

Mary's memory of Grandma

When asked to write something about Grandma, I was unable to pinpoint just ONE specific memory...there are too many that are meaningful and all combine to evoke 'Grandma.'

One of the strongest remembrances is of course Grandma's cooking...the smell of tortillas, Spanish rice, tacos and chorizo, the scents wafting through the air and making my mouth water, since I knew I could never eat this food that was so good and made with love anyplace other than where Grandma was. One food she always served when I would visit her as a child was a kind of cake, an orange sponge cake that was store bought, but that I never ever found elsewhere. I loved that cake.

After we moved to Portland, we would all miss her cooking and she would spend endless hours preparing her famous 'care packages' for us. Dad would load us all in the car and we would drive to the Portland Airport, to the cargo receiving area and wait until the plane landed from LAX, bringing a huge box, with which we would rush home to unpack and eat, some of the food still warm. We would eat like this for days.

One of the funniest memories is of a Thanksgiving in Portland. Grandma came to visit and on Thanksgiving evening, after we were all full and lethargic, Dad made us pose for yet another Kodak moment. We sat on a bench, all with the obligatory smiles, yet we were all so full we looked pained. Dad shot the first photo, but then said, "Mark, zip up your fly!" We all of course looked at Beebite's pants and started laughing. Grandma laughed until tears were rolling down her face and she turned red with mirth. Dad shot a second picture, all of us with big smiles and Mark, looking very glum and embarrassed with his hand over his zipper. I have the first photo in my baby book, Jane got the 'post-zipper' picture in hers.

During another visit after Mom got sick, Grandma came to help Dad take care of us kids. I was not feeling well as I had a stomach ache. It was late and I was in bed and Grandma came into my room and with a small woolen cloth wrapped around her hand and rubbed my tummy in circular motions while humming a soothing song. The combination made me fall asleep and I awoke the next morning and was fine. I will always remember how she calmed me and made my stomach feel better.

I have such fond memories of Grandma and all them in one way or another would always make my stomach feel better, whether it was through food, laughter or caring for me.