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 advise. “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.”