

10-27-2013

## **Interview with Loretta Lizama**

Loretta Lizama

California State University, Monterey Bay

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Interviewee: Loretta Lizama  
Interviewer: Cierra Rauch & Guy Galzerano  
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Duration of Interview: 01:08:18

**Cierra Rauch 00:00**

It's 2:56 on October 27, and we're here today at 1627 Exeter Ct in Fairfield, California. I'm Cierra Rauch.

**Guy Galzerano 00:16**

I'm Guy Galzerano.

**Cierra Rauch 00:19**

Do you want to introduce yourself?

**Loretta Lizama 00:21**

My name is Loretta Lizama.

**Cierra Rauch 00:24**

Okay, so we're here with Loretta today, and we're going to talk about a few things. We're hoping you'll share a little bit about Loretta's Cafe, about your family history, about the Filipino community in Salinas. And then also if you'd like to share a bit about your time as a Filipina queen. And I know you liked to gamble when you were younger, so if you could share a little bit about that, that would be great too. Before we start, I just want to make sure that we have your consent to use this interview for any archiving purposes, with CSUMB and the Asian Cultural Experience project?

**Loretta Lizama 01:12**

That will be fine.

**Cierra Rauch 01:14**

Perfect. So, to start off with, if you could just share a little bit about your family history and how your family came to California and Salinas.

**Loretta Lizama 01:30**

Well, as far as I know, my parents were going to come to America to go to school, to college. And all I know is later on I was born, so I guess they didn't finish college, but they entered the [unclear] restaurant business, and then my father got into the business of labor contracting, because in Salinas the price of the lettuce and celery and strawberry is really flourishing with fresh vegetables. In fact, the Castroville—if you don't know of it—it's the center for—not asparagus. The place in—forgot the name of the place, but it's the asparagus center of the world. Asparagus is really a lot of agriculture [unclear] in Salinas, California, and other cities like Castroville and Salinas itself [unclear] lettuce.

**Cierra Rauch 03:34**

And your parents were involved in in the agriculture business?

**Loretta Lizama 03:38**

Yes, my father—as I recall, he was commissioned to coordinate the labor contracting for Salinas, California. And they have a [unclear] camp, and it's still there. It was [unclear] functioning, because of the World War II, and my father was hired to coordinate the function of getting the lettuce and celery at the time, contracting the Mexican—at the time, the Mexicans were hired to handle the—developing and getting the coordination of the lettuce responsibility, collecting them, or harvesting I guess the terminology is.

**Cierra Rauch 05:26**

And how old were you? Were you a child when your father was commissioned to do this?

**Loretta Lizama 05:32**

Yes, I remember. That's how we all learned how to speak Spanish.

**Cierra Rauch 05:39**

Oh, you learned how to speak Spanish?

**Loretta Lizama 05:41**

Yes, because the employees were—came from Mexico. You had the [unclear], you call them. They had different terminologies for the Mexicans, and then we had the Filipinos and their different dialects. So, if you weren't from one region that spoke Tagalog, Ilocano, or Bisayan—they were busy working and staying at the—what we call Rigunay's camp.

**Cierra Rauch 06:32**

The Rigunay's camp?

**Loretta Lizama 06:33**

Yes, it was called Rigunay's camp. And the company that owned—it still developed, still—not the restaurant, but the—

**Guy Galzerano 07:02**

It's okay. We can go on. We can move on.

**Loretta Lizama 07:06**

I'm trying to [unclear]

**Guy Galzerano 07:08**

[unclear] or—

**Loretta Lizama 07:09**

I couldn't write down some notes, because of my handwriting is not that clear.

**Cierra Rauch** 07:20

So, when did your parents become involved in the restaurant business? Was this after they were involved in agriculture?

**Loretta Lizama** 07:32

Yes.

**Cierra Rauch** 07:34

Tell me a little bit about the restaurant.

**Loretta Lizama** 07:38

Well, my father passed away, and my mother used to be co-partner and learned the business so that she was able to inherit or assign the job to coordinate the business of the [unclear]

**Cierra Rauch** 08:18

No, I'm not [unclear].

**Loretta Lizama** 08:25

My father was assigned a job. It was a lucrative job, and—

**Guy Galzerano** 08:37

Was it keeping the upkeep of the restaurant or—

**Loretta Lizama** 08:41

No, the first thing was the Rigunay's camp, where they had cockfighting done, because of the tradition. And what I recall, because I was so embarrassed to find out that the policemen would raid the Rigunay's camp when they have those cockfighting events.

**Cierra Rauch** 09:24

Why were you embarrassed?

**Loretta Lizama** 09:26

Well, because the policemen would be raiding the place, and I remember when I was entering high school, they introduced me to some students and faculty, and they said, "This is Loretta Rigunay." And they says, "Do you know the family Rigunay?" That's my father's name. And I says, "Oh no, I don't know them." [Cierra laughs] He was well known for the cockfighting events that were held there. And my mother, she cooked food so that at the cockfighting events in [unclear]. They worked hard to earn money. In fact, during the Depression I recall only had to do with food. We just always had enough food, because we raised the food [unclear] ourselves in the restaurant. I mean, the restaurant didn't come until later.

**Cierra Rauch** 10:59

So, what kind of food would your mom make and sell at the cockfight?

**Loretta Lizama** 11:05

They would sell the Filipino type food, like pancit, the adobo, and pork adobo. And they cooked the [unclear]. They're really the traditional stuff that they [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch** 11:32

The traditional Filipino food?

**Loretta Lizama** 11:34

Filipino food.

**Cierra Rauch** 11:35

So, at the cockfights, was it mostly Filipino laborers, or you mentioned Mexican laborers as well?

**Loretta Lizama** 11:43

Yes, they would [unclear]—didn't get themselves involved in that. But it was kind of—my reaction was that it was kind of cruel to have those chickens with their knives in the [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch** 12:12

So, you didn't enjoy going?

**Loretta Lizama** 12:15

No, in fact, I was the opposite of my parents. They gamble. When I go to Reno and if I lose twenty dollars, that's about it. [Cierra laughs] [unclear] they were gambling, they played the Chinese pai gow, those dominoes. And my father would lose. One night he lost ten thousand dollars.

**Cierra Rauch** 12:44

Oh, wow.

**Loretta Lizama** 12:45

They were gamblers, and I guess they'd go [unclear] with jewelry for gambling, and I'm definitely the opposite of what they were. I don't want to gamble and lose money. But they work hard in executing different aspects of business. [unclear] on the job, so to speak. And she [unclear] money, and they were generous people, because later on they—my father never got involved in the restaurant, because he died.

**Cierra Rauch** 13:46

When did he pass away, if you don't mind me asking? Do you remember the year?

**Loretta Lizama** 13:51

Yeah, he died—he was only forty-two. You know, there's a Filipino custom that you help your family to go to school. And that's why my parents came to the United States, to help their siblings.

**Cierra Rauch** 14:21  
Back in the Philippines?

**Loretta Lizama** 14:23  
Yes.

**Cierra Rauch** 14:25  
What part of the Philippines are they from?

**Loretta Lizama** 14:28  
They're Ilocanos. What's that one—the president's wife that has—

**Cierra Rauch** 14:42  
Imelda Marcos?

**Loretta Lizama** 14:43  
Yes, the shoes. She's from [unclear], and so—but the politics in the Philippines—

**Cierra Rauch** 14:56  
That's a whole nother story. [laughs] So, during the time where your mom—you said it was hard, that they did anything they could to make money, because times were hard. Were you a child, or did you have to go to work to contribute as well?

**Loretta Lizama** 15:17  
No, I'm an only child.

**Cierra Rauch** 15:19  
You're an only child? [unclear] okay?

**Loretta Lizama** 15:21  
I will say I was spoiled. I was spoiled, because I didn't have [unclear] to share. But it was lonely. It was not really fun to play as just an only child, because there's [unclear]. In fact, you know, the Filipino customs are very strict, like in the Philippines, they have their serenading custom. And when they come and sing under your window, and they let them come in the house to have refreshment. You just sit a distance from the boy, because the parents are all checking things out.

**Cierra Rauch** 16:33  
So, you grew up in Salinas, and did you go to high school in Salinas?

**Loretta Lizama** 16:40  
Yes, I went to South Salinas High. Then I went to UC Berkeley for my college.

**Cierra Rauch** 16:47  
And then how did you find yourself back in Salinas? You opened a restaurant?

**Loretta Lizama 16:55**

No, it was—I was in school, and I'd go home on the weekends. My mother was so strict that even when I was in Berkeley, I'd take the bus or the train in high school and college. And then I worked for the university for forty-five years.

**Cierra Rauch 17:23**

Oh, wow.

**Loretta Lizama 17:25**

I retired in 1994. But then with the university, with schooling and working for the UC [unclear]. I'm not a scientist. The Lord helped me get through that job. [Cierra laughs] I'm surprised the things that I planned to be. I wanted to be a teacher. My mother wanted me to be an accountant. I almost flunked the accounting class. It is difficult.

**Cierra Rauch 18:12**

It is.

**Loretta Lizama 18:13**

It's not, like, bookkeeping, you know. It's really mind-boggling that I entered as a editor of [unclear]. I learned on the job to be close to Nobel laureates. In fact, they speak English [unclear] all the time. But you learn on the job, and I'm grateful the Lord let me pass through, But I had to work hard for it.

**Cierra Rauch 19:04**

It sounds like a learning experience for sure. So, how did you—when were you involved with Loretta's Cafe? I understand that you had a cafe. Can you describe it?

**Loretta Lizama 19:18**

Yes, we had two cafes, because one was a small cafe. Then it was doing okay, that she expanded. My mother got the larger room or building. We didn't own the building. We just rented, even though we had two cafes, and my mom ran that after she discontinued her connection with the lettuce company. It was, you know, they had World War II, and there were a lot of Japanese in Salinas, and they were doing very well in their own right. They didn't want [unclear] the Japanese for more, because the Japanese were taken over by the United States and there was a group of Japanese that stayed in the—they call them—there's a terminology for it.

**Guy Galzerano 21:00**

Detention camps.

**Cierra Rauch 21:01**

Internment camps.

**Loretta Lizama 21:05**

Some of them committed suicide because they didn't want to go through that process. I remember—see, when we had the camp, they [unclear] about a month would take them to Brawley, California, for

jobs, for the wintertime. And my father would be responsible to coordinate the job through the Brawley location, and I remember the [unclear]. They were feeling that they had [unclear] Japanese that was [unclear] or affiliated or whatever, or safeguard the American people, and I would be sort of condemned, and I had to use [unclear] Filipino.

**Cierra Rauch 22:50**

Because you thought people would think you were Japanese?

**Loretta Lizama 22:55**

Yes. That's how sensitive it was.

**Cierra Rauch 22:58**

Wow. Did you have any friends, any Japanese friends during that time?

**Loretta Lizama 23:08**

Yes, I did.

**Cierra Rauch 23:09**

That had to leave?

**Loretta Lizama 23:11**

We did, and the company that hired my dad was Japanese. They were frugal [unclear]. But this Japanese that were affected by the—what do you call the camps?

**Cierra Rauch 23:45**

Internment.

**Loretta Lizama 23:46**

Internment. I had some close friends, and they were frugal in what they did and saved. But [unclear] a lot of books were written about the war, and the ones, the Japanese that were affected by these camps, that you can't tell—I mean, about a couple years after the war was over, we went to the Philippines, and we stopped by ship. We didn't fly to the Philippines. It's twenty-eight days by ship.

**Cierra Rauch 24:51**

Wow.

**Loretta Lizama 24:54**

And they were stopped in Yokohama, and I was scared, because the Japanese were very hard to deal with during the war, and they posed a threat to the Philippines.

**Cierra Rauch 25:26**

There was a lot of tension between Japanese and Filipinos during the time of war?



**Loretta Lizama** 25:31

Oh, yes. Japanese are—well, you know, I worked for the laboratory that created the atomic bomb.

**Cierra Rauch** 25:52

Around what year was this?

**Loretta Lizama** 25:58

Forty—well, the war was over '44.

**Guy Galzerano** 26:01

And that was in Berkeley as well?

**Loretta Lizama** 26:03

In Livermore.

**Guy Galzerano** 26:06

Livermore?

**Loretta Lizama** 26:07

Yes. I never thought I'd be working with this scientific lab. I don't know much about the science, but you learn. I got my daughter to work at the lab. And she [unclear] decipher the handwritten [unclear] that she [unclear] herself. [unclear] was five years. And I learned how to read the handwriting of the scientists.

**Guy Galzerano** 27:03

I'm curious about Loretta's Cafe and the gambling situation. I heard there was a gambling room in the back, or—

**Loretta Lizama** 27:14

In the Rigunay's—

**Guy Galzerano** 27:18

At the camp?

**Loretta Lizama** 27:23

—where they had the cockfighting, they'll be using the rules of the facility to play dominoes. They call it pai gow. And they would play the pai gow, and as I said, my father lost ten thousand dollars playing.

**Cierra Rauch** 28:16

And you didn't gamble at all? Or did you like to gamble a little bit too?

**Loretta Lizama** 28:22

No.

**Cierra Rauch 28:23**

No?

**Loretta Lizama 28:24**

No, not even when I go to Reno [unclear]. I limit myself to twenty dollars.

**Cierra Rauch 28:30**

Yes.

**Loretta Lizama 28:33**

You would think that you'd follow suit with the environment as such, but no, I just [unclear] opposite of them. They would play Reno games too. We just—Filipinos were noted for gambling, but it doesn't mean you have to follow their ways.

**Cierra Rauch 29:15**

Certainly enjoy other things of the culture, like the Filipino food and, you know, Filipino pageants and things like that. You kind of mentioned that you met your husband at Loretta's Cafe, so—

**Loretta Lizama 29:36**

He was in the service, and he came, found the restaurant by word of mouth. Fort Ord was there. That's the Army—

**Cierra Rauch 29:54**

The military base.

**Loretta Lizama 30:00**

Yes. And he was from Guam, and I never heard of Guam. And I don't know how come I fell in love with a guy from Guam when I didn't even know where Guam is. [Cierra laughs] I said, the Lord hooked me up with somebody from Guam when I don't even know what [unclear] [Cierra laughs]. They're like the Filipinos. They're a composite race. They're Spanish, German. They're all mixed. And they have their own language, but it's not extensive. I learned the bad words and some of the good words, but I never learned to communicate with my husband. We speak English to each other. But as I said, the custom of the Filipinos [unclear] any—it's not in their M.O. to date. The Chinese are more like that. Parents arrange their spouses to be married to—and later on, they developed to become in love with a husband. They don't date because that's not the custom to do that. But they do very well.

**Cierra Rauch 31:58**

So, were you working at Loretta's Cafe when your husband—well, at the time, he wasn't your husband, but when he came in, you were working there?

**Loretta Lizama 32:10**

I was [unclear] there helping my mother on the weekends. That was her way of controlling me.

**Cierra Rauch** 32:21

[laughs] What sort of—were you a waitress when you worked there, or—

**Loretta Lizama** 32:25

Yes, I learned on the job.

**Cierra Rauch** 32:28

On the job?

**Loretta Lizama** 32:29

Yes, helped my mother out, because she paid for my schooling.

**Cierra Rauch** 32:38

Where exactly was the cafe? Do you remember the exact location?

**Loretta Lizama** 32:44

Well, if you look at—you know where the Chinese restaurant is?

**Cierra Rauch** 32:53

The Republic Cafe?

**Loretta Lizama** 32:55

Yeah, the Republic. We were on the other end, close to a Mexican restaurant. But [unclear] predominant ones there, the Mexican ones. I think it speaks for itself. It was doing quite well as a Filipino restaurant, and that's why she commissioned or rented a larger facility, Loretta's Cafe. [unclear] in 1954. [unclear] part of college, and I lived there for the weekend [unclear]. There's also another highlight of my mother. She was a hardworking lady, and all this work, and somehow with the situation where she finished doing the bulk of the restaurant business, she somehow got six children, and one she adopted. So, I have a half-brother who's part black and Filipino. And she had girls, part Filipino. So, she had six of them that she took care of and raised. And, in fact, when my husband [unclear], they all came. We're still in contact. Three of the boys are from the same mother and father, and how [unclear] to raise them, that she, out of her generosity, raised them. And I guess, I mean, I was an only child. She got the [unclear], but she didn't want to remarry. She even took the—Gregory to the Philippines.

**Cierra Rauch** 36:07

And Gregory is one of your—

**Loretta Lizama** 36:12

He's the one that's adopted.

**Cierra Rauch** 36:13

The adopted brother? Okay.

**Loretta Lizama 36:16**

And he's part black. And she really loved him. And when my mother was ill, she wanted me to take care of him, because he was only fourteen years old when she was sick, and she wanted to ensure he would be cared for. So, we took care of him until he got out of high school and got married to [unclear] girl, because he got used to living with us and being in the Filipino environment. But being married that many years to one person [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch 37:25**

So, when your mother got sick, is that when she sold Loretta's Cafe, or—

**Loretta Lizama 37:33**

Yes, it is.

**Cierra Rauch 37:35**

That was the reason?

**Loretta Lizama 37:36**

In fact, when she died, I sold Loretta's Cafe as part of the estate that we had to handle. She was so generous with her earnings that people thought I'd be a millionaire when I had to sell my mother's estate.

**Cierra Rauch 38:17**

So, the cafe must have been really successful then. Was it a busy place?

**Loretta Lizama 38:24**

It was doing okay. I sold it to my mother's sister. I didn't [unclear] but she bought three of her sisters. That's a custom of the Filipino [unclear], bring their siblings over when they can. And so they did come, three of them. And she raised them too.

**Cierra Rauch 38:57**

Oh, wow.

**Loretta Lizama 38:59**

Yeah. She was really a generous person. But she only had me. But, you know, parents, they don't talk to you about those personal things, why they only have one or three [unclear]. People today discuss all those little details.

**Cierra Rauch 39:29**

We do a lot more [unclear] open. [laughs] So, I kind of—would your mother—was she a cook at the restaurant as well?

**Loretta Lizama 39:42**

[unclear]

**Cierra Rauch** 39:44

Or was she the main chef at Loretta's?

**Loretta Lizama** 39:46

No, she wasn't.

**Cierra Rauch** 39:48

No? There was someone else?

**Loretta Lizama** 39:49

But she's a good cook. She gained weight like [unclear]. [Cierra laughs] She did the cooking of the Filipino food.

**Cierra Rauch** 40:02

What was her specialty? What was her—your most favorite dish that she'd make?

**Loretta Lizama** 40:08

We liked the raw fish they prepared. [unclear] raw.

**Cierra Rauch** 40:25

Would you help your mom cook?

**Loretta Lizama** 40:28

Yes, I learned how to cook a little bit, but my husband did the cooking [unclear]. My sons, they prefer his cooking over my mine. My boys are my family. The children, we had four, and they did the family affairs stuff [unclear] boys like sports. [unclear] sports too, because, you know, the boys, that's all they do is watch [unclear], one after the other.

**Cierra Rauch** 41:43

So, what sort of—were you involved in the Filipino community in Salinas, Chinatown? Can you talk about that a little bit?

**Loretta Lizama** 41:55

Well, my parents were both involved with the organization called Legionarios Del Trabajo. It's the big—they support the programs that the Filipinos join in and help their countrymen in education and other activities. And I was the first queen. I don't have a picture there, but I was fourteen years old when I became the first queen.

**Cierra Rauch** 42:47

What was that experience like?

**Loretta Lizama** 42:51

Awesome.

**Cierra Rauch 42:53**

What sort of things would you do as queen?

**Loretta Lizama 42:57**

Well, like, the activities, the social activities. You sell tickets to them. [unclear] they provided a certain amount of money in ticket sales, so I didn't win for beauty.

**Cierra Rauch 43:41**

[laughs] And would the proceeds of the tickets that you sold go back to the organization?

**Loretta Lizama 43:46**

Yes, it does. And part of the donation and the sales of the tickets' percentage goes to the organization, and at the time, the first one, we sold tickets and we'd get a percentage back. But subsequently when they played the same program, they give them a car.

**Cierra Rauch 44:30**

A car?

**Loretta Lizama 44:31**

Yeah, the winner gets a car.

**Cierra Rauch 44:36**

Did you get a car?

**Loretta Lizama 44:37**

No. You had to really fork out the money to get—to win.

**Cierra Rauch 44:43**

Oh, I see.

**Loretta Lizama 44:44**

Yeah, it was a different [unclear]. But they have a picture of me when I was fourteen years old. I was queen at fourteen. I was thin.

**Cierra Rauch 45:02**

[laughs] So, did you do any other sort of Filipino cultural things? Were you involved when you were older in the Filipino community as well?

**Loretta Lizama 45:11**

No, I [unclear] too old. You'll see those pictures over there. You're about the same age range. But I was raised as a Filipino, and when I married a Guamanian, it surprised me.

**Cierra Rauch 45:35**

Did you think that you would marry another Filipino?

**Loretta Lizama** 45:39

In fact, my mother had lined up [unclear]. Well, I kind of eloped, because I didn't want to be told who to marry.

**Cierra Rauch** 45:50

You eloped?

**Loretta Lizama** 45:52

Yes. [both laugh] [unclear] program, my husband's program, the children in the program says [unclear]. And she asked Jose—that's my husband's name—to marry me. [unclear] to marry me, because my mother was gonna arrange for me to marry somebody in the Philippines.

**Cierra Rauch** 46:55

So, you were in a rush to get married.

**Loretta Lizama** 46:57

Yeah.

**Cierra Rauch** 47:06

[laughs] Were your parents upset?

**Loretta Lizama** 47:12

My mom [unclear] the door— came to [unclear] on the door.

**Cierra Rauch** 47:16

Oh no.

**Loretta Lizama** 47:20

Yes, she was upset, but later on she accepted. My husband was doing very well and doing what he's supposed to be doing, so when my grandchildren [unclear], she, of course, loved the grandchildren. But she died so early. She was only fifty-eight, but they worked so hard that they enjoyed life the way they wanted to enjoy life. You can't take that away from them. That's why, you know, [unclear].

**Guy Galzerano** 48:26

Can you tell us how you got the name for Loretta's Cafe? Was it your mother that named it after you?

**Loretta Lizama** 48:33

Yes. She took care of me. She spoiled me. By the time I got out to college, I was on my third car.

**Cierra Rauch** 48:50

Wow.

**Loretta Lizama 48:52**

[unclear]. They can't afford what we did. The Lord helped us, because I've had four sons that died of heart condition.

**Cierra Rauch 49:30**

Four sons?

**Loretta Lizama 49:31**

Yes, four sons.

**Cierra Rauch 49:32**

Of yours?

**Loretta Lizama 49:33**

Yes. I was an only child, and he came from a family of twelve.

**Cierra Rauch 49:42**

Wow.

**Loretta Lizama 49:43**

And I says, "I don't think I'm going to make that [unclear]." [both laugh] And being Catholic, we follow pretty much what we're supposed to follow. I lost four child.

**Cierra Rauch 50:13**

That must have been hard.

**Loretta Lizama 50:15**

Yes, it's been hard. Four boys. I had only one girl. She's a tough one. She's [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch 50:34**

So, when you and your husband eloped, did you get married in Salinas, or—

**Loretta Lizama 50:41**

No, we got married in Mexico.

**Cierra Rauch 50:44**

Mexico! Tijuana? Tijuana. [laughs] And you met—he came into Loretta's Cafe when you were working there. Do you remember, like, did he order something? How did he catch your eye? Do you remember?

**Loretta Lizama 51:02**

[unclear] [Cierra laughs] He actually met my mother at a function, Filipino function. And in those days, there were not too many men to—well, we weren't allowed—all the Filipino girls weren't allowed to go on dates.



**Cierra Rauch** 51:35

So, would a lot of people of other ethnic backgrounds come to Filipino events?

**Loretta Lizama** 51:44

They came to the restaurant. That was the focal point, was the—Fort Ord was open then, and there were different nationalities that came to the restaurant. I would classify my husband as love at first sight kind of thing, and I finally asked him, "You're not interested in me, are you?" [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch** 52:28

All of the soldiers in Fort Ord, people that would come in to the restaurant and court you?

**Loretta Lizama** 52:34

Yes.

**Cierra Rauch** 52:40

What did it look like in Loretta's Cafe? Do you remember—was it a big place? Was it small?

**Loretta Lizama** 52:47

Well, the first one was small, and the second one was larger, and it had more room to have more clients.

**Cierra Rauch** 53:02

Was it a busy place? Would a lot of people come to eat?

**Loretta Lizama** 53:07

Yes, we had Mexicans there with their music, because you have to cater to your clientele. And that's what we did. And my mother, she was a tough lady.

**Cierra Rauch** 53:27

So, it was mostly a lot of Mexicans would come in and eat Filipino food and listen to Mexican music?

**Loretta Lizama** 53:35

Yes, but by proportions, I think they were pretty much even. It's just the Guamanians was new to the area. Like I said, I didn't even know what a Guamanian was. I didn't think that I would fall in love with a different nationality as [unclear] at the time.

**Cierra Rauch** 54:05

Was that uncommon for—

**Loretta Lizama** 54:09

Yes.

**Cierra Rauch** 54:10

—people of other ethnicities—

**Loretta Lizama 54:12**

It was because of the war, because Guam was hit by Japan. That war was something else. Then you had the prejudism. We didn't have too many black people. They were, like, in the southern part of the states. My president—our president—[unclear]. But he's trying to do so much, and the American people are not used to spending so much to help the people. He tries to help the country. But I don't want to talk about politics right now.

**Cierra Rauch 55:22**

[laughs] So, what was Chinatown like when you were—when you spent time there? Do you remember?

**Loretta Lizama 55:28**

[unclear] a place where they sell liquor in Chinatown, on the opposite end of the Chinese restaurant. They had some Mexican owners of cafes, and then the prostitutes, very rampant over there. You have the green cards to show that you have your typical examination for the diseases that you contract.

**Cierra Rauch 56:27**

The prostitutes would have to carry—would carry those, or—

**Loretta Lizama 56:30**

[unclear] to show that they've been inoculated.

**Cierra Rauch 56:37**

Wow.

**Loretta Lizama 56:38**

You got a fresh [unclear]. [Cierra laughs] As I said, I got educated there.

**Cierra Rauch 56:58**

So, what sort of—but what did you learn? You said you got educated.

**Loretta Lizama 57:05**

The prostitutes [unclear]. They don't care who they associate themselves with, as long as they get the money.

**Cierra Rauch 57:36**

Was it a busy place in Chinatown? Would you go there just to help your mom at her cafe?

**Loretta Lizama 57:45**

Yes, [unclear]. Yes, I did.

**Cierra Rauch 57:49**

Would you go there at night for any of the nightlife, or—

**Loretta Lizama 57:54**

Yes, the nightlife.

**Cierra Rauch 57:55**

What was that like?

**Loretta Lizama 57:56**

Well, they didn't get too far with me, so other than that, somebody would explain to me though what they offered, and I just in awe. [unclear] believe it. But's that an old form of occupation.

**Cierra Rauch 58:33**

Yes. So, what else—would you and your friends go to Chinatown on your own on weekends?

**Loretta Lizama 58:46**

[unclear]

**Cierra Rauch 58:50**

Working?

**Loretta Lizama 58:52**

Yes.

**Cierra Rauch 58:57**

Was there a lot of competition, would you say, between Loretta's Cafe and the Chinese—the Republic Cafe, the Chinese restaurant down the street?

**Loretta Lizama 59:06**

No. [unclear] there's no real problem. It's just that—I probably would say is a problem, because I don't like the drinking of alcohol. [unclear] for the Mexicans, but they work there. I mean, they patronize the places to earn money to send to Mexico. They worked there to earn money to send to Mexico, like the Filipinos would send their money to the Philippines.

**Cierra Rauch 1:00:11**

So, I think that's probably—let me see if I missed anything. Is there anything else that you'd like to share about your experience working at the cafe? Like, do you remember what it looked like on the inside?

**Loretta Lizama 1:00:46**

Yes, I do. The bigger restaurant was nicer, of course. It had more room, legroom. And by and large, they didn't have any fistfights or fighting for one woman or waitress. My mother was—she was a tough lady. Even the men would stay to help when they'd close up. She was kind of known there in the place. Of course, certain foods she would fix on certain days.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:01:50

What sort of foods would she fix with?

**Loretta Lizama** 1:01:55

[unclear] barbecued goat meat. That was her specialty that they liked. I don't particularly care for it. But the seafood is always the [unclear] that would cater to the public, because they haven't eaten or prepared it at home, because it's a big deal to prepare it.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:02:33

Was the cafe open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, or was it just open for lunch?

**Loretta Lizama** 1:02:38

For lunch and dinner.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:02:40

Okay.

**Loretta Lizama** 1:02:41

Not breakfast [unclear] still getting sober. They were manageable though. And, of course, you had access to the policeman. Things are different now.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:03:27

You feel like things are different now—

**Loretta Lizama** 1:03:30

Yes.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:03:31

—than they were back then? Okay, well, I think that's good. I think we've covered all of the topics that we were hoping to discuss with you. Is there anything else that you'd like to maybe add about the cafe or about your experience in Chinatown or the Filipino community?

**Loretta Lizama** 1:04:02

Filipino community is very active. There's a lot of Filipinos in Salinas, more so than now, because they're getting old. But like in any environment that's changed, you can't—I mean, I'm scared to send my granddaughter to college because of the killings nowadays, robbing the good life. But if I have anything that I think I could add, I'll let my daughter know, and she'll let you know.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:05:11

That would be lovely. And thank you so much for arranging to make yourself available so that we can come and talk with you and, you know, I really appreciate your time.

**Loretta Lizama** 1:05:24

Well, my girlfriend was [unclear] one of the ladies here. Grace Mauricio had asked me about—do I have anything about the restaurant. And at the time, we didn't have this organized [unclear] to producing it. [unclear] wasn't quite ready yet. I couldn't help as much as I'd like to.

**Cierra Rauch** 1:06:05

No, you're helping. Absolutely. You're doing amazing. Thank you so much. It's always wonderful to get another perspective and insight into what Chinatown and the Filipino community and the various communities around Chinatown were like, and it's great that you were able to come and talk with us.

**Loretta Lizama** 1:06:27

Well, my pleasure. I was going to write some notes myself, but I've lost the control of my handwriting. It's so small, I can hardly read it. That's part of old age, but [unclear] old age. Some people who are still—my husband really was doing very well, but he's got a heart condition, which is hard to control sometimes. But he was eighty. It's still hard to believe. But if it weren't for my daughter [unclear].

**Cierra Rauch** 1:07:54

Oh, well are you ready? Do you want to—need to take a break before we start scanning photos or—Do you want to show us some of the photographs?

**Loretta Lizama** 1:08:00

Well, it's all right with me. When it comes to food, I'm ready to—

**Cierra Rauch** 1:08:10

You're ready to eat? You like to eat? Let's take a little break, have some water or something.