

Little Mexico restaurant in Alton is off to great start; looking to hire more staff

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ALTON - After opening a new location in Alton nearly two months ago, **Hector Alvarado** said he has seen a large amount of different faces come and go at his restaurant, **Little Mexico**, located at 102 Ninth St. (the former location of **Bluff City Grill**).

Little Mexico is the second location with the same name. The first opened 18 months ago in **Jacksonville, Illinois**, Alvarado said. He said Jacksonville is a smaller town than Alton, and his business's location adjacent to Martin Luther King Boulevard - a main thoroughfare for people traveling to St. Louis. Since opening, he said he has seen a flurry of people come for dining. He said there are so many, in fact, he requires more staff.

"Our service is stretched very tight," he said. "We need to get some more people for that."

Right now, Alvarado said he is looking for servers, table bussers and bartenders. He said he is waiting to open the sports bar until he is able to expand the staff.

As far as the food is concerned, Little Mexico offers a variety of authentic Mexican fare. Alvarado said everything with the exception of mushrooms is made fresh daily, from the corn flour tortillas to the meats to the beans and rice Alvarado said are the foundations of every dish. He said the mushrooms used in the dishes are sourced from a can, because only one or two dishes in the restaurant utilize them as ingredients and he does not want to risk waste with the short shelf life of fresh mushrooms.

Prices at Little Mexico are comparable to other full-service Mexican restaurants in the area, with some items being cheaper and some slightly more expensive. The lunch crowd is usually very bustling, as word of a new restaurant in town often brings in crowds.

The City of Alton's current administration has also been very supportive of his restaurant, Alvarado said. He said within a few weeks of opening, Alton Mayor Brant Walker came into the restaurant for lunch and asked Alvarado how the city could help.

Walker's sentiment was also mirrored by many Altonians, Alvarado said, many of whom are being patient as his staff and he work through some of the bumps, which come with all new business openings. He said a lot of diners are becoming repeat customers as well.

To apply for a position, Alvarado said all one has to do is come into the restaurant and ask for an application. He said he is in great need of more servers and bartenders.