

# Arepitas

"What are you doing?" I ask my dad, "Haciendo arepas", he replies. He takes out the bucket of cooked corn and places it on the counter.

My dad always makes arepas on the weekends. Yesterday he cooked the corn, which he left in the pot boiling for hours.

"Can I help?" "Sure", dad says "You can do the grinding". I jump off the chair leaving my book behind, and I go to wash my hands. I use a lot of soap and I scrub furiously. The running water flows from the faucet onto my hand. Dad says that if you want to make arepas you have to make sure everything is clean, especially your hands. As soon as I am done drying my hands I rush back to the kitchen, "I'm ready" I say, rolling up my sleeves.

"Remember that you need to press down the corn into the grinder and keep your hand steady when you are moving the handle," he says.

I grip the wooden handle and I start turning it round and round. I love the noise that it makes. My arm starts to get tired from the grinding but I know it will be worth it when we get to eat the

arepas. The masa, which is the ground corn, starts coming out the other side and my dad takes it and puts it into a bowl to prepare tomorrow. Dad already has masa prepared from the day before and we are going to cook that now.

"Start making the masa into balls" he says, "After we will flatten them". I grin, then I put a little bit of water on my hands so the masa doesn't stick to me. I pat the big balls that I make and I roll them in my hands, this has always been my favorite part. Then I put the balls to the side and dad puts them all in a big bowl. He takes little measuring spoons and he puts salt and a little bit of sugar into the balls. I take a little piece of masa that was left behind and I make a mini ball

"¡Buen trabajo!" Dad tells me, "Ahora vamos a aplastar los" Now we get to flatten them.

He takes out the wooden mold, pulls out a chunk of masa from one of the balls, and puts it into the mold. He places a sheet of plastic wrap over the ball of corn, takes a rolling pin, and flattens it out. Then he peels the plastic wrap and takes the masa out. It is in the shape of a circle. He places it on the griddle, ( Which is basically a long pan ) and steam starts to come out from the arepa. I make sure that I stay away from the stove so I don't get burned. We repeat this process over and over. We take the arepas that are already finished

and we put them on a rack to cool down. A little while later dad calls for me to come downstairs.

“Lila, es hora de comer!” It's time to eat! I race down the stairs and walk into a kitchen that is full of delicious food. I hover over the warm arepas with cheese and the pollo desmechado ( shredded chicken ). My mouth is watering as I serve myself and take my plate to the table. I pick up my arepa and take a bite. Mmmmmm... I already know I will be having seconds.

“Thanks Lila” my sister says while taking a bite of her meal. “And me” Dad reminds her, rolling his eyes. “And dad,” My sister says giggling. I smile, then nod because my mouth is full of yummy and special food.