

**Host intro:**

New Orleans is famous for bringing together food from different cultures and creating something unique. So we, Mariana Wilson and Sierra Orłowski, eagerly set out to talk to people about Brazilian- New Orleans food fusion. We figured, hey- both are spicy, they've both got the rice and beans thing going on, this'll be easy... Turns out, we were wrong. What we discovered instead was a tight-knit group of Brazilian immigrants founded upon gathering together and eating the food they grew up with.

ACT/Roberto

When I have gumbo, I remember feijoada, but it's two things completely- it's kind of "oh, when I eat an apple, I remember oranges, because they're both fruits," but they're completely different. I miss Brazilian food so much. I think about it every day.

TRACK

Lucky for Roberto, a Brazilian exchange student at Tulane, there are a few fellow Brazilians in town who've created a solution to his problem.

AMBI/ restaurant noises

TRACK

Greyze Vieira, who immigrated to New Orleans right after Hurricane Katrina, owns and operates Brazilian Market and Cafe. The place looks like it never quite decided whether it wanted to be a supermarket or a restaurant. Shelves, stocked with Brazilian products, are crammed in next to tables that butt up against the freezer where fish is stored. Not five feet away is the entrance to the busy kitchen. Somehow, Greyze managed to cram an office in the space, where he invites us to sit down.

ACT/Greyze

A comida que come aqui, eu te garanto que come no Brasil. É o mesmo.

TRACK/Translation

The food you eat here, I guarantee, is what you eat in Brazil. It is the same.

TRACK

Maybe that's why the restaurant is popular among both Brazilians, like Roberto, and non-Brazilians. But Greyze tells us that this cross demographic popularity was not his original goal for the store.

ACT/Greyze

Por causa do fluxo de brasileiros que veio para cá, pós Katrina. Aí, eu vim abrir essa loja, a primeira loja brasileira que tem no Nova Orleans, para poder atender a comunidade brasileira.

TRACK/Translation

Because of the influx of Brazilians who came here after Katrina, I came to open this store, the first Brazilian store in New Orleans, to be able to serve the Brazilian community.

TRACK

Down the street, we walk into Churras Brazilian Grill, where we're invited to sit in metal chairs at one of the many tables that fill the space. Edelson Martins, who owns the restaurant with his wife, Ionia, almost has to shout over the soccer match that's playing on the tv behind him.

AMBI/ Soccer Match (GOOOOLLLL)

ACT/Edelson

Nós moramos na California uns 10 anos, e eu vim para cá depois do Hurricane Katrina para trabalhar-comprando e reformando casas. E depois disso, abri um restaurante.

TRACK/Translation

We lived in California for 10 years, and I came here after Hurricane Katrina to work- buying and renovating houses. And after that, I opened a restaurant.

TRACK

This narrative -- of a Brazilian moving to New Orleans to get a job in construction -- is actually a pretty common one. Edelson is one of thousands of Brazilians who immigrated to New Orleans to take advantage of reconstruction jobs that appeared after Hurricane Katrina.

AMBI/ Construction Noises

TRACK

But, today, Edelson seems far from one of the crowd. In fact, it seems as though the entire crowd is sitting in his restaurant right now. Among all the chatter, we hear barely a word of English. We ask him about his role in the community.

ACT/Edelson

Eu ter um restaurante brasileiro, eu tenho muito contato com a comunidade brasileira e me traz alegria, isso, quando não tinha no começo, tinha pouco contato com a comunidade brasileira. Tinha mais amigos Americanos e depois que abri o restaurante, eu tenho mais contato com a comunidade brasileira. Isso me traz alegria. Me deixa mais próximo ao meu país. Eu posso falar a minha língua, eu posso conversar sobre o futebol, eu posso conversar sobre a política, e isso traz conforto a pessoa.

TRACK/Translation

Because I have a Brazilian Restaurant, I have a lot of contact with the Brazilian community and this brings me joy. But, when I had not yet started, I had little contact with the Brazilian community. I had more American friends and after we opened the restaurant, I have more contact with the Brazilian community. This brings me joy. It makes me closer to my country. I can speak my language, I can talk about soccer, I can talk about politics, and this brings comfort to me.

TRACK

One of the people in the restaurant, Lindo-Mar, is a Brazilian immigrant who brings his wife and two daughters to eat at Churra's every weekend.

ACT/ Lindo-Mar

A mesma comida que eu como aqui, eu como no Brasil. (6:50) todos os brasileiros que moram aqui comem a mesma comida brasileira...mas em casa mesmo tem que ser comida brasileira. (7:06)

TRACK/ Translation

*The same food I eat in America, I eat in Brazil. And everything that you see in this restaurant, I eat in my house. The Brazilians that live in New Orleans only eat Brazilian food, and especially at home the food has to be exclusively Brazilian. But my family eats in this restaurant a lot just to leave the house and eat somewhere else.*

TRACK

Lindo-Mar says he likes to come here to get out of the house and because he likes to spend time with his friends, Edelson and Ionia. We ask if the two families know each other outside of the restaurant.

ACT/ Lindo-Mar

(8:36) Nos somos amigos! Quando a gente faz alguma festa de aniversário de criança ou festa, ou churrasco, eles são convidados, e vice-versa.. eles convidam a gente tbm. Eu não sou só cliente, eu sou amigo deles. A gente conversa e tal.

(9:03) Conhecemos por restaurante, e pelas festas. Porque toda festa que a gente faz, estão todo mundo... então sempre estamos numa festa juntos, tomando e conversando, então, criou um amizade.

TRACK/Translation

Of course, we're friends! When my family has a party, like a barbecue or a birthday party for one of our kids, they're invited and vice-versa, they invite us to their parties also. I'm not just a client, I'm their friend- we hang out and talk a lot.

We met them through this restaurant but also through parties. Because every time a member of the Brazilian community has a party, everyone is there- so we're always at parties with them, eating and talking. Through that, we became good friends.

TRACK

Before we leave, we sit down with Edelson again. He tells us that we're his son's age... it's actually really sweet.

And since I have family in Brazil and Mariana is a first generation immigrant from Portugal-

He says: "I'll tell you what I always tell my son."

ACT/Edelson

Comida faz parte da tradição do povo brasileiro. Se você casa com um Americano, você vai passar essa tradição aos seus filhos. E eu acho que é importante para imigrantes não esquecer a tradição. Porque a tradição enriquece o país onde você está morando. Comida faz parte da tradição do país, tradição de uma família. A comida unifica as pessoas.

TRACK/Translation

Food is part of the tradition of the Brazilian people. If you decide to live in the U.S. and you marry an American, you'll pass on your tradition to your children. I think it's important for you, because you're an immigrant, to not forget your tradition. Because the tradition from your country enriches the country where you live. Food is a part of a country's tradition, a family's tradition. Food brings people together.

TRACK

For WTUL, I'm Sierra Orłowski. And I'm Mariana Wilson.