

# Dream Come True': New Family-run Mexican Restaurant Opens In Northampton County

By Ryan Kneller / WFMZ

PEN ARGYL - PEN ARGYL, Pa. - A new spot for tacos, tamales and other Mexican specialties has joined the Slate Belt's restaurant roster.

El Portal, a family-run eatery serving authentic Mexican cuisine, opened Thursday at 492 E. Main St. in Pen Argyl, Northampton County.

The space was previously home to other food establishments, including Sweet Temptations ice cream shop, Emmy Lou's and, most recently, Good Azz Eats.

El Portal, with seating for approximately 40 customers, serves made-from-scratch Mexican dishes, including tacos, tortas, burritos and quesadillas.

A variety of meats are available, including ground beef, chicken breast, al pastor, pulled pork and steak.

Ad-ons include bacon, avocado, cheese and guacamole.

"We're excited to serve the community," manager Alberto Hernandez said.

"We also have daily specials, with our first day's specials including ribs and salsa and chicken and salsa. We want to keep our selections fresh and offer a little something for everyone."

El Portal is owned and operated by Hernandez's mother, Maria del Carmen Padilla, and stepfather, Juan Dominguez.

The restaurant is a true family affair with Hernandez's brother, Miguel Hernandez, and sister-in-law, Claudia Hernandez, also helping out.

The group got its start in the food service business in 2015, when family members began operating a mobile food operation that involved selling prepared Mexican meals and desserts to dairy and farm workers in California, where they were living at the time, Alberto said.

A few years later, they moved to New Jersey, where they operated a food truck.

"We've been wanting to open a restaurant for a while," Alberto said.

"When we moved to Bangor last year, we saw that this space was available, and we thought, 'Let's give it a try and go bigger!' It's kind of like a dream come true for us."

At El Portal, customers can enjoy small plate "cravings," starting at \$2.50, such as flautas, tamales and street corn.

Soft and hard corn tacos, starting at \$3 each, are served with chips and salsa. Other menu highlights include taco salads and Mexican bowls.

Breakfast selections, including burritos with scrambled eggs, meat and vegetables, are also available.

"We'll also feature specials for breakfast," Alberto said.

"For our first day, we had a burrito with scrambled eggs, ham and tomatoes, but we'll have different kinds of meats in them. We'll have breakfast sandwiches on rolls, too."

In addition to savory food, El Portal offers 24 flavors of Hershey's ice cream, available in cups or cones, along with other chilled treats such as flan, milkshakes and sundaes.

Specialty drinks include Mexican sodas, iced coffee and natural juices in water.

"We named the restaurant El Portal because we want to be a portal that takes you to a different place, filled with new food and drinks," Alberto said.

El Portal, which features an outdoor dining patio, is open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Info: 610-881-4090.




Photos by Ryan Kneller



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