

The Art of Storytelling

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4 WEEK WRITERS' WORKSHOP FOR

Novel Excerpts · Short Stories · Creative Non-Fiction · Genre Writing

Level II: (One Opening) September 9 - 30, Mondays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Level I: (Registration currently open) October 21 - November 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

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MICHAEL CROFT



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FOOD

BY TODD SOUTH



Señor Tequila's *Camarones al gusto* can be served spicy, or *a la diablo*.
PHOTO/ALLISON YOUNG

Sunday service

Some of the best food and service in Reno can be found tucked away in humble environs at recently opened Señor Tequila's. Taking over from a previous restaurant in an industrial neighborhood, they've done a nice job refurbishing the place. It was perfect for a Sunday family dinner after high exertion at a trampoline fun house.

To start things off, complimentary tortilla chips and pico de gallo were accompanied by warm *chicharones*—just the things to accompany a rocks margarita (\$7) garnished with blood orange and fresh mint. We also ordered a *cazuela* (\$12), an earthenware crock filled with tequila, grapefruit soda and fresh slices of grapefruit, lime, and orange; and a La Llorona (\$10), named after the tale of “the weeping woman” of Latin American folklore. Usually a take on a pisco sour, this expression involved tequila, mango, jalapeño and chile/lime/salt on the rim. All were quite good, but the citrus/tequila loaded, clay booze bowl should be shared with a friend or two.

Queso fundido (\$7) was next, with plenty of spicy chorizo atop a sea of stretchy, melted cheese. Great on both chips and fried pork skin. A dozen *ostiones* (oysters) (\$16) served with plenty of lemon and medium hot sauce were large, fresh and briny. Further, a couple of orders of *ceviche* (\$7 each) featured a pair of heavily laden tostadas on each plate, accompanied by half of a sliced avocado. The citrus-cured fish version was good, but on request my pulpo-loving grandson received a great mix of octopus, shrimp, and fish at no extra charge.

Camarones al gusto (\$15), i.e. “shrimp to the taste” was ordered *diablo* style, served with a ton of rice and salad. The rice was fine, and the prawns were good in a thick, medium hot sauce. But the salad had—unexpectedly—been dressed in the house habanero sauce—a delicious-yet-devilish pile of lettuce, tomato, cucumber and onion.

I love Mexican vegetable and meatball soup, but *sopa de albondigas o pescado* (\$13) was new to me. The large balls of minced whitefish in a savory, spicy broth were quite tasty, and the side bowl of onion, cilantro, lemon and dried chiles to punch it up were a nice touch. My 12 year-old nephew played it safe with the kid's meal of *tiras de pollo con papas* (\$5), two chicken planks with fries and ketchup. He said they were “fine” and made a brave face as we slurped down raw oysters. I have previously seen him eat Caesar salad, so there's hope.

I went with *chuleta de res* (\$15), a thin, bone-in, marinated beef chop topped with grilled Cambray onion and jalapeño and sides of salad, rice, *frijoles* and an exemplary guacamole. The meat was akin to *carne asada*, the veg charred and tender, and the beans had plenty of flavor.

My son chose the *molcajete el santi playero* (\$25), translated as a big lava rock bowl filled with delicacies you might enjoy on a particularly attractive beach. It was served hot and bubbling, the spicy mix of red sauce and melted cheese supporting a complement of head-on shrimp, mussels, clams, scallops, fish and crab legs. I've had good and not-so-good seafood *molcajete*, but this was among the top contenders. He declared it to be one of the best meals he's ever had.

Despite being pleasantly stuffed, we shared a couple of orders of fresh, warm *churros* dusted in cinnamon sugar (\$4 each), with caramel and dark chocolate dipping sauces—a sweet end to our Sunday fun day. □

Señor Tequila's Mexican Kitchen & Cantina

1490 E. Fourth St., 384-2933

Señor Tequila's Mexican Kitchen & Cantina is open Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Happy hour is from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.