

Totto's opens Honduran-inspired Mexican restaurant

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You may be familiar with the Totto's Mexican Grill food truck, which has been in Lancaster since 2020, but its owners now have a restaurant here, too.

Totto's Mexican Restaurant opened July 5 at 126 Elm St., Lancaster.

Manager Bryan Villalvir said his mom and stepdad, Elsy and Carlos Baquedano, ran the food truck parked in Lancaster Square by Kimbrell's and Food Lion on Main Street, but always yearned to move to a permanent site.

"We always wanted to move on to a location since our customers were always telling us they want a place where they can sit and enjoy a beer or enjoy a drink," Villalvir said. "So we had a chance when this building opened up for us, and then we took it and we went from there."

The food truck and the restaurant may have different menus, but Villalvir said both locations are influenced by their home country, Honduras.

At the restaurant, the most popular menu item is the birria tacos and birria fries. Birria is a tender, savory Mexican beef or goat stew that is slow cooked until the meat falls apart. The tacos are usually served with the meat, tortilla, onions, herbs and a form of chili stew to dip the tacos in.

"We also have the Hawaiian fajitas, which is everybody's favorite, which is a combination of a steak, chicken, chili, peppers, onions, pineapple, shredded cheese melted on top of it, and it comes with rice, beans and guacamole salad," Villalvir said.

At the food truck, their most popular dish is street tacos, which Villalvir said customers have called "the best in town."

“The community’s helped us a lot,” he said. “They show support to us, and it’s been pretty good. A lot of people are showing (up) more now that we are serving alcohol here.”

He said the community should expect a family-friendly restaurant that is open seven days a week. He also said that should a customer want something not listed on the menu, just ask for it.

“If we have it in stock, even if it's not on the menu, we can make it happen,” Villalvir said.

His mother has lived in Lancaster for the last 17 years, and Villalvir moved here from Honduras when he was 16. He said the family connection within the business makes them unique for the area.

“Customers for us are always first... We want to give people a good service, great service, great food, great attention and give great drinks in order for them to be pleased,” he said. “Not only because we want to sell something, but we want them to leave happy when they leave the business.”

Totto’s Mexican Restaurant is also planning to be an active participant in the Lancaster community, whether it’s cooking for future city events or hosting a karaoke night.

“After a certain hour, we're gonna remove the tables, and then we're gonna make a dance floor, so people can come and have a little dance,” Villalvir said. “I know there's not a place over here in Lancaster, that you can come and do a little salsa or bachata, or any type of music; it doesn’t have to be Hispanic.”

As far as specials go, kids eat free on Saturdays until 3 p.m. and food specials are available daily. The restaurant is open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday. It can be reached at 803-285-5001.

The Totto’s Mexican Grill food truck will still be open at its usual location.

Child images

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