

# CHRONICLE

austinchronicle.com

July 18, 2008

# food

48 SUMMER WINES  
50 RESTAURANT  
ROULETTE

## RIO'S BRAZILIAN SAUCES AND PASTRIES

[www.riosofaustin.com](http://www.riosofaustin.com)

After a recent trip to Brazil, I found myself missing many of the marvelous foods that I got used to enjoying every day. Lucky for me – and the rest of Austin – we have Rio's Brazilian cuisine. Partners **Ben Googins** and **Elias Martins** (a native of Rio de Janeiro and former Castle Hill Cafe chef) use family recipes and traditional ingredients to bring an authentic slice of Brazilian culinary culture to our city.

Their staple products are *salgadinhos*, a general term used to describe Brazilian savory pastries. They are a common street food in Brazil, typically enjoyed for lunch or as a mid-morning or afternoon snack, and also popular fare at parties. Martins currently makes six to eight different flavors and styles that change weekly and are available for sale at the Downtown Farmers' Market. The *Risoli de Frango com Requeijão* (chicken pastry with handmade cheese) and *Risoli de Camarão* (shrimp pastry) are deep-fried, half-moon-shaped pockets of goodness; the *Pastel de Ricota e Espinafre* (handmade ricotta and spinach) and *Pastel de Abobrinha e*

*Musarela* (zucchini, summer squash, and mozzarella) are baked vegetarian turnovers with an incredibly flaky crust; the *Empadão de Palmito* (hearts-of-palm cupcake) is probably my favorite, with a tangy filling of *palmito*, green peas, and carrots encased in a flaky savory cupcake. Other flavors include *Empadão de Berinjela Japonesa* (Japanese eggplant); *Kibe* (also known as *Bolinho de Carne*), a popular Brazilian take on the Lebanese favorite; and the new vegetarian *Empadão* made with soy chorizo and a plethora of veggies.

To spice them up, add a touch of Rio's unique line of sweet-spicy sauces made with Brazilian *malagueta* pepper. The 12-ounce bottles come in original, mango, and pineapple-coconut flavors. All are perfect as a zingy salad dressing, marinade, or dip, and are available at the Farmers' Market and at Whole Foods. A few select *salgadinhos* are served at Drogo's Cafe do Brasil, and they can be found prepackaged with a side of sauce – along with a fabulous Brazilian salad – at Royal Blue Grocery and Emerald City Press.

– Claudia Alarcón

Ben Googins



JOHN ANDERSON