



PHOTO: ANDREW MEADE



SIMPLY INGRID



A HOMETOWN COOKING DIVA WORKS TO EXPAND HER MULTICULTURAL REACH

BY ELIZABETH RAHE

Ingrid Hoffmann and butterflies on an island paradise – sounds idyllic, but there's a catch. Paradise is Spanish Wells in the Bahamas. The butterflies are in Hoffmann's stomach.

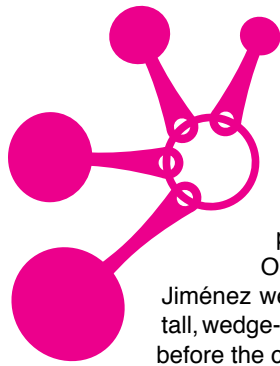
It's the first week of January, and South Florida's multicultural kitchen maven is vacationing on the remote island to recharge before getting back to her fast-paced, multimedia life. In the next week she begins marathon taping sessions for her Spanish-language cooking and lifestyle show *Delicioso with Ingrid Hoffmann* plus radio and morning-show spots. There are HSN promotions for her cookware and flatware lines and live appearances, including preparing pork tacos for the masses on Feb. 26 at the South Beach Wine & Food Festival.

Hoffmann has been adding Latin color and spice to TV cooking for 13 years, but this season, the hour-long *Delicioso* is slated to be broadcast over the entire Univision network, first in the nation for Hispanic viewers.

"It's a big break, but also a risky break," says Hoffmann, 46, who was born in Colombia. The challenge is to get viewer ratings from a broader fan base, including the large population of Hispanics with Mexican roots on the West Coast. She says she is excited about the task, and ready, if a bit on edge.

"I always like to have the anxiety and these nerves because the adrenalin drives you to a different place. If you don't have fire in the belly, you're sort of complacent. Complacent doesn't give good TV," she says.

The new season of *Delicioso*, which previously aired on Univision's cable outlet, Galavision, and then on its sister TeleFutura network, debuted at 1 p.m. on Feb. 4, with a show entitled *With a Mexican Touch*. Mexico is just one of the 22 Latin American countries the show embraces in its programming, says Delia Annette Leon, vice president of operations and creative development at Hoffmann's company,



Chica Worldwide. “We present viewers with flavors they know and introduce them to new flavors,” she says.

Hoffmann’s co-host is Mexican-born Maggie Jiménez, who is as tall, dark and willowy as Hoffmann is petite, blond and shapely. “I’m five-feet-zero, but I tell people I’m five-feet-one,” Hoffmann says.

On the Univision set in Doral on Jan. 12, Jiménez wears flats while Hoffmann zips around in tall, wedge-heeled sandals as she prepares breakfast before the cameras – Coffee-Laced Spanish Torrijas (French toast), Breakfast Burrito with Cilantro-Pepita

Sauce and Creamy Fruit Salad. Later she discusses the sugar content in children’s cereals and crafts a serving tray from a stained plank of wood and rope for handles.

As several busy chefs and producers set up the scenes, the co-hosts bundle up against the chill in the studio. “¡Qué frío, Dios mío!” Hoffmann says, at one point warming her hands over the stove. Just before the cameras roll, they peel off their wraps and turn on the charm.

Hoffmann is all business as she prepares for her segments. “Silence, guys, please!” she pleads as she practices her lines. Then she delivers the scene in one take with smooth professionalism. Her hands-on style is evident even in prop selection.

“This ties it all together,” she tells a producer, indicating a pink and purple print napkin that will be placed under the plate of torrijas in a picturesque table setting.

Being involved in the process from beginning to end is just her way. She arrives at the studio at 6 a.m. on shoot days and often stays until 9 or 10 at night. During breaks, she whips out her pink BlackBerry to answer texts and emails and to update her Facebook and Twitter pages, in two languages.

Her Yorkie, Paris - aka *Salsita* on the show - accompanies her to the studio on these long days, but he doesn’t have to work as hard as his master. Hoffmann leads a visitor to a back room, where the perfectly groomed pooch is curled up on a dog bed placed on a couch. She picks him up for a quick snuggle, then places him back on the couch. As she turns to leave, Paris begins to follow her. Hoffmann commands him to stay, and he instantly obeys. *Salsita* knows his cue.

“I’m obsessive with any task that I do. I live it, breathe it, sweat it, cry it. I’m very emotionally intense,” she says. “Some people may call it being a control freak and, in the end, yes, it is. It has my name on it. I’m allowed to be the control freak here.”

In addition to her television shows, she lends her name to Latin-influenced cookware for T-fal (sold at Target, Kmart and via HSN) and a cutlery and gadget line for Furi (on HSN). There’s more in the pipeline, she says, including a sauce and salsa line. She

has endorsement contracts with Coca-Cola and Chilean Hass avocados. In 2008 she published *Simply Delicioso: A Collection of Everyday Recipes with a Latin Twist* (Clarkson Potter/Random House) in both English and Spanish.

Her next book, which she describes as “Latin light,” will focus on her belief that diets don’t work. She has learned this lesson herself and devised a system of eating and exercise that keeps her in balance. “I definitely have an obsessive relationship with food. It’s sort of always been a battle. I eat double what I should eat, and I’m a little person. Thank God I think I’m blessed with an amazing metabolism.”

The issue is accentuated by her profession. “Food is the one thing my mind is really focused on every day of my life,” she says.



Ingrid Hoffmann and co-host Maggie Jiménez wrap up against the studio chill before warming up to the camera while taping *Delicioso* at Univision.

Whatever she is doing, it seems to be working. She appears fit and energetic on the set, wearing skinny jeans and a ruffled peacock-blue shirt accented with a long necklace and, in some segments, a leopard-print scarf.

Her personal life seems to be cruising along as well, often at high altitudes. She has been dating Paul Bacardi – yes, *that* Bacardi – for the past two years, and the pair escape whenever possible in a plane he pilots. Hoffmann says they both enjoy cooking, eating, fishing, hunting and flying together.

“I found Ingrid incredibly attractive because we both enjoy similar activities in life,” Bacardi says. He also was captivated by the way she built her career and adds another example of her strength and drive: “Did you know Ingrid once used to ride a Katana Suzuki 1100 cc motorcycle? It’s twice what I ride now!”

It’s no surprise that she would be attracted to a pilot. Her father, Billy Hoffmann, had a career in aviation. Her mother, Yolanda, was a Cordon Bleu-trained chef, and little Ingrid learned to cook and entertain at her elbow.

She grew up in Colombia and the Netherlands and acted in Colombian *telenovelas* before moving to South Florida in 1985, opening a fashion boutique in Coconut Grove and then a restaurant in Miami. Hoffmann got her start on television 13 years ago, hosting a segment on a local morning show. That led to *Delicioso with Ingrid Hoffmann*, which initially aired in Latin America before Galavision picked it up in 2006. The English-language *Simply Delicioso* premiered on The Food Network in 2007, moving to The Cooking Channel two years ago.

Bridging cultures has always been a part of Hoffmann’s life – she speaks five languages. Early on, she identified the difference between her two audiences: The American viewer wanted fast recipes; the Hispanic viewer wanted budget recipes. “But the lines are getting blurrier and blurrier,” she says. “With the economy... people are working more, and they can’t afford what they used to be able to afford. In 10 more years I really doubt we’ll be speaking about ethnic food. It will all be global.”

She is doing her part to globalize ethnic ingredients. For the

PHOTOS: ELIZABETH RAHE

PHOTO: ANDREW MEADE



Simply Delicioso airs on The Cooking Channel weekdays at 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (times often change). Spanish-language *Delicioso with Ingrid Hoffmann* airs 1 p.m. Saturdays on Univision. Connect with Ingrid Hoffmann via www.univisiondelicioso.com, Facebook, on her official Fan Page, or Twitter@[simplifyingrid](https://twitter.com/simplifyingrid).

Catch Ingrid Hoffmann in action via video links at www.cityandshore.com.



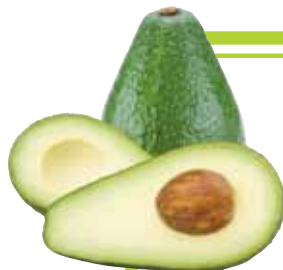
South Beach Wine & Food Festival she will bring Latin zest to the multicultural Swine & Wine event Feb. 26 at the Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, preparing La Caja China Pig marinated in Coca-Cola with her Adobo Delicioso. She and her crew will turn the roasted meat into Mini Cold Pork Tacos with Guava Salsa Negra and Pickled Mustard Seeds.

Hoffmann sees herself as an ambassador for Latin food, yet she is sometimes amazed by her influence. "When you hear somebody from the Midwest saying, 'I've done this recipe from you, and I really like it,' that's surprising to me. I say, *really?*" ■

5 Questions

What is your favorite ingredient of the moment?

Chilean Hass avocados. They have more flavor. I use them even as a spread on toast in the morning and include slices in almost all my meals.



Your favorite gadget?

I would have to say my pressure cooker of my own T-fal/Simply Delicioso line. It's become my best friend...the only way to eat healthy fast. I make everything in it – risottos, pastas, stews, desserts.



What are some of your favorite local restaurants?

Michael's [Genuine Food & Drink], Zuma, Haven, Michy's, Meat Market, Salmon & Salmon, Sardenia



Beyond family and close friends, what people, past or present, would you like to dine with? Joan of Arc, Julius Caesar, Winston Churchill and any past presidents of the USA.



Who is your favorite cooking partner? My significant other, Paul Bacardi. We love cooking together, and he does most of the cooking at home. He should have been a professional chef as he is extremely talented in the kitchen. We love fishing, eating, hunting and, most of all, flying together in his plane, with me and my dog as co-pilots. I think my dream would be to have a cooking/fishing/hunting/flying show together with him.



ZUMA PHOTO: BILL-WISSER

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Ingrid shares some favorite recipes and wine pairings on page 120.

SoBe Wine & Food Fest spreads foodie feast

Ingrid Hoffmann is among scores of TV food personalities, chefs and wine and spirits professionals lined up for the 11th South Beach Wine & Food Festival Feb. 23-26. The list includes Guy Fieri, Bobby Flay, Rachael Ray, Emeril Lagasse, Nadia G, Patrick and Gina Neely and many other celebs, appearing at dozens of tastings, seminars, feasts and parties. The festival benefits FIU's Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and Southern Wine & Spirits Beverage Management Center.

The Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Feb. 23-26, 877-762-3933, www.sobefest.com.



Eat, drink & enjoy

In honor of the **South Beach Wine & Food Festival** (Feb. 23-26, www.sobefest.com), **Ingrid Hoffmann** offers a pair of favorite recipes as well as wines to serve with them.

PHOTO: ANDREW MEADE

Lamb Chops With Cilantro-Mint Chimichurri

Ingredients

For the chimichurri sauce

- 1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves
- 1-2 pickled or fresh serrano chiles, halved (seeded and ribbed for less heat)
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice (from about ½ lime)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

For the lamb

- 12 1-inch thick lamb loin chops, trimmed of excess fat
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and coarsely chopped

To Prepare

To make the chimichurri, combine the cilantro, parsley, mint, serrano chile, rice vinegar, lime juice, honey and salt in the bowl of a food processor and pulse into a paste. With the food processor running, gradually add the olive oil, continuing to process until the sauce is smooth, scraping down the sides of the food processor as necessary. Transfer the chimichurri to a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving. (Best served the same day.)

To make the lamb, preheat the broiler to high and place the oven rack at its highest position.

Season the lamb with salt and pepper. Heat the olive oil in a large, oven-safe skillet over high heat. Add the lamb chops and brown on all sides, about 10 minutes total. Add the rosemary and the garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes.

Transfer the skillet to the broiler and cook about 5 minutes (lamb should be pink in the center) or to desired doneness. Serve the chops with a spoonful of the chimichurri drizzled on top.

Makes 4-6 servings



Shrimp & Scallop Easy Paella

Ingredients

- 4-6 cups chicken stock
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 red pepper, seeded, ribbed and thinly sliced
- 1 green pepper, seeded, ribbed and thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon Spanish saffron, pistils only
- 4 links (about 6 ounces) chorizo, sliced
- 2 cups medium-grain white rice
- 1 10-ounce can diced tomatoes with chilies
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 pounds raw large shrimp, peeled
- 1 pound sea scallops
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ½ cup chopped Italian parsley
- Lemon wedges for garnish



WINE PAIRING
Mar de Frades
Albariño Rias Baixas

To Prepare

In a medium saucepan, heat the chicken stock until boiling.

In a separate large saucepan or paella pan over medium-high heat, heat the oil and add the onion, garlic, peppers, saffron and chorizo. Cook for 6 minutes or until vegetables are soft and chorizo is browned.

Stir in the rice, tomatoes and tomato paste until well mixed and cook for 5 minutes. Add the boiling chicken stock little by little, stirring constantly until the stock is almost absorbed (add enough for desired consistency).

Cover the pan with lid or aluminum foil and cook for 25 minutes, until rice is tender. Add the shrimp and scallops and let cook covered for 5-7 minutes more.

Garnish with chopped parsley and lemon wedges.

Makes 8 servings

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Coffee-Laced Spanish Torrijas

Ingredients

- 1 8-ounce loaf French bread, cut into 8 (1/2-inch) slices
- ½ cup strong brewed coffee
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup sweetened condensed milk
- 2 teaspoons grated lime zest
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons mild olive oil or canola oil
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon



WINE PAIRING
Bellini cocktail or
champagne



To Prepare

Preheat the oven to 250 degrees. Place a small baking sheet in the oven.

Whisk together the coffee, milk, sweetened condensed milk, lime zest and vanilla in a large bowl. Whisk the eggs in a medium bowl until blended. Working with 1 bread slice at a time, place into milk mixture, then into the beaten eggs, turning gently to coat both sides.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of the soaked bread slices and cook until browned, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to the baking sheet to keep warm. Repeat with remaining bread slices.

Combine the sugar and cinnamon in small bowl; set aside. Sprinkle cinnamon sugar over the torrijas and serve warm.

Makes 4 servings