

Brazilian barbecue fires up in Burnsland

JOHN GILCHRIST

Sopened a few days ago at 3606 Manchester Rd. S.E. (454-9119), just a bolo's throw away from Alloy.

To get detailed for a moment: this is an odd restaurant location and an unusual address. Manchester Road is two blocks east of Macleod Trail and parallels it from 34th to 39th Avenue S.E. In spite of its name, it is not located in Manchester. This is Burnsland, home to automotive shops and light industrial businesses. Perfect for a Brazilian barbecue.

Gaucho is the creation of Ede Rodrigues, an experienced gaucho chef from Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. A gaucho chef is trained in the barbecue cuisine of south Brazil, where meats are impaled on long skewers, seasoned with salt, pepper and fresh herbs, and roasted on rotisseries over hot coals.

They are then brought to the table on the skewers and sliced onto your plate in a style called rodizio. Or they're prepared on plates with side dishes and served simply. (That's called churrasco.) Either way, there's lots of meat and rich, bean-filled dishes as well as various salads and potato offerings.

Rodrigues started learning his trade at the age of 15. His first job was peeling and preparing chicken hearts for a local specialty dish in a popular Brazileems like it was just last week I was writing about a new restaurant located east of Macleod Trail run by a South American chef. That restaurant was the hot new Alloy. But could there be a second restaurant answering this general description? Oddly enough, there is. Gaucho Brazilian Barbecue is a restaurant. He worked his way up the culinary chain and when the restaurant expanded to Japan in 1993, he was asked to join the opening team there.

Rodrigues spent seven years in Osaka and then moved to China to open another Brazilian restaurant. In 2000, he met Calgarian Rosina Aiello (now Rodrigues) who was studying in China on an educational exchange. One thing led to another and they ended up moving to Calgary.

While learning English here, Rodrigues enjoyed the cultural immersion of working at a Tim Hortons. Eventually he started catering to members of the local Brazilian and Portuguese communities. Now he's gone public with Gaucho.

Rodrigues promises a condensed but legitimate version of the Brazilian gaucho cuisine. His huge charcoal barbecue holds up to 45 skewers, but to start, he'll only be offering rump steak (picanha), top sirloin (alcatra ao alho), chicken wings (asa de frango), chicken breast (peito de frango) and Italian sausage (linguica), along with side dishes such as cowboy beans (feijao tropeiro) and potato salad (salada de maionese).

Gaucho is open weekdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (On Saturdays they cater.)

Typical weekday dining will be churrasco combination plates of meats and side dishes, ranging from \$12 to \$20. Everything is ready for takeout and you can buy gaucho-marinated meats to take home for your own barbecue. On Sundays, they will do the full rodizio meal for \$25.

Note: Gaucho is tiny — as in 32 seats tiny, so call ahead.

Evidently I am much better at locating restaurants than jewelry shops. A few weeks ago, I mentioned that the new location of the Sultan's Tent is located at 4 14th St. N.W. (244-2333). I pointed out that the owners have procured parking after 6 p.m. at the jeweller across 14th Street. That shop is The Goldsmiths. I mistakenly named the shop as The Goldschmiede Studio, which is a few blocks away.

Apologies to all.



Photos, Christina Ryan, Calgary Herald



Ede Rodrigues displays a dish of churrasco at his restaurant, Gaucho.



Brazilian barbecue features cuts of meat cooked on skewers and then brought into the dining area to be sliced directly on to the plates of restaurant patrons.