The Adventures and Misadventures of the foods that changed the world
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Aventuras y desventuras de los alimentos que cambiaron el mundo is an illustrated book for children about a series of fifteen foods from the vegetal kingdom, which combines a lot of information in very well administered with a fun tone, both in texts and visually. The book is recommended for readers 8 year old and up, but it is very attractive in its design and colors, making it a good option for parents reading to younger readers. Each section of the book dedicates four fully illustrated pages (2 full pages) to each "star plant" (11), structured from a geographical and historical approach: the first half consists of eight foods that were brought to the American continent, and the second half consists of the remaining seven, which were taken from America (to Europe). There is a final section with a list of other resources for readers interested in learning more about food, with approachable explanations about each source contents.

The first part of the book, preceded by a map that shows all foods in this section, includes:

- trigo (wheat)
- olivo (olive tree)
- arroz (rice)
- vid (grapevine)
- café (coffee)
- caña de azúcar (sugar cane)
- plátano (plantain)
- pimienta (pepper)

The second part of the book, preceded by a map that shows all foods in this section, includes:

- maíz (corn)
- pimiento (bell peppers)
- patata (potato)
- cacao (cocoa)
- tomate (tomato)
- vainilla (vanilla)
- alubia (bean)

Each entry begins with a one page (or 1.5 page) text that introduces each food, usually connecting them to daily life experiences (such as "¿Qué has comido hoy en el desayuno?" [What did you have for breakfast today?] to begin talking about wheat, or "¿Conoces a alguien a quien no le guste el arroz" [Do you know anyone who does not like rice?] in the rice section). Others begin with historical facts on funny or curious anecdotes. The tone of all texts is fun and informative, and most texts are very short (being the introductory one the longest).

Each double page is colorful and abundantly illustrated, and the first introductory text is accompanied with blurbs and infographics that gives each page its own dynamism. These include a diverse range of pieces of information about each food. Readers can find there historical facts, fun facts, poems, quotes by famous characters, recipes, geographical and economical information, where foods come from, and what countries produce them, among others. The overall tone of all texts is entertaining and appealing.

Beyond the general tone, and more focused on the content, two aspects should be underlined. First, it reveals information about varieties of foods that are very common in most American daily diets. For example, it refers to and shows wide varieties of potatoes, beans, and plantains and bananas. Although all very common, little is known about the diversity of each of them. Second and more importantly, the book openly addresses delicate ethical matters involved in the production, circulation and consumption of these foods, as well as in history, such as slavery, child labor, endangered animal species, and global warming. Not being the explicit focus of the book, these aspects are not ignored but carefully and conscientiously mentioned when needed.

One of the most important achievements of this book is how it locates each food historically and geographically, and the engaging manner in which that location is achieved. The combination of varied texts with infographics and pictures, along with how texts are written, makes each page both easy to read and memorable. In this sense, it should be noted that this book received the I Premio Iberoamericano al Mejor Libro Informativo para Niños (First Spanish American Prize for the Best Informative Children's Book). Although the general point of view of the book is clearly located in Spain, the book is easily translatable for an American public, choosing some local examples and switching or adjusting some explicit references (such as deictic expressions such as here, there, bring, take, etc.).

Aventuras y desventuras de los alimentos que cambiaron el mundo is a deeply informative, visually engaging, and narratively entertaining book, with a careful ethical approach. Teresa Benéitez and Flavia Zorrilla did a very impressive job at addressing a young audience with a tone that respects their intelligence and awakens their interests, enriching a quotidian topic—such as common foods eaten every day—with a complex perspective that integrates diverse sources of information in a very appealing result.