

El Pueblo Review

BY JAMES NGUYEN

Finding its home where another Mexican eatery once stood, El Pueblo brings a new category of cuisine to The Village scene, and what it lacks in deviation, it makes up for in spades of flavor. Known for its famous one-dollar fish tacos, El Pueblo is a local Mexican restaurant in The Village of Pacific Highlands Ranch. Previously inhabited by Death By Tequila, El Pueblo's position as a new-found establishment has generated a strong buzz among the students of the neighboring high school, CCA. With an already sizable roster of lunch options, CCA students hope the advent of El Pueblo can offer students and locals a breath of fresh air. Walking past the open doors of El Pueblo, I was immediately struck by the cheerfulness of its interior. Through chic chairs, colorful walls, and lively music, the atmosphere buzzed with an energy lacking in most other establishments in The Village.

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The space itself was moderate in size yet displayed intimately, making its customers feel like they were part of a community rather than a mere service. Although making food added to the restaurant's buzz, it stripped away some of its customer service quality. From my two instances dining there, I found both to be subpar in customer interaction, though this could

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also be seen as a positive for those who wish for quick food options. To miss the extensive lines and possible mishaps in ordering, I recommend simply ordering through their website. Though the service is nothing to write home about, the food offered in El Pueblo was incredible, with flavorful ingredients clearly made fresh, and an uncomplicated understanding of the genre, making each bite feel authentic and lovingly crafted. The most stand out item on their menu was, by leaps and bounds, their carnitas tacos, which offered incredible texture and flavor packed into a “2 for 10” deal. Their one-dollar fish tacos were also exemplary, although less for their taste and more for the novelty of their price. Ultimately, El Pueblo stands tall amongst the well-established lunch options of The Village, giving students a chance to explore new cuisines without sacrificing too much of their lunch periods. Though prices in El Pueblo may seem daunting to newcomers, their large portions and food deals make it an experience worth trying at least once. With a jubilant setting, brisk wait times, and enjoyable food, there's much to like and a lot to love in El Pueblo.