

DINING

Festive Rio Bravo Cantina practices art of having fun

Kids enjoy sitting by the window overlooking a pond filled with ducks and geese at Rio Bravo Cantina in Livonia, but even if seats aren't available by the window, there are lots of other attention grabbers. The friendly staff is quick to provide crayons, balloons, and a menu designed just for kids. There are colored lights everywhere, and the atmosphere is fun and relaxed.

As the second anniversary of the restaurant approaches, Eric Drescher, general manager, is hosting the Associated Artists' Invitational Art Exhibit and Sale on Aug. 8 to celebrate. The show will fill a 40- by 40-foot tent in the restaurant parking lot with more than 130 watercolor and oil paintings, colored pencil, photography, and fabric art.

"I wanted to entice adults to come and linger at the restaurant," said Drescher. "Going to an art fair is a nice relaxing way to spend the day. It's a win-win type of situation for all of us and a big test for me. If it works well for the artists and the restaurant, we'll do it again."

There will be great food, games, prizes and other surprises, including live entertainment during the Second Anniversary Summer Bash on Saturday.

Summertime menu

Besides their popular Mexican and Tex-Mex style menu, Rio Bravo Cantina is offering a special Grilltime Menu through September.

"We're always trying to find ways to please customers who want something different," said Drescher.

The Grilltime menu offers lots of summertime favorites including Rio Grande T-Bone, Chipotle Chops, Chili-Battered Fish, and Spice-Rubbed Grilled Chicken. Lunchtime portions are available.

Lunch is served until 3 p.m. Monday-Saturday. The luncheon menu includes Rio Bravo Cantina's famous made to order fajitas along with Mexican favorites such as tacos, enchiladas and burritos. If you can't decide, order one of the combination platters. Sandwiches, and a soup and salad combo are also available.

Rio Bravo Cantina
Where: 19265 Victor Parkway (north of Seven Mile Road, east of I-275), Livonia, (734) 542-0700.
Open: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday; 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday brunch, 2-10 p.m. Sunday dinner.
Menu: Traditional Mexican and Tex-Mex Style dishes. Famous for fajitas, homemade tortillas. Generous portions.
Cost: Moderate, lunch \$4.79 to \$7.99; dinner \$6.79 to \$12.99. Sunday brunch \$9.95 adults, \$5.95 children age 5-12, children under 5, free.
Credit Cards: All majors accepted.
Reservations: Preferred seating. Call ahead to be seated 5-20 minutes upon arrival.
Carryout: Available.
Highlights:
■ Children's menu
■ Happy Hour 4-6 p.m. Monday-Friday with complimentary taco bar.
Special Event:
■ Associated Artists Invitational Exhibit - A show of painting, colored pencil, photography, and fabric art by a group of independent artists. Admission is free.
When: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 8. GRR plays acoustic rhythm and blues 5-9 p.m. followed by rock 'n' roll until midnight.
Where: In the parking lot of Rio Bravo Cantina.



Fiesta time: Steven Schaefer (left), senior manager, and Eric Drescher, general manager, present some of tasty choices at Rio Bravo Cantina, which is celebrating its second anniversary.

Drescher can't say enough about the fajitas; one of the most often ordered items. They are available in many different flavorful varieties - Monterey Veggie, chicken, steak, and shrimp. You can order fajitas for one or two. If you're counting fat grams, order corn & black bean salsa as accompaniments instead of guacamole or sour cream and substitute black beans for Charro beans, low-fat Cheddar cheese, low-fat sour cream and fat-free tortillas are available on request.

Combination platters, all served with rice, beans and a salad are another popular item. Choose from six offerings, or create your own with any three of your favorites including Shredded Beef Taco, Mini Veggie Burrito, Cheese Enchilada, or Pork Tamale. Tacos may be ordered soft or crispy.

Armadillo Eggs, a popular appetizer, aren't what you think they are - they're six red jalapenos filled with seasoned cream cheese, lightly breaded and deep-fried. Armadillo Eggs are served in a special egg carton with sweet chile sauce for dipping.

Popular entree salads include the Red Mesa Grilled Chicken Salad - a cool mix of California greens tossed with thinly sliced grilled chicken, corn & black bean salsa, red chile corn tortilla strips, julienne red peppers, crunchy jicama and balsamic vinaigrette dressing topped with a touch of lite ranch dressing. There's also a Caesar Salad and Tostada Salad.

On the "Lighter Side," choose from Vegetarian Black Bean Soup, Chicken Burrito made with skinless Fajita Chicken and seasoned black beans, hand-rolled in a fat-free tortilla, or Pueblo Chicken, skinless chicken breast, marinated and grilled to perfection. Both chicken dishes are served with Mexican rice and fresh steamed vegetables.

Just for kids
Children can color their place mat while they wait for dinner. Give the place mat to your service to win a free Rio Bravo Kid's Meal. Every kid is a winner, and the menu offers foods kids love: hamburger, burrito, nachos, two

tacos, chicken fingers, Mexican pizza or cheese Quesadilla. Choose any item for \$2.95.

Sunday brunch offers omelets made to order, traditional Mexican favorites such as enchiladas and tacos, Belgian waffles, fresh carved roast beef, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon.

There are lots of ways to catch your thirst at Rio Bravo Cantina. Every month they feature a different flavored margari-

ta. This month it's raspberry, next month will probably be peach.

A variety of ice cold beers, sangria, frozen pina colodas, wines, and Tequila are also available along with assorted soft drinks.

At the end of September, a Rio Bravo Cantina will open in Auburn Hills on University at Squirrel. There's also one in Dearborn on Mercury Drive, near the Southfield Freeway at the Fairlane Town Center.

State Chili Championship, Saturday, Sept. 12, downtown Plymouth, Kellogg Park during Plymouth's annual Fall Festival. Winner goes to the 1998 World Championship Chili Cook-off. Cooking starts 2 p.m., chili sampling 5 p.m. Call (734) 455-8838 for information.

Annabelle's (Fine Catering), Baci Abruzzi, Bangkok Cuisine, Big Daddy's Parthenon, Excalibur, and Too Chee. Admission to Arts, Beats & Eats is free. Call (248) 684-4177 for information.

CHILI COOKOFF
Twentieth annual Michigan

RESTAURANT SPECIALS

Restaurant Specials features restaurant openings and renovations, menu specials, and anniversaries. Send announcements to: Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or fax (734) 691-7279.

EVENTS

MARIO'S RESTAURANT

Is celebrating its 50th anniversary in August with great specials. The restaurant is at 4222 Second Ave. in Detroit. They're open for lunch 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday; dinner 3-11 p.m. Monday-Friday, 4 p.m. to midnight Saturday, and 2-11 p.m. Sunday. Valet parking, reserva-

tions recommended, call (313) 832-1616. Anniversary specials served Sunday-Friday, and include Antipasta with salad bowl, Minestrone or onion soup, Pasta Del Giorno and bread basket.

THE LARK

Chef de Cuisine Dinner 7 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, Aug. 24-25. Chef de Cuisine Marcus Haight will dazzle diners with his own personal cuisine. The menu features Tart of Sautéed Fresh Foie Gras with fresh blueberries and cinnamon sauce, Sauté of Wild Mushrooms with Tarragon Sauce, Roasted Veal Loin en Croûte & Roasted Veal Chop "Jenn Banchet" with truffle

sauce, Potatoes Dauphinoise, seasonal vegetables and Creme Brulee. The cost is \$85 per person, not including other beverages, tax or gratuity. Last date for cancellation or reduction of reservations without charge is Aug. 15. The Lark is at 6430 Farmington Road, West Bloomfield. Call (248) 661-4466 to make reservations.

ART, BEATS & EATS

More than 30 of Oakland County's finest restaurants will participate in Arts, Beats & Eats, Friday-Monday, Sept. 4-7 in downtown Pontiac. Participating restaurants will offer up to four menu items for sampling at a cost of \$1 to \$4. Customers can purchase tickets and use them in exchange for food items. Not proceeds will benefit a group of eight local charities. Participating restaurants include

Go Horseback Riding
OAKWOOD RIDING STABLES
2991 Oakwood Rd.
Orionville
Tuesday Special
Group Rates Available
(248) 627-2826

FRIDAY SPECIAL
Fish & Chips
(baked or fried)
All You Can Eat
\$9.95
The Horsford Inn
Farmington Hills
(248) 474-4800

DON PEDRO'S
AUTHENTIC MEXICAN CUISINE
24366 Grand River
Bloomfield Hills
CARRY OUT (913) 537-1450
MARGARITA MARTINI
\$1.95
Check Out Our
Summer
Food & Drink Specials!

BANQUET FACILITIES
from \$7.95
American / Mexican Banquet Buffet
\$3.79 LUNCH SPECIALS
MEXICAN SAMPLER
FOR TWO
Includes: Steak Fajita,
2 Tacos, Cheese
Enchilada, El Pasa,
Burrito, Tostitos,
Guacamole Dip, Rice.
Dine-In • Coupon Expires 8/20/98
Not valid with any other offer.

With Your Friends
Good 'Ole Days
August 7-16

- 98¢ Bowling
- 98¢ Shoe Rental*
- 98¢ Hot Dog*
- 75¢ Soft Drink*

* You must participate in bowling to be eligible for these specials.

Return to the Good 'Ole Days at these locations:

CENTURY BOWL 7345 Highland Road Waterford (248) 666-4700	SUPER BOWL 45100 Ford Road Canton (734) 459-6070	SKORE LANES 22255 Ecorse Road Taylor (313) 291-6220
MERRI-BOWL 30950 Five Mile Road Livonia (734) 427-2900	PLUM HOLLOW 21900 W. Nine Mile Southfield (248) 353-6540	TROY LANES 1950 E. Square Lake Rd. Troy (248) 879-8700

Call the bowling center for times and lane availability.

Mr. Z's STEAK HOUSE 537-5600
27331 Five Mile Rd. (Corner of Oakman)
Dancing Fri. & Sat.

2 for 1 LUNCHEON SPECIALS
Your Choice \$7.95
VIAL PARMESAN W/SAUCE OF SPAGHETTI
CHICKEN STEAK W/ WICKLE PLAT
BEEF TIPS IN BURGUNDY WINE SAUCE OVER
MUSHROOMS OR RICE PILAF
FISH & CHIPS W/COLE SLAW
IL CLUB SANDWICH
BAKED OR REGULAR SPAGHETTI
Includes cup of soup & bread basket
(No coupons, carry outs or single orders)

BUY ONE DINNER GET 2nd DINNER 1/2 OFF
(of equal or lesser value)
Dine-In Only • Expires 8-14-98

2 for 1 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL 3 to 6 p.m. Your Choice \$10.95
Chicken Scallopine • Sizzler Steak • Broiled Icelandic Cod • Beef Tips
Over Egg Noodles or Rice • Chicken or Beef Stiff Fry • Beef Liver &
Onions • Veal Parmesan with Side of Spaghetti
(No coupons, carry outs or single orders)

Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn Restaurant
HALF OFF
YOUR SECOND DINNER
When another dinner entree of equal or greater value is ordered at regular price.
Good Monday thru Friday ONLY
Valid Now thru Sept. 4, 1998
This coupon may not be used for private parties, Bavarian Room menu, dinner shows or other offers. 61
Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn Restaurant
713 South Main Street, Frankenmuth, MI 48734
RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED • 1-800-BAVARIA

PRIME RIB DINNER
includes Salad, Potatoes, Vegetable and Hot Bread
\$12.95

EARLY BIRD DINNERS - \$5.95
MON-FRI 3-6 PM ONLY
Country Fried Steak
Liver & Onions
Veal Parmesan/Pasta
Spaghetti & Meatballs
Includes: Soup or Salad, veggie or potato.
(Excludes for main items)

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DINNERS
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Hamtramck Art Festival
Saturday & Sunday
August 8th & 9th
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Zussman Park
(Across from City Hall)

ART, MUSIC, CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
ETHNIC CULTURAL DISPLAY
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