

Chile Pepper

SPICY WORLD CUISINE

All Shook Up Over Hot Festivals!

On the Road
to America's
Hottest Events



Chile Pepper

SPICY WORLD CUISINE

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1993
Volume VII, No. 5



Viva Terlingua, page 18



Stinking Rose, page 24

FEATURES

14 The Lowdown on the Meltdown

In Albuquerque, New Mexico there is a magical place where you can chat with a human-sized chile pepper, while nibbling on a piece of jalapeño peanut brittle which you wash down with a swig of chile pepper beer. If this is your idea of heaven, then head down to the Fiery Foods Show and hobnob with the glitterati of the hot & spicy foods world.

by JEFFREE WYN ITRICH

18 Viva Terlingua!

Do you know the way to this famous chili cookoff? Sure—drive about ten hours to the middle of nowhere, and then go three more hours. However, as you'll see, the phenomenal food and the high entertainment value of the participants makes it all worthwhile.

by MELISSA T. STOCK

24 Brothers of the Stinking Rose

Chef's best ally, bane to vampires, no other vegetable has been so lauded—and so maligned—over the centuries. In Gilroy, California, however, garlic comes into its own with a festival of grand proportions attended each year by over 150,000 revelers.

by RICHARD STERLING

40 The Chile Lover's Kitchen

If you've ever wondered what to buy the chilehead who has everything, check out this listing of fun and useful appliances that will add efficiency to every hot & spicy chef's kitchen.

by NANETTE BLANCHARD

DEPARTMENTS

5 Letters from Our Readers

6 Hot Flashes

10 Fiery Foods Front

12 Pungent Press

30 Fiery Fare: Fiery Festivals

31 Recipe Index

33 Classified Ads

42 Flame & Fortune

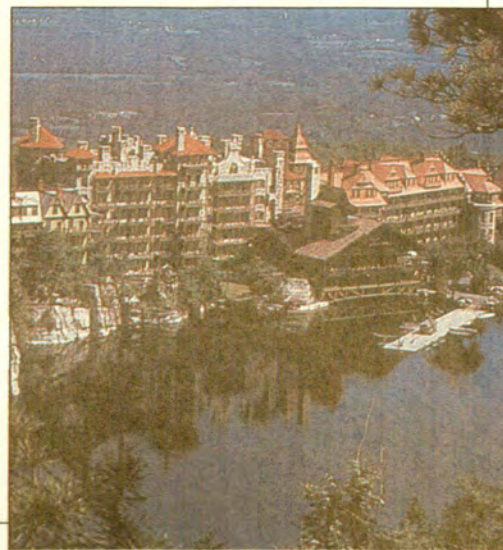
Talking Pods: Tony Hillerman

44 Hot Spots

46 Back Burner

Buy Me Some Sushi and
Crackerjacks

Hot Spots, page 44



Cover Photograph:

You never know who you'll run into on the way to a hot festival! Photo by Chel Beeson. Model: Lonnie Yanes.

TALKING PODS: TONY HILLERMAN



MELISSA T. STOCK

I had to face it. Tony Hillerman's books are not exactly chock-full of culinary delights. In fact, Jim Chee, the main character in his Navajo detective mysteries, rarely whips up more than a bologna sandwich. Not good. A cold sweat has begun to appear on my forehead—I was wondering, where's the chile?

Fortunately, Tony Hillerman is an aficionado of the pod in his own right. So I started with the basics: What is one of the best chile dishes he had ever tasted?

"Well-crafted Navajo Tacos with lots of red chile," Hillerman replied. And the worst, I wondered? "Well-crafted Navajo Tacos with lots of chile," he said with a smirk.

The best *and* the worst?! I needed an explanation. I found my answer in Hillerman's recipe.

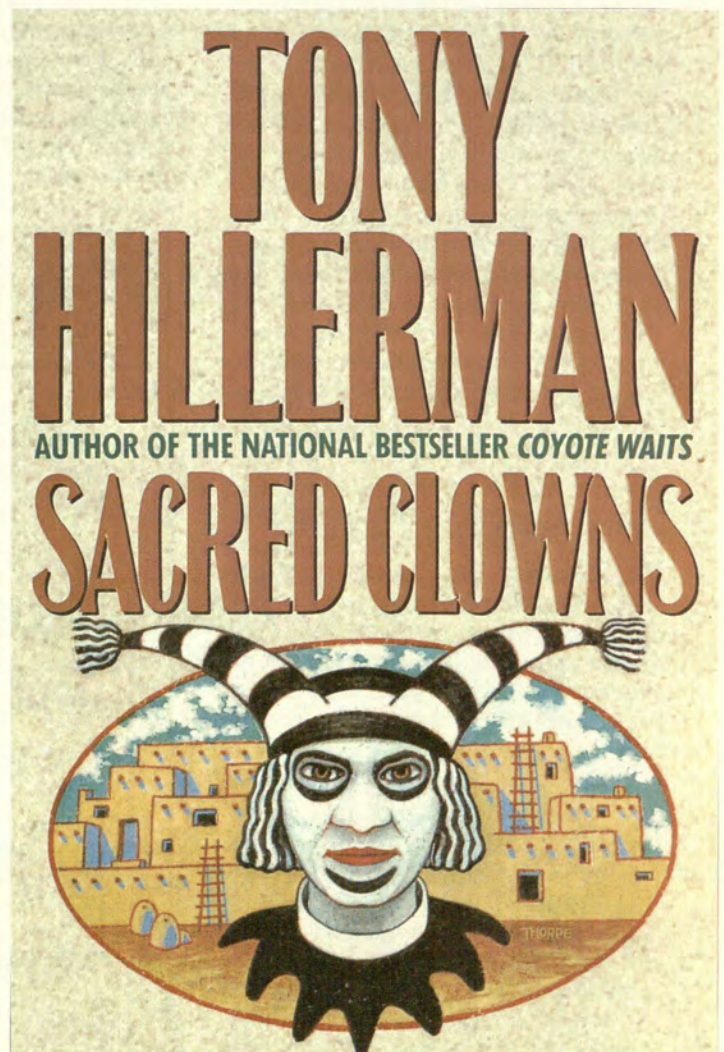
"Take a slab of fry bread cooked to perfection in last autumn's mutton grease. Then place layers of mutton cooked in 90-day-old mutton grease on top of the fry bread. Top the mutton/ fry bread concoction with beans, lettuce, tomatoes and excellent green chile. Gar-nish with a dose of Pepto Bismal."

Hillerman attributes his tongue-in-cheek knowledge of this diametrically opposed cuisine to the fact that he's spent a lot of time hanging

around reservation general stores and tribal celebrations—occasionally over-indulging in this two-faced taco.

And hanging around is certainly a modest way to put it. Hillerman has spent two decades studying the Navajo culture, exploring and experiencing life on the reservation, which encompasses thousands of square miles throughout the Four Corners area of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona. Those experiences have translated into eight novels involving the Navajo Tribal Police and Navajo culture; three of which earned places on the coveted *New York Times* best seller List.

His list of literary honors are long, including the Edgar Allen Poe Award in 1973, for *Dance Hall of the Dead* as best mystery of the year. His *Thief of Time* was awarded the Golden Spur by the Western Writers of America, chosen as the year's



best novel of the West. The Navajo Nation also honored his work in 1987 by recognizing him as "Special Friend to the Dineh."

Born in 1925, Hillerman grew up in the small farming community of Sacred Heart, Oklahoma. A World War II veteran, he received both the

Silver Star and Bronze Star before being wounded and discharged. After earning a B.A. in Journalism, he spent seventeen years as a newspaper man, and another twenty years in academia as a journalism professor at the University of New Mexico.

It was during an assignment as a reporter for United Press International that he experienced the true joys of chile. "It was 1952 and I was just into New Mexico from Oklahoma. Something took me to Rio Arriba County. I was up there in Tres Piedras, and I stopped at a little tin diner on the side of the road. The lady brought me a large bowl of green chile stew, and I took a huge spoonful. I've been hooked from that point forward," he said.

But what inspired him to become a mystery writer? According to Hillerman, it was because "mysteries looked like they would be easy to write. I figured I am good at description, that way if it ends up being a bad play, they can always look at the stage." The Navajo culture and reservation was a natural, as he had good contacts and great interest in the subject matter.

An impressive background I thought, but what about *food*—specifically the hot and spicy type? I wanted to know how a guy who admits to being influenced by Jan Van Wettering, a chef himself whose cop character was *always* thinking about food, would not include a little culinary cleverness in his literary bag of tricks?

"My guys are rarely thinking about food," said Hillerman. "Navajos have many fine points in their culture, but they mostly eat what's available. Food," he said, "does not have high social significance—they don't make a fetish out of it as do the Anglos." I supposed the fetish theory could be true—after all I do work for a *food* magazine.

And since this article was going in said magazine, Hillerman thought one of our readers might be able to help him find out the mystery ingredient in a hot dish he had in the Philippines. "I was on the Polowan Islands in the Philippines.

The whole island had only eight miles of paved road—our driver kept a spare axle in the back seat. It also had a prison, which didn't even have a wall. They figured out whether somebody was gone by watching who showed up to dinner. If an inmate missed two meals in a row, he was assumed to have escaped," said Hillerman. While visiting that prison, Hillerman sampled a "fiercely spicy" stew consisting of what he thought was elderly water buffalo. He said he had always wondered what made that stew so "damn hot." If anyone could find out, I said, it would be our readers.

Do you have an idea what this ingredient might be? Drop a line to *Chile Pepper* and let us know!

Tony Hillerman's next Navajo detective mystery is titled *Sacred Clowns* and is due out in October.



Books By Tony Hillerman

FICTION

- The Blessing Way* (1970)
- The Fly On the Wall* (1971)
- The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* (1972)
- Dance Hall of the Dead* (1973)
- Listening Woman* (1978)*
- People of Darkness* (1980)*
- The Dark Wind* (1982)*
- The Ghostway* (1984)*
- Skinwalkers* (1986)*
- A Thief of Time* (1988)*
- Talking God* (1989)*
- Coyote Waits* (1990)*

NONFICTION

- The Great Taos Bank Robbery* (1973)
- New Mexico* (1974)
- Rio Grande* (1975)
- The Spell of New Mexico* (1976)
- Indian Country* (1987)
- *Novels in the Navajo Mystery Series

Complete Your Chile Pepper Set with These Color Back Issues!



This Issue & 4 More Available in Full Color!

Send me all 5 for \$15.95

Please send the issues marked below for \$3.50 each.

- ___ Sept./Oct. 92
- ___ Nov./Dec. 92
- ___ March/April 93
- ___ May/June 93
- ___ July/August 93

Sept./Oct. 92

The Search for the Perfect Ceviche, Isla Mujeres, The Cuisine of Oaxaca, The Land with no Ketchup, Margarita Man, The Chipotle Mystery Solved

Nov./Dec. 92

The First Thanksgiving, Korea in the Big Apple, The Peppery Palates of Padang, Return to Spice Island, Nothing Beats a Bug

March/April 93

R.C. Gorman, That Good Chile, Fred Harvey's Railroad Cuisine, The Great Grow-Out, How to Order Enchiladas in Santa Fe, Postcard From the Edge

May/June 93

The Cuisines of the South Slavs, A Cambodian Journey, Tex-Mex is Back, Cookies Caliente, T.G. Sheppard, Pardon My Emission

July/August 93

The Hidden Haunts of Cajun Country, In Search of Hot Stuff in Costa Rica, Buckwheat Zydeco, Blazing BBQ, Northern Disclosure

Total Enclosed _____

Payment Enclosed

VISA/MC/AmEx

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Outside US add \$1.00 per item ordered. Credit card orders only outside US.

Acct. # _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: **Chile Pepper**, P.O. Box 5355, Brandon, MS 39047 or call: 1-800-359-1483