

A Tale of Two Kitchens (2019): A Culinary Delight in Cinematic Vision

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Chef Gabriela Cámara's Mexican restaurant Cala in San Francisco

Source: YouTube/ Netflix

Food and cinema can often make an interesting combination, especially for a place that is known for both. And yes, it's Mexico! Mexican food and films both awe us and here comes a 2019 documentary film on culinary directed by Trisha Ziff, titled '*A Tale of Two Kitchens*'.



Mexican restaurant Contramar's staff

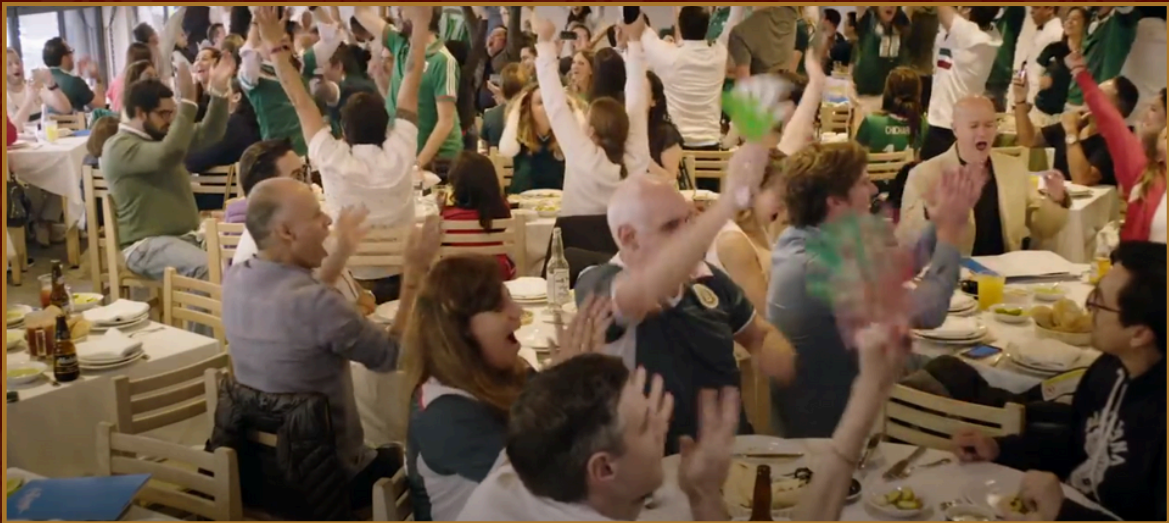
Source: YouTube/ Netflix

A Tale of Two Kitchens is a 29-minute documentary short available on Netflix that contrasts the experiences of restaurant staff in two restaurants: Contramar in Mexico City and Cala in San Francisco owned by chef Gabriela Cámara. She is a renowned chef known for using fresh, local ingredients and showcasing traditional Mexican flavors. It presents a heartwarming look at the personal and professional growth found within the restaurant industry. The film begins with a brief history of Contramar, established in 1998 to bring a taste of the ocean to city life. Unlike many culinary documentaries that emphasize high-stress environments and the pursuit of perfection, this film showcases the stories of chefs, waiters, bartenders, and bussers who find fulfillment in their work.



A scene showing cooking preparations

Source: YouTube/ Netflix



A shot of a lively scene at Gabriela Cámara's restaurant

Source: YouTube/ Netflix

The most interesting part is that they have a unique hiring practice at Cala, established in 2015. It will amaze you when you watch the restaurants' dedication to giving second chances to people with criminal records. This unconventional way with a family-like environment in both kitchens highlights the positive effects of their inclusive approach. To make it more authentic, it includes personal views, for example, Employees like Orlando Castillo, and Johnny Robles share how the restaurant's supportive culture helped them reintegrate into society. This documentary will show you how the often-overlooked narratives of restaurant workers, focusing on their personal growth, camaraderie, and the unique challenges they face within their cultural contexts.



Presentation of beautiful culinary dishes from the documentary 'A Tale of Two Kitchens' (2019)

Source: YouTube/ Netflix

Visually, they capture lively scenes of the bustling restaurants. The use of airy visuals highlights the spacious interiors, decorated with colorful artwork and stylish table settings. The cinematography emphasizes the warmth of each setting and also contrasts Contramar's formal waitstaff in jackets and bow ties with Cala's casual, all-black uniforms.

Intimate moments were shown through shots of staff preparing meals and interacting with customers, celebrating the artistry of Mexican cuisine and the personal journeys of the employees. The blend of personal stories with beautiful shots of Mexican dishes being prepared helped viewers to resonate closely.



Mexican chef Gabriela Cámara posing with her staff members

Source: YouTube/ Netflix

Food often becomes a beautiful language to understand culture, community, and passion. This documentary showed us the authentic cuisines but also we could explore the background of the restaurants which we often overlook when we visit somewhere to eat. Cinema can blend a subject to show the other sides of a picture like how kindness, inclusivity, and a sense of belonging can turn the workplace into a second home. *'A Tale of Two Kitchens'* will invite you to recognize the hard work and dedication of restaurant staff, making it a must-watch for food lovers and anyone curious about the human side of the culinary world.

The page features a dark red background with a repeating pattern of stylized floral and bird motifs. A decorative border of yellow and green leaves and flowers frames the page. A central yellow medallion is positioned at the top center.

References:

- <https://decider.com/2019/05/22/a-tale-of-two-kitchens-stream-it-or-skip-it/>
- <https://www.thereviewgeek.com/ataleoftwokitchens-filmreview/>
- <https://www.eater.com/2019/5/25/18638553/netflix-a-tale-of-two-kitchens-cala-san-francisco>

Image Citations:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAMqmsvYrHM>