

[ V ]

- + architecture | design (10)
- + arts (11)
- + business | innovation (3)
- + events (2)
- + fashion (4)
- + film (8)
- + literature (3)
- + musica (9)
- + news | ideas (3)
- + politics (4)
- + science | technology (1)
- + travel | leisure (11)

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# the new latinos in the kitchen

Wednesday, December 28, 2011 at 12:19PM



CHEFS: Ricardo Zárate, Jacques Gautier, Roberto Santibañez

One only needs to pass by a lunchtime line at Chipotle, or consider the popularity of top TV chefs like Aaron Sanchez or Dasiy Martinez, to gather that Latin cuisine has by now gone mainstream.

But in the slightly more selective world of the country's culinary elite? Not so much. When Food & Wine announced the finalists for this year's Best New American Chefs Awards—a leading national arbiter for emerging industry talent—only one Latino (Ricardo Zarate, from LA's **mo-chica**) made the cut.

In our not-so-humble opinion, Food & Wine should re-consider its criteria. The fact is, when it comes to food, we are in the middle of a micro-revolution, helmed by chefs who favor local over large-scale, diversity over density, and are as activist as they are artistic. And at the forefront of that revolution are many Latino chefs.