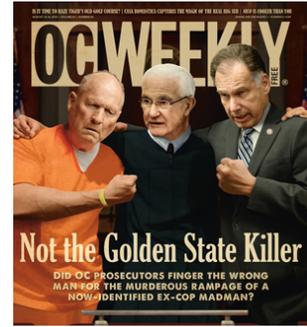


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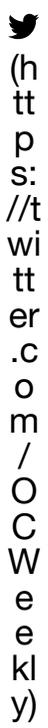
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On the Line: Loreta Ruiz of La Vegana Mexicana

ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN ([HTTPS://WWW.OCWEEKLY.COM/AUTHOR/AMPANORINGAN/](https://www.ocweekly.com/author/ampanoringan/)) JANUARY 8, 2018 — [LEAVE A COMMENT \(HTTPS://WWW.OCWEEKLY.COM/TAMALES-TAXES-AND-TOXINS-WE-GO-ON-THE-LINE-WITH-LORETA-RUIZ-OF-LA-VEGANA-FAMILIA-8689411/#RESPOND\)](https://www.ocweekly.com/tamales-taxes-and-toxins-we-go-on-the-line-with-loreta-ruiz-of-la-vegana-familia-8689411/#respond)





As *OC Weekly's* Viva Los Tacos (<https://vivalostacosoc.com/>) event draws closer, I wanted to take this opportunity to get to know a few of the people participating. This week, I go vegan with Loreta Ruiz and her creative tamales.

Best culinary tip for the home cook:

I think that cooking at home when vegan can be a difficult and isolating experience, one that often results in wasted or unused perishables such as fresh produce. I believe the best tip is to avoid wasting food by precooking and freezing in small batches, as well as not shopping with an empty stomach.

Favorite appliance or utensil in the kitchen that isn't a knife:

I don't use this for tamales, but I love my Presto cooker!

Ad By [Where to go and what to see](#)

Heading to HB? Go where the Locals



Go: 5th & PCH

5th & PCH - steps from the beach, 5th and PCH is the perfect spot for shopping, dining, playing, staying. 5th and PCH features retailers, restaurants and Pacific Hideaway ...

What are your best-selling savory and sweet items?

Our best-selling savory item is the vegan cheese with rajas tamale, and the best-selling sweet item is the chocolate abuelita with almonds tamale.

You're making breakfast; what are you having?

I usually have half a banana, a couple of strawberries, two tortillas with a grilled nopal, and a cup of coffee.

What was your father's reasoning for teaching you about plant-based food and balanced diets?

My dad was a vegetarian before it was trendy, since the '1960s. His reasoning was that animal products had too many toxins for the body and that eating a large amount of plant-based, unprocessed foods benefited the body and mind.

Is La Vegana Mexicana a full-time job?

It's a full-time job on top of a full-time job.

When was the last time you cut/burned yourself? What were you doing when it happened?

The last time I cut myself was last week, and I was cutting nopales.



An unusual customer request (and did you do it?):

We have customers request that we modify the tamale fillings so they do not have chile, and we have fulfilled those requests in the past.

Favorite places to eat:

My favorite places to eat are wherever my kids are with me.

An underutilized spice or herb (besides salt or pepper): What would it be good in?

Epazote. It's great for black beans.

What was the most complicated dish you ever created?

I don't know about a complicated dish, but the most complicated aspect of our recipe for the tamales has been creating a masa without animal products that tastes good and remains fluffy and moist.

Where did you grow up? If you're not from Southern California, what brought you here?

I grew up in Mexico City. Before becoming a chef, I was a member of the foreign

service, and I was transferred to Southern California.

What was your favorite meal growing up?

I am a foodie, so it's hard for me to decide. But I loved tostadas, fried quesadillas, fried tamales and molletes!



What other skills do you have outside of the kitchen?

I have a B.A. in Homeland Security with a specialization in Violence Prevention, and I have primarily worked in Consular Diplomacy.

Last thing you looked up online:

How to pay my business taxes.

Tell me something most people don't know about you.

I love karaoke!

Any thoughts as to what you'll be serving at the *OC Weekly* event?

We plan on serving an assortment of our most popular tamale flavors.

What profession would you like to try if you weren't in this business?

This was the profession that I wanted to try after working for more than 30 years in government with a B.A. in Homeland Security.



How can people locate you to place an order? Have you considered opening a storefront?

People can locate us by phone at (714) 602-0100, email at la.vegana.mexicana.oc@gmail.com (<mailto:la.vegana.mexicana.oc@gmail.com>) and at our website at www.laveganamexicana.com (<http://www.laveganamexicana.com>). We have considered opening a storefront when the time is right.



Anne Marie Panoringan

(<https://www.ocweekly.com/author/ampanoringan/>)

A contributing writer for OC Weekly, Anne Marie freelances for multiple online and print publications, and guest judges for culinary competitions. A Bay Area transplant, she graduated with a degree in Hospitality Management from Cal Poly Pomona. Find her on Instagram as brekkiefan.

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(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/all-the-worlds-a-grave-a-new-play-by-william-shakespeare-2018-08-12/>) August 12, 2018 - August 13, 2018 at 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm, Fullerton

Art and Story Time
(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/art-and-story-time-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm, Laguna Beach

Art Colony: The Laguna Beach Art Association 1918-1935
(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/art-colony-the-laguna-beach-art-association-1918-1935-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at 11:00 am, Laguna Beach

Baby Steps through Pretend City!
(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/baby-steps-through-pretend-city-3/>) August 13, 2018 at 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm, Irvine

Beer and Gear: Women's Backpacking Basics, Mon., 7PM
(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/beer-and-gear-womens-backpacking-basics-mon-7pm/>) August 13, 2018 at 7:00 pm, Anaheim

Breaking the Rules of the Past: A Retrospective by Mutlu Ertac
(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/breaking-the-rules-of-the-past-a-retrospective-by-mutlu-ertac-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Aliso Viejo

Brunch

(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/brunch-2018-08-11/>) August 11, 2018 - August 13, 2018 at 9:00 am - 1:15 pm, Huntington beach

Celebrate "Mondays at Fleming's" with Filet & Lobster

(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/celebrate-mondays-at-flemings-with-filet-lobster-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at 5:00 pm - 10:00 pm, Newport Beach

Festival of Arts Pageant of the Masters 2018 "Under the Sun"

(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/festival-of-arts-pageant-of-the-masters-2018-under-the-sun-tickets-on-sale-now-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at All Day, Laguna Beach

Ghost Stories and Fairy Tales: A Ceremony of Make Believe Exhibition

(<https://www.ocweekly.com/events/ghost-stories-and-fairy-tales-a-ceremony-of-make-believe-exhibition-2018-08-13/>) August 13, 2018 at 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Anaheim

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