

LOS DOS : LOCAL RESTAURANT REVIEWS

MEXICAN / BEYOND CENTRO

NOTE: Our star qualification system is not intended to be referred to across categories. In other words, a three-star *cocina economica* is in no way meant to compare to a three-star formal dining establishment. The stars should be considered only for the sake of comparison to other entries within the same category.

- **El Corral del Carnero**** *Mexican barbacoa. Open Thursday – Sunday from 7am – 5pm. Calle 38A No. 104 between Calle 33 and 31B, Colonia Zodzil Norte. Turn east at light opposite Liverpool. Information: 941.9417.* Not for everyday dining, the *barbacoa* of heavy, fatty yet savory mutton (*carnero*) served at El Corral is the real thing. Do you hear them bleating in the background? Could be, since they slaughter their own sheep and cook it on a bed of *maguey* leaves in a pit out back, just like in central and western Mexico. And be prepared for some menu surprises, since real *barbacoa* wastes nothing: kidney, liver, sweetbreads, heart, stuffed stomach and even testicles one way or another make their way onto a *taco*. The grilled liver and onion *tacos* are sensational, and the melted cheese rolled with fatty mutton into a *pita (taco Arabe)* is an embarrassment of riches. Not for the faint of heart (nor those with heart ailments, for that matter), El Corral del Carnero is a taste of wild-west Mexico just north of Mérida.
- **La Parrilla***** *Grill and taquería. Open daily 12pm – 1am. Calle 30 No. 87 at Prolongación Paseo de Montejo. Information: 944.3999.* The best bet is their “Carnívoro” all-you-can-eat-*arrachera*-buffet every afternoon Monday through Saturday for just \$125 pesos. The *arrachera* is grilled on the spot to your preference. Save room for the wide variety of Yucatecan and Mexican specialties, too. If the buffet is just too much food for you, try ordering a few *taquitos* of *carne al pastor*, or a delicious “Gringa” which is the same meat smothered in melted cheese. Ohmygod. Another favorite is their *brocheta*: I like the *mar y tierra* version with steak and shrimp.