

## CASA DON CARLOS

"We introduced Mexican food to Eugene 23 years ago," claims owner and chief cook Victoria Wallace, of the Casa Don Carlos Restaurant, located at the corner of 4th and Blair in Eugene. She and husband Charles opened the original El Sombrero Restaurant, then at 13th and Alder (where Duffy's Tavern is now), back in 1960, "when everybody here was eating meat and potatoes only!" To counter the prejudice toward hamburgers, they offered money-back offers just to get customers to try the Mexican fare. This is hard to imagine today when there are as many Mexican food eateries as there are seafood places, from Taco Time to Moreno's, fast food to classy dining. "I think it's caught on pretty well," laughs Victoria.

The Wallaces are personally responsible for opening a total of eight Mexican restaurants in the Northwest, seven in Oregon and one in Seattle. Starting out in Costa Mesa, California, their first restaurant there happened to be right in the path of a proposed freeway. Forced to move from that location, they migrated to Eugene.

El Sombrero eventually moved to its present location in downtown Eugene, where it has continued to be a successful and popular business. The Wallaces went on to build La Posada in

1969, and later to open Tortilla Flat in the 5th Street Public Market. They helped one of their sons start a restaurant in Seattle, and helped a friend set up another in Brookings.

Victoria and Charles had recently retired when the opportunity came along to start up another restaurant of their own. They talked their son Jim into going into business with them, and Casa Don Carlos was born. Victoria, herself of Hispanic descent, has passed on her culinary talents to her son Jim who shares the cooking duties. Charles makes all the soups, and also does the promoting. (He's the author of the homespun messages on their newspaper ads.)

They couldn't have picked a more charming spot for their enterprise. The quaint white frame house sits under a huge maple tree, with green grass all around. Sit down at any one of the tables and you're looking out on the hub of the Whiteaker Neighborhood, the oldest in Eugene. Across the street sits the beautifully restored Brogden Barn (an historical building dating back to 1913) which now houses a fine grocery store and meat shop. Also within view are the Tiny Tavern and Blair Island Natural Foods Restaurant, both unique landmarks in the neighborhood.

The decor is simple, clean, and comfortable. Natural light

streams through the large windows which line the rooms. Is it the simplicity that gives it its authentic flavor? I think so.

An interesting menu—personal, like the place itself—offers all the standard Mexican/American fare and several specials. There's a whole page of vegetarian variations and a make-your-own-burrito section. I was intrigued by the Chimichanga "¡caramaba es grande!" (\$3.95)—and a good choice it was! Refried beans, beef, and cheese are wrapped into a flour tortilla, deep fried so that the tortilla is crispy and light, then topped with cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, a heap of guacamole, and another heap of sour cream. Yes, it was good!

My friend ordered the Don Carlos Enchiladas (Acapulco style with chicken)—a full dinner with soup or salad, plus freshly made chips and salsa (\$5.50). The "peasant vegetable soup" was hearty, and the enchiladas quite tasty. This is mildly spiced food, not too hot for north-of-the-border palates. Victoria describes the cuisine as New Mexican, more indigenous to the southwestern United States than to Mexico.

Casa Don Carlos offers reasonably priced food of good quality, beer and wine, a pleasant relaxing atmosphere. Hours are 11 am-9 pm, Monday-Saturday.

—S.U.

## Restaurant Guide

### Lenny's Nosh Bar

Late nite giant omelettes. Also Sunday champagne brunch, Matzoh ball soup, salads, deli sandwiches, cheesecake, beer & wine. Fantastic juke box. Indoor and outdoor seating. 669 E 13th (in the courtyard behind Poppi's). Open 7 days, 10 am-3 am.

### Poppi's

Authentic Greek peasant food, lunches and dinners, wine, beer and desserts. Outdoor seating. 675 E 13th. Open weekdays 11:30 am-10:30 pm, Sat & Sun 9 am-10:30 pm (Brunch). Closed Tuesdays.

### Prince Puckler's Ice Cream & Coffee Parlor

Locally-made gourmet ice cream. Summer specialties: fresh fruit flavors. Also espresso drinks, coffee, Italian sodas. Downtown at 861 Willamette, on campus at 13th & Hilyard. Open til 9 pm downtown, 11 pm campus (midnight on Friday and Saturday).

### Saturday Market

20 vendors serving food in a festive atmosphere every Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm downtown at 8th & Oak Streets. Choose from burritos, calzone, chicken, ribs, falafel, knishes, empanadas, pasta, pizza, tempura, cheesecake, smoothies and more.

### Scott's and Scott's Courtside

Specializing in affordable lunch and breakfast. Full service grill and daily specials, desserts. Downtown at 100 E. Broadway, open M-F, 7 am-4 pm; and 44 W. Broadway, M-F, 7 am-4 pm and Sat 8 am-3 pm.

### Sweet Surrender

Pure and natural gourmet ice cream, sugar and honey sweetened. Full soda fountain. Indoor and outdoor seating. Hours 1-10 pm daily. 943 River Road. Sweet Surrender ice cream also available at De Frisco's Terrace, downtown in the Atrium, 10th & Olive.

### Sy's Pizza

New York style pizza by the slice, regular or thick crust. Calzone, meat or veggie, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Whole pizzas delivered within a limited area. On campus at 1211 Alder St. Open 11:30 am-midnight Monday-Friday, 3:30 pm-midnight Saturday-Sunday. 686-9598.

### The Yogurt Stand Healthy Deli

Light meals and snacks on the downtown Mall at 992 Willamette St. Continental breakfast, croissant and bagel sandwiches, soups, variety of salads, chicken tacos, juices and smoothies, coffee and teas, luscious, low-calorie frozen yogurt. Open 9-6 weekdays, 10-6 Saturday. Orders to go, 344-2727.

### Zoo Zoo's

Natural foods and coffee house with live music. 454 Willamette near Amtrak. Open 8 am-10 pm. Closed Tuesdays. 344-4764.

### Alpine Village Inn

Authentic dinners from America, France, Italy and Germany. Featuring O'Carolan's Consort on Saturdays. 260 River Rd. Open Tues, Wed, Thur 5-10 pm; Fri & Sat 5-11 pm; Sun 4-9 pm. 688-5387.

### Bruno's Bistro

European styled foods and spirits. Prepared always by Chef Bruno. 207 E 5th (in the Fifth Pearl Bldg.). Open for lunch and dinner, 343-9324.

### Butcher Block Delicatessen

Deli sandwiches, salads, beer & wine. Party platters and to go orders. 13th & Franklin (next to William's Bakery). Open Mon-Sat 10 am-1 am, Sundays noon-9 pm.

### Casa Don Carlos

Mexican cuisine featuring vegetarian and natural foods. 400 Blair Blvd (at 4th). Open 11 am-9 pm Mon-Sat, closed Sunday. 343-4322.

### El Sombrero

Homemade tortillas fresh everyday. Taco salads, enchiladas, chili rellenos, tostadas, burritos, and more. Beer & wine. 146 E 11th. Open 11 am-10 pm M-F and 12-10 pm Sat. Live music Tues & Wed.

### Fifth Pearl Delicatessen

51 different sandwiches (or make your own). Also soup, salad bar & salads, deserts, specials. Draft beer, import & domestic, wine, and order to go. 207 E 5th Ave, in the Fifth Pearl Building. Open 8 am-5:30 pm, Mon-Sat and Sunday noon-5 pm. 484-0686.

### Great Oregon Burger Co.

100% beef with all the trimmings, fast service and quality. Open daily til midnight. To go orders, 344-5221.

### Greek Isle

Authentic Greek cuisine for those on the go. Upstairs at the 5th St. Public Market. Open 11 am-6 pm 7 days, till 8 pm Friday.

### Hamburger Terry's

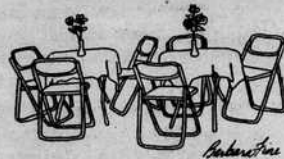
23 kinds of omelets and lunches. Downstairs at the 5th St. Public Market. Open Mon-Thur 7 am-6 pm, Fri till 9 pm, Sat 8 am-6 pm, Sun 9 am-5 pm. 683-8196.

### Harry's on the Canal

Lounge, salad bar, full menu includes fresh fish. 2200 Centennial Blvd. Open weekdays for lunch, 11:30 am-2 pm. Everyday 5-10 pm and Sundays for brunch, 10 am-2 pm. Reservations 342-5231.

### Keystone Cafe

Homestyle breakfasts featuring eggs & potatoes, whole grain pancakes. Also lunch specials, desserts and fresh roasted coffee. Open 7 days, 7 am-2 pm, and Fri, Sat & Sun nights, 5:30-9:30 pm. 342-2075.



### AFFORDABLE BREAKFASTS & LUNCHES

## SCOTT'S COURTSIDE

44 W. Broadway

"Upstairs"

M-F 7 am-4 pm

Sat 8 am-3 pm

## SCOTT'S

100 E. Broadway

"Downstairs"

M-F 7 am-4 pm

DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS AT BOTH LOCATIONS

**Harry's**  
ON THE CANAL

Restaurant & Lounge

Happy Hour Every Day 2-7 PM

Discount Prices on all Drinks

Free Hors D'oeuvres 5-7 pm

Live Entertainment

Monday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday

Jean Walker

July 18-30

9 pm-1:30 am NO COVER

2200 Centennial Blvd. Reservations, 342-5231

## CALZONE

ON

TUESDAYS

and

THURSDAYS

Vegie or Meat

## SY'S PIZZA

1211 Alder

On Campus

686-9598



## The New Woody's

Have you had a Coney Island hot dog lately? Or ever? Stop in at the New Woody's at 580 Adams Street. There's a new menu coming out which features your traditional old-time fast foods at very reasonable prices.

The breakfast menu offers waffles, pancakes, omelettes, steak and eggs, and delicious cinnamon rolls large enough for several to share. Lunch will see an expanded menu of hot and cold sandwiches, chiliburgers (\$2.35), steakburgers (\$2.35), hickoryburgers and more. The dinner menu has a range of

choices to entice the whole family: top sirloin, breaded chicken, lasagna and spaghetti.

The New Woody's wants your trade. They'll be offering senior and junior portions to fit your need. The service is fast and good; your hosts Don and Baerbel aim to please. So if you'd like to try a morning fresh cinnamon roll with melted butter dribbling down the sides, or steak and potatoes in the evening, stop in at Woody's, 580 Adams St., just off West Sixth Street. The hours are 6 am-9 pm Monday-Saturday and 7 am-9 pm Sundays.