


TRE PIANI
ITALIAN & MEDITERRANEAN CUISINE
Located at The Forrestral Village
Princeton, NJ

When the food comes from local sources it is generally fresher, therefore tastier.
Tre Piani purchases locally whenever possible!

trepiani.com



RUSSO'S ORCHARD & GARDEN CENTER
From May through October enjoy picking what the seasons have to offer.



chesterfield, NJ

RESTAURANT REVIEW: El Tule, Lambertville

Family offers Peruvian and Mexican dishes in a casual, friendly atmosphere

DATE POSTED: Wednesday, November 23, 2011 7:06 PM EST
By Megan Sullivan

LIVE COMEDY WITH BRIAN REGAN
DEC. 10
732-246-SHOW (7469) • www.StateTheatreNJ.org
STATE THEATRE • NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ



MORE NEWS IN THIS SECTION

- Fu Li
- Zoubi
- On the Bone
- Triumph Brewing Company
- BT Bistro

TOP STORIES

Don't just read the sports page – be in it.
Gain a competitive edge at our winter sports performance program.



Winter 2011-2012 Sports Performance Program
For more information or to register call 908 203 5972 or visit somersetsportsperformance.com
Somerset MEDICAL CENTER
Program runs from December 19 through March 2

Peruvian food is making its mark in the United States, thanks to chefs like Gastón Acurio, who has more than 30 restaurants in a dozen countries.

Mr. Acurio, a Peruvian, first brought his La Mar Cebicheria Peruana brand to San Francisco in 2008, and opened a second location in New York City this past September. Chef Ricardo Zarate, who was named a Best New Chef for 2011 by Food & Wine, opened Peruvian cantina Picca in Los Angeles in June. With Spanish, African, Chinese and Japanese influences, Peruvian cuisine offers a fusion of bold flavors, which is among the reasons why Frommer's named Peru's capital, Lima, the top food and drink destination for 2012.

Closer to home, in Lambertville, the Egoavil family is helping the cuisine achieve crossover appeal with their restaurant El Tule. When it first opened in January, El Tule offered only Mexican fare, but the family slowly started to introduce Peruvian dishes to gauge customer response. With such positive results, Peruvian options are now offered daily, and the weekend welcomes a full Peruvian menu with fresh seafood dishes like ceviche, a Peruvian trademark.

The team consists of Fausto and Carmen Egoavil, their children Jack, Silvia and Mechelle, and Mechelle's husband, Said Anguiano. Fausto and Jack act as general managers, while Silvia and Mechelle handle the front of house. In the kitchen, Carmen prepares the Peruvian dishes, Said tackles the Mexican dishes, and Alvaro Hernandez is the sous chef.

The restaurant is located in a small house on North Main Street, formerly occupied by Manny Taco Taco, with a cozy dining space that seats only about 35 guests. The room is brightly styled, from the orange-painted walls to the glass-topped tables with fringed, striped serapes peeking through.

Given the size, I recommend making a reservation for weekends. On the chilly Saturday night we dined, we noticed several people left to go elsewhere when they were informed that only outside tables were available.

The restaurant has an inviting, outdoor patio with a few tables, but the outdoor heat lamps only swayed a few customers to stick around. During warm months, these tables are prime real estate.

The server brought my companion and me a basket of fresh, homemade tortilla chips and a trio of salsas—verde, roja and fresca—to snack on as we plotted our meal. To start, we selected two appetizers from the Peruvian menu: ceviche limeño (\$15) and tamales de cerdo (\$8).

I've long enjoyed the marriage of flavors in ceviche — the fresh raw fish, tart lime juice, sweet red onion, citrusy cilantro, and spicy chili pepper. Tule's ceviche limeño was described on the menu as "truly a piece of Peru," so I was excited to experience Carmen's tribute to her homeland. (The Egoavils moved from Peru to the United States about 16 years ago.) We requested the dish with a medium heat level.

Our server presented us with a large plate brimming with fresh chunks of corvina, a sweet and firm white fish marinated in lime juice and topped with thinly sliced red onions and rocoto hot peppers. The dish was served with giant, tender kernels of yellow corn to the side and slices of sweet potato underneath. A small silver tin of The portion was so generous, we just barely polished it off.

cancha, or toasted corn, added a crunchy contrast to the dish. Other variations of ceviche are also available on the Peruvian menu, including a ceviche mixto with marinated corvina, shrimp, octopus and calamari "swimming" in tiger milk.

The tamales are offered stuffed with chicken, pork, or a vegetarian option; we chose the pork. The menu described the dish as mashed corn wrapped in banana leaves, so I was surprised when it arrived on the dish without a wrapper. It was plated with a Criolla-based salad, with lettuce, sliced onions, hot peppers, shredded carrot and purple cabbage, with lemon and vinegar adding a nice tang. The long, rectangular tamal was warm, moist and cake-like, but I was longing for more of the tender shredded pork within. Both appetizers were bright and colorful in their presentation.

Other Peruvian appetizers, described as modern but inspired by traditional recipes, include fried yuca sticks, fried stuffed mashed potatoes with meat sauce, and Inca style taboule. On the regular Mexican menu, small plates range from tortilla soup and nachos to quesadillas and guacamole.

In keeping with the theme, I selected a Peruvian entree, while my companion opted for a Peruvian soup and two Mexican style tacos. My "Lomo Saltado Mar y Tierra" (\$19) was Tule's twist on surf and turf. It featured a mix of tender beef strips, calamari, mussels (shells removed), octopus and shrimp, sautéed with onions and red tomatoes in a savory Peruvian sauce. The ingredients formed a ring around a big scoop of white rice in the center. A few wedges of golden fried potatoes were like buried treasure.

Chupe de camarones was a hearty shrimp chowder with rice, eggs, queso fresco, vegetables, a touch of light cream and huacatay (an herb). To me, it was reminiscent of an egg drop soup with a pronounced fish flavor, and the huacatay lent a minty-basil note.

The Mexican-style tacos (\$2.75 each), made with soft corn tortillas, are available in pork, steak, Mexican-style sausage or pork, beef tongue, beef, beef tripe, and spicy seasoned pork or chicken. They can be requested in platter form with rice and beans, but my companion ordered one chorizo and one carne enchilada taco without accompaniment. The tortillas were golden and slightly crispy on the outside. The smoky chorizo and spicy pork were both packed with flavor and topped with onion, cilantro and a medium spicy sauce.

On a return visit, I'd be curious to try the chicken breast with Oaxacan mole sauce, or an item from the "Mexicanas Tradicionales" section, such as flash fried poblano pepper filled with queso Oaxaca. I'd also like to try one of their popular desserts, which are made in house like everything else on the menu. Tempting choices include tres leches, arroz con leche, flan, and buñuelos.

For a sweet finish, we instead enjoyed a mug of atole (\$3.75), a traditional masa-based hot drink. This particular version was sweetened with vanilla and had a thicker consistency similar to that of cream of wheat. It was comforting on this cold night.

El Tule is named after a famous ancient tree in Santa Maria del Tule, a small town in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. The old tree is said to have the thickest trunk of any in the world. It's a popular attraction that draws locals and visitors alike, and that's something any restaurant would strive for.

From May through October enjoy picking what the seasons have to offer.



chesterfield, NJ

Locally Grown Locally Owned FRESH
FROM THE GARDEN STATE

Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY



Striking Mid Century Modern Contemporary

This striking contemporary home is nestled on a lush hillside on 1.76 acres in Princeton Township. Its mid-

More info...

Presented By:



Jane Weber
609-924-1000
Jane.Weber@HendersonSIR.com
View my other listings

Princeton: 609.924.1000
34 Chambers Street
Cranbury: 609.395.0444
37 North Main Street
Hopewell: 609.466.4666
45 East Broad Street
Montgomery: 908.874.0000
2161 Route 206

HendersonSIR.com

Featured Brokers

Weichert Realtors
Princeton Real Estate

WEIDEL REALTORS

Sotheby's

[Login](#)

If you are not registered yet, please sign up today. It's FREE!

Fill out our quick form and start commenting today!
[Click here](#)

Marketplace Print Ads

Select advertiser to see an ad 

View Ads By Category 

Click on ad below for larger view

Find out why it's so great to work with an Independent Insurance Agent

*Auto Insurance * Home Insurance / Renters Insurance
* Business Insurance * Bonds
* Life Insurance / Financial Planning / Long Term Care Coverage * Recreational Vehicles Insurance

**Free Auto Rate Quotes!
Now Available 24/7**

www.wagnerins.com



AT WAGNER INSURANCE
Click on the image above to view entire ad



Save money. Get GEICO.

GEICO
Local Office

[Click here for my Central Jersey location. ►►](#)

» **Sections**

- Homepage
- News
- Obituaries
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Dining
- Lifestyle
- Health
- Business
- Education
- Blogs
- Opinions
- Newswire
- Photo Gallery
- Calendar
- Site Map
- [Local Events](#)

» **Your Local**

- Business Directory
- Classifieds
- Calendar
- Newsletter
- Marketplace

» **Our Publications**

- The Beacon
- Cranbury Press
- Hillsborough Beacon
- Hopewell Valley News
- The Lawrence Ledger
- The Manville News
- The Messenger-Press
- The Princeton Packet
- The Register-News
- South Brunswick Post
- Windsor-Hights Herald
- TimeOFF - Entertainment
- PMFineLiving.com
- Hamilton-Robbinsville Observer

» **Services**

- Advertise with us
- Contact Us | About Us
- Subscribe to the Newspaper
-  Find us on Facebook
-  Follow us on Twitter
-  RSS feeds

»  [Search News](#)

GROUNDS FOR SCULPTURE
presents three months of
Winter Wonders

THOUSANDS OF LIGHTS,
HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE
RIDES AND MORE!

[Click to see the full calendar of events and more!](#)