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# The Mistura Food Festival Shows Peruvian Cuisine at its Finest

by Nell McShane Wulfhart September 8, 2015



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Celebrity chefs, a mega-farmer's market, and a "Hall of Pisco"—these are the hallmarks for Mistura, Latin America's biggest annual food festival. All serious food-lovers know that Peru is creating some of the world's most innovative, exciting cuisine at the moment, and Mistura, which takes place in Lima, is a showcase for specialties from all regions of the country.

This year, the festival will run through September 13, and will be held in Lima's Parque de la Exposición. This is its eighth year, and it regularly draws hundreds of thousands of international visitors and locals, plus an infusion of notable Peruvian and international

chefs. All come to salivate over the newest in food trends and demonstrations from the country's top chefs, like Virgilio Martinez of *Central*, in Lima, and Gaston Acurio, the Peruvian chef who has restaurants throughout Latin American and Europe.

El Gran Mercado is an annual festival highlight. The sprawling farmer's market will feature 300 farmers from around Peru, each showcasing products from his or her region. Visitors can try some of the thousands of varieties of potatoes grown in Peru, along with colorful types of quinoa, coffee, and spices.

The food trucks that assemble for *Mistura* demonstrate the sheer variety of street food available nearby. Don't miss the sweet and savory tamales from Cusco's Tamales Josefina, *picarones* (Peruvian donuts) made from quinoa and drizzled with maracuya sauce from *La Picarona del Perú*, and potatoes stuffed with spicy sausage and chili chicken from *Señor Papa*.

This year's theme is "artisanal gastronomy," and international appearances will be made by Belgian cheese-maker Frederic Van Tricht, the famous Italian "Butcher of Panzano" Dario Cecchini, and New York chocolatiers the Mast Brothers.

For travelers looking to squeeze in a trip to the festival as part of a larger exploration of Peru, *JourneYou*, a travel company specializing in trips to South America, has put together an eight-day tour that encompasses a full day at the festival, cooking lessons in Lima and Cusco, and highlights like a trip to Machu Picchu.

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