



**Adobos Mexican Grill**

756 Main Street, Dubuque, IA 52001, 563-556-4407

**HOURS:** Sun – Thu, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m., Fri - Sat, 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**DINING STYLE:** Come as you are **NOISE LEVEL:** Conversational

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Guacamole, Adobos Burrito, Fajitas Al Carron or Diablos, Chicken Chimichanga, Adobos T-bone steak, Carne Asada, Pollo Al Carbon, Tacos Carne Asada or Al Pastor or De Carnitas, Banana Burrito, Flan.

**LIQUOR SERVICE:** Bottled Beer, Margaritas and Daiquiris

**PRICES:** Lunch: \$1.75 to \$8.99, Dinner: \$7.99 to \$14.99

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:** Cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, local checks

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESS:** Front Door and Restrooms

**KIDS POLICY:** Menu, High Chair, Booster,

**TAKE OUT:** Yes **RESERVATIONS:** No

**DELIVERY:** No **CATERING:** Yes **PARKING:** On street



**ADOBOS MEXICAN GRILL**

by Rich Belmont

Adobos is a Spanish word with many English translations. It can mean pickles, preparations, chili sauces, marinades, spices and even seasonings. Chef Jaime Salazar chose this word for the name of his new restaurant because his cuisine is based on his own recipes for sauces, marinades, spices and special seasonings. He buys large bags of fresh herbs like cilantro and Mexican oregano which has a stronger flavor than the Italian and Greek varieties. And I counted over 65 spices on the shelf in his kitchen. He uses all of these ingredients to produce flavors true to his homeland.



You see, Jaime Salazar, who is from San Luis Potosí, Mexico, has 15 years experience cooking American food in local restaurants. He was a student of culinary arts at Highland Community College in Elizabeth, IL. Now with the help of his partner and brother-in-law, Alfredo Jimenez, who is from Veracruz, he is fulfilling his dream of running his own restaurant offering authentic flavors of Mexico.



This place is not fancy. There are some sombreros and paintings on the wall to give you a feel of old Mexico. However, the patrons flocking to Adobos are not coming for the décor. They are there to experience the tastes they remember from South of the Border. You will know this as soon as you walk through the door because half the people enjoying lunch or dinner are from Mexico! They already understand the menu so for those of us just getting into Mexican food here are a few definitions:

- **BURRITO** (bur-EE-Toh) also called Burro. A large flour tortilla folded and rolled around choice of meat and beans.
- **CHALUPA** (cha-LOO-pah) Corn tortilla dough formed into the shape of a boat and filled with ground beef, beans and cheese.
- **CHILE RELLENOS** (CHEE-leh rreh-YEH-nohs) Mild, roasted Poblano pepper, stuffed with cheese, dipped in egg batter and fried.



- **CHIMICHANGA** (chee-mee-CHAN-gah) Deep fried burrito filled with choice of meat, beans and topped with lettuce, tomatoes, cheese and guacamole.
- **ENCHILADA** (en-chuh-LAH-dah) Soft corn tortilla wrapped around choice of meat or fish and topped with tomato salsa, cheese and guacamole.
- **FAJITAS** (fah-HEE-tuhs) Strips of skirt steak or chicken or shrimp or chorizo or any combination marinated and grilled then placed in flour tortillas and garnished with



onions, peppers, guacamole, pico de gallo and beans.

- **FLAUTA** (flaww-tah) Corn tortilla rolled around a filling and deep fried.
- **QUESADILLA** (keh-sah-DEE-yah) Flour tortilla filled with cheese and choice of meats, folded in half and grilled.
- **QUESO FUNDIDO** (KEH-so fun-DEE-doh) Melted cheese.
- **TACO** (tah-COH) Small folded corn or flour tortilla filled with choice of meat and beans.
- **TAMALE** (tuh-MAH-lee) Chopped meat or vegetables wrapped in a softened corn husk and steamed. The husk is not eaten.
- **TAQUITO** (ta-QUEE-toh) Same as Flauta.
- **TORTILLA** (to-TEE-yuh) Round, thin unleavened bread made from corn or wheat flour and baked on a griddle.
- **TOSTADA** (toh-STAH-duh) Crisp, fried tortilla topped with refried beans and garnished with meat and cheese.

Now that we are familiar with some of the terminology we can order like experts. To start with the waitresses are eager to serve you. During recent visits Liz Harris or Chris Kennedy immediately invited my guests to relax and enjoy some refreshing beverages. They offered us Margaritas, Daiquiris, several domestic beers and eleven Mexican beers to choose from. For something different they suggested we try a Horchata. This is made in-house from rice, milk, vanilla and cinnamon. Then there are the sodas imported from Mexico called Jarritos. They have less carbonation than we are used to. They are sweetened with sugar cane and are caffeine free. The flavors can vary but we had our choice of lime, pineapple, mandarin, mango, grapefruit, fruit punch and tamarind. This last one is the most popular throughout Mexico. It is made from the fruit of the Tamarind tree and has an unusual sweet and sour taste.

Then homemade tortilla chips and salsa were brought to the table. The sauce is made from fresh Tomatillos (tohm-ah-TEE-ohs), jalapeños, tomatoes, onions, garlic and cilantro. The Tomatillo is a Mexican fruit resembling a tomato with a paper like husk and a tart lemony herb flavor. You must not eat too many chips, though, because there are so many things to sample.

For appetizers you might like some Nachos or Queso Fundido. This is simply Spanish for “melted cheese”. Here Jamie uses Queso Chihuahua, a soft white cow’s milk cheese and combines it with bell peppers, onions and tomatoes and serves it with chips.



The Tacos Rancheros (pictured above) are on corn or flour tortillas and can be ordered as an appetizer or as a meal by themselves. Tacos al Pastor are grilled pork loin chunks in a Chile Pasilla (pah-SEE-yah) marinade. Jaime uses mild chili powder, paprika, apple vinegar and Guajillo peppers for this marinade. Tacos de Lengua are beef tongue and are a favorite in Mexico. Tacos Carne Asada are char-broiled skirt steak, and are the most popular in this country. Tacos de Chorizo (cor-EE-zoh) has Mexican sausage made by Jaime’s cooks who follow his special recipe calling for fresh pork seasoned with garlic and powdered chili peppers. My favorite is the Tacos Carnitas with deep-fried pork shoulder marinated in Tequila, spices, beer, citrus and milk.



For lunch I recommend the Taco Salad in a crispy shell with beef or chicken, beans, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, sour cream and guacamole. My favorite lunch, though, is the Adobos Burrito. This is large flour or spinach tortilla filled with choice of steak, chicken, Carnitas or ground beef. It contains shredded cheese and pico de gallo and is covered with a fabulous cheese sauce.



There are so many delicious house specialties for dinner it is hard to pick just one. The Adobos T-bone steak is coated with Jaime’s special blend of spices and charbroiled with roasted jalapeño peppers. Bryce Parks, 365ink publisher, loves the Carnitas (pictured above). This is seasoned pork sliced into chunks and deep fried until crisp, then served with Tomatillo sauce, rice, beans and flour tortillas. The Pollo Al Carbon is an intriguing dish. A chicken breast is basted with Achote (ah-chee-OH-tay) and marinated in chili powder and orange juice. Achote is made from the seeds of the Annatto tree. The pulp surrounding the seeds adds a slightly sweet and peppery flavor to the chicken.



Carne Asada (above) is another great specialty. A tender skirt steak is grilled with onions and served with rice, beans, flour tortillas and guacamole salad. Chimichanga are always a crowd pleaser. Two flour tortillas are filled with your choice of grilled beef, grilled chicken, shrimp or crabmeat and then deep fried and topped with nacho cheese, enchilada sauce, lettuce, guacamole and tomatoes accompanied by refried beans and rice.

Of course, Fajitas (pictured top left) are always popular. The Al Carbon is marinated strips of beef, chicken and grilled onions. The Fajitas Diablos (pictured at the bottom center) is a combination of beef, chicken, shrimp and chorizo marinated in orange juice and chili powder. Diablo is the devil so you can expect anything with this name to be hot!



Adobos is all about sauces. So don’t forget to ask to try some of Jamie’s magic potions. He has many he would like to share with you. For example: Chipotle (chi-POHT-lay) made from smoked, dried jalapeño (mah-lah-PEH-nyoh) peppers and garlic; Chili Piquin made from the piquin also known as bird pepper, Tomatillo with Jalapeño and Garlic Sauce; Tomatillo and Chili de Árbol peppers with cilantro and onion; Tomatillo Sauce made from roasted puya peppers, garlic and tomato; and finally La Diabla Sauce. This is really spicy because it contains hot sauce, chipotles, garlic, white wine and chicken paste.



Remember I said not to eat too many chips? You needed to save room for dessert! There is always Fried Ice Cream but the Flan is especially good and is homemade from eggs, condensed milk, vanilla and sugar. The Banana Burrito is my favorite, with a ripe banana and ice cream on a fried tortilla.