



## [Mixtura \(Kirkland\)](#)

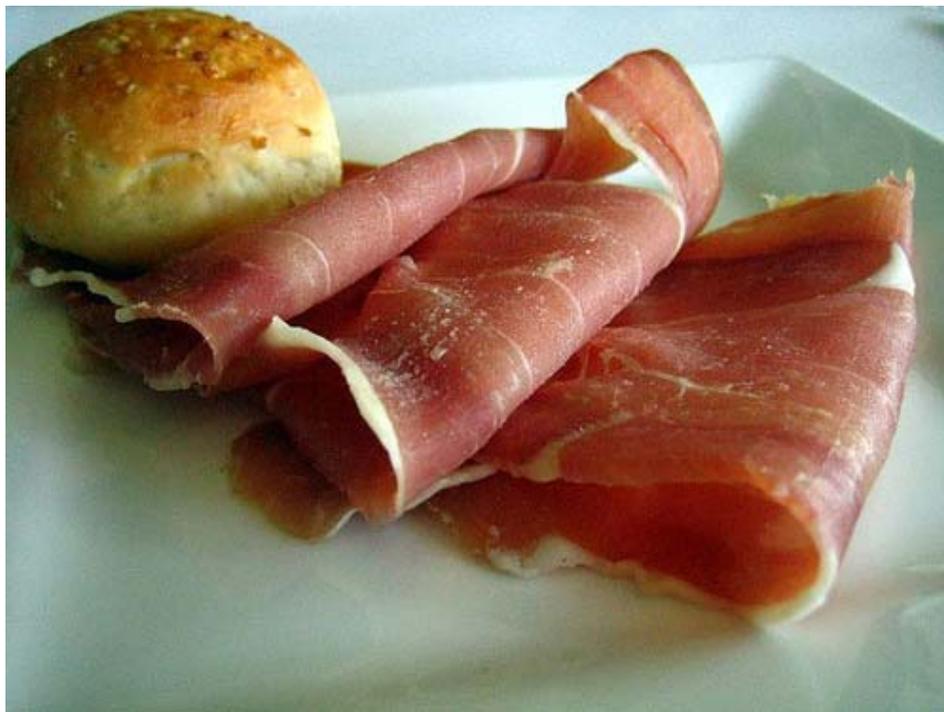
May 10th, 2006 | Category: [South American](#)

Peru and tapas are two words that one doesn't normally associate together; but I was intrigued by the combination after reading about [Mixtura](#). Located in Kirkland I thought this was an odd choice for a restaurant. I mean, Peru? More specifically the cuisine of Peru. What exactly is that? By no means am I a world travel but neither am I so provincial as to not have experienced several different cultures in my life. But South American, more specifically Andean, cuisine is something I have yet to try so I was a bit wary. Of course an Andean version of tapas makes sense as Peru was colonized by Spanish conquistadors and tapas are "snacks" that originated in Spain. When one thinks about it nearly every culture has a version of the "small bites" that make up tapas. The Chinese have dim sum and in the Middle East there is mezze. What would be so strange about Peruvian tapas? So it was this line of thought that found me walking through the door of Mixtura for dinner one night.

Soon I was to learn that, as my server explained, Mixtura doesn't serve true Peruvian cuisine but rather offers a fusion of Andean and European dishes. Feeling a bit more comfortable with my choice I set about scanning the menu for a dinner decision. While I will be discussing tapas exclusively here one can also order most tapas in a larger appetizer size. As well, and order can be placed for one of the dinner entree options located on the reverse of the tapas or "mixturas" menu.



I started out with Raices del Ande (\$4.50/tapas, \$8.00 appetizer), a tuber dish. What arrived were golden brown nuggets floating on a sea of tangy, yellow sauce and topped with red onion escabeche. But the real story is that these crisp little shells held a marvelous treasure inside. Cracking one open with the edge of my fork I was greeted by molten cheese that engulfed bits of mushroom. Upon first taste I was a little bit lost for how to describe it. The combination of starchy potato, creamy cheese and the meaty mushroom were quite heady. A dip in the sauce added a further spicy element that helped to add interest but not to give me clues on flavor. Then it hit me - jalapeno poppers. Not that these were anything like the cheap, greasy bar food you get at T.G.I. Fridays™ but the flavor was similar.



Next I tucked into Jamon Serrano Casa Redondo Iglesias (\$7.00/tapas, \$13.50/appetizer.). Three large slices and a house made roll tempted me to make a mini sandwich. Mini being the only word to use as the roll, made from the grain Quinoa, was about the size of ping-pong ball. More biscuit like, the roll had a crusty bread-like exterior and a flaky, layered interior that was mild in flavor. This was perfect for eating with the Serrano ham. Well aged and sliced paper-thin the meat had a nice subtle ham flavor with out being too bold. Moist and a little salty it was the perfect complement to the roll.



For the next plate I had the Escabeche Vegetariano (\$4.50/tapas, \$8.00/appetizer). A sampling of grilled fresh and pickled vegetables the plate arrived hot, drizzled with paprika oil and a sprinkling of large grained salt. The fresh squash and zucchini being my favorite as it was sliced thin but not too much so that it would fall apart on grilling. The char was very evident to not only the eye but also the tongue as provided a nice smoky contrast to the sweetness of the vegetable. The hearts of palm was very tender and had a lingering tartness from the marinating process. The grilled red pepper was fairly typical. Not a stand-out on the plate in my mind. The asparagus though was very good as it was allowed to stay on the grill just long enough to soften the tough skin of the exterior but still leave snap to the inside. Again the grill char adding to the flavors of oil and salt that draped its exterior.



Since I had such a positive experience with the grilled vegetables in the Escabeche Vegetariano I decided to try the Pulpito Crocante (\$5.50/tapas, \$10.00/appetizer). Octopus, marinated and the char-grilled, served in a small dish with olive tapenade was what arrived. The exterior was crisp from its brush with the hot grill while the

interior held cooked meat that reminded me of eating a cooked clam. Surprised by the lack of rubbery-ness that is most often associated with octopus my server informed me that it was the soak in marinade and the quick sear on the grill that eliminated this common trait. While the meat was done well I felt that the tapenade could have been replaced by just a little olive oil and lemon.



My final plate for the evening was Aceitunas del Peru Y del Viejo Continente (\$4.00/tapas, \$8.00/appetizer). The medley of olives brought the fusion concept in direct view with the combination of Peruvian and European olives. The larger olives being from the old world and the smaller from the new, the flavors were just as distinct. With the larger olives the flavor was milder and slightly sweet. While on the other end of the size scale the tiny olives were much bolder and slightly bitter. Arriving in a small, brown dish the olives were coated in house-made rosemary oil that added an additional herbal note to the fruits.

While only in operation five months I am a little concerned for Mixtura. During my hour and a half visit there were a total of three tables for dinner (Mine included) and just a handful of people at the bar. Are Peruvian tapas too out there for the general public? I'd say no, with a little education. There are tapas restaurants all over the country and a few here in Seattle so the idea is not so foreign. But I think if people can just find their way in they'll see that fusion Peruvian cuisine is not all that strange. Add to that a head chef that was trained in Spain and attended Le Cordon Bleu in Paris and you have a powerful combination that is bound to please the taste buds. Be sure to add this to your list of restaurants to try on the Eastside.

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1. AA May 10th, 2006 10:45 am

I went to Mixtura Friday night and left somewhat disappointed. This place is very different than typical hearty Peruvian food I've had. Loved everything we had (esp the ce viche), but the portions were too small for the price and the drinks were incredible overpriced. Great location though.

BTW, great website! Love the reviews and photos. You seem to have similar taste/favorites as me.

2. [Robotic Gourmand](#) May 11th, 2006 12:35 pm

True, as my server related to me, this is not true Peruvian cuisine but rather a fusion. There were a lot of European influences in the dishes I had.

As for the price, I'd disagree. At least compared to what I've seen at restaurants of similar caliber. I will say though that food in general in Seattle is a bit pricey compared to what I was used to paying in Florida.

Thanks for stopping by, keep reading!

3. Lady In Red May 18th, 2006 4:33 pm

It seems all Public Relations efforts have fallen on deaf ears when it comes to articulating the "New Andean Cuisine" dining experience to the general public. Servers exuded a rare over-caffinated confidence in the interpretation of the menu. (Apologies to the owners but GET NEW SERVERS) For an authentic experience try El Chalan in white center. Best of Luck!!!

4. [Robotic Gourmand](#) May 23rd, 2006 12:58 pm

El Chalan huh? I'll have to look them up. Thanks!

5. [MetroBellevue](#) June 8th, 2007 2:57 pm

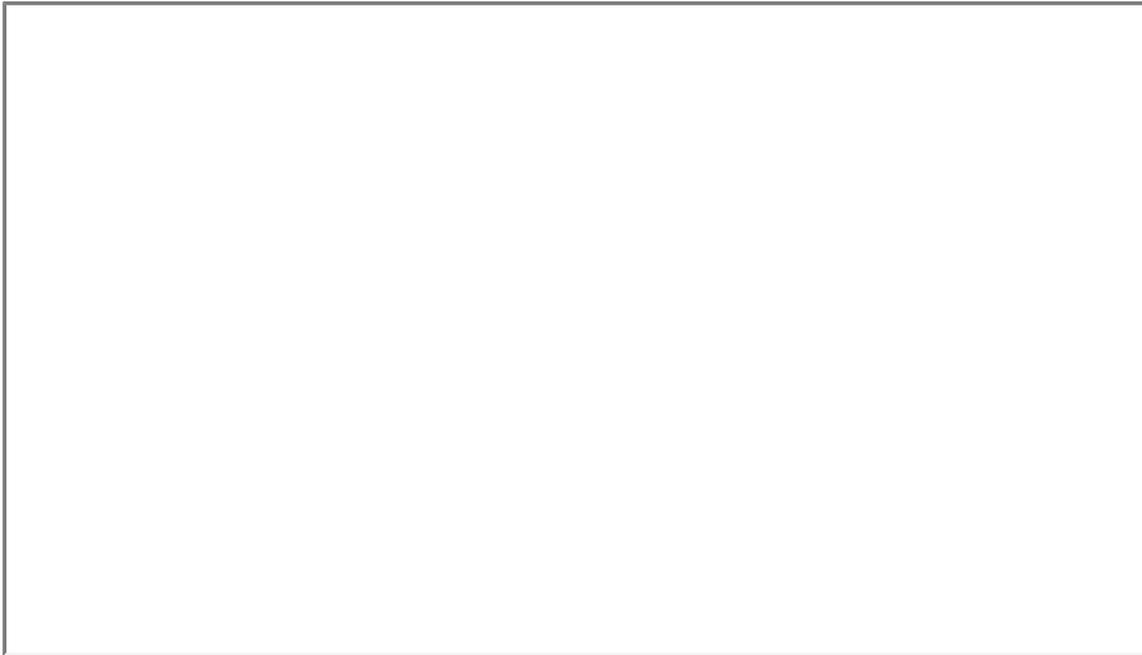
Love your photos of the food dishes! Found your blog through a search on Mixtura, which has a few ads running on our web site. Wondering if we may use some of the great pictures above on our web site. Thanks for your time and consideration. Cheers.

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