

Carlos Roberto Antunes dos Santos

Flavors from Paraná

Let the party begin: Barreado,

a skilled art of the cuisine from Paraná

Cuisines are constantly changing. Whatever the time or the geographical space, food cultures are exposed to conflicting factors related to the implementation of new techniques and forms of consumption, to the introduction of products, or the encounter and fusion of these, driven by innovation and creativity. These changes in cooking habits can be absorbed or “digested” by tradition, which in turn create new models and adapt them to the previous conventional models. In this sense, while causing a certain culinary revolution, disruption brings at its core transitional traits, albeit marked by tradition.



Barreado. Priscila Forone – Tourism Secretariat of the State of Paraná

Local, regional, national and international cuisines are byproducts of cultural miscegenation and reveal traces of cultural exchanges. Today, food and nutrition studies have been incorporated into the human sciences, given that food preferences are not solely explained on the grounds of their nutritional and biological contents. Food is historic category; the patterns of permanence and change of food habits and practices refer to the very dynamics of a society. Food is not just food. To nourish is a nutritional act, to eat is a social act, because it consists of attitudes, connected to usage, customs, protocols, behaviors and situations. Whatever food that goes into our mouths is not neutral. The historic dimension of gastro-

nommic sensibility is explained and explains social and cultural manifestations as a reflection of an era. So, what you eat is as important as when you eat, how you eat and whom you eat with. This is where food stands in history.

In Brazil, food diversity has been historically cultivated as a synthesis between primitive cultures and the superposition of different ethnicities which symbiotically formed our eating habits and rich cuisine. Hence, gustative memory blended with food lore and tastes, culinary techniques and practices have originated into regional cultures. As a means of resistance to fragmented and cosmopolitan cuisines, in the name of quality, society increasingly seeks to re-

*The cuisine of Paraná
offers delicacies from
typical local cooking
and dishes that use food
incorporated to local
nutritional history and
culture*

vive and value local and regional cuisines that carry cultural significance. Consequently, the local and the regional precede the national and the international, and thus gastronomy reveals the identity of a group of “Brazils”. In some cases, so much importance is attributed to this given valuation that it becomes permanent, a tradition that effectively involves not only the reproduction of a certain dish, but the re-creation of its cooking procedures at the time. Thus, the act of preparing a regional dish as “in the old days” gains national status, propelled by tourism. On the coastal area of the state of Paraná, *barreado*, a memory-invoking food, is an example of that process.

Themes of regional cooking and eating in Paraná reveal the old times of gustative memory when the preparation of *barreado* as well as the sequence and ways of serving it were ritualized. In this context, table manners refer to the symbolic regional representation and its cuisine expresses the language that translates its social relations.

The gastronomy of Paraná has a place for everyone. It is diversified and established on an ethnic and cultural richness that invented a large table laid with dishes prepared by the local people, or introduced by several migrants and im-

migrants, in a constant process of adaptation and re-adaptation.

In true fact, there is no typical cuisine of Paraná, its framework blends a range of flavors from local cuisine (Portuguese-Brazilian) to the culinary traditions of peasants and immigrants. Despite the incorporation of foreign cuisine elements into local and regional gastronomy, some dishes maintained their basic characteristics while others were adapted to the new palate and food practices. Such process relates to the very historical dynamics in several regions of the state of Paraná.

The cuisine of Paraná offers delicacies from typical local cooking and dishes that use food incorporated to local nutritional history and culture, such as *pinhão*; corn; beans of several colors; manioc; rice; beef, pork and chicken; *torresmo*; manioc starch; and banana, which are used in dishes like: *barreado*; *paçoca* with *pinhão*; *quirera lapiana*, pork with cornmeal; *carreteiro* rice; *feijão tropeiro*, polenta with farm chicken; pork loin with *pinhão*; pork ribs in the *campeira* style; mutton with *farofa*; barbecue Paraná style; including the dessert from the Palácio Bar in Curitiba, known as *mineiro de botas*.

The act of preparing a regional dish embedded in local tradition and history acquires a national status when it is integrated in a touristic context. This is the case with *barreado*, a traditional food, considered the only typical dish of the state of Paraná. Its recipe dates back to the second half of the XVIII Century, originally on the coast of Paraná. *Barreado* is a beef delicacy cooked with spices, for about twelve hours, in a clay pot, hermetically sealed with a starch-paste of manioc. The name of the dish comes from the expression “*barrear a panela*”, which refers to the act of sealing the pot with manioc starch. When

Since barreado is a dish directly linked to the coast of Paraná, its consumption is connected to religious feasts and public festivities, celebrations, holidays and popular parties.

cooked, the meat gets shredded and is served with manioc flour, banana, and cachaça made from bananas. Passed on by oral tradition, the recipe has some variations, mostly when seasoning the meat (with bacon only; or by adding parsley and chives tied in a bunch, which should be removed before serving; or even by mixing in tomatoes to “enhance” the color of the dish; others say that the meat should be cooked on its own, without the addition of water). There are also variations in its preparation. Many say that when cooking the “original” *barreado*, the pot is sealed and buried in an open hole covered with green leaves, and over it the fire is lit. This technique is called “*biaribi*” or “*biaribu*” and had been used by the native Indians and the Africans since the end of the 18th Century.

The origin of *barreado* is still unknown. The municipalities of Antonina, Morretes and Paranaaguá claim the “paternity” of the dish, each one promoting its own version. The people from Antonina, who have the strongest carnival tradition in Paraná, tend to associate *barreado* with the “*entrudo*”, a profane, pagan feast that preceded Carnival. The *entrudo* has its most genuine sense in

the old Roman rituals, which were later reenacted in Portugal, always characterized by a certain permissiveness and a critical stance toward contemporary authorities, order and morals. Those from Morretes tend to identify the origin of *barreado* with their city, saying that the *tropeiros* – men that were part of a type of private transporting system of goods in the South of Brazil – brought from the plateau, when they descended the trail of the Graciosa, a well-seasoned stew that would last several days without going bad.

Since *barreado* is a dish directly linked to the coast of Paraná, its consumption is connected to religious feasts and public festivities, celebrations, holidays and popular parties. It is worth mentioning that on every weekend the coastal cities of Paraná are decorated to welcome tourists to savor *barreado*. In Curitiba, some of the restaurants that serve typical food offer *barreado* on their menus on certain days of the week.

Propelled by the *barreado* repute, many coastal cities became gastronomic capitals. Therefore, the term “capital” does not necessarily imply a political and administrative space, but is characterized as a net, a symbolically established territory of the “Sacred Alliance” of food, history, tradition and tourism. Thus, the *barreado* “net” is a historical place, it offers a place for consumption that boosts the regional development and grants and strengthens regional identity.

Therefore, the regional cuisine of the coast of Paraná is an instrument for promoting culture and bringing in revenue. The constancy of some eating habits from the coast is directly linked to a gastronomic territoriality marked by *barreado*, which constitutes a space for leisure, sociability and, above all, for eating.

In the logic of the territory created, defined and occupied by *barreado*, identity is constructed and scattered as a form of differentiating a specificity. The more typical the territory or net, the more benefits it will bring to the cities.

In this sense, the *barreado* feast and the territory where this dish is prepared are part of a vast tourist net that, fed by history and by tradition, transforms the cities of Morretes, Antonina and Paranaguá into true gastronomic capitals.

Since cooking is a microcosm of society and an inexhaustible source of history, it is important to note that many of its dishes are considered a gustative heritage of society. For all it represents from the point-of-view of originality and creativity, *barreado* has become a typical crafted dish full of symbolism and local and regional identity. It stands as a monument, a cultural asset, an intangible heritage.

REFERENCES

- ARMESTO, F.F. *Comida: uma história*. Rio Janeiro: Record, 2004.
- BONIN, A. M. & ROLIM, M.C. *Hábitos alimentares: tradição e inovação*. Curitiba: Boletim de Antropologia, SCHLA, UFPR, 1991.
- BOUDAN, C. *Géopolitique du goût*. La guerre culinaire, Paris, PUF, 2004.
- CASCUDO, L. C. *História da Alimentação no Brasil*, São Paulo, USP 1983.
- FLANDRIN, J. L. & MONTANARI, M. *História da Alimentação*, São Paulo, Liberdade, 1998.
- GIMENES, MARIA Henriqueta S.G. *Cozinhando a tradição: a degustação do barreado no litoral paranaense*. Curitiba: Doctorate project in Food History and Culture, SCHLA, UFPR, 2006.
- HOBSBAWN, E. RANGER, T. *A invenção das tradições*, Rio de Janeiro, 1997.
- NOVAIS, F.A. *História da vida privada no Brasil*, São Paulo, Cia. das Letras, 1998.
- SANTOS, C.R.A. *História da alimentação no Paraná*. Curitiba, Fundação Cultural, 1995.
- _____. *Por uma história da alimentação*. In *História: Questões & Debates*. Curitiba, Ed. UFPR, nº 26/27, Jan/Dez, 1997.
- _____. *A alimentação e seu lugar na História: os tempos da memória gustativa*. In *História: Questões & Debates*. Curitiba, Ed. UFPR, nº 42, Jan/Jun, 2005.



Barreado. Priscila Forone – Tourism Secretariat of the State of Paraná

Carlos Roberto Antunes dos Santos
Professor at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR)