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Dining with Dills - Ole Tapas Bar

By Elmer Dills

June 9, 2006 - The dollar is sick in Europe and the euro is healthy, so you probably will not be in Spain this year. But you still can enjoy tapas, paella and eel and I have a place for you in Studio City worth visiting.

It's the Ole Tapas Bar in Studio City, formerly where the French Tournesol restaurant was located.

There's a totally new decor and look, much more a romantic feeling in the evening. Plus there's a new menu and a totally different dining experience.

There's also an outdoor patio out front with a view of the cars, buses and trucks rolling by a few feet away. Frankly I prefer the inside dining area.



The Tapas menu offers nine different cold tapas possibilities from \$5 to \$10 with most several dollars below that \$10 amount.

You can try oysters Fanny Bay on the half shell with a bit of caviar for \$10. There's also roasted red peppers with garlic vinaigrette for \$5.

Another choice is ceviche with red snapper marinated in citrus juice with avocado smash for \$8.

Or how about black cod and orange salad, a very different choice for \$8.

The other \$10 cold tapas item is the sampler with manchego cheese, olives, peppers, serrano ham, green beans and salad. I recommend this one.

And now for the hot tapas. You can try seared scallops with eggplant caviar and mango sauce for \$8. Or the grilled rosemary flatiron steak with anchovy butter for \$10. There's also sautéed shrimp with garlic, lots of garlic, for \$8.

Here's one I really liked - fried goat cheese with honey for \$7. You could also try the snow crab cake with scallops and cucumber relish. Those are just a few of the dozen or so hot tapas choices.

If you don't want tapas, order from the regular menu start with the cold spicy tomato soup for \$6 or go for the crab soup with brandy and a soft shell crab in the center for \$7.

Having sherry with the soup is recommended, but perhaps not for me. Ugh!

The restaurant features grilled duck breast with sweet potatoes for \$19. There's grilled pork chops with saffron apple mashed potatoes and a strawberry black bean sauce for \$18.

You can also try lamb chops with garlic truffle mashed potatoes for \$23.

Of course, there's also paella ole style with chorizo sausage, chicken and mixed seafood for \$23.

And for dessert don't miss the fondue with lots of fresh fruit for dunking into the bubbling chocolate.

Come on Tuesday and enjoy the traditional flamenco show. A very lively and enthusiastic group of performers and there's no cover or minimum. Just come in and enjoy.



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