

Someone's In The Kitchen - Special

Something Is Up At El Paseo

By **RICHARD** and **AMANDA PAYATT**
Special to **CASA**

A S THE BEAUTIFUL EL PASEO RESTAURANT CELEBRATES ITS 92ND ANNIVERSARY,

something good is happening in the kitchen. Chef Alex Castillo, formerly of the Wine Cask, and manager Paul Jakubowski, are up to nothing but good. Since last June, they have been working hard to revamp, redo, and restart El Paseo. Our impression is that they are doing very well.

In addition to doing a much more affordable and interesting Sunday brunch, they have introduced a series of new special dining evenings to give Chef the opportunity to stretch his wings a bit. We recently enjoyed one of their new Tequila Tasting Dinners.

For a mere \$39.95, at 6pm on the last Wednesday of each month, El Paseo is offering a four-course meal that is carefully constructed around tequila. Our sampling featured Cazadores Tequila. After appetizers, the first course was a tequila punch with Benedictine, bitters, and lemon juice, artfully paired with a delicious simple salad with pepitas and a vinaigrette dressing. The second course was a savory Pollo Con Champiñones,

matched with a Tequila Fresh, or tequila, with agave honey and a white wine float.

Yummy! The third course was a grilled rib eye steak, pumpkin risotto, and a sage demi-glace. This was served with a hot, spicy Granada Picosita, featuring muddled serrano peppers, chipotle seasoning, and a hint of sugar on the rim. This fabulous meal was finished off with a straight shot of Cazadores Añejo Tequila, and a pumpkin cream crème brûlée.

The evening was festive and the mixed drinks that were paired with the absolutely delicious food

couldn't have been better. We are looking forward to doing this again soon and we hope we will see you there!

El Paseo Restaurant is located at 813 Anacapa St. Tequila Dinners: 6pm On The Last Wednesday Of Each Month. Reach them at 962-6050.



Cazadores Tequila



Amanda and Richard Payatt combine their considerable writing skills with their incredible knowledge and experience of fine dining to bring you this column.