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CULTURA EN AUSTIN

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World Cup goes beyond sports to unite cultures, traditions

Huapango music festival launches; Puerto Rican cultural fest highlights dance, music, food

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By Nancy Flores - American-Statesman Staff

In the small Mexican town of Guerrero, Coahuila, where my family ran a fried chicken restaurant, a small television set with snowy reception would tune into any World Cup match our TV's rabbit ears could capture.

My dad caught snippets of the games between customers, and while bussing tables, I tried to figure out the ins-and-outs of the global phenomenon that was special not only to him but to legions of fútbol fanatics.



Los Condenados Huastecos of Chicago are among the Huapango bands playing at the first Huapango Sin Fronteras or Huapango Sin Fronteras ... Read More

When I moved to Mexico City in 2006, I descended right into World Cup fever. Evenings were spent in neighborhood outdoor plazas watching games projected on big screens. Together wearing red, green and white, we all cheered. And together, when Mexico was defeated in overtime by Argentina, we cried.

As World Cup 2014 begins on June 12, Austinites will gather across the city to make new memories and celebrate not just their favorite sports teams, but each other's culture, music, food and traditions.

Celebrations kick off at several Austin spots including Fadó Irish Pub, where a launch party for the opening Brazil vs. Croatia game includes Brazilian dancers, a special game day menu and live music after the game. There's even a million dollar bracket challenge. The festive gatherings at Fadó draw both new and true fans, and the watch parties will continue there for all 64 matches.

At Rio's Brazilian Cafe in East Austin,

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PUERTO RICAN FOLKLORIC DANCE

Master percussionist Jorge Emmanuelli Náter will be featured at the Salsa & Bomba Festival presented by the Puerto Rican Folkloric Dance ... [Read More](#)

you'll meet Fabulosa, the eatery's shiny, new big screen TV. For the opening game viewing party, Rio's will offer food and drink specials as well as raffles and prizes.

In 2010, Takoba emerged as a popular, lively gathering spot for World Cup fans with games broadcasting in its laid-back outdoor sandbox area. Takoba's watch parties this year extend into two additional areas including their remodeled Cantina, where matches will be shown on a state-of-the-art projector with a 140-inch screen. Plan on specials every day according to which teams are playing.

Where will you celebrate? Let us know on Twitter @latinoculture or @ahora_si.

Huapango festival launches

As a child, whenever a live Huapango band performed in his native Guanajuato, Austinite Raúl Orduña would sit right by the musicians and become hypnotized by the violins, guitars and improvisational style.

Huapango, a Mexican folk and dance tradition, originates in the Huasteca region of Mexico, and in recent years its popularity in the U.S. has grown as more Huapango bands have begun peppering the country from California



RODOLFO GONZALEZ

Mexico fans Verenice Carbajal, Eddie Arzola and Max Arzola of Austin, celebrate as Mexico scores a goal during World Cup action ... [Read More](#)

to North Carolina.

Orduña began playing Huapango music when he moved to Austin more than a decade ago. In 1995, he helped form one of Texas' first Huapango bands, Los Trovadores. Since then his group has toured the nation.

In an effort to preserve the musical tradition, build community among the growing group of musicians and raise awareness about the music, Orduña has helped launch a new music festival that will debut on May 31.

Huapango sin Fronteras or Huapango without Borders is the first Huapango festival in America to feature mostly U.S.-based bands, according to Texas Folklife.

Find the family-friendly festival, which costs \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door, in Southeast Austin's Salon Plaza R3 at 7704 FM 973. Huapango sin Fronteras will feature traditional zapateado dancing, poetry, children's activities and about a dozen Huapango bands starting at 2 p.m.

"When we first started playing in Austin, we always had a diverse

crowd because it has that roots sound that people enjoy," Orduña says. "The music just gets into your body and soul."

To purchase tickets online or for more details, go to huapangosinfronteras.com.

Puerto Rican Bomba & Salsa Festival

For the past 17 years, the Puerto Rican Folkloric Dance and Culture Center has been a haven for the fast-growing Puerto Rican community in Central Texas.

From bilingual theater performances to domino socials, the nonprofit has helped lift the profile of the rich, Puerto Rican heritage with unique cultural programming that's hard to find elsewhere in the area.

Its annual cultural festival, which features music, dance, food and art, presents an opportunity to experience Puerto Rican traditions at home, starting at 7 p.m. June 21 at the Jewish Community Center of Austin.

Catch a special joint performance by the local Puerto Rican Folkloric Dance group with master percussionist Jorge Emmanuelli Náter, an expert in the ancestral Puerto Rican percussion-driven musical tradition of bomba.

Bring your dancing shoes because the festival also features salsa music by Austin's Orquesta Trabuko. Artisan crafts and food from Chago's Caribbean Cuisine will be for sale. Adult tickets are \$15 in advance (\$18 at the door). Child tickets (ages 3-12) are \$7, and children 2 and younger are free. Tickets available at Chago's Caribbean Cuisine or online at casita.prfdance.org/celebrando2014.

WELCOME TO CULTURA EN AUSTIN

Cultura en Austin is a monthly column highlighting Latino-related cultural events in Austin. Look for it on the last Friday of the month.

Nancy Flores grew up in the Texas border town of Eagle Pass, and has been covering Latino culture for the American-Statesman and Austin360 since 2011. Before that, she covered Latino issues as a journalist in Mexico City. Send tips or suggestions to nflores@statesman.com.

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