

PINEDO, ENCARNACIÓN (1848–1902)

“So that you may always remember the value of woman’s work, study the contents of this volume and take advantage of my knowledge of this art, so important in the management of the family’s home.”

Encarnación Pinedo was a renowned cook; her recipes appeared in print in San Francisco in 1898 in a collection entitled, *El cocinero español*, and dedicated to her nieces. She was born into an elite Californio family who suffered the loss of land and privilege as a result of the U.S.-Mexico War (1846-1848) but maintained their memories of a romantic Spanish past. With the death of her father, the family fell on hard times and were reduced to begging the San Jose town government for a small plot on which to build a home. Nonetheless, Pinedo received an education. She never married but left her nieces an invaluable heirloom; the collection of Mexican/Spanish recipes and sound advice. “You should consider your needs,” she wrote to her nieces, “because if a woman is rich, she needs to manage; and if she is poor, she needs to know how to work.” Encarnación’s Kitchen, the modern version of *El cocinero español*, states the following: “Food, as Encarnación understood, can be a seductively delicious catalyst for social understanding, change, and even rebellious protest.”