

# Native American foods on the menu in the Sioux Chef's new book

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Sean Sherman is a chef and the author of a new cookbook, "The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen." Photo: Nancy Bundt

What do Native Americans eat?

Sean Sherman laughs. He says that is like asking what Europeans eat. Not all people in Europe are the same. Not all Native Americans are the same either.

Mr. Sherman has numbers to prove his point. There are 567 Native American tribes in the United States. There are 634 in Canada. That is a big mix of people.

## **A Book About Native American Food**

Mr. Sherman wrote a book about Native American food. He worked on it with another writer. It is called "The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen." Indigenous means something or someone that comes from a certain place. It is native to that place.

Mr. Sherman is Oglala Lakota. The Oglala Lakota tribe has a reservation. It is in South Dakota. The tribe is in charge of this land. That is where Mr. Sherman grew up. He learned to cook at a

young age. His mother was in school and working other jobs. So he was the cook.

He got his first job in a restaurant at age 13. He cleaned tables. He washed dishes. He did small cooking jobs, too. Then Mr. Sherman got a job cooking in a restaurant. After that, he knew he wanted to be a chef.

### The Sioux Chef Idea

Mr. Sherman worked in many restaurants. Then he decided to go to Mexico. That is where he got a new idea. He visited a restaurant that used only local foods.

Suddenly, it hit him.

What did his own ancestors eat before the Europeans arrived? Mr. Sherman wanted to know. So he learned all about tribes and their foods.

### Native Ingredients, Simple Cooking Methods

Then he knew what he wanted to do. He wanted to cook with native ingredients. He wanted to use simple tools and cooking methods.

Mr. Sherman has his own business now. He calls it the Sioux Chef. He makes food for parties. He runs a food truck, too. Both are good ways to see if people like Native American foods.

### Familiar And Unusual Ingredients

Most of Sherman's recipes use familiar ingredients. He has some unusual ingredients, too. For example, juniper berries can be used like pepper. Maple sugar adds sweetness.

Mr. Sherman says, "This is a beginning." He wants to learn more about native foods.

**Recipe: Wild Rice Cakes**

*This recipe appears in Chef Sean Sherman's new book, "The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen." Try it yourself -- but only with help from a grown-up in the kitchen! Serves 4 to 6.*

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- About 3 cups water
- Pinch of salt
- Generous pinch of maple sugar
- 3 to 4 tablespoons sunflower oil, or more as needed

**STEPS**

1. Put 1 1/2 cups cooked wild rice and 3 cups water into a saucepan. Place over high heat, bring to a boil and reduce heat to a simmer.
2. Cook until rice is very soft and the water has evaporated. Drain.
3. In a food processor fitted with a steel blade, puree rice into a stick dough. Place dough into a medium bowl and work in the salt, sugar and remaining 1/2 cup cooked rice.
4. Scoop out a scant 1/4 cup dough for each patty and shape into rounds about 1/2-inch thick.
5. Heat oil in a heavy skillet and brown patties about 5 to 8 minutes per side until lightly browned.
6. Transfer patties to a baking sheet and place in a warm oven until ready to serve.

Image: Newsela staff

## Quiz

- 1 What is a reason why Mr. Sherman wrote the "Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen"?
- (A) to prove that all Native American tribes eat the same type of food
  - (B) to show that indigenous food is better than European food
  - (C) to write about how he learned to be a chef on the reservation
  - (D) to teach people about food from different Native American tribes
- 2 Where did Mr. Sherman get the idea to cook with native ingredients?
- (A) Canada
  - (B) Mexico
  - (C) Europe
  - (D) United States
- 3 Look at the image at the beginning of the article.  
What does the image show?
- (A) the Oglala Lakota tribe
  - (B) a cookbook recipe
  - (C) Sean Sherman
  - (D) a Native American restaurant
- 4 Look at the image in the section "Familiar And Unusual Ingredients."  
How does the image show the MAIN idea of that section?
- (A) It shows how many Native American tribes are in the U.S.
  - (B) It shows how to use juniper berries in a recipe.
  - (C) It shows Mr. Sherman's favorite Native American meal.
  - (D) It shows how to make one Native American dish.