

by Charles Marcanetti

Casa Tequila

It's 1958, a small West Coast studio band quickly records a song with only one word in it, and for the next 16 weeks, most of which were at number 1 on the charts, America listened to the Champs' smash hit, *Tequila!*

Now, today, I offer you all one word to brighten your lunch or dinner, and no, I am not saying you should drink your meal, I am saying the word is "Tequila!" I am recommending the Casa Tequila in Coral Springs (and, if the other Casa Tequilas are just as good, they will also be a delight for you).

As with so many Mexican restaurants, customers dine in a party-like atmosphere. There's upbeat music playing, the décor is "happy" and the dining floor is bright but not overpowering. The entire eatery is spotlessly clean and there is plenty of room between tables, so there's no claustrophobia, clamoring, or overhearing your neighbors.

Casa Tequila has a great mixed drink menu and they absolutely know how to prepare each one expertly (especially the ones with, shall I say it, tequila). Being a rebel though, I had the Mojito (rum-based) and it was delicious.

Our waiter for the evening was Ever, who was ever-present and ever invisible; a perfect blend. He helped us understand what each dish was and what degree of spiciness each had (though each dish can be adjusted to suit each patron's pallet).

Casa Tequila makes several soups "to order" and "from scratch" and with that boast I decided to put them to the test. I ordered the Seafood Soup, which is made with shrimp, scallops, crab legs, fish, octopus, and vegetables, served in a mellow briny-broth with fresh tomatoes, onions, and cilantro. It was perfect.

I ordered the Ceviche Salad made with shrimp cooked in fresh lime juice with onion, cilantro, tomatoes, and mango. I love Ceviche. Casa Tequila's is properly called a salad because it is thin, cool, and



crisp. You will want to drink the remaining liquid (I did) and, since it is light, there will still be plenty of room for the "real" food.

Our waiter, Ever, next recommended the fresh Guacamole. I thought fresh meant made with avocado bought that day. Actually it does, but at Casa Tequila it also means created right before your eyes, at your table, using whole avocados, tomatoes, cilantro, onions, fresh lime juice, and other spices prepared as entertainment much like a Hibachi chef would do in a Japanese restaurant. Thoroughly enjoyable, titillating multiple senses.

The Taco Salad, which is a traditional Mexican starter, is made in a crispy flour tortilla shell with ground beef, chicken, or picadillo and we all loved it.

I can also recommend the steak or chicken fajitas made in a sizzling skillet and served with sautéed vegetables.

We tried (and loved) the Dos Amigos which is either grilled carne asada or pollo

asada and comes accompanied with four shrimps wrapped in bacon. Of course they come with rice, beans, and sour cream.

Since I was reviewing a Mexican restaurant I tried those dishes that are called traditional and the Quesa Tacos (3) made with melted cheese, carne asada, specially seasoned, served with whole beans and homemade hot sauce is fabulous.

My confession for the month is that I love burritos. I eat them all the time. If they were not good I would tell you. The burritos at Casa Tequila are wonderful. They are somewhat spiced and, unlike the bland burritos served in many so-called Mexican restaurants (to accommodate the American tastes, or, so we're told), these have a little kick. To me, if you are offering a certain type of food it should be offered as it is meant to be made, not simplified for this pallet or that pallet. It is the job of the chef to educate the customer. It will result in a loyal following and grateful diners. I am completely sold on the ones offered here.

My standard burrito fare is Burrito Relleno made using a soft flour tortilla filled with chile relleno, rice, and beans, and covered with enchilada sauce of chopped tomatoes then sprinkled with Parmesan cheese. You should try different ones even though these are my favorites. Go ahead, experiment. Gamble. Venture into unexplored territory. The burritos are very special and your experience will be worth it.

The desserts are a fabulous end to an enjoyable evening, whether it's the apple chimichanga, flan, or fried ice cream, your sweet tooth will be sated. I will return to Casa Tequila whenever I am anywhere near the Magnolia Shoppes in Coral Springs. Join me. Tequila! 🍹

Casa Tequila, 9617 Westview Drive, Coral Springs, FL 954-340-4611

