

DINING OUT

Old World MEETS NEW

NEW AGAVE DISHING OUT AUTHENTIC MEXICAN FEEL

BY R.H. DUKE • PHOTOS BY JENNA BODNAR

A message on the menu at the colorful Agave restaurant in the Canyon Pointe Center reads “Hecho en Mexico” (made in Mexico).

And so true. As the only aspects of the restaurant not authentic is the basic construction material, such as cement, stucco, and nails, as well as Summerlin resident and restaurant developer Michael Corrigan.



Agave's iron and wood doors, wall tiles, metal railings, hand-blown colored glass, artifacts, lighting and much more were custom designed and hand-crafted by artisans throughout the Guadalajara region of Mexico.

The stunning building, with elliptical and circular walls, consists of authentic details that project intense characteristics. The entrance, with its doors, Cantera-style stone, accent lighting and landscape featuring imported agave plants, sets the mood for old-world-meets-new-world dining.

The interior design further enhances authenticity. Three slightly elevated seating levels, and a large bar, are highlighted by intense Mexican, rose-painted walls. The large booths, covered with rose-pattern fabric, complement the color scheme. Four interior wood/metal/glass doors open to a rustic and comfortable enclosed patio that features four fireplaces, tables, and stone-bench seating.

Corrigan has brought a unique dining environment. One so rich in authenticity that Agave's traditional recipes, vibrant ambiance, bold flavors and exceptional tequilas are expected.

A top-level management team positions Agave to ensure the level of service, and authenticity, that Corrigan envisioned. The core of the business operation includes Matthew Silverman, corporate executive chef formerly of the Wolfgang Puck Group; Juan Saldana, chef de cuisine, a Mexican native and protégée of Mark Miller, and the former Coyote Café at the MGM Grand; Eduardo Gonzales, master tequilero who was recruited from Mexico; and Casey Reid, general manager formerly of Tremezzo, and Elements restaurants at the Aladdin.

You can expect authentic Mexican cuisine, with a twist.

"The combination of imported ingredients are levels above typical Mexican fare," Silverman says.

"Our signature rock shrimp chili relleno is coated with corn meal, resulting in a crisp texture, that does not absorb oils as those prepared in egg batter," Silverman says. "And our shrimp and crab stacked enchilada is uniquely layered and accented with sweet corn-chili enchilada sauce served with micro greens on top."

Don't miss the outstanding birria de chivo soft tacos. The goat meat is marinated with 12 different chilies and achiote paste and cooked eight hours in a tomato base.

And for an explosive and unique flavor, the carne asada is marinated in Mexican dark beer, fresh orange juice, onions, cilantro and soy sauce.

Although most of the plates are served with traditional refried beans and Mexican rice, one signature dish, oven roasted pork chops, is served with pozole gratin and spaghetti squash.

The bar features more than 60 tequilas, including blanco, reposado, anejo, and premium tequilas. Gonzales, a world-renowned tequilero, understands the nuances and method of distillation.

Margaritas use specially infused tequila, and some of the unique cocktails are original recipes created by Gonzales.

"We use only fresh fruits, hand-squeezed limes, natural sugars and 100 percent Agave tequila in our drinks," he says.

Summerlin's Howard Hughes Corporation singled out Corrigan to develop a unique restaurant. And now Summerlin has an exciting Mexican restaurant the community can call its own.

For an authentic Mexican dining experience, yet unique to the community, visit Agave Comida y Tequila at 10820 West Charleston Boulevard. Open 24 hours serving breakfast, lunch, dinner and late night. Phone 214-3500. ■



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