

Amordidas Acompañadas: Deported Recipes of Survival

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Project Overview

This project is autoethnographic, rooted in my experience as the daughter of deported parents. Both were deported on May 9, 2012, and lived in exile in Tijuana for 12 years. My mother's passing in December 2024 deepened this rupture



In this project, foodways operate as accompaniment: cooking becomes a way deported parents continue caring, teaching, and loving across borders. Recipes carry stories and small acts of love that travel where bodies cannot.

***Amordidas Acompañadas* reframes the kitchen as an altar, a place where memory, grief, and reconnection emerge through food**

Recipes of Survival are meals I learn directly from deported parents while cooking with them in Tijuana. Each dish carries a story of endurance, memory, and care

What I do:

- Cook side-by-side with deported parents in Tijuana
- Turn their meals into recipe cards that preserve both the dish and the story attached to it
- Travel back to the U.S. to share these recipes with their children, re-generating connection across borders

Why it matters:

Recipes work as accompaniment: a way for parents to continue caring, teaching, and loving despite separation



The Kitchen as Altar

- The kitchen becomes a sacred site of memory and care
- After my mother passed, I returned to her recipes as offerings
- Cooking becomes ritual: a way to remember, to honor, to stay connected
- The installation centers an altar placed on a kitchen table



URGENCY

- **This project responds to the urgency of the current political climate, where deportations continue to surge and families are hunted and separated every day**
- **I often searched for ways to live with the magnitude of this loss. I spent years yearning for guidance, for a protocol, for something to help me move forward.**
- **These recipes became the instructions I needed for survival. They became a way to grieve, remember, and keep loving through distance**
- **Making this work open access ensures that these lessons, stories, and methods remain publicly available for others who are navigating similar ruptures**
- **This project offers community access to food as memory, care, and accompaniment in moments of forced separation**

Community Impact

- **Creates a public, accessible archive of deportation foodways through open access**
- **Offers families separated by deportation tangible forms of reconnection through shared recipes**
- **Contributes to community healing by documenting everyday practices of care, survival, and remembrance**
- **Provides educators, advocates, and researchers with open tools for teaching about migration, memory, and family separation**
- **Grounds political understanding in lived experience, centering the stories often erased from policy debates**

In Progress & Future Directions

Where the project is now:

- Recipes gathered from deported parents in Tijuana
- Recipe cards created and shared with their US-based children
- Conceptual design of the kitchen-altar installation developed
- Open-access materials being prepared for eScholarship

Next steps:

- Continue gathering recipes and stories from deported families
- Produce installation documentation for public access
- Develop full sensory installation for 2026
- Grow the open-access archive so families, researchers, and community members can access recipes of survival

Long-term vision:

To create a public, sensory, open-access archive that re-generates connection where deportation has produced rupture