



Meet St. Martin de Porres

Martin was born in Lima, Peru in 1579 and had a tough childhood. His parents never married each other and after the birth of a sister, his father abandoned the family. Martin was bi-racial and reared in poverty, locked into a low level of Lima's society. When he was 12, his mother apprenticed him to a barber-surgeon. Martin learned how to cut hair and also how to draw blood, care for wounds, and prepare and administer medicines. After a few years, Martin applied to the Dominicans to be a "lay helper," not feeling himself worthy to be a religious brother. After nine years, the example of his prayer, penance, charity and humility led the community to request him to make full religious profession.

Many of his nights were spent in prayer; his days were filled with nursing the sick and caring for the poor. It was particularly impressive at that time that he treated all people regardless of their color, race, or status. He was instrumental in founding an orphanage, took care of slaves brought from Africa, and managed the daily alms of the monastery with practicality, as well as generosity. Side by side with his daily work in the kitchen, laundry, and infirmary, Martin's life reflected God's extraordinary gifts and many extraordinary miracles took place in Martin's life: ecstasies that lifted him into the air, light filling the room where he prayed, bi-location, miraculous knowledge, instantaneous cures, and a remarkable rapport with animals. He was a good friend of another saint of Peru, Rose of Lima. Martin died on November 3rd, 1639. He died surrounded by his brothers and reciting the Creed. His funeral was attended by thousands of Peruvians from all walks of life. When he was exhumed 25 years later, his body exhaled a splendid fragrance and he was still intact. He was canonized in 1962 and has become the patron saint of people of mixed race, barbers, public health workers and more. His feast day is November 3rd.

To honor his Peruvian heritage, we're going to be cooking two famous dishes from Peru: Lomo Saltado and Alfajores!