

‘Highly anticipated’ Coyo Taco to open on Thursday in Palm Beach

NEWS By Matt Morgan - Daily News Staff Writer



Tacos from Coyo Taco. Photo by Rodrigo Moreno

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Coyo Taco has been the talk of the [Royal Poinciana Plaza](#) recently.

“When is Coyo opening?” has been the No. 1 question that the community has asked general manager Lori Berg recently. The restaurant was supposed to open in December, but it will finally throw open the doors to the public Thursday.

A fast-casual and hip taco joint on the island will be the first of its kind, and chef and co-owner Scott Linquist brings about three decades of experience serving up Mexican food from his native Southern California, plus New York and, most recently, Miami.

RELATED: [Coyo Taco to open next week in Royal Poinciana Plaza](#)

Coyo, which started a little more than three years ago, has Miami locations in Brickell and Wynwood, but this is the first foray north into Palm Beach County.

Though the demographic will be different on the island, Linquist said tacos are a food that kind of transcends a customer’s lifestyle or net worth.

Up Markets representatives approached Linquist about opening the newest restaurant in the plaza and he thought it was a great idea.

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“They were really driven and passionate about it,” he said. “They really wanted something that was entirely different and unique to the project.”

Linquist is a classically trained chef who holds a degree from the Culinary Institute of America. He left college and started working restaurant jobs in his teens and early 20s.

Southern California is a hub of Mexican cooking in the United States, but he didn’t get his degree and immediately know that’s where his food path would take him. After working as the head chef in a couple of Mexican-style spots and traveling throughout the country, he figured out what he was going to do for the rest of his life.

“Over the years I started learning the depth and the diversity of the cuisine and how beautiful the people and the culture of Mexico is,” Linquist said.

A lot of people think of Mexican food as the Tex-Mex border cuisine that has become popular throughout the U.S., but many don’t realize the depth of the food in such places as the Yucatan, Vera Cruz and Oaxaca — a place Linquist called “the mecca of Mexican cuisine.”

He tries to keep the food authentic, but Linquist said people don’t realize that a standard taco from a street cart in Oaxaca would just basically be meat in a tortilla. To make the American audience happy, Coyo will add pico de gallo, cheese and vegetables to its tacos.

“It’s not about me. A lot of chefs make it about themselves,” he said. “It’s about people who come into the restaurant and my job is to make food that is suitable for everyone who walks in.”

He also tries to bring a gourmet element to what is essentially fast food. He said all of Coyo’s meat is top grade and put into house-made marinades and all the corn tortillas are made by hand.

The Wynwood location has made a name for itself by having a secret bar in the back that gets some of the most popular DJs in the world to play in a small, intimate space. Don’t expect DJ Diplo to roll into the Palm Beach location anytime soon, but it will have a “secret” bar attached to the restaurant that’s not visible from the dining area.

Up Markets management is excited about what Coyo Taco will bring to Royal Poinciana Plaza.

“Coyo Taco’s opening has been highly anticipated as it will be the only gourmet Mexican food restaurant on the island,” Berg said in an email. “Casual, cool, fresh, and a great place to bring the entire family.”