

El Nayarit — A Hidden Gem in San Fernando

El Nayarit, in San Fernando, is one of my favorite Mexican restaurants in all of Los Angeles.

It serves what I consider traditional Mexican food, offering breakfast and lunch daily. I enjoy the great food, the happy faces, the fast service, the simple menu, and the easy parking.

El Nayarit is housed in a small, stand-alone building with an old Spanish Mission look. Inside, there is one dining room with eight large booths, each big enough to seat six guests. In the center, there's a row of small tables and chairs that can be connected to seat a dozen or more people.

I jokingly call it “El Rayo Nayarit,” using the Spanish word for lightning, because the staff — Doris, Amalia, and Nelly — are incredibly quick. They seat you promptly, take your order efficiently, and serve your food fast, all without ever making you feel rushed.

Ambience

The place and furnishings are plain yet practical. The artwork on the walls is simple. The kitchen door remains open, and all the tools of service are visible and conveniently placed for the servers, allowing them to grab whatever they need — in a flash.

Often, especially on weekends, some humble and gentle troubadours step in to sing a song or two.

At other times, a soft-spoken vendor may come in and offer Mexican bread to enjoy there or take home. Occasionally, another vendor might offer a sample slice of fresh fruit — like a mango, as one did on my last visit. They are never overbearing, and you can always politely say, “No, thanks.”

Menu Highlights

The menu is small, but it features several popular dishes:

- First of all: soft, homemade, hand-made tortillas — and they serve plenty of them (you'll get used to that).
- My favorite breakfast dish is the Huevos Rancheros, made with three eggs and full of great flavor.
- Menudo, done right, with just a little bit of hominy. I enjoy sharing a bowl with a friend as a breakfast appetizer.
- Chorizo and eggs, which are very good.
- Several excellent guisados, including:
 - Chile Verde — pork stew in green sauce, served with rice, beans, and fresh tortillas
 - Chile Colorado
 - Spare ribs in tomatillo sauce
- They also offer tacos, sopes, and several other items.

Prices

- Breakfast dishes: around \$12

- Guisados: around \$15
- No beer or wine is served

Conclusion

I love this restaurant.

They call me — and the other guests — “mi amor.” Who does that?

The food is consistently tasty, the portions are satisfying, and those homemade tortillas make every visit worthwhile. If I’m anywhere nearby, and especially if I’m in a hurry, I head straight to El Nayarit.

Location & Hours

El Nayarit

657 N. Maclay Ave

San Fernando, CA

Hours:

- Monday–Thursday: 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
- Friday–Sunday: 7:30 am – 4:00
- IF YOU HAVE A HISPANIC RESTAURANT, WITH GREAT FOOD, OR A GREAT STORY, please reach us online and we will review them.

We still have opening for contestants for the LAHRC
Menudo Contest, which will be held January 31, 2026.