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food on W H E E L S



C Magazine's guide to Bay Area food truck finds

ZAIDA'S KITCHEN



Zaida's Kitchen food truck brings the authentic flavors of Oaxacan cuisine to the hustle and bustle of the Saturday morning farmers' market in downtown Palo Alto. With an entirely gluten-free menu, the food truck serves unique dishes from their Mole De La Casa (\$20-\$22), a traditional, velvety and thick sauce frequently used in Mexican cuisine, to their Mexican Wedding Cookies (\$3), a tender butter cookie made with nuts and sprinkled with powdered sugar.

Super Burrito (\$16)

— A thick, soft, fresh-pressed corn tortilla encases a delicious combination of rice, beans, cheese, sour cream, guacamole, and your choice of protein. Although the burrito was packed with flavor, the ratio of tortilla to filling was occasionally skewed, with some bites consisting of only tortilla.



Tostada (\$17) — Sometimes referred to as the "Mexican pizza," the tostada is one of the most popular items on the menu. A handmade corn tortilla is toasted over a comal until crunchy, then topped with black bean puree, toasted avocado leaves, queso fresco, tomatoes, avocado and your choice of protein. The fresh-pressed tortilla delivers a satisfying first-bite crunch, while each topping brings an authentic and unique flavor. The carnitas were perfectly spiced, and the black bean spread added a rich, velvety touch that tied the dish together.

MAMACITAS

Mamacitas! Food Truck brings bold and flavorful Mexican street food to the heart of Mountain View, delivering a taste of tradition in every bite. Located in the parking lot next to the Mountain View Target, this colorful truck is hard to miss and a go-to for locals in the area.

Birria Taco (\$11.95)

— The Birria Taco was a standout on their menu – a crispy, cheesy and flavor-packed taco filled with tender, juicy beef. Dunked into a side of warm consommé, it was apparent why this is a customer favorite. Every bite of this was balanced, with no ingredient overpowering the other. Though it came piping hot, this didn't cause the shells to become soggy.



Super Taco (\$4.50)

— The Super Taco has a lot of potential; however, it fell short in execution. It was generously filled with well-seasoned al pastor meat, but it was difficult to eat, and the overload of sauces made the crispy taco soggy. While the combination of the ingredients was delicious, the textures made it harder to enjoy.



PAV BHAJI AND MORE

A bright red truck and rich, spicy aroma are in stark contrast to the adjacent gas station and parking lot. Pav Bhaji and More is an entirely vegan, affordable, authentic Indian food truck located roughly half an hour from Paly driving or 45 minutes on bike in Sunnyvale West. Pricing is surprisingly reasonable, with most meals ranging from \$5.99 to \$11.99, not including the eight percent discount for cash purchases. The staff is friendly and helpful, though there may be a minor language barrier for those who do not speak Hindi.



Tandoori Vada Pav (\$6.99)

— While the tan vegetable patty, white bread roll, tandoori sauce and roasted green chili pepper may appear bland, the flavors blend to create a pleasant, approachable dish. The center of the dish, a deep-fried potato patty, has a smooth texture and contains most of the star qualities in this dish. The chef's special tandoori sauce is a less vibrant orange than most tandoori sauces, which is reflected in its flavor palette similar to that of a shy aioli. The untoasted bread is a dry, unimpressive addition, only slightly redeemed texture-wise by the chef's special tandoori sauce. The smallest component is the most deadly — beware the green pepper unless you want intense spice.

Amul Pav Bhaji (\$11.9) — A viscous vegetable curry with a punch paired with Amul butter, onion, lime and cilantro and served alongside Masala Pav (bread rolls). The curry's powerful, slightly tangy and barely spicy flavors resemble comforting home cooking. While plain on its own, the Masala Pav balances out the strong spices in the curry and has a splendid crispy and soft texture for dipping.

PETRA'S KITCHEN



Burrito (\$12)

As one of their most popular menu items, the burrito is highly customizable with seven protein options to choose from. Despite the generous portion for the price, the burrito al pastor was lacking in flavor and texture, as the pork was not very tender and tasted slightly metallic. The salsa, pinto beans and rice were far superior to the pork, with a pleasant spice level that salvaged the bite from the sub-par meat and complimented the lettuce and sour cream.



Located in a quiet parking lot at the corner of San Antonio Road and California Street in Mountain View, Petra's Kitchen is immediately recognizable, painted to resemble the flag of France. The truck is an amalgamation of cultural symbols, with a Buddha statue wearing an evil eye necklace at the checkout window and a menu ranging from traditional Mexican entrees to French desserts to American classics. Founded three years ago as a family business, Petra's Kitchen's menu is expansive, and picking just one meal can be difficult. Overall, while Petra's Kitchen's vast options are appealing to some, the execution of their menu is a hit or miss. The food was slow to come out but can be ordered either in person at the truck or online, and the staff is very friendly and welcoming to customers.

Grepes (\$12)

— In contrast, the crepes were a standout dish — containing Nutella, strawberries and bananas, the classic combination of flavors was perfectly balanced and filling. The fruit was perfectly ripe and was complimented nicely with whipped cream, creating a pleasant dish.

