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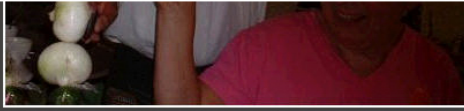
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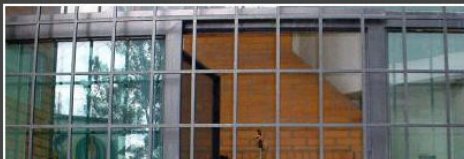


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Awed by the sword, Amazonia, Morelia



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Amazonia Swordsmen, Morelia
Cooks and servers, Restaurante Amazonia,
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20-OCT-2005

Sopa de Gallina a Doña Mary, Pátzcuaro

Sopa de Gallina, in the restaurant "Doña Mary", on the Libramiento outside of Pátzcuaro. This place was started by some friends from México City, to serve Hen Soup, D.F. style. The place is simple but very clean. If you like chicken soup, you'll love this. It's a large bowl of broth, with garbanzos, rice, and the cut of chicken of your choice.

This one is for the adventurous: it's the hen's reproductive apparatus, so that the bowl comes with little, unborn eggs in the soup. I chose the pechuga, or chicken breast version.



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Comal Cookery: Fresh Tortillas

We'll go out of the way for freshly griddled corn tortillas.

Whether at a sit-down Mexican restaurant, a taco cart or a vendor at a Farmers market, there's no comparison with watching someone roll out balls of corn dough, or *masa*, pressing the dough flat, and then cooking the discs on a scorching hot griddle.

We watch the tortillas puff up and brown from the heat of the *comal* and anticipate what they'll be filled with, from carnitas and chicken to chorizo and machaca.

— E&D

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China Poblano by Max Jacobson



China Poblano's Open Kitchen

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Most major Vegas casinos offer Chinese food, if not in a sit down restaurant, then in a Food Court, in a place like Panda Express. Many consider Mexican food de rigueur as well, when plans are drawn up to build the property.

Cosmopolitan Las Vegas has dealt with these demands in the unique way that befits an imaginative twenty-first century business plan. At China Poblano, a new Chinese/Mexican cafe, you have your baos and tacos, and eat them, too.

The restaurant belongs to Jose Andres, the peripatetic Washington DC based chef who also runs the tapas bar, Jaleo, just upstairs. At first, it may strike you as a goofy concept. But as you eat your way through its menu, (not literally, of course, unless your saliva is overly acidic), it all begins to make sense.

The menu tells us that (sic) "Spanish galleons that first sailed the Pacific in 1565 brought spices and fruit to Mexico, and New World peppers to the Middle Kingdom." Well, perhaps that is a stretch, but I can attest to similar aesthetics in the cooking of the two countries, so the connection doesn't seem all that strange.

The wonderfully eclectic décor will get you in the mood. LED panels flashing such luminary faces as those of Chairman Mao and the Dalai Lama are the backdrop for rustic wooden tables, holographic images, a noodle and dim sum bar, and an open Mexican kitchen, where teams of female chefs shape and cook tortillas for "street tacos" on comals.

As you approach the restaurant, you'll see a take-out window and a sign that reads "Mexican Food." You can order such things as lengua, or tongue tacos, from this window, as well as more conventional meat preparations such as carnitas and chicken. They'll give you a Chinese steamed bun to eat while strolling, as well. I'd venture that there isn't another such take-out stand in this country, or maybe the world.

It's hard to say where all this began. Jose Andres, who worked at Spain's elBulli, and is sort of an alchemist as well as chef, may have taken a page from such American chefs as David Chang in New York, or the man who started the Korean taco truck, Kogi, in Los Angeles.

