



ANCIENT CITY APPETITE

BY JOSHUA BAER

EL TAPATIO TACOS Y TORTAS

1640 Hopewell Street, Santa Fe

Mondays through Saturdays, 8:00 a.m – 6:00 p.m.

505 501-3421

El Tapatio is a *lonchera*, or food truck, that serves great Mexican tacos. The best times to go are either before eleven-thirty in the morning or after one-thirty in the afternoon. As you get closer to noon, the truck gets busy with take-out orders. I recommend that you not get take out from El Tapatio. The tacos are just as good, but if you eat them someplace else you'll miss the experience of sitting at the tables under the Russian olive trees and watching the ongoing pageant of car and foot traffic that passes through the intersection of Sixth and Hopewell.

These are the tacos you don't want to miss:

Tacos de Lengua (four to an order, with grilled onions, a grilled jalapeño, a lime wedge, and two kinds of sauce); \$8. I order tacos de lengua every time I go to El Tapatio. To be at the truck, smell the lengua on the grill, and not order it would be my idea of hell. Each taco is made with one small, soft corn tortilla. I top the lengua with the grilled onions, a squeeze of lime, and a healthy dollop of both sauces. The tacos are too large to eat in one bite but small enough to eat in two. *Lengua* means "tongue"—in this case, beef tongue. El Tapatio's tacos

de lengua are the best I've had. As soon as I leave the *lonchera*, the craving to turn around, go back, and get another order begins.

Tacos de Cachete (four to an order, with the same sides and sauces that come with the tacos de lengua); \$8.00. *Cachete* means "cheek"—in this case, beef cheek. When I invite people to lunch at El Tapatio, and they hesitate about eating beef tongue, I recommend the tacos de cachete or tacos de adovada (\$8). My wife orders the adovada. It's delicious, but it's not in the same league of authenticity as the lengua or the cachete. If I wasn't addicted to El Tapatio's lengua, I'd be addicted to their cachete. The cachete's texture is more complex than the texture of the lengua, but its flavor is less distinct.

Miguel Ángel Torres Galván and his wife, Evelia Segura, who own the *lonchera* and cook all the food, are good people. I can't thank them enough for making El Tapatio one of the happiest parts of my life.

Photograph by Joshua Baer. Ancient City Appetite recommends places to eat, in and out of Santa Fe. Send favorites to places@ancientcityappetite.com.