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**DEL MAR MODERN MEXICAN**  
CRUSH VISITS - JANUARY 2015

*Experience modern Mexican with the beauty of Camps Bay as a backdrop.*

**OPENING HOURS:**  
Mon-Sun 12 noon to 22h00

**WHERE:**  
The Promenade, Victoria Road, Camps Bay

021 437 0333 |

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The hallmarks of traditional Mexican food are vibrancy, freshness and punchy flavours, yet somehow the rise of 'Tex-Mex' has managed to overshadow this in favour of dishes heavy with cheese, sour cream and sauces. Thank goodness then for Del Mar restaurant in Camps Bay, which has managed to find its way through all of this to serve up authentic, tapas-style Mexican fare.

The restaurant has a beautiful view over the vista of the strip and, if seated near the window as we were, you can enjoy the sunset while sipping on a delicious pomegranate 'rita' (margarita), a glass of vino or an ice-cold cerveza (beer). The interior is cool and contemporary with no sombreros in sight.

Don't feel overwhelmed at the menu – a lot of it is written traditionally, but your server will be well versed in the lingo, and by the end of the evening you will be too. The menu is divided into sections such as ceviches, followed by antojitos ('little cravings' or street food), para la mesa (quintessentials for the table), platos principales (mains) and so on. We tried a few dishes from each section, kicking off with the

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Info

Review

dishes from each section, kicking off with the guacamole with chips. It is hands-down the tastiest guacamole I have ever eaten – chunky avocado with tomato, onion, green chilli, lime, coriander and guajillo oil. That drizzle of delicious, smokey chilli oil lifted a regular bowl of guacamole to new heights. This was served with Frijoles Nero – black beans blended with epazote (a Mexican tea leaf). My dining partner has not eaten any form of bean since he was a child, but this delicious bean purée had him converted at first bite. We simply couldn't get enough of either.

Our server recommended a few things from the street food section of the menu – we enjoyed the Pancita De Puerco – meltingly tender pork belly with chipotle and jalapeño glaze and Taquito Pollo – crispy tortillas filled with pulled chicken with ranchero sauce. We tried a ceviche trio – linefish cured in three different curing mixes, all three were beautifully fresh and delivered a smack of chilli heat. We also loved the Tostada de Pescado – crispy corn tostadas topped with tuna and salmon. From the mains menu we opted to share the Barbacoa (slow roasted



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Info

Review

opted to share the Barbacoa (slow roasted lamb), served with accompaniments and put together with soft, handmade tortillas. Barbacoa (the origin of the where the term barbeque stems from) is a form of slow roasting meat until it is fall-apart tender, and this dish certainly delivered. All dishes are served with a selection of accompaniments such as salsas and sauces that are carefully crafted using premium chillies straight from Mexico.

A few 'ritas' and several plates of food down we were positively popping, but couldn't leave without trying the churros. This sweet dish seems to have blurred origins – the Mexicans, Spanish and Portuguese (and probably a few others) all lay claim to this deep-fried, doughnut like dessert. The sugary churros are served with a choice of two dunking sauces, chocolate and dulce de leche (caramel). They were texturally spot on – the choux pastry fried to crispy, golden perfection.



Del Mar is a great place to choose to share a relaxed meal with a partner or a group of friends. While the style of food is quite casual

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Del Mar is a great place to choose to share a relaxed meal with a partner or a group of friends. While the style of food is quite casual (the street food and tapas-style sharing being the real way to get the full experience), it is not a laid back 'taquería'. The food is authentic, full flavoured and packed with punchy heat. It's a trip south of the border without the expensive plane ticket.

**SPICY FLAVOURS, FRESH FOOD AND A VIEW THAT'S HARD TO BEAT.**

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