

Cinco de Mayo

(with pickles and onion, hold the French's)



Many people think Cinco de Mayo (My-O) is Mexico's Independence Day, but it isn't. The holiday of Cinco de Mayo, or *The Fifth of May* celebrates the day Mexican forces defeated French forces in the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Mexico had already won its independence from Spain in 1821, but now France was trying to take over. 4,500 Mexican fighters defeated 6,500 French fighters in the tiny town of Puebla, Mexico. The battle did not end the war, but it became a symbol of unity for the Mexican people. Cinco de Mayo is now celebrated in the United States as well as Mexico.



The Mexican flag has three bands in green, white and red, with the Mexican Coat of Arms in the center of the white band. The green band stands for hope. White stands for purity. The red band stands for the blood of the national heroes that gave Mexico its independence. The Mexican Coat of Arms is taken from an Aztec legend which tells the way in which the Aztecs chose the site where they built their capital city. The gods had told the Aztecs that the place where they should start their city was where they saw an eagle on a prickly pear tree eating a snake.

The Aztecs were an ancient people that once lived where Mexico is now. There they built a great civilization including cities, pyramids, and temples. In 1519, Spanish conquistadors arrived in Mexico and defeated the Aztecs.



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Directions: Use the information from the story to answer the questions below. Write your answer with a complete sentence. **Underline or highlight the sentence where you found the information.**

1. What does Cinco de Mayo mean in English?

2. What is celebrated on Cinco de Mayo?

3. What do the three colors on the Mexican flag stand for?

4. Who were the Aztecs?
