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BEARD BITES

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THE BIWEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER OF THE
JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION

IN THIS ISSUE

EAT THIS WORD

Piloncillo

What? Sugar cone. Mexicans have long used piloncillo to sweeten their *café de olla*, an earthy espresso invigorated by cinnamon and citrus. Also known in South America as *panela* or *panocha*, piloncillo is cane sugar juice that has been melted into a dense syrup and then poured into cone-shaped molds. Once solid, these small caramel-colored cylinders are pliable enough to be grated, usually with the side of a serrated knife, or crushed in a *molcajete* (a traditional mortar and pestle). Piloncillo imparts a unique flavor with hints of smoky molasses and deep mineral notes that distinguish it from traditional refined white sugar. Renowned modern Mexican chef Richard Sandoval uses the versatile ingredient in savory dishes like seared sesame-crusting tuna or on crunchy *buñelos* layered with fresh whipped cream. Alejandro Rojas of Sal y Fuego will highlight this exotic sugar at the Beard House with flambéed finger bananas.

When? May 1, 2007: Mayan Riviera Dinner [>>>](#)