

March 12, 2010

Best of the Beach 2010: Food

Mexican over \$10: Mucho Ultima Mexicana

Mucho serves Mexican food for sophisticates, items like chipotle dusted Ono, lamb shanks braised in mole sauce, and carnitas made from flavorful Kurobuta pork. The tortillas are hand-made, the guacamole is hacked to order, and your chips arrive with a salsa bursting with freshness. The bouncy, bustling vibe of this place makes it an exciting place to dine, too – it has a lounge feel and a comfortable, well-stocked bar for after dinner, so you can come early and stay late.

Mucho Ultima Mexicana: 903 Manhattan Ave., MB. (310) 374-4422. www.mucho.mb.com

Best of the Beach 2010: Drinks

Best Margarita/Tequila bar

Mucho Ultima Mexicana Since opening in November 2007, Mucho Ultima Mexicana has amassed over 185 different tequilas to suite all taste and levels of tequila drinkers. The margarita menu offers several varieties like the “Traditional” made with Herradura Silver and fresh lime juice just like at cantinas in Mexico. “The Mucho Margarita” and “El Dorado Classico” are made with Mucho’s homemade margarita mix. For those who like to experiment with their tequila, try the “El Fuego” made with muddled jalapeno to give it a little heat or the “Fresco Pepino” made with English Hothouse Cucumber which is cool and refreshing. If you prefer fruity margaritas, Mucho offers Passion Fruit, Pineapple, and Pomegranate all made with fresh fruits and purees. Cinco de Mucho happy hour has great appetizers like BBQ Shrimp Tacos, Chicken Quesadilla, Carnitas Sliders, Mucho Margarita, house wines, bottle and draught beer for \$5 at 5 p.m. Sunday – Thursday and runs until 6:30pm. No matter your flavor, Mucho will provide you with a margarita to match.

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Tequila bar

Mucho Ultima Mexican If you like tequila, there are plenty of restaurants and bars in the South Bay that have a few – and the bartender will probably toss your choice into a Margarita. If you really appreciate fine tequila, though, you’ll drink it straight, and you’ll probably drink it at Mucho. This Manhattan Beach hotspot has boutique tequilas like Cazadores Anejo and Tequila Oro First Vintage that most people have never heard of, the ones that are hand-crafted and carefully aged. Bar manager Jim Martel compares tequilas to wines in their aging characteristics, and is happy to initiate newcomers in the art of tequila. There are excellent options at all price ranges, from El Tesoro and Don Eduardo \$10 a shot to rarities like Don Julio Real at \$50. Those who really know tequila, or really want to, will find that both the selection and the knowledge of the staff here are second to none.

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