

International Palette

A Multi-Sensory Experience as a Food Critique

Gender Dress and Society

SBS 3201

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I recently visited one of my favorite Mexican spots on 5<sup>th</sup> avenue in Prospect park out in Brooklyn called Tacos Broncos. It is an exceptionally good place to go for authentic Mexican street food, it tastes just like the food you would get out in Mexico. And just like the street food stands and restaurants back in Mexico, there is no wait list or reservations, the workers don't wear suits but an all-black uniform and in traditional manners you greet the people as you walk in.

Cultural differences that one notices visually is the décor. The place is decorated with tapestries with traditional designs, There's mahogany-colored guitars next to a mariachi hat. The Mexican flag is hung up with the eagle cactus and snake on full display. A very bold display of pride. You can feel the tablecloths and how thick they are created, feeling close to the same fabric that could be found on a poncho. The sound sense hears songs played from Mexico from every time period and genre. The senses that have the best delight are the taste and smell, as walking in your greeted with the taste of fresh salsa being made with fresh ingredients, the smell of masa greets you and gives you the urgency to order something fast, as well the fresh drinks like horchata and tamarindo. Comparing this to Taco Bell an American food chain, you are greeted only by cold air conditioner and the sounds of food being processed.

The menu at this restaurant is truly diverse and not just Tacos. The menu consist of tostadas, sopas, enchiladas, mole con arroz, tortas, nachos, regular or Tejano style, they have seafood as well, calamar, shrimp, clams, oysters, ceviche. I personally ordered the sopas de pollo. It's basically 3 corn bowls with fried beans, chicken, sour cream, shredded cheese, lettuce and tomato.

What's offered as a snack before you decide to eat are plain tortilla chips with green and red sauce and a salsa. Pretty simple and good for building an appetite, for desserts they have gelatins

and flan, this part of the menu is pretty slim, but the small choices mean the desserts are made even better.

Beverages are some of the best, while they do have your regular American drinks, they have coca cola from Mexico, Jarritos, sangria soda, and refreshers such as hibiscus juice and horchata, and tamarindo. The alcohol selection is great, they have tequilas and beers such as modelo, corona, tecate, dos X, Victoria and other Mexican brand beers.

The food is reflective of the cultural geography because there is use of corn in almost everything you eat at the restaurant, Mexico is known for using corn as a primary ingredient for their food. Even with sea food torillas are used on the side as a form of grabbing the food.

The staff at the restaurant won't be wearing fancy clothes and jewelry. They wear an all black uniform, some of the waitress do have body modifications such as piercings and tattoos, but for the most part these people come to work and are not so expressive when it comes to their dress. You will see male staff wear hats and aprons and female staff have and updo or ponytail.

I would rate my experience an A. everything about this restaurant is authentic to the street food scene in Mexico. Having eaten there and here. The similarities are so close the only difference is that in Mexico the food is a little oilier. I would highly recommend eating at this establishment and if you're only looking to get tacos, they have a truck just 5 minutes away by the bus depot on 5<sup>th</sup> avenue.

Off my experience I would be able to contribute the importance of corn to Mexican people and how they use it. How fresh drinks like horchata are made. And why the restaurants display their pride through the décor.