



STRONG AMERICAS

ONE HEMISPHERE · ONE FUTURE

Words We Already Share

Some words crossed the whole hemisphere long before we did. They began in the languages of the Americas, and we have all been saying them together ever since. Here are twelve we already share.





FROM THE NAHUATL

Chocolate

It began as xocolatl in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec world, the name for a drink ground from cacao. The word traveled with the thing itself, and the whole hemisphere kept it almost untouched.

ENGLISH

chocolate

ESPAÑOL

chocolate

PORTUGUÊS

chocolate

One word, sweet in every kitchen.



FROM THE NAHUATL

Tomato

Tomatl in Nahuatl named the fruit long before it crossed any ocean. English softened the ending, Spanish and Portuguese kept the warmth of it, and the root stayed the same.

ENGLISH

tomato

ESPAÑOL

tomate

PORTUGUÊS

tomate

From one garden to every table.



FROM THE NAHUATL

Avocado

Ahuacatl in Nahuatl became aguacate in Spanish and abacate in Portuguese. English borrowed it too, a little reshaped, but you can still hear the first sound underneath all three.

ENGLISH

avocado

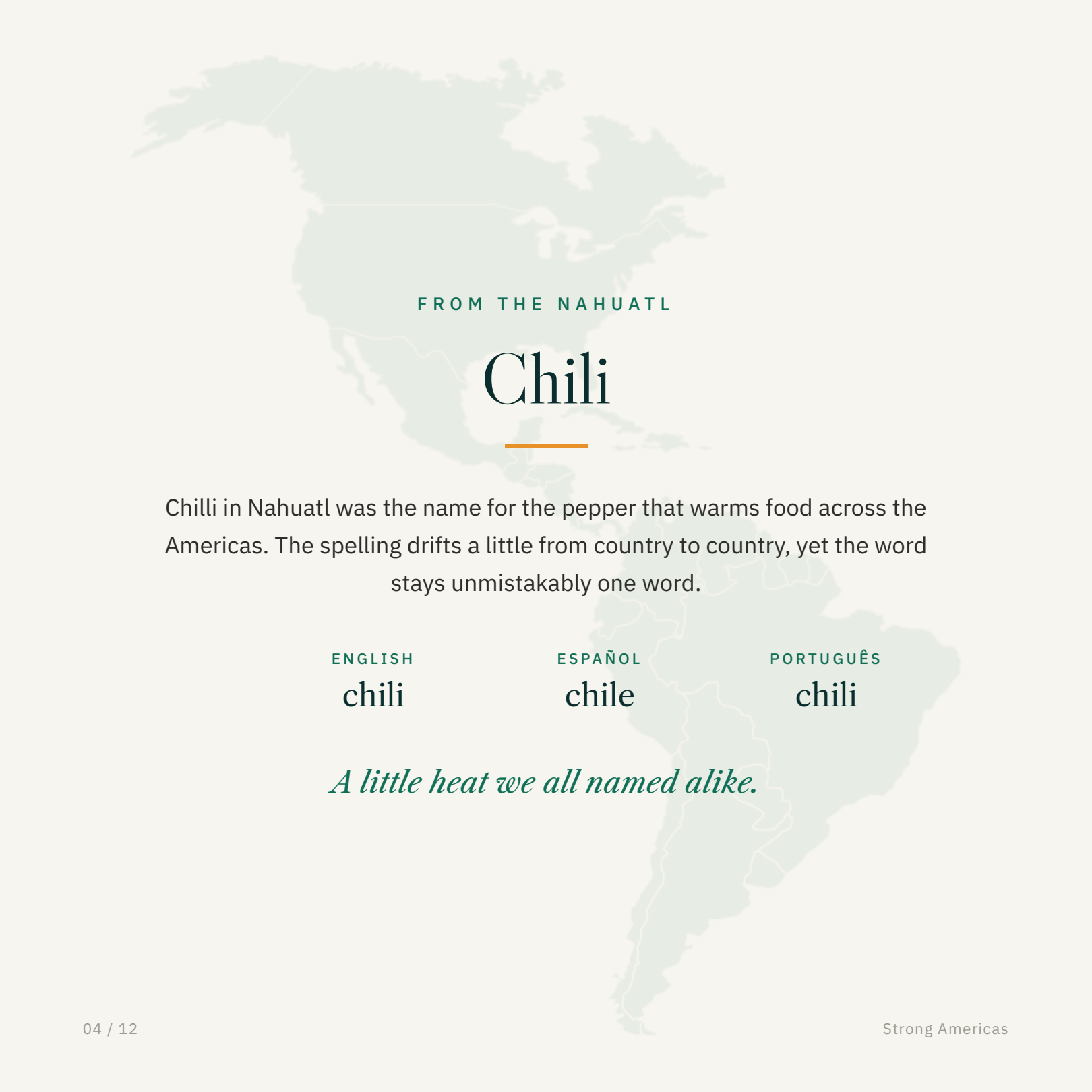
ESPAÑOL

aguacate

PORTUGUÊS

abacate

Same fruit, same root, three voices.



FROM THE NAHUATL

Chili

Chilli in Nahuatl was the name for the pepper that warms food across the Americas. The spelling drifts a little from country to country, yet the word stays unmistakably one word.

ENGLISH

chili

ESPAÑOL

chile

PORTUGUÊS

chili

A little heat we all named alike.



FROM THE TAINO

Hurricane

Hurakan came from the Taino people of the Caribbean, a name for the great storm. Spanish made it huracan and Portuguese furacao, and English carried it north, all from the same island word.

ENGLISH

hurricane

ESPAÑOL

huracán

PORTUGUÊS

furacão

One storm, one name we share.



FROM THE TAINO

Canoe

Kanawa was the Taino word for the boat carved from a single trunk. It is canoa in Spanish and Portuguese, canoe in English, and it has carried people across these waters for centuries.

ENGLISH

canoe

ESPAÑOL

canoa

PORTUGUÊS

canoa

The same boat, the same word.



FROM THE QUECHUA

Condor

Kuntur in Quechua, the language of the Andes, named the great bird of the mountains. Spanish, Portuguese, and English all kept it close, a word that still belongs to the high places it came from.

ENGLISH

condor

ESPAÑOL

cóndor

PORTUGUÊS

condor

A mountain bird, a shared name.



FROM THE QUECHUA

Puma

Puma is Quechua, plain and whole, the Andean name for the big cat of the Americas. No language that borrowed it felt the need to change a single letter.

ENGLISH

puma

ESPAÑOL

puma

PORTUGUÊS

puma

Four letters the whole hemisphere kept.



FROM THE TUPI

Jaguar

Iaguara came from Tupi, spoken along the Atlantic coast of South America. English, Spanish, and Portuguese all write it the very same way today, jaguar, with no change at all.

ENGLISH

jaguar

ESPAÑOL

jaguar

PORTUGUÊS

jaguar

One spelling, one cat, all of us.



FROM THE TUPI

Piranha

Pira anha in Tupi described the sharp little river fish. Portuguese and English keep the spelling piranha, Spanish writes it piraña with the familiar tilde, and it is plainly the same word in all three.

ENGLISH

piranha

ESPAÑOL

piraña

PORTUGUÊS

piranha

One river fish, one shared name.



FROM THE TUPI

Tapioca

Typyoka in Tupi named the starch pressed from cassava root. The word passed into Spanish, Portuguese, and English unchanged, and so did the food that has fed families here for generations.

ENGLISH

tapioca

ESPAÑOL

tapioca

PORTUGUÊS

tapioca

From the root, a word we all kept.



A WORD THAT TRAVELED

Potato

This one has a twist worth telling. It traces to the Taino word batata, carried into Spanish as patata. Along the way the name shifted between two crops, and in the Andes the potato has its own Quechua name, papa. Even so, batata still lives on, plainly, in the Portuguese word today.

ENGLISH
potato

ESPAÑOL
patata

PORTUGUÊS
batata

One root word, an honest journey.



Say one out loud.

These words were a gift from the first peoples of the Americas to the whole world. We have been speaking them together all along.

Borders define our nations. Common ground defines our neighborhood.

One hemisphere. One future.

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