

San Diego

MAGAZINE

The city's best TACOS

SD's taco hall
of fame on
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TACO THE TOWN

The taco is San Diego's next big thing. Please mess with my taco.

BY TROY JOHNSON

TACO PURISTS ARE FREAKING OUT. Much like the burger and mac 'n' cheese before it, the humble border-town classic has new, fancy friends. Four-star chefs are fussing with it. This makes taco purists use their sad emojis. "Don't co-opt our street food!" they scream. Tacos are meant to be



Galaxy Taco

Bracero

the better-burger biz: Burger Lounge, Five Guys, Shake Shack, Smashburger, Fatburger, Habit, etc.

For decades, Mexican food in San Diego meant three rolled tacos at one of the 'bertos. Alberto's, El Albiertos, Humberto's, you name it. Sure, aficionados had their own favorite carts and hovels, like Las Cuatro Milpas in Barrio Logan, where "Mom" and her sisters make fresh tortillas in a shallow pool of simmer-

ing grease as you order them. And the legendary El Indio sells lard in buckets. That's pretty hardcore. But Old Town has always been known more for its satellite-dish-sized margaritas than its culinary prowess.

Most San Diego diners loved the hell out of their burritos in to-go bags, but opted

eaten without regard for utensils, manners, or hygiene. "It's like putting Banksy in the Louvre!" The taco is not, never has been, a vessel for your culinary school frippery.

Smacks a microgreen out of a chef's hand.

For decades, we were stuck with burgers boasting frozen meat pucks, white lettuce, and never-aging bread. Then In-N-Out used real, fresh food and legions followed them into

"Authenticity is a bogus pursuit, championed mostly by pompous, precious aesthetes and exclusionary, elitist tools."

TOP TACO deals

BARRIO STAR

Tuesday, 5–9:30 p.m. \$3–\$3.75 tacos and \$6–\$8 margaritas. 2706 Fifth Avenue, Bankers Hill

THE BLIND BURRO

Tuesday, 4–11 p.m. \$6–\$8 for two tacos and \$5 margaritas. 639 J Street, East Village

