

Best of November: Top things we tasted at Naples restaurants



November begins the food festivities, wrapping it up at the end with Thanksgiving.

But we decided to take advantage of everything Naples-area restaurants have to offer and sampled some fine cuisine last month.

From tacos to leches to pizza, we found some gourmet gems we hope you try, too.

This naan taco (\$10) from Arekie Fusion Food Truck features chicken tika, pickled onion, cheese, cilantro and a garlic-cilantro yogurt sauce. *(Photo: Sarajane Sullivan)*

Chicken tikka naan taco from Arekie Fusion Food Truck

I mourned every bite of this taco — because it meant I was one step closer to no longer having this taco.

I savored every bite with reverent silence. If I were more vulnerable, perhaps tears would have slipped down my cheeks as I gently took my last bite.

The taco is served in warm naan, with bright red chicken tikka topped with pickled onion, cilantro, cheese and a garlic cilantro yogurt sauce.

Where: New locations daily, check website for schedule.

Hours: Check website for schedule.

Information: arekie.com; [Facebook](#)

— Sarajane Sullivan



The tres leches (\$13.95) from Rumba Cuban Cafe in Naples is milky without being sodden or gooey, and sweet without being cloying. (Photo: Harriet Heithaus)

Tres leches at Rumba Cuba Cafe

I'm in love. I had every intention of writing about the killer slow-roasted pork, lechon asado, at Rumba Cuban Cafe. It's my absolute favorite guilty-pleasure lunch with sides of arroz amarillo and crispy-tender fried plantains (\$13.95). But my sister was visiting, and we decided to splurge with dessert.

Suddenly the best taste spot shifted. The family-owned restaurant makes its own tres leches, that cake infused with at least three types of milk, and we bypassed a fudgy-looking chocolate cake to try it.

Some enthusiasts add a fourth variety. And Rumba's version (\$5.95) surely qualifies as one. But don't ask; this recipe, as in many Cuban households, is a family secret.

The sweetened condensed milk component gives the liquid poured over its cake a subtle flavor that never overwhelms the dessert or the diner. This tres leches was milky without being sodden or gooey, and sweet without being cloying.

Its frosting tastes like a gently applied buttercream — just a light layer to keep the milky goodness in the forefront. Despite the fact we're both chocolate fans, this cake disappeared in record time. With coffee, it's a quick trip to heaven.

This tres leches only left me with one question: How can I ever go back to Rumba without succumbing to it?

Where: Rumba Cuban Cafe, 1265 Airport-Pulling Road S., Naples

Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Saturday

Information: 239-659-2996 or rumbacubancafe.com

— *Harriet Heithaus*

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The Porker and Taters Gone Tate at LowBrow Pizza in East Naples

As you walk toward your table at LowBrow Pizza along U.S. 41 East, it's easy to understand the buzz surrounding this place (and lack of parking spaces on a weeknight).

A wooden stool rested atop our table, with the image of Will Ferrell's Ron Burgundy "Anchorman" burned in a corner. That began our first LowBrow experience that we began with the appetizer Taters Gone Tate.

The abundant starter (\$12) arrives in a large, wooden salad bowl and consists of fried taters, pork shoulder bacon, scallions, pimento cheese, hot honey and 'Bama sauce. This is not the typical tater skins that often arrive dried with hard cheese at some restaurants.

The tater samplings are smaller and mixed in with the other delights with sauce on the side for a savory surprise.

And the pizza comes as advertised, "charred, crispy and chewy," with our choice The Porker. Haters gonna hate about pineapple on pizza, so don't judge me too harshly. And this one arrived with thinner slices and not the pineapple blocks usually on large-chain pizzas.

The Porker (\$15) comes topped with small barbecue pork belly pieces, pineapple, jalapeño, pickled red onion and cotija. Call us wimps, as we declined the jalapeño or onion, but were not disappointed with what we tasted.

Where: LowBrow Pizza & Beer, 3148 U.S. 41 E., Naples

Hours: 4 to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday; noon to 11 p.m. Saturday; noon to 9 p.m. Sunday

Information: 239-529-6919 or lowbrowpizzaandbeer.com