



## Two Restaurants, One Legendary Standard for Exceptional Mexican Cuisine & Friendly Service

During a recent visit with Rodrigo Razo, it became pretty obvious why his restaurant is so successful. It was just after the 11 a.m. opening of Playa Azul, 4909 10th, when the first customers of the day, who had been waiting in the parking lot, came streaming into the Mexican restaurant. Razo acknowledged many of them with a fist-bump or other greeting.

"We love it here," Razo commented. "We like being social with everyone who comes in. The focus here is customer satisfaction."

Razo is the manager at Playa Azul, while his sister, Veronica Lara, manages a second Mexican-food restaurant just down the street at 3212 10th. "Some customers say they like one restaurant better; some say they like the other better. And some say they just like both," Razo said.

That unscientific poll stems from the differences in menus at each location. Playa Azul features more traditional fare and Maria's is a "little bit more upscale, a little fancier," Razo explained. Both restaurants offer several traditional American dishes. This is where the customer satisfaction comes in. "We want to please everyone," Razo commented.

However, if a patron is unhappy for whatever reason, the staff will do its best to make it right.

Playa Azul opened in 2003 "and we added on in 2012 because we were so busy. But even with the addition, we were still packed and sometimes there was still a line outside," Razo recalled.

Each restaurant is owned by a different company. Maria's doors opened in 2015 after Razo learned the site was becoming available. Its capacity is about 110 customers; Playa Azul can accommodate close to 250 patrons.

The building that now houses Playa Azul had been empty for more than a year before the restaurant opened its doors, Razo mentioned. Maria's has about 15 employees, while 20 staff members serve the Playa Azul clientele.

"Everyone here is aware that customer satisfaction is always the goal," Razo said. "Employees at both restaurants are the backbone of the businesses. We wouldn't be here without them."

"The kitchen is the heart of each location," Razo continued. "We appreciate all our staff members being here and being so polite with our customers. And, of course, we appreciate all our customers at both restaurants. We certainly wouldn't be here without them."

While both locations are always hopping at lunch and dinner times, they are especially busy on Friday and Saturday evenings and at lunchtime on Sunday.

But no matter the time of day or day of the week, chips and sauces are always available when guests arrive.

"Our sauce has a little bit of a hit, a little spicy,"

Razo said. "We have lots of

Anglo customers and we know not

everyone likes it too

spicy. But we can

always make it

hotter. There are

several options for

hot and sweet sauces."

When the conversation

turned to the margaritas,

Razo smiled and said "they

are famous at both

places."

