



## **Chef Louis Szathmary**

Is there an ethnic link between Hungarians and Mexicans? According to "Chef Louis", there really is and here's how he explains it:

"For 30 years I have collected bits and pieces of data about how recipes and cooking methods move from one part of the world to another through mysterious channels by unsuspected carriers. Since arriving in the United States, for example, I have been surprised by striking similarities in Hungarian and Mexican foods and preparation methods. I could never think of any connection other than sheer coincidence until I met an American anthropologist who described the influence of Hungarian embroidery on American Indian embroidery.

At first I thought I had been set up for a practical joke by one of my friends who likes to tease me for being such a 'Hungaromaniac.'

As it turns out, several religious orders in early America had a considerable number of Hungarian nuns, priests and brothers who came to the New World to work in monasteries. They taught local Indian girls handicraft arts such as embroidery, pottery making, basket weaving — and cooking. When these missionaries grew old or frail or sick, they returned to the old country, where they told Hungarians what they had learned from the American Indians. It was a two-way cultural exchange."

**ONE VERY INTERESTING** proof of this is Indian fried bread, prepared by almost all Indian tribes on the North American continent. This fried bread from leavened dough never was part of pre-Columbian or Spanish or English cuisine, but Hungarians were making it before time of Columbus. They call langos.

In Mexico I was surprised to be served roast pork loin stuffed with chorizo and to be told that this was "Hungarian pork roast." I've eaten the same dish in Hungary stuffed with Hungarian sausage and called "Mexican-style roast pork."