

Publicity Articles

«Viva» Revista Diaria

Last week the inauguration of the El Fogoncito restaurant took place, which specialty is the Mexican cuisine. In the opening night many were invited and the site in diagonal to Plaza Mayor in Rohrmoser was insufficient to hold them all. Among the guests who could find a seat and able to enjoy their gallitos of pastor' meat and taquitos with spicy pepper was several politicians, and we do not know if this was only a coincidence but they belong to the Partido Liberacion Nacional (PLN). Like whom? Luis Alberto Monge, ex president of the Republic, Oscar Arias Sanchez ex president and Nobel Peace Price; Rolando Araya and his brother Johnny, municipal executive of San Jose. Ah! and the chancellor Fernando Naranjo, accompanied by the entire family.

The Land and cattle market

San Jose, Costa Rica, El Fogoncito Mexican tacos chain, will expand its branches in this and other Central American countries, after having inaugurated a month ago its first franchise in Costa Rica land. The branch manager, Carlos Mendoza, signaled that the business has been a full success, with an average of 700 daily clients.

Executive World

We have found in South America three countries offering great advantages to the Mexican Franchises. The three countries have reported interesting growing economies during the last years and markets not too competitive in certain areas, which result in interesting opportunities to certain Mexican franchises. We are talking about Colombia, Chile and Peru.

Diversiones Moy, who revolutionized the concept of video-games salons to transform them in gathering centers for family entertainment, has granted franchises in Brazil, Spain and India. Besides the Central American markets, Spain is also a very interesting country where to expand the Mexican Franchises, especially in the food market.

On May 1996 participated representing the Mexican Franchises Association in the Madrid Franchises Fair. On that event, in the Association stand, three brochures with Mexican Franchises publicity were distributed: Sushi Itto, Diversiones Moy and Mi Viejo Pueblito. Before the end of the year from that date, Sushi Itto and Diversiones Moy managed to end the initiation of their operations in Spain. Operations than soon will cross the Pyrenees and will be in other European countries. On the publication of this article, six Mexican companies will have ended their participation in the Madrid Fair: Angus, Opticas Devlyn, Ferrioni, Los Bisquets de Obregon, El Fogoncito, La Fabula Pizza.



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The Mexican Companies participation will be in a pavilion where the European investors will be in contact with concepts that could be successful in Spain and in some other countries in the old continent. The Madrid Fair with three working days will be visited by more than ten thousand visitors interested in new concepts which are conducted through franchises. The third wave is already on route.

The Mexican Franchises are already marching to conquer new markets. Spain, Central and South America will be territories where very soon will be common to find Mexican franchises. With respect to the United States and Europe, those markets should be considered with care, as they do not have the advantages of a common language and culture of the already mentioned countries.

The Arizona Republic

MEXICO CITY -- Marinated pork meat is always roasting temptingly on a spit at El Fogoncito, a chain of trendy taco shops in Mexico City.

"Tacos al Pastor," made from the roasted pork, are the specialty at these fast-food outlets, where customers typically order seconds and thirds while waiters tap the orders into laptop computers that track the bill and the store's sales. Owner Carlos Roberts started the chain four years ago and lost no time in marrying tacos to technology.

From his downtown office, Roberts can log onto a computer network connecting his 17 restaurants and audit any store's activity down to monitoring orders as they are placed.

He does it all with Arizona-bred technology.

Roberts uses computer-networking software by Artisoft, a Tucson-based company that sold \$2 million worth of computer products in Mexico in 1995.

"Mexico accounts for 30 to 33 percent of our Latin American sales and it is a very, very important operation for says Abelino "Al" Ochoa, Artisoft's Latin America director.

Founded in 1987, Artisoft has mushroomed into a \$61 million-a-year company with 371 employees and offices in nine countries, including Mexico.

"Our company manufactures software to connect computers together to form a network that can share resources, such as printers, modems and phone Ochoa explains.

The star product in the Artisoft line is a networking program called LANtastic that was developed for the needs and budget of small- to mid-size businesses.

It is LANtastic that has helped Artisoft become a leader in Mexico for networking software.

Carlos Camargo, director of Abscisa Sistemas, a Mexico City computer-equipment retailer, helped introduce LANtastic to Mexico in 1991; a year before Artisoft opened its Mexico City office.



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"We sought out Artisoft, which had not thought about entry to Mexico, and asked to sell their product," Camargo said.

At that time, Mexican computer fans bent on using LANtastic having to buy it in the United States. Roberts did this only to find that the English-language version would crash every time a Spanish-alphabet character was entered.

Because Artisoft was not in Mexico, there were no customer-service or computer technicians available to help customers such as Roberts with trouble-shooting.

All that changed with Artisoft's entry into Mexico in 1992. Today, there are Spanish versions of LANtastic with Spanish-language user manuals. Artisoft also has an office in Mexico City that provides sales, marketing and technical support besides a web of distributors and retailers with trained technicians.

Camargo says he now has more than 260 customers using LANtastic as well as other Artisoft products. "The majority are companies with 50 or less employees," he said. "We have schools, factories, car dealers and restaurants».

Some Artisoft customers in Mexico break the mold. The national Fishing Ministry and the Finance Ministry in the state of Oaxaca also are LANtastic users.

Throughout Mexico, an average of 12,000 computers annually or 1,000 per month are being outfitted with LANtastic, Ochoa said.

"The Mexican market is not saturated with computers. It's a growing market and a market for the future," Ochoa said.

Hopes for the future kept Artisoft from pulling out of Mexico last year when, after two years of climbing, sales plunged. The drop-off followed the devaluation of the peso and a drop in software prices.

"We had a lot of inventory, and the customers could not pay for it," he said. To avoid closing shop, Artisoft took drastic steps to cut the company's losses. The Mexico City office staff was pared to six from 12, and Artisoft wrote off half of every customer's debt in exchange for 50 percent payment.

"We were able to stop the bleeding immediately and balance the inventory that we had in Mexico," Ochoa said. In April, the Mexican recovery started for Artisoft.

"Now we are growing again," Ochoa said.

Artisoft's Mexico City office now offers support for sales in the rest of Latin America, including Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay, Uruguay and Ecuador.

In 1995, Latin American sales accounted for almost \$6 million of Artisoft's total receipts, Ochoa said.

The company foresees a 25 percent increase this year in Mexican sales, with more growth to follow the introduction this month of computer telephony programs.

The new software will function much like online telephone banking, giving small businesses the ability to let their customers call into the company's computer and place orders, leave messages or check their accounts.

"There is a big future for us in the Mexican market," Ochoa said.



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Costa Rica

Type of Food: Mexican

Location: Rohmoser, across the street from Plaza Mayor

Telephone: 232-0393

Specialties: «Tacos» al carbon! Tortillas prepared with all kinds of tasty grilled meats...served with onion, sweet pepper, refried beans, Mexican sauce and cheese toppings, but no US style tacos! Tasty guacamole and Aztec Soup. The Platos Fuertes (main courses) come with Mexican rice and a salad. The Platillo del Día is a good buy about \$4 US!

Why we like the place: Everything is fresh, all meats are grilled and nicely seasoned. The waiters are «snappy» and offer good service. Meals have a nice presentation and the place is attractive, although on the noisy side! It's a good place to go for a Mexican style meal or for drinks and a snack.

Decor: Tastefully decorated with a gas grill and open kitchen at the entrance. Handsome furniture and a charming courtyard enhance dining area with a fountain. Upstairs cocktail lounge.

Alcohol: Full bar with Mexican beers, wines and champagnes. Margaritas come prepared in a variety of styles and flavors.

Language Spoken: Primarily Spanish, but a few staff members speak some English.

Credit Cards: All accepted

Cost: Inexpensive

Meals will run from about \$4 to \$8US without alcohol.



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