

# Taco Stand in Mexico City Gets Michelin Star

今回は、メキシコシティの小さなタコス屋台がミシュランの星を獲得したという記事です。わずかなスペースで職人が変わらぬ味を守り続け、街の人々に愛されてきました。周辺の通りには多くの露店が並び、活気ある雰囲気をつくっています。「vendor」は「販売人」「屋台の商人」という意味で、street vendor（屋台の商人）、food vendor（飲食の屋台）のように使います。小さな店でも心を込めた味が世界的に評価されるのは素敵ですね。ミシュランの星を取ってほしいと思う、あなたのお気に入りのお店はありますか？講師と話してみましょう。



## 1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Mexico City's Tacos El Califa de León recently became the first Mexican taco stand to get a Michelin star – an award presented by the famous French restaurant guide.

Chef Arturo Rivera Martínez recently stood over a very hot grill when Michelin representatives came to present him with one of the company's heavy white chef's coats. But Rivera Martinez did not put the jacket on.

In this very small, 3-meter by 3-meter business space, the heat makes the meat. And the heat is strong.

At El Califa de León there are only four things on the menu -- all of them tacos. The food business has been doing the same four things since opening in 1968.

“The secret is the simplicity of our taco. It has only a tortilla, red or green sauce, and that’s it. That, and the quality of the meat,” said Rivera Martínez. He is also probably the only Michelin-starred chef who, when asked what drink should go with his food, answers “I like a Coke.”

Other than perhaps one street food stand in Bangkok, Thailand, El Califa de León is probably the smallest restaurant ever to get a Michelin star. And half of the small space is taken up by a solid steel plate grill that is hotter than the salsa.

Thousands of times a day, Rivera Martínez gets a fresh, thinly sliced piece of beef and puts it on the hot steel grill.

The heat is one of the few secrets Rivera Martínez would share. The steel grill has to be heated to 360 Celsius.

Asked how it felt to get a Michelin star, he said in classic Mexico City slang, “it’s neat, it’s cool.”

The prices at his stand are quite high by Mexican standards. A single taco costs nearly \$5. But many customers are sure it is the best in the city.

“It’s the quality of the meat,” said Alberto Muñoz, who has been coming to the place for about eight years. “I have never been [disappointed](#). And now I’ll [recommend](#) it with even more reason, now that it has a star.”

His son, Alan, who was waiting for a beef taco alongside his father, noted “this is a historic day for Mexican cuisine, and we’re witnesses to it.”

It really is about not changing anything — the freshness of the tortillas, the menu, the design of the restaurant. Owner Mario Hernández Alonso will not even tell where he buys the stand’s meat.

By law, following the coronavirus pandemic, Mexico City restaurants have been [permitted](#) to open up street-side seating areas. But El Califa de León does not even have a [sidewalk](#) where customers could eat because of all the street [vendors](#).

Asked if he would like them to make room for a street-side seating area, Hernández Alonso said pointing to the street vendors, “As the saying goes, why fix or change something that’s alright? You shouldn’t fix anything... It’s the way God ordered things, and you have to deal with it.”

Mark Stevenson reported on this story for the Associated Press. John Russell adapted it for VOA Learning English.

## 2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

**1. disappointed (adj.)** feeling unhappy because your hope or wish did not come true

The fans were disappointed when the baseball team lost the World Series.

**2. recommend (v.)** to suggest; to give advice

My aunt recommended taking an art class in university.

**3. permit (v.)** to let; to allow

This apartment does not permit people to keep pets.

**4. sidewalk (n.)** a cement path for walking next to a street

We walked slowly together down the sidewalk and enjoyed the warm spring sunshine.

**5. vendor (n.)** a person who sells something

At the festival, vendors sell many kinds of food, drinks, and souvenirs.

## 3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How big is the restaurant Tacos El Califa de León?
2. Describe the food made at Tacos El Califa de León. What is special about the food?
3. What one secret does Chef Arturo Rivera Martínez give about the cooking?
4. Have you ever tried Mexican food? If “yes,” did you like it? If “no,” would you like to try it?
5. What is your favorite restaurant? Do you think it should get a Michelin star? Why or why not?