in which they are embedded, and responding to the two central questions of this paper, we make two arguments. First, we argue that these cookbooks emerged in this moment due to the confluence of three factors: market demand; the desire of authors to record family history for posterity; and a drive to promote Palestinian presence in the face of Israeli violence in the West Bank and Gaza. Market demand comes from third- and fourth-generation Palestinian migrants living in Chile who were encouraged to professionalize or study rather than spend time in home kitchens where culinary knowledge transfer typically occurs, as well as from non-Palestinian Chileans with time, money, and an interest in affordable ways to become elite omnivorous consumers.<sup>9</sup> Authors' interest in capturing family history and memory is motivated by the aging and passing of earlier generations of Palestinian immigrants to Chile. The desire to promote Palestinian culture amid recent rounds of Israeli military escalation in the West Bank and Gaza can be understood as the latest iteration of a long anti-colonial struggle for self-determination.

We also argue that by marketing these cookbooks as specifically Chilean Palestinian cookbooks, authors *bind identity* and demarcate a specific diasporic culture that is distinct from Palestinian or Chilean national cuisines. We show that

diasporic food culture exists in its contestations, as authors claim and refute other ways of making or explaining the same dish in an iterative attempt to delineate or blur identity's parameters. The context under which these cookbooks are produced, the authors' profiles, and the content they encompass, from recipes to family stories to photos and font choice, reveal how migrant foodways dance between invention, fusion, and preserving tradition. Accordingly, we address the special issue's themes around recreating home, preserving identity, and asserting Palestinianness by focusing on the ways and places where Palestinian identity emerges and evolves in diaspora.

## Cookbook Context

Our analysis in this article takes into consideration the many forms of Palestinian recipes that have emerged and circulate in Chile. The most frequently used and exchanged recipes come in the form of embodied knowledge, passed on between individuals in home and restaurant kitchens through multiple demonstrations and constant practice of different techniques and flavor adjustments. On several occasions, while he cooked with participants, Bascuñan-Wiley received instructions to make dishes or adjust recipes such as "simmer until it is ready" or "pay attention to when you start to smell the garlic." Recipes exist here in shared anecdotes, subtle palates, muscle memory, sensory recognitions, and invested time.

Written recipes, although much less common than embodied knowledge recipes, are also present within the Chilean Palestinian foodscape. Several participants mentioned *Lo mejor de la cocina árabe* (The best of Arab cuisine), initially published in 1983 by Ketty Berr and Norma Yunis, as perhaps the only written *comida árabe* cookbook published and widely distributed in Chile before the surge of cookbooks that emerged circa 2020. This cookbook served as a staple in many households, and one participant even showed Bascuñan-Wiley an old edition with multiple stains and dog-eared pages from seasoned use. *Lo mejor de la cocina árabe* begins with a lengthy introduction that offers a detailed culinary history of the Arab world and asserts the book's aim is to "collect the most popular and traditional recipes from the Arab countries of Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon."<sup>10</sup> Ketty Berr and Norma Yunis draw on interviews with close friends and family members to compile the recipes for the cookbook, which has seen many later editions.<sup>11</sup>

Some recent recipes by Chilean Palestinian authors have been featured in cookbooks that compile recipes from multiple authors, such as Sofia Halabi's feature in *Craving Palestine* (2020) by Farrah Abuasad, Lama Bazzari, and Fadi Kattan. In some cases, Arab cuisine is incorporated as one of many global cuisines, such as in Noëlle Haddad's *El mundo en mi cocina: Recetas de los cinco continentes* (The world in my kitchen: Recipes from the five continents). In other instances, Arab cuisine takes center stage, as in *Cocina árabe*.<sup>12</sup> Each book centers beautiful images of ingredients and meals under preparation alongside recipes with short introductory blurbs. Other

recipes are shared over Instagram pages and other online platforms, written in the captions of food-oriented posts, or incorporated into video “reels” that feature high-definition shots of ingredients being prepared. Some recipes are shared in *comida árabe* cooking classes as instructors pass out paper or digital recipes that the class prepares together. Still others can be found in ethnic grocery stores or bakeries that have handouts explaining how to use the products being sold.

There are also recipes that are held close to the chest. During visits with Chilean Palestinian chefs and home cooks in Chile, Bascuñan-Wiley saw many recipes in restaurants jotted onto notecards and pinned on boards or on refrigerators. Cooks also kept personal journals containing recipes collected and tested over a lifetime or family cookbooks that were printed and circulated in small quantities between family members.

We highlight *Cocina de la diáspora*, *Cocinando con Thermohabibi*, and *Nafas* in particular for their depiction of Chilean Palestinian food as an explicitly diasporic cuisine and their similar release dates (between 2020 and 2024). In what follows, we draw on evidence from these cookbooks, interviews with the authors, and ethnographic context to unpack why and how diasporic cuisines emerge and evolve, as well as how the unique Chilean Palestinian diaspora asserts and contests its own history and political orientation.

## Why Now?

The recent boom of *comida árabe* in Chile and the publication of Chilean Palestinian cookbooks mirror a larger global phenomenon, seen in the wave of Palestinian cookbooks published over the last decade.<sup>13</sup> This follows a trend of English language cookbooks that cover famous and emerging national cuisines from around the world, printed in glossy, hardcover editions. Banal nationalism has long been central to the cookbook format.<sup>14</sup> Palestinian gastronationalism has been building globally in an effort to combat Israeli settler-colonial policies of cultural appropriation through food.<sup>15</sup>

Both professionally produced and intentionally resistant to Israeli appropriation, what is unique about recent Chilean Palestinian cookbooks is their explicit focus on the *diasporic* character of this cuisine. They pull inspiration from multiple directions and stake a claim to a new cuisine that is untethered from a single nationality, draws on local and global influences, and combines tradition and innovation. Yet, given that the Chilean Palestinian migratory connection is over 150 years old, why have these cookbooks emerged now? We highlight three factors: market demand, an effort to preserve heritage that might otherwise be lost, and a need to respond to recent and ongoing crises in Palestine itself.

### Market Demand

The first reason for the recent emergence of Chilean Palestinian cookbooks involves the market demand for cookbooks as a tool to (re)engage with Chilean Palestinian identity. There are two key separate consumer bases driving this demand: third- and fourth-generation Chilean Palestinians living in Chile; and non-Palestinian Chileans,

largely young professionals. Both groups mirror unique, but coexisting, relations to *comida árabe* that reflect migrant interests in connecting with cultural heritage and nonimmigrant desires to consume novel cultural experiences.<sup>16</sup>

The story of Palestinians in Chile is, in many ways, a classic migration story. Early travelers were young men who left a collapsing Ottoman Empire to seek work in the Americas. They arrived in Chile under difficult circumstances (xenophobia, language barriers, homesickness), but by selling goods from the homeland and local textiles from Santiago throughout the Chilean countryside, they were able to make a living.<sup>17</sup> Their children and grandchildren, the second and third generations, mobilized their parents' resources and their familiarity with Chilean culture, language, and customs to build factories and establish successful businesses. *Their* children, the third and fourth generation and beyond, were encouraged to professionalize or study, becoming doctors, lawyers, and so on. This upward mobility in terms of class and status is common within, though not entirely encompassing of, the Chilean Palestinian community.

The new generation of Chilean Palestinians are thus mostly young professionals who, as teens and young adults, were too busy with schooling to spend time in home kitchens learning traditional recipes from parents and grandparents through embodied knowledge transfer. That said, given more time and expendable income, many Chilean Palestinians of this generation have recently become interested in reengaging with their heritage and making “the dishes mom used to make.” The cookbook as a medium affords this generation the ability to access recipes on their own schedule and reengage with familiar cuisine, albeit made somewhat differently than in their families. Many research participants noted they would complement cookbook recipes with cooking classes or phone calls home to ask their mothers for adjustments to written recipes. Whereas embodied knowledge was typically passed down matrilineally, both men and women use cookbooks and experiment with recipes.

In an interview, *Cocina de la diáspora* author Dalal Halabi observed that many of the participants in her virtual Palestinian cooking classes were in their thirties or forties or younger and sought out her classes to connect to the recipes their family members never taught them or could no longer guide them through. Here, the act of cooking diasporic Chilean Palestinian cuisine connects younger generations to specific family members but also to a broader sense of lost or tenuous cultural heritage as an older generation dies out or has less time for teaching recipes or techniques. “We don't want the next generations to forget all that the older generations have done for us,” Dalal writes in her cookbook.<sup>18</sup>

The other audience that purchases and engages with the Chilean Palestinian cookbooks are young Chileans who lack familial connection to Palestine but have an interest in learning about a new culture. As Chilean millennials have fewer children and become more educated than their parents, they have more time and access to conspicuous consumption. While they have experienced some social mobility, many seek avenues to access global culture without having to board a flight to another country. Attending cooking classes and buying cookbooks provide ideal opportunities

to access Chilean Palestinian cuisine. Making and sharing a dish from a new cookbook when friends visit, for instance, demonstrates an omnivorous, cosmopolitan palate and consciousness, and the cookbooks make excellent coffee table decor.<sup>19</sup>

For both groups, months of social distancing brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic further catalyzed the production and circulation of these cookbooks, as well as an interest in home cooking. The pandemic created a moment of collective isolation and boredom and a need to establish and maintain community at a distance.<sup>20</sup> In an interview, *Cocinando con Thermohabibi* author Elizabeth Aduay noted:

From what I have learned during the pandemic, lots of people sought ways to escape the boredom and fear of not knowing what to do ... most of my students followed me [on social media] and for one reason or another – they had a friend who was of Arab descent or a family member who was married to someone with Arab heritage – they all had some moment in their life where they experienced their connection with Arab roots.<sup>21</sup>

Buying a cookbook and making the recipes or joining an online cooking class with one of the authors allowed participants to access Chilean Palestinian culture amid the chaos of lockdowns and uncertainty of social isolation.

### **Archiving for Posterity**

The second factor driving the recent publication boom in Chilean Palestinian cookbooks is their material and seemingly *more* permanent (in relation to oral transmission) form of recording family and community histories. Family life and relations are central to Chilean Palestinian identities and many of the informants for this study maintain detailed awareness of their lineage and narratives of the accounts of their parents' or grandparents' migration from Palestine to Chile, interweaving recipes with stories of transnational and transtemporal connectivity.

Food itself and food production and consumption as cultural practices are fundamentally ephemeral.<sup>22</sup> Nutrients are eaten, digested, and expended, and the cycle continues. Meals are shared across tables, commensality is memorialized and eventually forgotten or evolved. Recipes and cookbooks attempt to capture and confine food's transient nature in the form of language and images. The younger generations described above realize that the knowledge of Chilean Palestinian foodways is largely held by older generations who have not written down their recipes and memories. As this generation ages, many solicit written versions of their family's recipes to preserve the older generations' food traditions as well as their family stories.

The cookbook authors note that they took the time and effort to publish their recipes because they believe their cookbooks will stand the test of time. Elizabeth recalled that her motivation to write her cookbook “was born because I wanted to leave an inheritance to my children about Palestinian culture, about Arab culture ... the only way that they'll maintain these traditions is to leave them a book which can be a guide for them.”<sup>23</sup> Even if the authors' children are too young to be interested in learning about family foodways for some years, they may change their minds later,

and, as parents, the authors might not always be around to educate. Like Elizabeth, Dalal noted:

Some my age, some younger, entered my [online] classes and they told me, “my *abuela* died, and she never taught me [to cook].” Or “my mom knows the recipes, but never taught me.” So, they came to my classes, and they bought the book. They knew that their mothers and grandmothers cooked, but they never before had the need to cook themselves.<sup>24</sup>

Published cookbooks also mark a shift in gender roles. Women have historically been expected to be culture keepers for the family and community and to carry out the labor of food work without recognition for the labor of food provisioning.<sup>25</sup> Cookbooks save women time by allowing readers to self-educate.<sup>26</sup> They also allow men to engage in cooking practices without having to seek out a willing instructor.

These cookbooks are at once an archive for future generations and a reference point to compare how different families make recipes. Both the authors and the readers were eager to have a tangible, material product so that unique recipes could be remembered. Dalal, for instance, explained that her desire to write a cookbook emerged after encountering the lack of existing published work about Chilean Palestinian food: “The Palestinian community in Chile is the largest in the world [outside of Palestine]. So [I wrote this] because someone had never done it before, no one had taken the time to gather recipes and standardize them.”<sup>27</sup> Dalal said that publishing this cookbook felt like a (welcomed) obligation for her community and was a necessary project to complete before exploring other culinary directions that were not related to her heritage. Dalal, in the introduction to her cookbook, also takes pains to explain that this work is not representative of “all the Palestinians who came to Chile, but [is] the history of my family – my grandparents, aunts and uncles, parents, cousins, and siblings – through food, ingredients, smells and flavors.”<sup>28</sup> Before the instructions for one recipe, the authors in the *Paisanas por Gaza* cookbook note that there are “as many ways to make *marmahon* [*maftul* in Palestine] as Palestinians in the world. *La cocina árabe* is a representation of the Palestinian people: it varies depending on the place, but there is always adaptability to change while retaining the essential resilience.”<sup>29</sup>

### **An Eye on Palestine**

The third relevant factor in the emergence of the publication of Chilean Palestinian cookbooks is the increased global attention toward Palestine and Palestinian identity due to recent social media proliferation of images of the escalation of Israeli military violence in Gaza and the West Bank. Most Chilean Palestinians maintain a close eye on what is going on politically in Palestine, despite the fact that direct political involvement as a diaspora has largely waned from its peak in the 1960s and 1970s, when earlier generations used Arab social clubs throughout Chile to organize for Palestine, sending money and advocating locally for Palestinian equal rights. In moments of increased global attention on the Israeli military occupation and the subsequent global surge in Palestinian solidarity movements, the Chilean diaspora draws its attention back to the



land through political organizing, solidarity demonstrations, and, of course, food and other cultural production.<sup>30</sup>

Two events in recent decades have sparked particular diasporic interest in the region. Chilean Palestinians took to the streets during the summer of 2014, protesting Israel's "Operation Protective Edge," which involved heavy bombing of Gaza and resulted in over two thousand Palestinian deaths. Siri Schwabe offers a detailed account of the diasporic mobilization in Chile around the events of that summer and how Chilean Palestinians pushed local politicians to respond and drew on collective memories of the Nakba.<sup>31</sup> Ten years later, Chilean Palestinians are again taking to the streets and to digital platforms to protest Israel's response to Hamas's attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023, which resulted in the deaths of nearly 1,200 Israelis.<sup>32</sup> After 7 October, Israel launched ground and air invasions throughout Gaza, resulting in, to date, over forty-four thousand Palestinian deaths, well over one hundred thousand injuries, 90 percent of the population displaced, and the destruction of much of Gaza's existing civil infrastructure and agricultural land.<sup>33</sup> The Israeli military has also increased raids and killings in the already-besieged occupied West Bank. Like cities from Chicago to Cape Town, Santiago, Chile, too, has witnessed mass mobilizations in support of a ceasefire. The community who show up at local protests contain a rather wide-ranging spectrum of political affiliations, including non-Palestinian Chilean left supporters who have taken up the Palestinian cause and connected the current struggle against Israeli militarism to the anti-Pinochet and anti-colonialism struggles at home in the Andes, and also many prominent Chilean Palestinian figures and institutions that are strong supporters of the Chilean right.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to protest, food has provided an avenue for diasporic engagement. Club Palestino and other Chilean Palestinian social organizations have held dinners and event nights to solicit member contributions and donations to send to Gaza. Chilean chefs have led online or in-person cooking classes with the aim of educating students about what is going on in Palestine. Influencers have used TikTok or Instagram to share news or personal accounts about family connections in Palestine. Important culinary symbols of Palestinian resistance such as olive trees (which signal durability and steadfastness in difficult conditions) or watermelons (whose red, green, black, and white colors mirror that of the Palestinian flag) are graffitied on walls or stamped on social media posts. Chilean Palestinian cookbooks have also emerged amid these fraught times. Their publication emphasizes Palestinian identity through foodways, fighting against physical erasure in Gaza by asserting symbolic Palestinian presence in diaspora, drawing public attention to historical and contemporary information about the conflict, and serving as diasporic resistance to Israeli culinary appropriation. These foodways constitute a form of diasporic *sumud* (steadfastness), where public demonstrations of national culture and passing on memory across generations are acts of resistance against the ongoing Nakba.<sup>35</sup>

The suite of authors contributing to the *Nafas* cookbook speak directly to uplifting Palestinian food as a means of imbuing pride in one's identity amid images of violence and despair in Gaza. "Food allows us to understand ourselves, carry on our legacy

and identity, enjoy, relish, and feel infinite pride for our heritage,” writes one cook in the notes before her recipe for za‘tar flatbread.<sup>36</sup> And when violence and physical distance contribute to the increasingly tenuous connection to the land and people of present-day Palestine, food itself provides the most concrete sense of connection with the homeland when actual return is difficult or impossible. “Food is the most pure heritage of the culture that we, like many Palestinian families, left in the Middle East, but which at every family reunion we can return to, even if we have no concrete intention to return,” reads another author’s note before a recipe for tabbouleh.<sup>37</sup> The book itself is dedicated symbolically and materially to responding to the current genocide in Gaza, as indicated in the book’s detailed historical description of the conflict and dedication: “All proceeds from this ebook will be used as humanitarian aid for the population of Gaza who, despite everything, remain firm and resilient in the face of adversity. Palestine, the soul of our soul, will rise again and us with her. *Inshallah!*”<sup>38</sup>

These three explanations for the recent wave of Chilean Palestinian cookbooks overlap. In many instances, both the authors and readers of these cookbooks see their engagement with diasporic foodways as simultaneously a form of political and cultural engagement with Palestinianness. Diasporic foodways have existed in Chile since the earliest Arab migrants crossed the Andes mountains in the mid-1800s, yet, as we highlighted in this section, they have undergone a recent transition within the Chilean Palestinian foodscape. In the following section, we build on this analysis to ask what the consequences of this transition are for the Chilean Palestinian community and the formation of a diaspora-specific cuisine.

## **Building a Chilean Palestinian Cuisine**

Arab gastronomy, especially Palestinian, is rich in aromas that penetrate the soul: the warmth of turmeric, the strength of saffron, cinnamon, nutmeg, or cloves, which in different mixtures and amounts of flavor [*sazonan*], give a unique character to each plate. These same dishes have accompanied me since my childhood when, despite my young age, my grandmothers and my mother let me help them in the kitchen. And among those smells, colors, and textures, I had the great fortune of learning from them, who passed on to me the entire culinary tradition of my ancestors. It is true that with the passing of centuries, some original ingredients from the Middle East were adapted to our occidental reality, but the resulting dishes continue to be as delicious as the first dishes brought to the continent by our great-grandparents. I invite you to try and get to know Arab gastronomy, which for us symbolizes hospitality. For that reason, each recipe of this book is designed so that our guests feel comfortable in our home; so that each plate says, “Welcome.”

– Introduction, *Cocinando con Thermohabibi*<sup>39</sup>

For me, ingredients speak. Not literally, but I have always believed that you have to give them all the attention in the world. There is not only one recipe for Middle Eastern food, because each dish and its seasoning [*sazón*] is also part of the history of a family and of a Palestinian grandmother. What happens with the cuisine of an immigrant community is that it adapts to the country where they settle. And that is how it was with us, we grew up trying the flavors we inherited, listening to the histories and looking at the photos of those who stayed over there [Palestine]. We learned about flavors through inexact descriptions of spices, ingredients, and cooking methods. We took it and made it ours. *Cocina de la diáspora* is exactly that. A trip through the most classic of dishes and the characteristic aromas of Palestinian cuisine, and, above all, it is a diary of my family so that no one forgets where we came from and the memories those dishes hold. We don't want the next generations to forget what the previous ones did for us.

– Introduction, *Cocina de la diáspora*<sup>40</sup>

We are a group of Chilean Palestinian cooks who decided to come together through Arab cuisine to honor our culture and roots. We compiled 25 recipes from our land that we have inherited from our mothers and grandmothers with the intention of sharing with you a piece of our history and opening a window so that you can look and, we hope, experience the beauty of Palestine. The preparation of *comida árabe* is always a space for creativity, reflection and encounter. It is a moment of enjoyment and togetherness around the table. We form bonds and share our affection through flavors, spices, and textures of the Orient. Our land, Palestine, is thousands of kilometers away. Many of us have not had the opportunity to visit it, but our culture is so powerful that from Chile we have created a bridge that keeps us connected. Our culture is always present in the quotidian: it is in our gestures and in our way of relating; in our language and our way of creating family; in the spirit of resilience and unity, and, of course, at our beloved Palestinian table where every guest is turned into another cousin.

– Introduction, *Nafas*<sup>41</sup>

We begin this section by quoting at length the introductions of three Chilean Palestinian cookbooks to show the reader how the authors choose to introduce themselves in their publications. These excerpts elucidate the points from the previous section, as the authors center the importance of memory, family, and Palestine. These framing quotations set the scene for the following discussion of how these cookbooks

bind identity and stake a claim to cuisine that is neither strictly Palestinian nor Chilean but diasporic in its very nature.

These cookbooks, in their published form, fix and concretize for a moment a flowing, permeable diasporic food. The authors resist a singular or universal assertion of what Chilean Palestinian food is or is not; they ground recipes and instructions in their specific familial traditions and memories, explicitly noting that distinct experiences across the diaspora are reflected in unique methods, substitutions, and rituals around food. But as they do so, they begin to stake out an implicit consensus about the fundamentals of a Chilean Palestinian cuisine. Diaspora here exists between assimilation and globalization, in both tradition and innovation, and in the separation from and connection to a Palestinian homeland.<sup>42</sup> This section tracks the blurring of these binaries and the emergence of a diasporic cuisine through the publication of Chilean Palestinian cookbooks.

### **Palestinian Roots**

The subtitles (“Recipes with Palestinian Heritage” and “Recipes with Palestinian Roots”) of two of the cookbooks indicate the centrality of Palestinianness to the cuisine contained within. Foodways themselves are central to Palestinian identity in general, both in terms of their cultural importance as a tool of resistance against Israeli occupation (in the form of symbology and hunger strikes, for instance) and in terms of the material and sensory power of food to transmit memories, traditions, and a sense of communal belonging.<sup>43</sup> This is particularly true in the Chilean Palestinian case: where other forms of culture have been forgotten or assimilated, food practices persist.<sup>44</sup>

The rootedness of the diaspora in Palestinianness draws on individual and familial connections that provide a direct link to an imagined homeland through food.<sup>45</sup> Elizabeth’s remark that “Arab gastronomy, especially Palestinian, is rich in aromas that penetrate the soul,” for instance, connects the sensorial and material dimensions of cuisine to an intangible but fundamental dimension of individual identity. Dalal shows that flavors share the stories of whole communities and lineages, emphasizing the centrality of family in passing on recipes: “Each dish and its seasoning [*sazón*] is also part of the history of a family and of a Palestinian grandmother.”<sup>46</sup> *Mujeres por Palestina* also write about these intergenerational and geographic links, describing their aim to use recipes and food to open “a window so that you can look and, we hope, also experience the beauty of Palestine.”<sup>47</sup> Food thus has the power to transport the reader, the cook, and the eater through time and across distance, bringing them closer to each other, their histories, and the homeland.

The roots of the Chilean Palestinian diaspora have grown deep over the centuries and through multiple generations. The recipes found within modern cookbooks are linked to the recipes brought by the first migrants, the grandparents and great-grandparents of these cookbook authors. In one sense, these recipes remain frozen in time from that initial arrival. While culinary traditions in Palestine continued to evolve, diasporans in Chile kept a strict loyalty to those initial dishes that so powerfully

represent home. Take the following story that many participants referenced during fieldwork, described here by Saqqa and Abu Eid:

In 2005, during his first encounter with Palestinians in Chile, President [Mahmud] Abbas would be surprised by the fact that “in Chile they eat some food that we even forgot how to cook,” noting the deeply rooted Palestinian traditions of the largest Palestinian community outside the Arab world. After decades of immigrating, maybe many Palestinians have lost their language and even some traditions, but their hearts have remained in the right place. Latin America remains one of the strongest sources of support for Palestine and her people.<sup>48</sup>

Here again we see the centrality of roots and of “keeping” traditions in their original form throughout the years. Nabi, who migrated to Chile from Palestine in 2011 and opened a Palestinian-themed restaurant and cafe, noted that he was shocked by what Chileans considered Palestinian food when he arrived. “The foods they eat here every day we eat back home during celebrations, like weddings,” he noted.<sup>49</sup> Nabi pointed to *mahshi*, a genre of dish that involves stuffing peppers, potatoes, zucchini, and other vegetables full of a rice, meat, and tomato mixture. Throughout Santiago, *rellenos* (the term for “stuffed” in Spanish used to refer to these dishes) are as ubiquitous on the menus of restaurants selling *comida árabe* as shawarma, falafel, and hummus.

The centrality and transtemporal “permanence” of particular dishes are reflected in the indices of the cookbooks. Implicitly or explicitly, these cookbook authors confirm and concretize a general understanding of what foods constitute Chilean Palestinian cuisine through their publications. In other words, they have built a canon and bound a unique, diasporic food identity. All three cookbooks have recipes for *arroz árabe* (rice with noodles), *hojas de parra* (stuffed grape leaves), hummus, pita bread, baklava, kebab, tabbouleh, *rellenos*, *fatayer* (stuffed puff pastry), among others. Whether a modification or exact replica of an earlier tradition, recipes are frequently prefaced with comments about the centrality of the dish to the author’s childhood and family or to Palestinianness. Dalal, for example, writes, “This is one of the simplest recipes you will find in this book. Olives are an important part of the culinary identity of Palestine and the Middle East in general. From its original form, we can add flavor and they can be used for different preparations and eaten for breakfast.”<sup>50</sup> This consistent link to homeland histories and traditions is common across each of the three cookbooks, first binding the recipes to the larger history of Palestinian migration in order to then establish a Chilean Palestinian cuisine.

### **Local Influences**

While the cookbook authors heavily emphasize the importance of their Palestinian roots, they also acknowledge that the long-term and long-distance nature of the diasporic connection to Palestine means that Chilean Palestinian cuisine has both strayed from what is eaten in Palestine today and incorporates other local influences. For instance, Elizabeth notes, “With the passing of centuries, some original ingredients

from the Middle East were adapted to our occidental reality.”<sup>51</sup> Dalal similarly writes that “the cuisine of an immigrant community ... adapts to the country where they settle.”<sup>52</sup> These changes came from local influences, market expectations, and producer creativity, and are woven into the cookbooks’ larger assertion of what makes up this new diasporic cuisine.

Authors honor Chile’s influential mark on Chilean Palestinian cuisine through ingredients as well as recipes themselves, noting the similarities and frequent overlap between Chilean and Palestinian produce, spices, and more.<sup>53</sup> After commenting on garlic’s significance to Palestinian food in the introduction to her book, Dalal continues to say that “in Chile, [garlic] forms the base of *sofritos* [a green sauce].”<sup>54</sup> Later, Dalal describes *tahini* paste as akin to mayonnaise, the condiment ubiquitous on Chilean french fries, hot dogs, and sandwiches. And by including recipes for “legibly Chilean” dishes such as *empanada de pino* (dough wrapped around a meat and olive mixture) or *queque aleman* (a chocolate cake) alongside hummus and kibbe, authors further weave Palestinian and Chilean identity together. Chapters are not separated into “Chilean” and “Palestinian” influences in the three books, but rather into appetizers, entrees, and desserts.

The cookbooks’ lack of nationality-based separation mirrors a key factor in Chilean Palestinian cuisine itself: there is a significant overlap in ingredients, including produce and spices, grown in Chile and in Palestine. While early Palestinian migrants to Chile had to substitute ingredients in their favorite dishes (choosing beef over goat or lamb, for example), similar regional climates meant that many ingredients could be found fresh locally (for example, Chile’s wine industry meant that grape leaves were available to make stuffed grape leaves). In an interview, Dalal noted, “Cumin and oregano are the base of both Chilean and Palestinian culture. In Chile, we have *aji* (chili), which is sort of like paprika. In many ways, the base is very similar!”<sup>55</sup> Some of these early substitutions and adjustments stuck, while in other cases, increasing global trade and local agriculture made products (such as goat and olive oil) more readily available.

Consumer expectations of Chilean Palestinian food also influence what is considered part of this diasporic cuisine. Across the three cookbooks, authors alternate between describing the food as Arab food (*comida árabe*), Mediterranean food (*comida mediterranea*), Oriental food, (*comida del oriente*), and Palestinian food (*comida palestina*). Dalal, for instance, spends her first chapter outlining the essential ingredients for Chilean Palestinian food, describing rose water as “one of the most aromatic ingredients in oriental food” and garlic as a “much-used bulb in food of the Mediterranean.”<sup>56</sup> Authors thus situate their cuisine within a larger Arab identity and acknowledge that diasporic cuisine is influenced not only by Chile and Latin America but also by the broader Levantine history and the multiple geographies of this diaspora. Many Chilean Palestinians, especially those expelled from Palestine in 1948, may well have spent time in Beirut, Amman, Cairo, Buenos Aires, and São Paulo before making their way west of the Andes. Authors consistently contrast the specificity of Palestinian food and even their own family’s particular recipe with the broader, multi-hyphenate foodways to which Chilean Palestinians are connected.

At the same time, market forces influence the framing and content of the cookbooks.

Cookbook authors must respond to an “orientalist market inertia” within the foodscape of *comida árabe* in Chile.<sup>57</sup> Stemming from circulating popular culture discourses (such as the ever-popular Turkish television dramas), Chilean customers expect from restaurants and cookbooks a particular Orientalist representation of “Arabness” in the restaurant experience and cookbook imagery. The font for the section titles in Elizabeth’s book, for example, alludes to Arabic script, highlighting familiar or cliché representations of Palestinianness or Arabness.<sup>58</sup> Elizabeth’s partnership with the Thermomix brand, meanwhile, fundamentally shapes the recipe instructions, and the marketing of the book as a promotion is tied to a particular cooking tool. For Chileans unfamiliar with Palestinian food in particular, the broader legibility of *comida árabe* drives interest (and purchase) of cookbooks, spices, and takeout of this diasporic cuisine.

In describing how these cookbooks are shaped by Palestinian roots and local influences separately, we do not intend to suggest that these are separate processes. Rather, there is a coexisting tension between tradition and evolution that itself produces a culinary canon. Authors also create a unique diasporic food by utilizing and encouraging substitution, invention, and fluidity. In an introduction to the final chapter of her cookbook, Dalal frames her recipes for za‘tar pizza and vegetarian kibbe by saying: “I have taken the liberty to play and make a personal goal: to take spices, ingredients, and classic flavors in everyday recipes. To mix origins, reinvent, and above all, make cooking something fun.”<sup>59</sup> Elizabeth plays with the possibilities of “robot cuisines” and the potential of technology to influence how and what we cook, explaining, “I was able to adapt the recipes of my Palestinian ancestors to this marvel of a robot, without losing even a pinch of their force or flavor.”<sup>60</sup> By drawing on multiple influences, whether Chilean cuisine or technological advances, and still staking a claim to a unique but cohesive identity, Chilean Palestinian food culminates as its own cuisine. These authors stake a claim to Chilean Palestinian cuisine as a unique and independent set of culinary and gastronomic practices through the implicit and explicit presentation choices found throughout their cookbooks.

## The Formation of a Diasporic Cuisine

Cookbooks make up one element of the Chilean Palestinian foodscape alongside Sunday gatherings at home tables, sit-down and casual *comida árabe* restaurants scattered throughout the country, online food blogs and social media accounts run by digital foodies, and the ethnic grocery stores and bakeries selling homeland ingredients. Cookbooks are unique, though, in that they aim to bind the ephemeral aromas, flavors, and feelings of foodways through published print and images. Cookbook authors attempt to take a snapshot and to capture the essence of a larger whole for their reader. Yet, while most cookbooks are dedicated to national culture as assumed singularities (for example, Chinese or Peruvian cuisine),<sup>61</sup> Chilean Palestinian cookbooks are dedicated to culture as understood multiplicities. Their authors foreground the evolution of food practices that draw on homeland roots and local innovations, as well as the constant interactive process of changing and adapting

recipes and flavors. Still, authors are self-aware that the task of binding identity is weighty or even impossible.

The process of staking a claim to this contested, constantly evolving diaspora cuisine brings challenges. Dalal, when asked what new food projects were upcoming after the publication of *Cocina de la Diaspora*, spoke of food-based television shows, podcasts, and other cookbooks that revolved around heritage and cultural stories through cooking but not Chilean Palestinian cuisine. She reflected on her anxieties around publishing *Cocina de la Diaspora*, explaining that she had created this cookbook before her other culinary interests to satisfy herself, her family, and her community. Dalal worried about the book's reception in general and by *paisanas* (countrywomen) in particular. She felt an immense pressure to get the book *right*, judged by an unspoken but omnipresent set of criteria from her imagined community. As one of the first authors to render Chilean Palestinian cuisine legible in the form of a published cookbook, she attempted to capture the transitory nature of the diaspora through images and words, but herself acknowledged that others may have framed or detailed recipes differently. *Cocina de la Diaspora* and its contemporaries have attempted to make explicit a cuisine that has been implicit for decades, and in doing so have bound a new diasporic food canon, which will be applauded, critiqued, and built upon for generations to come.

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#### **Endnotes**

1 Cecilia Baeza, "Palestinians in Latin America: Between Assimilation and Long-distance Nationalism," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 43, no. 2 (2014): 59–72.

2 The majority of these migrants originated from the towns of Bethlehem and Bayt Jala and were overwhelmingly Christian (Greek Orthodox). Several Greek Orthodox churches can be found in Santiago, though many migrants have converted to Catholicism given the influence and presence of the Catholic Church in Chile. Engagement with the Greek Orthodox Church and religious culture

mostly occur around events like weddings or funerals.

3 We use Palestinianness here the way Amy Rowe describes Lebaneseness: "[P]eople of Lebanese ancestry refer to themselves as Americans, yet will momentarily describe 'Lebanese' aspects of their lives – family values, entrepreneurial skills, blood (which relates to kinship, race, genealogy, appearance), religious faith, etc. Yet they rarely actually use the term Lebanese when describing these things; what they do is use the food as a medium to convey these core



- points. In this way, the food forms an anchor for communication. It is not a symbol for Lebanese culture; in a sense it is Lebanese culture.” Amy E. Rowe, “Mint Grows through the Cracks in the Foundation: Food Practices of the Assimilated Lebanese Diaspora in New England (USA),” *Food and Foodways* 20, nos. 3–4 (2012): 211–32, quote at 212.
- 4 See, for instance: Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2016); Anita Mannur, “Culinary Nostalgia: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Diaspora,” *Melus* 32, no. 4 (2007): 11–31; and Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 1982).
  - 5 Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
  - 6 Peggy Levitt and B. Nadya Jaworsky, “Transnational Migration Studies: Past Developments and Future Trends,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33, no. 1 (2007): 129–56, online at doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131816.
  - 7 See Jon D. Holtzman, “Food and Memory,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35 (2006): 361–78; and David E. Sutton, “Food and the Senses,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39 (2010): 209–23.
  - 8 Sidney W. Mintz, and Christine M. Du Bois, “The Anthropology of Food and Eating,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (2002): 99–119.
  - 9 Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
  - 10 Cristina Correa Siade, “Receta para las nuevas generaciones,” *Al Damir* 109 (December 2015): 50–51, online at [issuu.com/revistaaldamir/docs/aldamir\\_baja\\_19\\_nov\\_fd09d3b43eb1fb/50](http://issuu.com/revistaaldamir/docs/aldamir_baja_19_nov_fd09d3b43eb1fb/50) (accessed 23 September 2024).
  - 11 Siade, “Receta.”
  - 12 Published by Origo Press, 2013, Santiago.
  - 13 See, for instance: Joudie Kalla, *Palestine on a Plate* (Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2016); Sami Tamimi and Tara Wigley, *Falastin* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2020); Yasmin Khan, *Zaitoun* (New York: Norton, 2019); Reem Kassis, *The Palestinian Table* (New York: Phaidon, 2017); Laila El-Haddad and Maggie Schmitt, *The Gaza Kitchen* (Washington, DC: Just World Books, 2021); Christiane Dabdoub Nasser, *Classic Palestinian Cuisine* (London: Saqi Books, 2013); Fadi Kattan, *Bethlehem: A Celebration of Palestinian Food* (San Francisco, CA: Hardie Grant, 2024); and Heifa Odeh, *Dine in Palestine* (Salem, MA: Page Street Publishing, 2022).
  - 14 Arjun Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 1 (January 1988): 3–24.
  - 15 Michaela DeSoucey, “Gastronomicalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union,” *American Sociological Review* 75, no. 3 (2010): 432–55, online at doi.org/10.1177/0003122410372226. For detailed histories of the “hummus wars” and other negotiations around culinary Zionism, see: Ari Ariel, “The Hummus Wars,” *Gastronomica* 12, no. 1 (February 2012): 34–42, online at doi.org/10.1525/GFC.2012.12.1.34; Nir Avieli, “The Hummus Wars Revisited: Israeli-Arab Food Politics and Gastromediation,” *Gastronomica* 16, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 19–30, online at doi.org/10.1525/gfc.2016.16.3.19; Ilan Zvi Baron and Galia Press-Barnathan, “Foodways and Foodwashing: Israeli Cookbooks and the Politics of Culinary Zionism,” *International Political Sociology* 15, no. 3 (September 2021): 338–58, online at doi.org/10.1093/ips/olab007; Jacob Bessen, “Student Brief: Culinary Zionism,” *Gastronomica* 16, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 18–26, online at doi.org/10.1525/gfc.2016.16.4.18; Dafna Hirsch and Ofra Tene, “Hummus: The Making of an Israeli Culinary Cult,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 13, no. 1 (2013): 25–45, online at doi.org/10.1177/1469540512474529.
  - 16 Johnston and Baumann, *Foodies*.
  - 17 See Nadim Bawalsa, *Transnational Palestine: Migration and the Right of Return Before 1948* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022); and Myriam Tenorio and Patricia González, *La inmigración árabe en Chile* (Santiago de Chile: Instituto Chileno-Árabe de Cultura, 1990).
  - 18 Dalal Halabi, *Cocina de la Diáspora: Recetas con herencia palestina*. (Santiago de Chile: Grijalbo, 2021), 13.
  - 19 It should be noted that some Chileans have a good understanding and ability to make Chilean Palestinian cuisine because they or their parents (almost entirely women) have worked as *empleadas* (nannies) within

- Chilean Palestinian homes, often learning to cook traditional dishes from the women they work for and then taking those teachings back to their own families.
- 20 Juan Pablo Pinilla, José Antonio Román Brugnoli, Daniela Leyton Legües, and Ana Vergara del Solar, “My Home Quarantine on an App: A Qualitative Visual Analysis of Changes in Family Routines during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Chile,” *Qualitative Sociology* 46 (2023): 221–44.
  - 21 Interview with Elizabeth Aduay, 3 March 2023, Santiago.
  - 22 Annemarie Mol, *Eating in Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021); Annemarie Mol, “I Eat an Apple: On Theorizing Subjectivities,” *Subjectivity* 22 (2008): 28–37.
  - 23 Interview with Elizabeth Aduay, 3 March 2023, Santiago.
  - 24 Interview with Dalal Halabi, 30 January 2023, Santiago.
  - 25 That said, many of the women interviewed for this project mention or demonstrate a “differential consciousness” where they find empowerment through cooking and providing amid what they recognize are patriarchal relations of power. Carole Counihan, “Mexicanas’ Food Voice and Differential Consciousness in the San Luis Valley of Colorado,” in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 2012), 187–200.
  - 26 Cookbooks are just one of many technological and class developments that have saved women time (especially since many Chilean Palestinian recipes take so long to prepare). For instance, Elizabeth Aduay promotes the Thermomix, a machine with dozens of functions that facilitate mixing, chopping, blending, and so on. And as the diaspora experienced upward class mobility, many families could afford to pay nannies to do their cooking and house chores and to buy more expensive pre-prepared ingredients (such as potatoes or bell peppers cored by vendors in preparation for stuffing).
  - 27 Interview with Dalal Halabi, 30 January 2023, Santiago.
  - 28 Halabi, *Cocina*, 11.
  - 29 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas: Cuando el disfrute y goce suceden en torno a una buena mesa* (self-published online, 2023), 31.
  - 30 Chilean-Palestinian solidarity demonstrations after 7 October 2023 have spanned from cultural production, direct action and marches, and fundraisers. For additional context, see Sammy Feldblum, “Chileans for Gaza,” *Dissent*, 11 June 2024, online at [www.dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/chileans-for-gaza/](http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/chileans-for-gaza/) (accessed 1 October 2024).
  - 31 Siri Schwabe, *Moving Memory: Remembering Palestine in Postdictatorship Chile* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2023).
  - 32 This diasporic engagement at a distance has been made possible with the ubiquity of social media, as diasporans instantly receive videos and photos from connections and organizations in Palestine. As the *Nafas* cookbook describes, “The citizens of the world watch genocide live from the screens of their ‘smartphones.’” Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 6.
  - 33 AJ Labs, “Israel-Gaza War in Maps and Charts: Live Tracker,” *al-Jazeera*, 9 October 2023 (updated 30 September 2024), online at [www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker) (accessed 1 October 2024).
  - 34 Jess Schwalb, “What a BDS-Supporting President Means for Chile’s Jewish and Palestinian Diasporas,” *Jewish Currents*, 10 March 2024, online at [jewishcurrents.org/what-a-bds-supporting-president-means-for-chiles-jewish-and-palestinian-diasporas](http://jewishcurrents.org/what-a-bds-supporting-president-means-for-chiles-jewish-and-palestinian-diasporas) (accessed 1 October 2024).
  - 35 Nicholas Bascuñan-Wiley, “Sumud and Food: Remembering Palestine through Cuisine in Chile,” *Mashriq and Mahjar: Journal of Middle East and North African Migration Studies* 6, no. 2 (2019): 100–129, online at [doi.org/10.24847/66i2019.239](https://doi.org/10.24847/66i2019.239) (accessed 1 October 2024).
  - 36 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 23.
  - 37 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 25.
  - 38 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 3.
  - 39 Elizabeth Aduay, *Cocinando con Thermohabibi: Recetas con Raíces Palestinas* (Santiago de Chile: Gráfica LOM, 2022), 5.
  - 40 Halabi, *Cocina*, 13.
  - 41 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 3.
  - 42 Or, we can say, between gastronationalism and gastro-transnationalism. DeSoucey defines gastronationalism as “the use of food production, distribution, and consumption to create and sustain the emotive power of national attachment.” DeSoucey, “Gastronationalism,” 433. Klein defines gastro-transnationalism as “the active diffusion of foods and culinary techniques, technologies, knowledge, and

- ideas across national borders.” Jakob Klein, “Eating Potatoes Is Patriotic: State, Market, and the Common Good in Contemporary China,” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 48, no. 3 (2019): 340–59, quote at 349.
- 43 See Efrat Ben-Ze’ev, “The Politics of Taste and Smell: Palestinian Rites of Return,” in *The Politics of Food*, ed. Marianne Elisabeth Lien and Brigitte Nerlich (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 141–60; Anne Meneley, “Blood, Sweat and Tears in a Bottle of Palestinian Extra-Virgin Olive Oil,” *Food, Culture, and Society* 14, no. 2 (2011): 275–92, online at doi.org/10.2752/175174411X12893984828872; and Anne Meneley, “Resistance Is Fertile!” *Gastronomica* 14, no. 4 (November 2014): 69–78, online at doi.org/10.1525/gfc.2014.14.4.69.
- 44 Bascuñan-Wiley, “Sumud.”
- 45 Plant-based metaphors for diaspora are plentiful (branches, roots, forests). Even diaspora means “the spread of seed” in Greek. We use and refer to roots and rootedness here drawing on the language found within the texts we are analyzing, not to impose our own understanding of diaspora as such.
- 46 Halabi, *Cocina*, 12
- 47 Mujeres Palestinas por Gaza, *Nafas*, 3.
- 48 Fayeza Saqqa and Xavier Abu Eid, “Palestine and Latin America: A Legacy of Solidarity and Brotherhood,” *This Week in Palestine*, no. 175 (2012).
- 49 Interview with Nabi, 22 November 2022, Santiago.
- 50 Halabi, *Cocina*, 13.
- 51 Aduay, *Cocinando*, 144.
- 52 Halabi, *Cocina*, 12.
- 53 We can connect this to Homi Bhabha’s notion of hybridity and the blending of influences from multiple origins. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012).
- 54 Halabi, *Cocina*, 20.
- 55 Interview with Dalal Halabi, 30 January 2023, Santiago.
- 56 Halabi, *Cocina*, 20. On the growing popular and academic interest in Levantine cuisines, see Anny Gaul, Graham Auman Pitts, and Vicki Valosik, eds., *Making Levantine Cuisine: Modern Foodways of the Eastern Mediterranean* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2021).
- 57 Nicholas Bascuñan-Wiley, “Sensory Authenticity: Embodying and Commodifying ‘the Other,’” in *Consuming Bodies: Body Commodification and Embodiment in Late Capitalist Societies*, ed. Jackie Hogan, Fae Chubin, and Sarah Whetstone (New York: Routledge, forthcoming).
- 58 Matthew Jaber Stiffler, “‘Serving Arabness’: Imagery and Imagination of Arab-themed Restaurants,” in *Arab American Aesthetics: Literature, Material Culture, Film, and Theatre*, ed. Theri A. Pickens (New York: Routledge, 2018), 63–85.
- 59 Halabi, *Cocina*, 215.
- 60 Aduay, *Cocinando*, 5.
- 61 Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine.”