

North of the Border pleases the palate



Enchilada burrito surrounded by chips.

by Diana Saenger

North of the Border is a new restaurant at Viejas Casino on the upper level. Open three weeks, North of the Border is drawing raves from customers for its food and décor. The stylish and intimate space offers much for the eye to see from walls with wonderful graphics, wall covering in what looks like snake skin and colorful titles covering a pole that announces tacos. The lighting is soft and focused and even the multi-colored floor boards are vibrant and add atmosphere to the room.

Casino Shift Manager Lou DiBella said the restaurant is doing well. "We're very proud that all the design and work was done in-house," he said. "We're getting lots of good feedback about it."

The menu is simple, but the food far exceeds that of a

typical taco shop, yet at very reasonable prices. Six different tacos are offered, none over \$5.25. One diner told me she really enjoyed her fish taco and found it very fresh. Burritos come in 11 choices and the A LA Carte menu features tostadas, quesadillas and side options. A help-yourself condiment bar at the front lets eaters finish off their own plates.

Combination Plates come with rice and beans and offer several choices of items including carne asada fries. I was surprised by the Carne Asada plate I ordered that came with rice and beans and several side condiments. The Carne Asada was the best tasting and most tender I have ever had. There was plenty of food for only \$7.50. The menu items are excellently seasoned and inspired by a blend of flavors and spices from North of the Border. Viejas Sou Chef Roger Hernandez is partially responsible for the fine tasting

menu items. Beverage options offer several choices including domestic and imported beer.

Tim Babbitt, the Food and Beverage Manager of North of the Border, is partly responsible for the restaurant's success. He's a moving machine, constantly checking on diners to make sure their food is right and enjoyable; keeping the room looking top shape and at times helping the staff so that all customers get first rate food and service.

"I'm really enjoying this restaurant," he said. "It's fun, we have great food, a great staff and it's a terrific spot for our guests to set and relax and enjoy the ambiance of the Casino."

North of the Border is open Sunday – Thursday, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 a.m. Patrons are reminded everyone must be 18 years of age or older to dine in the casino.



Photo of staff: Food and Beverage Manager Tim Babbitt, Sou Chef Roger Hernandez, Tyler Tucker, (far right) Donna Weeding, (back) Julian Matthews, Juan Herrera, Refugio Rodriguez. Photo credits: Diana Saenger



Snakeskin walls meet wooden slats with art.



North of the Border decor at the entrance.

COMBINATIONS	
<i>(All served with rice and beans)</i>	
#1 - 1 Taco, 1 Enchilada.....	\$6.00
#2 - Tres Enchiladas.....	\$7.50
#3 - Carne Asada.....	\$7.50
#4 - Dos Tacos.....	\$6.75
#5 - 2 Rolled Tacos and 1 Enchilada.....	\$6.50
#6 - Enchilada Burrito.....	\$7.25

A LA CARTE	
Bean Tostada.....	\$2.75
Chicken Tostada.....	\$3.00
Carne Asada Tostada.....	\$3.75
Carnitas Tostada.....	\$3.00
Machaca Tostada.....	\$3.25
Cheese Quesadilla.....	\$4.00
Chicken Quesadilla.....	\$4.50
Rice.....	\$2.00
Beans.....	\$2.00
Plain Nachos.....	\$4.25
Nacho Extraordinaire.....	\$7.00
Carne Asada Fries.....	\$6.25
Nacho Fries.....	\$6.75

TACOS	
Picadillo.....	\$2.50
Carne Asada.....	\$3.00
Chicken.....	\$2.50
Carnitas.....	\$2.50
Fish.....	\$3.00
Roll (3).....	\$3.25
Roll (5).....	\$5.25

BURRITOS	
Picadillo.....	\$4.00
Carne Asada.....	\$4.75
Chicken.....	\$4.00
Carnitas.....	\$4.00
Mixed.....	\$4.75
Bean and Cheese.....	\$3.00
California.....	\$5.25
Enchilada Burrito.....	\$4.75
Mucho Machaca.....	\$5.25
Fish.....	\$6.00
Nacho.....	\$5.25

BEVERAGES	
Domestic Beer.....	\$4.00
Import Beer.....	\$4.50
Coca-Cola Bottle.....	\$2.00
Aguas Frescas	
Oreochito, Jamaica and Tamarindo.....	\$2.50
Orange Bang.....	\$2.50
Margarita.....	\$5.00

Hours of Operation
 10am - 10pm Sunday - Thursday
 10am - 2am Friday and Saturday



North of the Border decor.



Inside North of the Border.