



Sometimes what is meant as a compliment sounds like anything but. So that there is no confusion, what I am about to say is offered as high praise, given with much respect and admiration not only for this restaurant but also, and perhaps more importantly, to the Mexican-American population, to Mexicans around the world who bring a taste of their homeland to the faraway places they travel, and to the residents of Mexico, a land steeped in history, culture, tradition, and fabulous food creations.

And so I say lovingly, that to call Mexican cuisine, however prepared, “gourmet” is almost an insult to Mexicans because the very essence of Mexican cooking speaks to hominess, family, friends, sharing, and joy. Gourmet sounds like an affectation. Gourmet sounds highfalutin. Gourmet sounds like a separation of the haves from the have-nots. And, dear friends, Mexican food is the reverse of that. It is the embracing of different tastes, different spices and herbs, and meats, fowl, and fish made to be enjoyed — not diagnosed. It is meant to be experienced holistically and not separated from the environment, the people at the dining table, or the time of year, day of the week, or occasion.

Los Tacos by Chef Omar ought to be called gourmet without any of the negative connotations attached. The food is quite simply fantastic and quite simply — typically Mexican, in the truest sense.



by Charles Marcanetti

LOS TACOS

by Chef Omar



South Florida has an abundance of fast-food Mexican places, mostly franchises, and I really enjoy them. Though the restaurant names are different, the menus vary very little, and I actually thought that what I was served was the extent of Mexican food. Wow! I was so wrong.

Also, Coral Springs is rapidly becoming a mecca for international foods. Indian, Peruvian, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, American, and now Mexican restaurants dot the commercial strips. It's great for us, great for the locals and visitors, great for families, and great for me, as I get to sample foods from around the world and I barely have to leave home.

Los Tacos by Chef Omar is a mini-chain – I think Chef Omar now has three. I'm betting he can't open them fast enough, as his eating public is likely demanding them.

So, why am I so gaga over such a simple formula? It's how Omar perfected the items and balanced the spices and kept the decor simple but inviting. It is also how he staffs his eateries. On our review night Vanessa served us. She is fluent in English/Spanish and fluent in each and every item's ingredients and the expected results of the blends, such as smooth on the palate but warm in the tummy, or hot on the



tongue but quickly dissipating to sweet. For the sake of fairness I must reveal that Vanessa is not Mexican. She is Puerto Rican. I tell you this so you will know that food servers come in all sizes, shapes, and backgrounds. It is up to each one to master the art of serving. Vanessa has succeeded.

I am not going to spend much time discussing the particular dishes, although Omar spends much time preparing them and fine-tuning them. My reasoning is simple: Mexican cooking revolves around using few ingredients per item and balancing them to achieve the desired result. I don't enjoy writing about the use of chili peppers offset with a sweet spice or hot sauces balanced with avocado; I'm gambling that you agree. I am gambling that, like me, you want to know if this place is worth going to. It most assuredly is.



What I am hoping you want answered is this: Is Los Tacos by Chef Omar a place I and my family will enjoy? Yes. Is Los Tacos by Chef Omar a place where the clientele is seeking a fun evening in addition to great food? Yes. Is it bright, clean, and festive? Yes, yes, yes.

Finally, the one thing we all want to be comfortable knowing is that the food is fresh. Omar uses as many locally grown ingredients as are available. He shops daily to assure freshness. His meats are selected for their tenderness, color, complexity, and use (no sense in using breast meat chicken if the recipe calls for wings). Olé! 🇲🇽

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