

Romesco Mediterranean Bistro

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Outside Romesco Mediterranean Bistro
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Located in an unsuspecting strip mall on Bonita Road, Romesco Mediterranean Bistro is an elegant slice of heaven in Bonita. A fusion of Mexican cuisine and Mediterranean classics, the restaurant is an elegant and unique dining destination, unlike any other in San Diego.

With a formal dining area, Romesco also has a lively bar area in the back of the restaurant, discreetly hidden through double doors. Live music plays and TV screens offer views of weekend football games. Tuesdays offer half-off tapas (and boy, are there a lot to choose from) and live Flamenco music plays every last Saturday of the month.

Renowned Chef Javier Plascencia is the creator of Romesco, and brings an interesting mix of cuisine to his refined eatery. The tapas list seems to be a mile long, with everything from hummus to a not-to-be-missed ahi tuna tostada. The tacos are distinctive, particularly the tacos de fideo, or spaghetti tacos. Yes, spaghetti tacos sound like they'd be overwhelmingly carb-y, but they are done so right. More like taquitos, they are petite, and covered in fresh cream, salsa verde and sprinkled with cheese to produce the perfect balance of creamy-spicy flavor.

Did you know the Caesar salad was invented in Tijuana? It was. And if you're fortunate enough to have it made tableside (apparently it's only for the VIP's they do this for) you may have the fortune of being served by Gustavo Vasquez; a delightful, knowledgeable, and entertaining server who has been with the restaurant for over eight years. If you're looking for a traditional Mexican dish that is a rare find, try the chile en nogada. This classic dish is a chile stuffed with pork tenderloin and beef filet picadillo, smothered in a creamy white walnut sauce and topped with pomegranate seeds. It's flavorful, beautiful, and festive, as the colors of the dish reflect the colors of the Mexican flag.

As for dessert, the best flan you'll ever have is served here. I'm not kidding. I realize that's a bold statement to make, particularly in San Diego, but it's completely justified. Listed on the menu as "My Grandmother's Mexican Flan" this flan uses cinnamon bunuelos for the crust, which gives a nice crunchy contrast to the velvety-smooth flan.

The wine list is extensive, with bottles from Fallbrook to Argentina to Italy (Tip: Wednesday nights all bottles are 50% off). The ambiance is warm and inviting, the staff is helpful and professional, and the food options are endless. While the prices are definitely not cheap (Tapas range from \$2.85-\$14.25 and main dishes can go up to \$27.50) the quality is outstanding. This is why going during lunch or their Tapas Tuesdays are the best deal.

There's a reason Romesco has received numerous accolades, positive attention, and visits from celebrities and locals alike; it lives up to the hype. Check it out and see for yourself.

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