

Jerusha Klemperer:

I want to tell you about Whetstone Radio Collective, a brand new podcast venture from Whetstone Media. The shows from Whetstone Radio have a sound all their own, with discussions on politics, culture, global gastronomic histories, all centered on human empathy. Whetstone Radio Collective has some incredible shows for you, like Climate Cuisine from Taiwanese American journalist Clarissa Wei, which looks at the way the climate crisis is fundamentally shaping our relationship with food. Or Fruit Love Letters from Chef Jessamine Starr, which is like a Valentine to all your favorite fruits. I encourage you to check out some of the programming at Whetstone Radio Collective and continue to discover the immense power that food has on our communal lives.

Jerusha Klemperer:

Hi, there.

Louis Travino:

Hello, [foreign language 00:00:50].

Jerusha Klemperer:

Nice to meet you. I'm Jerusha. Do you want to start by just introducing yourselves?

Vincent Medina:

Absolutely. Just one moment, let's just put the cat in the...

Jerusha Klemperer:

Great start to every interview. For our episode on food waste, we interviewed Vincent Medina and Louis Trevino, who co-founded mak-'amham, an East Bay organization and restaurant focused on reviving and strengthening traditional Indigenous Ohlone foods and sharing them back with the community, as well as educating the public about Ohlone culture through cuisine. The restaurant was originally housed in the courtyard of Berkeley's University Press bookstore that shuttered a few months into the coronavirus pandemic. Now, two years later, Cafe Ohlone will be reopening on the UC Berkeley campus. We were only able to share a small portion of our interview with Vincent and Louis for that episode, but the full interview was so interesting and they were so engaging that we decided to run it in its entirety now for our season one final episode.

Vincent Medina:

I'll introduce myself and then my partner Louis, he'll introduce himself. And I'd like to introduce myself first though, in Chochenyo language, which is the language of my family and my community, where the native people here in the East Bay. My family specifically comes from an area right here called [inaudible 00:02:13], which is an old tribal nation, the oldest area of this space and the oldest name of this area, and we've lived here forever, consistently. So [foreign language 00:02:22].

Louis Travino:

[foreign language 00:02:28] Louis Trevino, [foreign language 00:02:48] Vincent Medina [foreign language 00:02:59].

Vincent Medina:

Thank you. Louis and myself just shared in our respective Ohlone languages, Louis is speaking in Rumsen, which is the Ohlone language of Carmel Valley. And once again, I'm speaking in Chochenyo, which is the indigenous language of the inner East Bay here, where we're speaking to you from, [foreign language 00:03:19], which is an old nation that goes from Southern Oakland down to Southern Hayward. And this is where my family has consistently lived from those old days, prior to missions, prior to colonization, to our creation times, to where we're at today and what we'll be in the future also. Lu and myself were both the co-founders of mak'-amham, which in Chochenyo language, it means "our food." And out of mak'-amham, which is a community organization that's all focused on strengthening traditional Ohlone foods as well as language and every other act of culture, that's being actively restored right now, as well as culture that's been carried on.

Vincent Medina:

We're finding ways to make those more accessible and to see them passed on inter-generationally with our elders' blessings and their guidance. Out of mak'-amham, Cafe Ohlone came to be. We're the co-founders of Cafe Ohlone, which is the only Ohlone restaurant in the world and a place that we celebrate our living culture every single meal, where we provide a physical space for our Ohlone community, and also where we can teach the public about how beautiful our culture is over very dignified and sophisticated plates of Ohlone food. We're proud of this work that we do, but really want to acknowledge and center our elders who make all of this possible, make the conditions possible, for us to be doing what we're doing, and also we're grateful to be able to see culture growing stronger these days.

Jerusha Klemperer:

You touched on this a little bit, but I wonder if you can expand somewhat. You talked about your two audiences creating a home for your Ohlone community, but then also providing an opportunity for people outside the Ohlone community to experience the beauty and the flavor of your food. There's an educational mission in there somewhere for both audiences. What do you hope that people will take away from their experience of eating with you or spending time in the cafe?

Vincent Medina:

Well, as you mentioned, there's two parts of this work, and the first part, which has always been the central part for us and our primary goal, is to be able to provide a space where our Ohlone community can feel represented when they walk into the doors of Cafe Ohlone. And this is important because we've never left our home, but up until recently, there hasn't been a lot of reminders of that outside of the homes of Ohlone people. So an example of this is even though our community still lives in these very specific place-based locations where we've always been, there's about two and a half million people here in the East Bay. And if you look at this at a larger level in the Bay Area, there's over 7 million people. Now, there's probably about a thousand East Bay Ohlone people in total, and about a 5,000, I would say, Ohlone people as a whole.

Vincent Medina:

And to understand that means that we're an extreme minority within our own place. Now, growing up and not seeing those reminders that we exist, that can be very harmful. Because without reminders that we exist without seeing accurate representation of our culture, invisibility is something that becomes a big issue within our community, and feeling invisible-ized is something that we've had to endure for far too long. Now, here in the Bay Area, there's no reason that our food shouldn't be centered and

shouldn't be highlighted, because our food is so delicious, and it's so specific to this place right here. Now, when Ohlone people walk into Cafe Ohlone, what they see are the things that we feel proud of. They see our aesthetics represented. They see our values being represented, with our elders being served for, or a plate being set aside for our ancestors to give them that respect.

Vincent Medina:

They see our language on the menus. They see our baskets on the walls. They see our native plants growing. They see all these things. And of course, being able to have those plates full of those foods that our family has been eating forever, it really creates a place where we can feel seen. And we've seen how far that this can go. We see when our elders get dressed up to the nines on Saturday night dinners and how proud they are to be able to have these foods and how they'll bring their friends over to be able to show these foods and show how beautiful they are to their friends. Or when we see young Ohlone people coming, teenagers and young adults, coming and feeling comfortable to walk up to the front and to talk about their identity. That's something that we've lacked a physical space of beyond the homes of our families and we're so happy that we have that.

Vincent Medina:

The secondary goal of this work is to be able to teach about how beautiful our culture is, as I said, with our own voices. Now, over the last 240 years since colonization has come, others have consistently tried to write about our culture or teach about our culture without always knowing the facts. And up until recently, what was being taught was also filled with these racist mis-categorizations or outright lies that attempted to dehumanize our people. We're not sure why. I mean, because those things that were written were just, growing up and having to read those things in public school, so painful to have to read. And as a young adult, I got a job at Mission Dolores in San Francisco, which was one of the missions, which was a hard place for our people. The missions attempted to change everything about our culture. And over at the mission, I was trying to change how that story was told, because when I was in fourth grade in California, I had to go to Mission San Jose where my own family experienced hard times, and had to hear things from the tour guide that were untrue and unfair to have to hear.

Vincent Medina:

After about seven years of working there at Mission Dolores as a curator, it became hard to be able to constantly tell this story, even if it's talking about it from an Ohlone perspective, in the same place where a lot of hardships occurred. And Louis and myself, we wanted to be able to think about a way that we can teach, but in a space that's uniquely Ohlone, a space that we can be able to teach about the beauty of our culture in a space where Ohlone culture is actively being practiced, where living Ohlone culture is happening, and it's happening in this way that our ancestors would also be able to identify with, that they would feel recognized, we feel.

Vincent Medina:

And so Cafe Ohlone really came out of that. And through that, when people have a plate full of beautiful food in front of them, seasonal food, that's all indigenous, right here, specifically to this part of California, and they hear us and our elders come and share about what's happened throughout our history, but also how our community has persevered through those times. How in spite of whatever came our way, people still found a way to keep moving forward, to retain culture, and to still be able to stay here in our homeland. When people know those things, they understand us in a different way, and

they're less likely to associate our culture with losses and defeat like how it's often presented, but to see it how we see it, which is from a lens of strength, and triumphs, and victories.

Vincent Medina:

Because if we were defeated, we wouldn't be here today. We wouldn't be in our homeland. We wouldn't be able to speak our language, eat our foods, practice our religion, be able to do any of these old ways, because if we were defeated, they wouldn't be here anymore. But because of those sacrifices of those generations before, they are still here. And when people know those things, we believe they're more likely to stand with us as allies and less likely to desecrate the things that are important to us.

Jerusha Klemperer:

It's really powerful, and I think resonates with me, that a restaurant or a cafe or a place of gathering and eating can be an assertion of visibility, an assertion of identity, and history, and culture, that it can be so much more than just food on a plate. I really get that. Thank you for that. I was thinking about, when you were talking about that, how in that way that food is what shows up on the plate and what we eat, but it's also all of the values behind them. And you mentioned values and just the way that you, and I'd love to get into this more a little later, the way that you source your ingredients, or the way that you build your menu, or the way that you run your kitchen, that your values and your culture are there, I assume, for all of that.

Jerusha Klemperer:

I was reading something and was struck by this quote that said, "Native people are not separate from the environment. We are the environment." And that certainly reflected this concept of "all my relatives" or "all my relations," and what I've heard described as a kind of a contract between animals, and plants, and human beings that you need to honor. And obviously, something wasting food in the process of harvest, or preparation, or serving, would seem to fly in the face of a contract like that. All of which is to say, could you talk a little bit about how those values that are there as part of your traditional culture do inform everything up until the moment the food comes out into the room for people to eat?

Vincent Medina:

Absolutely. So there is, growing up, many values that we're raised with, but one of those values is to remember interconnectedness between all different types of life. And what I mean by that, is that this goes back, way back into the ancient times, about how we're supposed to treat other communities, or as they're often referred to, because our people lived with so much abundance in those old days, there's often referred to understand the sovereignty and the personhood of those plants and of those animals. One thing I love about how they're often referred to, different plant communities or different animal communities, as they're referred to often as being nations of their own. That's also recognizing their groupings together, but also their individualism and also their distinctness. Now, understanding that, and understanding traditional land stewardship practices that are, again, very specific and place-based to this area, our ancestors, when we came to be here, because we believed that we were created in this area, there's this very, very long and complex formative time of creation.

Vincent Medina:

But when we came to be, and when the world was right for us, there was all of this abundance that we were birthed into here, in this place that we're speaking to you from. And in those original teachings,

we're also taught about how to ensure that that abundance grew stronger instead of weaker. And this is embedded in those beginning times. Now, one of those ways of ensuring abundance grows stronger is through a series of managed burns. Those managed burns, what they do, is they take away the overgrowth that today is leading to these catastrophic wildfires we're seeing more and more frequently. In California, the turning the sky orange, it's apocalyptic, the way that they look these days. But our people always knew that California, this part of California, it needed to be burned, otherwise we would enter a fire drought like what we're in right now.

Vincent Medina:

And without those burnings, also, it wouldn't take out the overgrowth, but beyond the overgrowth that's there, it's much more. Those burns, what they also do, is they enrich the soil with ash and nutrients. They take out all of that overgrowth, and they open up meadow spaces for other life to be able to flourish. By also having these low-heat controlled burns, they stimulate these interconnected plant communities to grow stronger instead of weaker. When our people would go out traditionally during this time, and let's say if they would dig for those bulbs or our Indian potatoes, what's traditionally done is a digging stick, usually made out of Manzanita or some hardwood like Oak, is taken out. And then those bulbs would be taken out, the young growths of those bulblets would be picked off, and then dropped back and into that loose soil.

Vincent Medina:

When the wind comes, those seed plants would drop their seeds into that loose soil, and what that would mean is that the next year's harvest would consistently be larger over and over. If you can imagine doing this multiple times a year for thousands, upon thousands, and thousands of years, you're going to have every type of food that you want, and that's going to be stewarded and cultivated by people. That abundance here in the Bay Area, you still see it today, and that's in part from the work of our ancestors, from thousands of years up until just recently until those controlled burns were banned in the 1850s.

Vincent Medina:

Now, understanding that, it also helps us understand an active role in management, but then to understand interconnectedness of life that's there too. And something that we're taught from a young age, as Ohlone people, is to be able to show respect for different life, to be able to show respect for animal life, to be able to show respect for plant life, and also to recognize, like we said earlier, their personhood. Now, this is evident in multiple different ways, but one way I want to bring up is our most traditional food here in this part of California is acorn. Acorn is our staple food, and it's made into a soup, and into a bread. But it's a six month long process from the gathering of the acorn, which is happening in about a month from now. I mean, with climate change, it's actually happening sooner now than it did before. But going from gathering the acorn to curing them for six months, to shelling them, skinning them, grinding them in a mortar until the flour is so fine it fits into the weave of a finely woven basket, leeching the acorn, and then making it a soup into bread. It's a long process that's been carried on.

Vincent Medina:

But when acorn comes, we're taught by our elders, even to this day, that you don't just go right when the acorns come to gather, but we have to be patient, because the first drop of the acorn always has to be for animals so that they can eat too. Has to be for those woodpecker so they could store up their

granaries. It has to be for squirrels, for the wood rats out there. It has to be for all these other animals that are there. So that for the deer, of course, so that they can also be able to have enough. And when animals have enough, there's a trickle down effect on other things, too. If you go and cause problems to one thing, it's going to eventually trickle down to humans. And our ancestors always knew that, that we live in a world that's interconnected, where it's not just centered on us and it's something that's much bigger than just humans that are here.

Vincent Medina:

Now, when we gather for an example, we're also taught that there's a way that we gather. And when we gather our foods, we give gratitude to the plant, we recognize the plant in our language, and we acknowledge that plant. What that does is when you do that, it puts you in a different place to take that time to show that respect. First, it's the right thing to do, because we believe those plants, they've been here forever. They understand our language. It's the right thing to do. But then also, it puts humans in the right mind to be able to gather with intention, and with respect so that you're not just going out there and just taking from the land, but instead, when we're gather, you're actually doing something good that's going to allow those plants to even grow stronger.

Vincent Medina:

What I mean by that is by clipping in the right place so that those plants can be able to have new growth that comes. When we go and we gather from different areas, making sure that you don't just take from one area, but that you spread it out so that every area can be able to have a resurgence afterwards. When we're gathering our mushrooms, to understand that those are interconnected with the Bay trees and the Oak trees, and that you can't take from the roots, but you have to cut it from a certain area so that that mushroom will be able to come back later that season, if not the next one. Something that we see happen is in the Bay Area, there's these newer movements, I guess you can call them. I don't know what they're called. But of urban foraging. And what happens with that, when we see it and it's so painful to have to see, is people just go and they clear-cut areas without any thought.

Vincent Medina:

We see people walking up hills with mushrooms taken from the roots. You see people going in and just chopping down things without any respect for the life of that plant, without any care that plant that they might be gathering from has been there for potentially thousands of years, is a descendant of something that's been there for thousands of years. But once those roots are gone, it's hard to be able to restore that, and having a short-term thinking without looking at the big picture is harmful. You always got to look at the intricacies and about the interconnections that are there. And that's something that's been carried on in our family that still is, and it will be in the future too, because those young gatherers in our community are being trained in that same way that we were trained as young people.

Jerusha Klemperer:

So is that, in terms of your ingredient sourcing, especially for foods that I have to imagine are, in some cases, always in danger of disappearing, you work as a community to forage together to revive ingredients. Can you talk a little bit about that process?

Vincent Medina:

Yeah. We are an urban community, so when we go and we gather these foods, we have to be innovative of how we do it, because we can't, for an example, gather everything from limited resources. That

would be inappropriate. What we have to do is we have to source from a whole bunch of different ways. And I'll give you an example of this. Some of this is gathering up in the hills when there is abundance. An example of this is like our tea plants we can gather, our elderberry we can gather, some of our nuts we have safe places to gather those. Some of those greens when they're available, like our Indian lettuces, they just grow in such abundance that it's safe to gather them in a respectful way.

Vincent Medina:

But then there's other things like, for an example, when we gather acorn here in the Bay Area, we only will gather enough for our community, because Oak groves are increasingly threatened here in the Bay Area with development. Again, it's an extremely urbanized area. And especially those preferential Oaks, like black Oak or valley Oak or tan Oak, those are even harder to come by these days because of sudden Oak death, which only started spreading relatively recently. And that came from... What did that come from?

Louis Travino:

Vietnam.

Vincent Medina:

From the Vietnam war. Yes, it was relatively recently. And that just causes huge troubles for all these Oaks that are around because it spreads and it takes over on those trees, and then the trees can't prosper. So when we gather those acorn, we will gather local acorns for our community. For the acorn that we can't gather for the cafe, we will source our acorn from a tribe that's just further east from a few individuals that gather acorn in central California in an area that has much more abundance. Same exact species of those acorns, the black Oak, but just a more responsible way to do that, and also doesn't cause as much stress to the land.

Vincent Medina:

Another example of this is our brodiaea potatoes, those potatoes I was mentioning earlier. Because of the ban of those burns and also the privatization of land, it's hard to come by those, and on a good year, we can find maybe 30 of them, I would say. And that's compared to being able to gather thousands of them in the old days. Now, what we have to do is when we gather those, because we don't want to cause stress on an already-endangered plant, but we also know that digging those bulblets can be a good thing if it's done in the right way, but it has to be done by Ohlone people. And it has to be done in this way that's appropriate. And we share those little tastes with our community when we have them and we just savor them together.

Vincent Medina:

But in order to have that same flavor on the menu, we had to be innovative, and we had to think of a dish, instead of the brodiaea potatoes, we call them [inaudible 00:26:18] potatoes, because what it is, is we research and there's this heirloom variety called a Russian fingerling banana potato. It's these little tiny dime-shaped potatoes that have such a similar flavor to the brodiaea. We find them at the farmer's markets, there's people who grow them sustainably and organically, and we can source those as the potatoes on our menu to give people a taste of what brodiaea are like, but in a way that's more responsible. Now, there's student gardeners that are growing foods for us at UC Berkeley, where we're going to be moving our cafe, that are growing our seed plants for us, our native onions, our edible flowers that we eat that are native right here, some of those harder-to-find plants.

Vincent Medina:

We're getting a little patchwork of student gardeners throughout Berkeley that are growing food for us. When we can't gather our muscles, for an example, because San Francisco Bay and the current state might have too much pollution as opposed to what it was just a short time ago. We're able to get those exact same muscles, the exact same species, from the Pacific Ocean, where it's safer and it's more sustainable. So those are a few different examples of ways that we... And also our family. We have home gardens too, I wanted to add, because we're actively engaged in this whole process so that we have all these places that we can be able to gather from that it's safe, that we're able to be responsible, and that we're keeping those values central to us.

Jerusha Klemperer:

And given all of that care that goes into the growing and the sourcing of all of those ingredients, I have to assume then that when they enter the kitchen, there is a deep respect for all that went into getting them there to that point. The preciousness of each of these ingredients, how does that then extend to food preparation and making sure that you're not, after all that went into it, that you're not wasting? Obviously, there are economic motivations as business owners for not wasting as well, which you can talk about as well, but that sense of not wanting any of what was so hard, one, to go to waste. How does that show up in the kitchen for you?

Vincent Medina:

Well, through a few different ways. One way that goes through is... And we have to also just be honest that part of every single step is intention based. And even when we're cooking the food, when we're starting to prepare the food, we have these rules in our community that you have to be in a good place. You can't be in a grumpy mood. You can't be sour. You have to be in a good place when you're starting this whole process, because those things also go into that food that you're preparing. Making sure that, from every step of this process, that there's intention. And when we're cooking those foods also, remembering what those foods represent to us. And that's an easy thing to do.

Vincent Medina:

We always will try to only source what going to use in the cooking or in the preparation methods, but we also have this way of preparing food also that we want to be abundant, because we want to reflect how we eat at home. One of the things that Cafe Ohlone that we constantly hear is that people would say, "Oh, wow, this is so much food." And then we invite people to come up for seconds before COVID, or even thirds if we have it that are there. Because when we opened up the cafe, we really wanted to show what a kitchen in Ohlone home looks like. We know our aunties go around and just constantly refilling your plates. Looking at you if you don't eat a little bit more or something like that. Making sure that you're full, and that you're satisfied, and that you feel good, and that you're happy, and that all those aspects of food reflect our values, which we're very generous people. And that's something that goes way back. That's something that's embedded in culture is that generosity and wanting people to be fed well.

Vincent Medina:

Now, we invite people to come back up. We're not charging anybody, by the way, for these things. It's not something that we're monetizing, but if they had a meal with us, we invite people to come up and eat more and to feel comfortable doing that. Now, another thing that this carries on is we always will make enough so that we can bring some to our family afterwards, especially our elders. And when we



started these Cafe Ohlone meal boxes as a way to keep the Cafe Ohlone message going strong with the public throughout COVID, we always put a few of those meal boxes, which are 12 course meals, order enough so that we can make sure that our community gets some too, if they want them, and we always have people in the community that do. Making sure that we're also saving enough so that we can share it with our families after. That's something that we're grateful that the revenues from Cafe Ohlone can be able to do a lot of good for the community as a whole, and share these foods widely through the cafe work to our family that's all still right here.

Jerusha Klemperer:

This is something I've recently... I read some things that really, to me, were very powerful about around this idea of decolonizing one's diet. And then I read something else that sort of took issue with some of that framing, and I found all of it incredibly interesting. I wondered if you could talk about that at all, if that sort of framework is ever there for you. I mean, it seems like that is part of your mission, that terminology or not, for the Ohlone people in the Bay Area, to be able to eat the food that is traditional for them, and an acknowledgement of how much better that is for us in every way to be eating our traditional foods. Do you ever talk about it in terms of decolonizing your diet? Is that a framework that resonates with you two?

Vincent Medina:

It does resonate, but I would like to give some context to it, and about what decolonization means to us. With the term "decolonization", something that we're very mindful, especially these days... COVID's given us a lot of time throughout this pandemic to think about food, and about relationship, and also about continuum as well. Now, something that comes with this word "decolonize" is we'd never want to use it in a way that's simply being used as a token word or something that's performative, but to have it be something that's intentional. And what decolonization means to us is removing layers of forcibly imposed identity, so identity that was attempted to be forced on us by these colonizing forces, whether they be the Spanish missionaries, or Americans coming in, and through assimilation policies. When people can understand that there was identity that was attempted to be imposed on us and that our own identity was attempted to be taken from us, then I think decolonization is something that resonates, because it's about removing those layers.

Vincent Medina:

But also something that, throughout this time of the pandemic that we realized, is that our identity was never taken, but instead there was different things that were imposed that, of course, we still have, we're still recovering from, and a lot of pain that we're still recovering from. When we first opened up Cafe Ohlone, we made this emphasis on only cooking with pre-contact ingredients, meaning the ingredients that our ancestors are recognized, with maybe one or two exceptions. We brought in chocolate, because Louis made these acorn flour brownies to introduce to our young people that became a hit in our community. And sometimes we would add vanilla, because that's a taste that our community really likes. But beyond that, it really stopped right there.

Vincent Medina:

Throughout the pandemic, we started to reach for a lot of those old-style comfort foods, and so we were constantly eating our acorn soup, and our muscles and clams, and all of these comfort foods. But then we also wanted to reach for comfort foods that also came here later in colonization that our people adopted and found ways to Ohlone-ize and bring in our taste preferences, things that often

aren't thought about as being strictly traditional foods. And I'll give you an example of this. On the old Rancheria, and what a Rancheria is after the mission times, the Spanish missions that came here in the late 1700s to the early 1800s, these Rancherias existed after the missions and into the early years of Americans being here, for us specifically here, until 1927. And there's still Rancherias that exist all throughout California also, but they're smaller reservations, if you want to think of it, but very distinct indigenous communities of their own.

Vincent Medina:

There was a Rancheria that traditionally exists about 10 miles away from where we're speaking to you from, where my great-grandmother was born on the [inaudible 00:36:43] Rancheria. And over in [inaudible 00:36:45], our traditional identity began to take on aspects that aren't traditional, but absorb them into our traditional culture. An example of this is people might wear Western dresses, but also wear their abalone necklaces and clam shell beads. They would speak Chochenyo and [inaudible 00:37:12] language, as well as speaking Spanish language and English. They would make acorn soup, but also make things like these slow-cooked chilies that were introduced here. And one of those chiles that came was a chile that was brought from the mission times, a chile Colorado. And when we make it at home, we make it with, it's one of those things that's been absorbed into our culture, but completely taken a different form. Meaning we cook it with our traditional herbs instead of the herbs that were brought here by the Spanish, or we will make it with venison instead of making it with traditional beef or pork.

Vincent Medina:

In Louis's family, there's an [inaudible 00:38:02] dish that's made, a Mexican meatball soup that came during the mission times as well. And it's talked about in the 1920s about how that would be made with native greens, and native herbs, and also deer meat instead of the pork that's used. And that's just a few examples. So when we started to think about those comfort foods, we started to think of continuum, and realized that those foods also have a place in our history. That our culinary traditions didn't stop when the Spanish arrived, but in fact, they kept going, kept persevering, but new things got introduced within those times that got passed on inter-generationally because the family liked those things also, and they're not incompatible.

Vincent Medina:

So this time has made us think about what that means, and doesn't mean you got to shun everything that was brought here, but thinking about what would it look like if we could absorb things on our own terms. How do those things meld into our culture while still keeping the integrity of our traditional way of eating and traditional values? How can we be able to do those things? And we look just a few generations back, we have the answers for that. And it also gives us a lot of insight in how we could bring in things from outside into our living culture. So we agree with the concept of decolonization in terms of taking away that identity that was forced on us, but also being mindful that some things were introduced and some things were adopted into our culture, and those things still have a place there, too.

Louis Travino:

It's so true. And when we think about what does Ohlone food mean, we know that all of those old-time foods that we've described already, they come from our creation time here in this place, and it's so place specific. The plant communities and animal communities that are also indigenous to our homelands are part of those food traditions. And so we thought then that all those things that were also

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brought to our homelands, those things that were selected by our ancestors, by the people from before, they had the agency to make these choices based on their taste preferences and their aesthetic, our aesthetic, and our taste preferences as a people. So all of those things that were adopted in that way, applying their moral authority in our homeland, they selected those foods for us, including that chile Colorado, that [inaudible 00:40:50] and other foods. So all of those things, even though they are not pre-contact are truly Ohlone foods here.

Vincent Medina:

Yes, exactly. And it's all part of a continuum of living Ohlone culture and living Ohlone food traditions.

Jerusha Klemperer:

Cafe Ohlone will open in June 2022 at UC Berkeley's Hearst Museum. A portal of light and shadows, singing trees, a dry creek running along Redwoods, a shell mound rising in a fragrant garden of abundance. Learn more about what Vincent and Louis are calling "a love song to Ohlone culture" at their website, [www.makamham.com/cafeohlone](http://www.makamham.com/cafeohlone). What you're eating is produced by me, Jerusha Klemperer, Nathan Dalton, and [foodprint.org](http://foodprint.org), which is a project of the Grace Communications Foundation. Special thanks to Vincent Medina and Louis Trevino. You can find us [www.foodprint.org](http://www.foodprint.org), where we have this podcast, as well as articles, reports, a food label guide, and more. Thanks so much for joining us for season one, and if you like the podcast, please leave us a review on Apple or wherever you listen to podcasts.