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## Students, public get a taste of Colombia

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BY JEFF BRANSCOME

University of Mary Washington junior Matt Kastrinsky called the school's recent "Flavors of Colombia" luncheon the best meal he'd ever had there.

The food wasn't exotic, but it was fresh, he said.

"It tastes like real food that's not coming out of a large packaged container," Kastrinsky said last Thursday.

Prepared by Colombian chef Joaquín Suárez, the meal included grilled chicken with passion fruit, yucca, small tomatoes stuffed with mashed potatoes, baby carrots with mint, three-potato and chicken soup, and rice pudding.

The event, which was open to the public, was sponsored by Sodexo, which provides dining services for UMW and more than 850 other colleges in the U.S. It's part of the company's month-long Global Chef Program.

The lunch was held in the South Market dining room, where UMW usually serves stir-fry and wraps.

The South American menu's sweet and sour flavors make it one of the program's more popular offerings, said Suárez, a culinary trainer for Sodexo South America in Bogota, Colombia.

"To me, it is important to share my culture," said Suárez, who was scheduled to visit Seattle Pacific University next. "You get to know a culture through the food."

He would greet students with a "Cómo está?" Some would respond in Spanish.

Seated with her roommate, junior Serena Houghton took a small bite of the stuffed tomato and pondered its flavors. She's not a tomato fan but enjoyed it nonetheless: "They scooped out the inside that's usually



Guest chef cooked up chicken marinated with passion fruit, fried yucca, stuffed tomatoes and steamed carrots for UMW buffet lunch last week.



Sodexo global chef Joaquin Suáñez (left) prepares lunch with the help of UMW executive chef Oscar Hernandez for a 'Flavors of Colombia' buffet last week attended by both students and the public.

all slimy."

Students weren't the only ones out for a little culture. Basil Doumas, 74, of Fredericksburg, said he decided to treat himself because his wife--a graduate of Mary Washington College--was out of town.

He had just about cleared his plate when he said, "It's all you can eat, which is dangerous for me. But maybe it's great for those folks who are still growing."

For more information, visit [globalchefprogram.com](http://globalchefprogram.com).

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### Ajiaco Santafereno (Three-Potato Soup)

Makes 10 servings

Procedure: Peel and dice the potatoes. Cut corn from the cobs. Mix potatoes, vegetable base, water, corn and guascas over medium heat. Simmer 35 minutes or until potatoes are done. Add avocado (peeled and diced), capers and heavy cream. Simmer until all ingredients are hot.

Papas Bogota (mashed potato-stuffed tomato)

Makes 10 servings

Procedure: Hollow out tomatoes. Boil potatoes until done. In mixer, add cooked potatoes, salt and pepper, garlic, butter, cream, parsley and half of Parmesan cheese. Whip until smooth. Put potato mixture into pastry bag and pipe into the hollowed out tomatoes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until hot.

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