

# Mexican Customs and Culture



NATIONAL  
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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.

Photo by Laurie Kay Sommers, 2000.



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

Photo by Laurie Kay Sommers, 1997.

## Community

Thursday, July 8, 1999 — 3A

### Hispanic festival pulls out of Omega

Organizers cite police shooting and allege harassment

By Florence Rankin  
THOMSON SOUTH GEORGIA

OMEGA — The Fiesta del Pueblo won't be held in Omega this year because organizers question the community's commitment to the festival.

"In 1997, there were three

"There seems to be a pattern, maybe only to us."

Hunt said he regrets the group's decision and hopes they will return to Omega next year.

The council also heard from two Hispanic women, Maria Martinez and Elizabeth Deltoro, about the third incident mentioned by Marti.

Eight Hispanic men were arrested by Omega police on disorderly conduct charges June 26, although relatives said they were only having a weekend cookout in their yard.

Police Chief Walt Young told *The Tifton Gazette* last week that the arrests were mishandled and he expects all charges to be dropped when the case

"We thank you for the hospitality you gave us in previous years. We'd love to come back in the future, but we can't do it under the present circumstances."

Luz Martin

Fiesta del Pueblo organizer.

"I'd be upset if it happened to me. I'm sure the council has the same concerns you do."

Thomas-Rosier asked why the men were not read their Miranda rights, whether they were