



AN INTERNATIONAL  
KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE  
INITIATIVE ABOUT FOOD  
& FOOD SYSTEMS

/ Ecuador /

Quito

## Traditional Ecuadorian Beverages

Was it the *sanduche de pernil*, the *ceviche de camarones*, the *agua fresca*, the *seco de chivo*? Or was it a rubbed eye, an inhaled vapor, an unnoticed scratch? Whatever produced the bacterial infection I acquired in Quito, along with altitude-induced severe dehydration, it did a brilliant job of taking me out of the picture the night of our panel on traditional Ecuadorian beverages. So instead of a traveling professor of gastronomy expounding on food systems and emergence, performance and identity, it was two imaginative and innovative UNISG alumnae who became the centerpoints of an important and transformative moment in eco-gastronomy.

Estefania Baldeon (FC18) and Maria Estela Corral (FC10) led the discussion, which featured several key players in Ecuadorian food culture: Javier Carrera, president of el Red de Guardianes de Semillas; Michelle O. Fried, a public health nutritionist and cookery writer; Gabriela Bonifaz Pallares, a producer of *chaguarmishky*; Julio Pazos, the renowned poet and author; Juan Sebastián Pérez Proaño, a Cordon Bleu-trained chef; Teresa Shiky, a local *chicha* producer; Esteban Tapia, president of Slow Food Ecuador; and Gabriela Valarezo, the Ecuadorian coordinator of la Red Latinoamericana de Diseño de Alimentos.

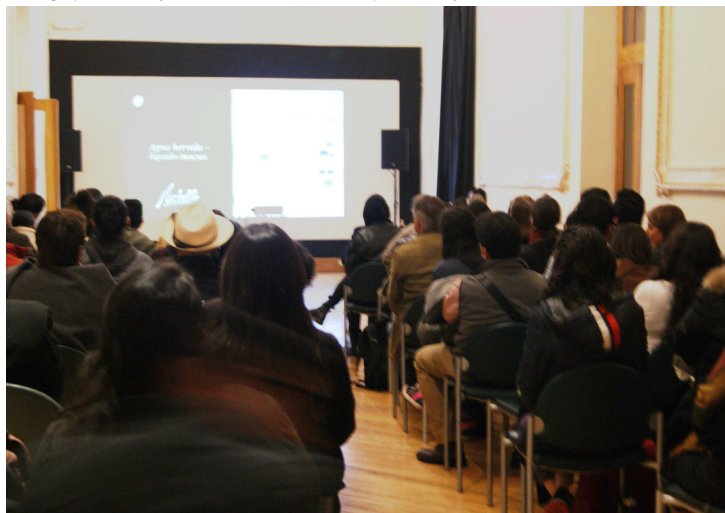
Absent physically, but very present through their tireless organizational efforts, were Ecuadorian UNISG students Valeria Merlo (LSG2016) and Nathaly Arroba (FC20). (They were still in Italy, finishing up studies, theses, and internships.) Together with Estefania and Maria Estela, we were a diverse, five-person team of students and ex-students, collaboratively constructing an event that had never been seen before in Quito. It showed that—while sometimes challenging logistically—a wide range of thinking-doing-and-feeling about food makes for a resilient gastronomic system.

Most importantly, this event marked a potential transition in the structure of the Eco-Gastronomy Project. Conceived as a way to *decentralize* knowledge about food and food systems, Eco-G is based on an ethos of sharing and exchange. Yet as an individual professor-at-large traveling around the world, I often become very central to the project—a repository of knowledge and experience, rather than a vector of disseminating. With the Quito event, a new model came forward, one in which teams of UNISG students and alumni could be the vectors, and because they would be situated locally, and experts in their own food issues and contexts, the content and process of the Eco-Gastronomy events would be ever more relevant to the milieus in which they occur.

We will see what transpires next. For now, Quito remains the place where I felt at my all-time low in physical terms, but at the same time, an all-time high when it came to the “eco-” in Eco-Gastronomy.

D. Szanto  
Nov. 16, 2016  
Melbourne, Australia

*Photographs courtesy of Veronica Burbano; texts provided by Estefania Baldeon.*



Bebidas tradicionales del Ecuador tuvo una acogida muy calurosa de sus espectadores. Tuvimos casa llena!



Esteban Tapia nos contó de la fascinante diversidad de bebidas y preparaciones que tenemos en Ecuador, gracias a su riqueza cultural, pisos climáticos y al mestizaje.



Las bebidas ecuatorianas son mejor descritas como un "comibebé" conforme a la exposición de Michelle, quien como nutricionista las recomienda no solo por su delicioso sabor sino también por su enorme aporte de vitaminas, minerales, calorías y proteínas.



Muchos se quedaron encantados degustando las bebidas antes expuestas.



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