



Carlio, a new Mexican restaurant in South Williamsburg, does a good job with the standards, including fish tacos.

ex-celent

Newcomer lives up to its name

By Kristen V. Brown
for The Brooklyn Paper

Mexican eateries may proliferate in South Williamsburg, but good Mexican food is still about as common as non-controversial bike lanes. The newly opened Carlio, however, is not just good Mexican — it's revelatory. From a group of former Bonita alumni, the menu at Carlio is lovingly prepared by cooks hailing from Puebla, Oaxaca and Vera Cruz — fitting, as Carlio, after all, means love. Interestingly, Carlio does not have a chef. Instead, cooks impart their own sensibilities and background to the food, yielding cuisine that far surpasses most New York Mexican for its originality. "We just put together all the things that we love to eat, with good, fresh ingredients," said co-owner Yesenia Santibanez. Few things at Carlio fall short of out-

standing, and even those that do are delectable. The gorditas (\$6) is a meal disguised as an appetizer, filled with a harmonious mixture of ground chorizo, potato, crema and salsa verde and served in the thickest, tastiest tortilla you'll ever try. The shrimp tacos (\$9) are filled with mysteriously smoky shrimp that's battered and fried, dressed simply in a fluffy, warm corn tortilla. The most inspired menu item, however, is easily Ricardo's Guacamole (\$8), a fresh take on a menu standard incorporating the latter Mexican herb papaya. Without a chef, Santibanez explained, the food at Carlio is a labor of collective love. "When you add love to food, even if it's only three ingredients, it's glorious," she said. Carlio is 25 Fourth St. between Wythe Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg. (718) 384-8282.

'istle' be good news

Seventh Avenue tavern mixes modern and old school

By Kristen V. Brown
for The Brooklyn Paper

Thistle Hill Tavern, the newest addition to Park Slope's Seventh Avenue restaurant row, is a new school eatery with an old-world feel. The menu is market-fresh new American and will change frequently to reflect chef Rebecca Weitzman's vegetable-heavy whims — pork belly may come dressed in pickled ramps now, but wear something entirely different next week. The restaurant, with handsome, wood-paneled walls adorned with weathered maps and portraits, invokes, as its name might suggest, the feeling of a place that might have been there a 200 years ago, had Park Slope been more than farmland.



Hill power: The team behind the Thistle Hill Tavern includes chef Rebecca Weitzman flanked by co-owners David Massoni (left) and John Bush.

Never mind the ambience though; it would be worth the trip without it. Weitzman, who last week took the crown on the Food Network TV show "Chopped," has crafted a menu that is nothing short of incredible — the food is thoughtful, proof that details matter.

The roasted leg of lamb (\$13) with charred eggplant, feta, arugula and tomato coulis. Grilled octopus and simply prepared, served atop an earthy bed of cracked wheat salad.

fried artichokes, kalamata olives and a creamy pool of polenta. A beat salad with watercress and Gorgonzola "crostons" (\$11) excels as well, balanced in sweetness and acidity, even for the best way. Many of the cocktails are re-worked old world cocktails, such as the Brooklyn Eagle (\$10), a satisfying concoction of bourbon, triple sec, sweet vermouth and lime juice — proof that the Brooklyn Eagle is good for one thing. Owner David Massoni has taken care to make sure Thistle Hill Tavern is also the sort of place you could pop into for a beer and a snack on the way home from work, with modestly priced snack items like the fried bread (\$5), a "grown-up-onion ring," and the subtly spicy, endlessly fulfilling turo-n-fruits and seeds (\$6) — both are perfect with a beer. Perhaps the trend of Seventh Avenue's overpriced, mediocre eateries is on its way out. Thistle Hill Tavern is surely a good start.

Thistle Hill Tavern (441 Seventh Ave., at 15th Street in Park Slope. (347) 599-1262)

Onion soup, minus the soup

The Counting Room may bill itself as a wine bar, but don't be fooled: beneath that colossal wine list, the new Williamsburg dram shop hides an impressively original take on French Onion soup. The menu here may be petite — a scant four sandwiches and five "bites" accompany the prerequisite meat and cheese boards — but you should consider this a favor: you'll want to try everything. If you do choose just one item though, it should be Chef Robert Crossen's Knife and Fork French Onion Soup (\$10), an inventive twist on the French classic that's more akin to a melt-in-your-mouth open-faced sandwich, served with a small carafe of broth to be poured on top. The bread is a thick, craggy slice of French baguette, smothered in Parmesan and Swiss cheeses, transformed into

a delectably oozy mess when drenched in the sumptuous — albeit vegetarian — broth. Of course, it also helps that the Counting Room is the perfect place to spend a lazy, warm weekend afternoon. With the windows open and the breeze blowing in, it's ideal, equally beautiful in the candlelit evening. The truffled grilled cheese (\$12), an pressed French bread with Fontina, is almost equally satisfying comfort food. We did take issue with one menu item: the Caesar "bites," which arrived in the form of still wet romaine leaves with a smattering of croutons. But if you skip that one, did, there is ample satisfaction to be had. Of course, with enough wine most things are. The Counting Room (44 Berry St. at North 11th St. in Williamsburg. (718) 599-1860). —Kristen V. Brown

The Brooklyn Paper PRESENTS Lessons from a broken ankle

It was a rainy Monday morning, and Smartmon and Diaper Diva were moving some of Smartmon's things into Manhattan. Wearing rubber rain boots, Smartmon walked on a wet rubber ramp, when — splat — she violently twisted her ankle and it was as if her foot folded beneath her. Smartmon found herself on her back screaming: "I think I broke something. I think I broke something. I think I broke something." "Did she break something valuable?" Manhattan Granny apparently said to Diaper Diva (they were in the storage room). "No, I think she means she broke herself," her twin sister said. The pain was excruciating, but somehow Smartmon was able to go upstairs to her mother's apartment. Within a half-hour, her foot had swollen to the size of a Nerf football, and Smartmon and Manhattan Granny went cross-country to have it X-rayed. "It's not fractured," the radiologist told her. "You can go now." "But what do I do?" Smartmon asked plaintively.

"We can't help you. You'll have to call your primary care physician." Smartmon was smarting. She wanted to cry. Badkha knows, she was relieved that it wasn't broken or fractured, but clearly there was something wrong with it and she was in need of some advice. Standing on the corner of 84th Street and Lexington Avenue in the cold rain with a throbbing foot, Smartmon called her doctor, who told her to "go home." "I'm sorry to walk tomorrow, call an orthopedic doctor," she said. That seemed exceedingly unhelpful at that moment. Finally, the doctor gave Smartmon the number of a nearby orthopedic practice. "The only one who will take your insurance," she grumbled. Manhattan Granny and Smartmon went into a restaurant, ordered some pizza and dialed the number. "We can't see you until later in the week," the receptionist told Smartmon. "What should I do in the meantime?" she said furiously, her foot still radiating pain. "I can't tell you anything until the doctor examines you," the receptionist said.

When Smartmon told Dr. Fishman what happened he measured the good ankle and the sprained ankle and concluded that, indeed, Smartmon's ankle was very, very swollen. Fishman, the author of "Yoga for Osteoporosis," and many other books and papers, told her to keep her foot elevated and iced. He said the best thing she could do was lie on her back and put her leg up against the wall. Smartmon and Manhattan Granny were both enchanted by Dr. Fishman. They spent close to an hour with the good doctor, and told Smartmon to come back in a few days for physical therapy. "To preserve your range of motion." And he gave her prescriptions for an anti-inflammatory and an air cast. Back in Brooklyn, Smartmon managed to hobble up the three flights of stairs to her apartment. With Hepcat in California, she was on her own until her children came home. They were clearly flummoxed when they found her lying on the floor with her left leg up on the wall. "Did you break it?" she asked. "No, I sprained it," Smartmon said. "What are you doing?" "I'm elevating it." "Never mind..." They were even more startled when she started to cry in pain and frustration. Nothing like tears to get your kids to really notice. After the waterworks, they were really help-



By Louise Crawford

Sunshine's Back!

We have the BEST PRICES of any Day Care in Park Slope!

JUNE GRAND OPENING SPECIAL: First 10 kids enrolled get 10% off the first year

• Convenient neighborhood location • NYC & NYS fully licensed

"We care for your kids like our own, in an environment like your home."

Our teachers help your kids develop and learn everything from basic to advanced skills

We accept all City and State funded programs for kids 0-6 years old!

Parent's Sunshine Daycare
272 Flatbush Avenue • 718-233-4354

FAMILY CALENDAR

FRI, MAY 21
11:30 am: Storytime with Emily. Weekly event.
Movie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 923-9710, themoxiepot.com.
6 pm: Movie night: "SpongeBob Squarepants: The Movie." Free. Movie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 923-9710, themoxiepot.com.
SAT, MAY 22
10:30 am: Story time for kids. Greenlight Bookstore (866 Fulton St. between South Ellice Place and South Portland Avenue in Fort Greene. (718) 244-0200, abcbooksinbrooklyn.blogspot.com.
12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: Puppet show: "Jack and the Beanstalk." The classic children's story — with mannequins & 7 children, 58 adults. Puppetworks (138 South Ave. at Fourth Street in Park Slope. (718) 965-3391, puppetworks.org.
SUN, MAY 23
12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: Puppets, Jack and the Beanstalk." See Saturday, May 22.
1-3 pm: Nature crafts. See Saturday, May 22.
1-3 pm: Doll-making workshop. Hosted by Illustrator Timoth. \$5 (55 guests). Brooklyn Historical Society (781 Thompson St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 224-1111, www.brooklynhistory.org.
1:30 pm: Science power hour. See Saturday, May 22.
2:30 pm: Alicia Svigals' To list your event, email calendar@englocal.com

Klezmer Dance Party
Learn traditional East European Jewish dances. Free. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch (Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope. (718) 230-2100.
WED, MAY 26
1 pm: Storytime with Emily. See Friday, May 21.
THURS, MAY 27
11 am: Dance and music with Naz. Movie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 923-9710, themoxiepot.com.
4:30 pm: Reading with Mo Williams and Ilsebeth Jones. J. Muth. Free. PowerHouse Arena (1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights. (718) 623-7220).
FRI, MAY 28
11:30 am: Doll-making workshop. See Friday, May 21.
6:15 pm: Movie night. See Friday, May 21.
SAT, MAY 29
10:30 am: Story time for kids. See Saturday, May 22.
12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Jack and the Beanstalk." See Saturday, May 22.

SUMMER AT pluggs DAY SCHOOL, INC.

COME JOIN IN THE FUN!

- Water Play
- Sprinklers
- Large Outdoor Yard
- Spinous Classrooms
- Music & Movement
- Gym Facilities
- Art Projects

A professional staff provides a warm stimulating environment for your child's 2.5 - 5 years old 2, 3, 4, or 5 mornings, afternoons or full days.

763 President St. 718-230-5255

BROOKLYN FENCING CENTER

The Brooklyn Fencing Center opened in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, in January 2003. We are proud to be Brooklyn's first competitive fencing club, and our mission is to make the excitement and joy of fencing more accessible to Brooklynites of all ages!

Group Classes
beginner to advanced, 7 years to adults

Private Lessons • Summer Camps

WE DO FENCING BIRTHDAYS!
Parties up to 20 kids

62 Fourth St (corner of Hoyt) • (718) 522-5822
www.BrooklynFencing.com

PARK SLOPE • WINDSOR TERRACE BAY RIDGE • CARROLL GARDENS THE PARK SLOPE DAY CAMP

Our Camp

- Variety of programs for campers age 3 1/2 to 15
- Safe, fun, stimulating environment
- Very flexible registration; accommodating 10 week session
- Free morning transportation from most Bay Ridge and Brownstone Brooklyn areas
- Established 1992

718-788-PSDC (7732)
www.parkslopedaycamp.com

End of Summer Mini Camp
August 23 - September 3

New This Year
Clique d'Été for campers entering grades PK-6