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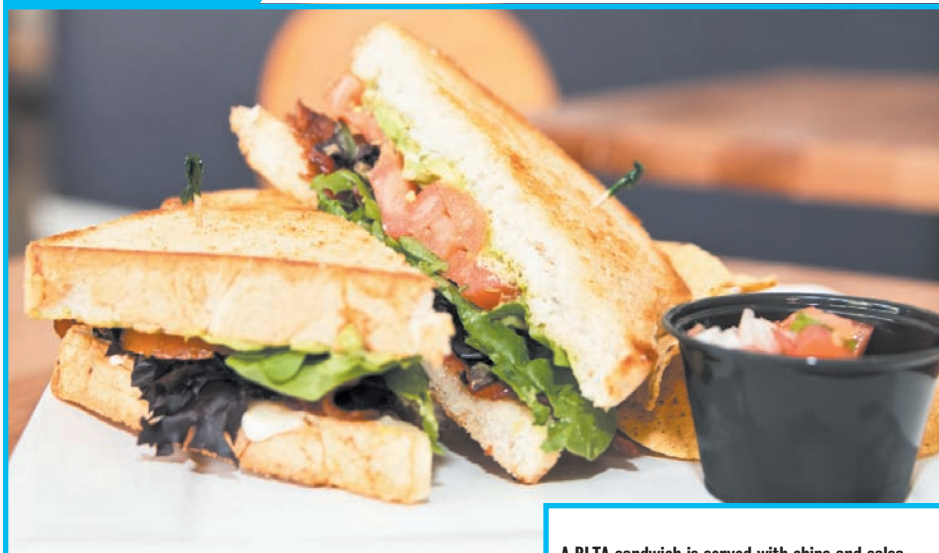
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## FOOD

BY TODD SOUTH



A BLTA sandwich is served with chips and salsa.  
PHOTO/ALLISON YOUNG

## Back to basics

### Long departed Deux Gros Nez was Reno's

first real coffeehouse in 1985, but Java Jungle followed close behind in 1990. I loved banging on the Jungle's beat-up piano back then, and it became home to one of the longest running open mics in town. It changed hands a decade later without losing its funky vibe, then changed a bit with an ill-fated rebranding. The second owner recently chose to sell to some folks who've gone back to the coffeehouse basics with Cafe Capello—short menu, welcoming space and the eclectic mix of patrons you'd expect in the Riverwalk district.

Breakfast and lunch items are served from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Pastries supplied by Rounds Bakery are served until evening close, or when they sell out. The coffee is roasted by the owner, and in hindsight I should have tried a straight-up hot cup o' joe to get a proper feel for his product. On my July midday visit, the promise of cold brew (\$3.50) with a blueberry scone (\$2.75) sounded more inviting, but the java was beyond weak. Served over ice, there was just a hint of robust coffee flavor, akin to one of those non-caloric fizzy beverages that may have brushed up against fruit in a casual meeting. The scone was soft, packed with blueberries and pretty much perfect.

The same friendly fellow who took our order then donned an apron and set to cooking in the back. Though there were plenty of beverages prepared by the one other barista on hand, we waited on food for a considerable amount of time. Here's hoping during an actual meal rush there's more than one hand in the kitchen. And I

sincerely mean that, because the food we eventually received was quite good.

Though tempted by breakfast items, my brunch partner went with the BLTA—bacon, lettuce tomato and avocado (\$8). The thick sourdough was grilled golden brown, cradling fat slices of tomato, mixed greens, a pile of hot and fresh thick-sliced bacon, uplifted by a decent avocado smash and slightly chunky garlic aioli. The garlic was a surprise (unmentioned on the menu), but definitely a plus. Served with tortilla chips and a fresh *pico de gallo*, it was a great plate of lunch.

A plate of three carne asada street tacos (\$7) were so loaded with meat, *pico de gallo* and guac, they were daunting to lift and eat. After a squirt of fresh lime juice and a dose of fantastic salsa verde, we managed to put them down without too much mess. The meat was slightly chewy, the seasoning solid. The salsa was a perfect mix of lime, chili, tomatillo and tons of cilantro. The guacamole was simple, chunky and plentiful. Damn good tacos, you've just got to embrace the mess and employ plenty of napkins.

There's a breakfast burrito on the menu, but I went with the carnitas lunch option (\$9) Grilled just as beautifully golden brown as the BLTA, it was a pleasant sight. And, man, it tasted just as good—crispy with completely melted cheese, mashed black beans and great guacamole and salsa. The pulled pork was super plentiful, moist and had plenty of flavor. Regardless of minor missteps, I will definitely return for one of the most satisfying burritos in town. □

### Cafe Capello

248 W. First St., 410-6228

Cafe Capello is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Learn more at [cafecapello.com](http://cafecapello.com).