## Mexican Customs and Culture

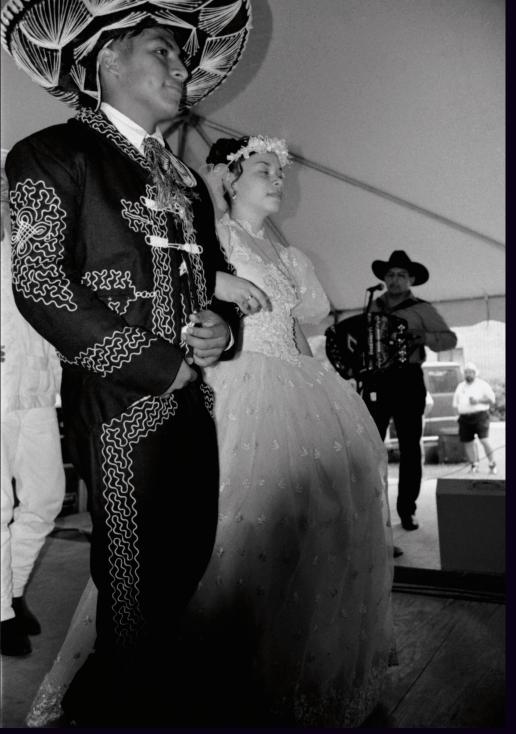


Most farmworkers in South Georgia are from Mexico. Mexicans and American Southerners share certain traditional values, such as the importance of family, personal contacts, and respect for elders. Family celebrations are important.

But basic cultural differences sometimes lead to prejudice. Mexicans often choose not to join formal groups. Eye contact is often viewed as a sign of disrespect. For them, a good party is often loud and noisy. In a predominantly Protestant region, the majority are Catholic in culture if not in practice. Most speak Spanish but value the importance of learning English for themselves and their children.

"There are many misconceptions about them. The ones I know are certainly not lazy, and they certainly don't want to go on welfare. Nor do they want to take our jobs. They'll take the job no one else wants. They just want to work. With the Mexicans, it's all about the dignity of work."

Sister Mary Robers, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Waycross, from Waycross Lifestyle, Winter/Spring 1997.



A quinceañera is a 15<sup>th</sup> birthday coming of age celebration for Mexican girls.



The Feast Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico, Valdosta, 1997.

Photo by Laurie Kay Sommers, 1997.

