

## Restaurant review: Cantina Laredo

by Orla Leland

The UK's first [Cantina Laredo](#) has opened in Covent Garden, specialising in Mexican cuisine and inspired by the culinary traditions found along the Rio Grande. My husband and I went along for dinner and with the promise of an authentic Mexican meal, made with only the freshest ingredients.

On arrival at the restaurant, we were greeted by friendly staff that showed us to our table. The decor is simple but inviting. A clever layout masks the fact that the restaurant is fairly large and even boasts a private dining room that can be booked exclusively.

Once seated, our waiter recommended the frozen signature margaritas (which are made with fresh lemon and lime juice rather than mixers) which were huge and didn't disappoint.

On the recommendation of our waiter, Sergio, we decided to try the 'Top Shelf Guacamole' which is served with tortilla chips. The Guacamole was prepared by the waiter at our table - fresh avocado, tomatoes, red onions, coriander, jalapenos and the perfect amount of spices made it a mouthwatering starter.

Neither of us realised that guacamole could be so tasty! We also shared the 'Botanas platter' which consisted of lots of Mexican tasters such as quesadillas, prawn and vegetable skewers, tacos and stuffed jalapenos - all beautifully prepared and presented.

For mains I chose one of the specials which was Salmon with chimmichurri sauce (a combination of parsley, garlic, wine vinegar, olive oil and red pepper flakes - yum!) accompanied by Mexican rice and sauteed vegetables. The salmon was perfectly cooked and the sauce had just the right 'kick' to it without being too overpowering.

The vegetables, a combination of green beans, courgettes and sliced almonds, were deliciously crunchy, and the almonds gave additional flavour. The rice was tasty and colourful accompaniment, and just the right portion size. My husband chose the 'Cascabel Ribeye' steak - which he raved about. The steak was aged for 28 days and basted with Cascabel marinade - a sweet and spicy sauce, and cooked exactly to our liking.

For dessert we shared the 'Mexican chocolate brownie' which was served with cinnamon ice cream and Mexican brandy - I say shared, but to be honest I had all but devoured it on my own by the time my husband picked up his spoon! It was quite honestly one of the nicest desserts I've had. Even my other half, who doesn't have a huge sweet tooth (mainly because I never give him a chance to!), agreed that it was extremely moreish.

Neither of us are huge fans of Tequila but the fact that the bar stocks more than 30 labels of Tequila alone made us think that maybe we were missing out by not sampling any. We ordered one each of the Plata (silver), Reposado (rested) and Anejo (aged) varieties. Of the three types, the Anejo was definitely my favourite - its smoothness likened it to Brandy rather than Tequila and made it the perfect digestif.

Our overall experience of [Cantina Laredo](#) was hugely enjoyable. Great tasting fresh food and an affordable price to boot means that we will definitely be making a return trip in the not too distant future. Only 27 other brands of tequila to get through next time!

For more information visit [www.cantinalaredo.co.uk](http://www.cantinalaredo.co.uk)

