



FONDA Restaurants Announce Mexican Heirloom Corn Initiative

*“Farm to Fonda”- Introducing All-Natural Heirloom Corn to Their Guests,
In Support Of Independent Mexican Farmers*

New York, NY – January 2015 - FONDA Restaurants today announced their new Mexican heirloom corn initiative. The program, which began as a part of their special Day of the Dead festivities in November 2014, is now integral to all three restaurants’ day-to-day operations.

“We are thrilled to be able to offer Mexican heirloom corn to New Yorkers on a daily basis,” says chef/owner of FONDA, Roberto Santibañez. “Not only are we helping small independent farmers in Mexico, we are introducing our guests to the complexities and nuances of one of the most essential ingredients of our cuisine.”

Here’s how it works: FONDA purchases their corn from *Masienda* (www.masienda.com), a Manhattan-based company that imports Mexican heirloom corn of different landrace varieties; “landrace” being locally adapted, open-pollinated corn produced in cultivation by selective breeding--in many cases, going back hundreds of years. In fact, some refer to landrace corn in terms of varieties, much like grapes from historic, regional vineyards. Where some restaurants have purchased large quantities of very specific types and colors of corn, FONDA is committing to use whichever heirloom corn is the best available in a given week. One week, it might be blue cónico corn from the highlands of Atlacomulco in Estado de México; two weeks later, it might be red corn from Oaxaca. There are 59 varieties of landrace corn in Mexico; each will add variety and subtlety to FONDA’s menu.

This means that every tortilla produced and consumed at FONDA – about twenty thousand weekly, and over a million yearly! – will be made from all-natural, non-GMO Mexican landrace heirloom corn, which is far more nutritious and flavorful than the aggressively-processed counterpart that Americans are used to eating. Come to FONDA in the late afternoon, before dinner, and the space will be filled with the aroma of fresh masa, of a depth and richness most American diners have not experienced.

“I believe it is our job to advocate to our guests why this corn is so superior, and healthier to eat,” continues Santibañez, “By committing to having **only** this corn for our tortillas, our guests will taste and even feel the difference for themselves.” Chef Santibañez further states that it is important to help preserve farming traditions that are the basis of Mexican cuisine, which some believe may help preserve the purity, and the future, of this precious ingredient.

As thousands of all-natural tortillas are made daily in FONDA’s kitchens in New York, hundreds of small, independent farmers in Mexico have access to a corn market previously unavailable to them, and are able to support themselves and their families—many of whom have farmed the same land for centuries. It is truly a “Farm to Fonda” experience.

FONDA restaurants are located at 189 9th Avenue, **Chelsea** (917.525.5252); 40 Avenue B, **East Village** (212.677.4096); and 434 7th Avenue, **Park Slope** (718.369.3144). Reservations are recommended and can be made by visiting www.fondarestaurant.com or calling directly.

Get social with FONDA: visit www.facebook.com/fondarestaurant, or @fondarestaurant on Instagram and Twitter.