

MOTION

El Cholo, one of Southern California’s oldest Mexican restaurants still currently operating, opened its doors in 1923 as the Sonora Café. Alejandro and Rosa Borquez moved to the City in 1922 and named their restaurant after their home state of Sonora, Mexico. In 1925, the restaurant was renamed “El Cholo,” the name given to field hands by Spanish settlers in California, after a patron drew a figure of a Mexican field hand on one of the café’s paper menus.

In 1927, Aurelia Borquez, the daughter of Alejandro and Rosa, and her future husband, George Salisbury, opened their own El Cholo restaurant at Western Avenue, a small counter with three booths and eight stools. Right away, the Western El Cholo attracted business from early Hollywood stars and locals alike. In 1931, the Salisburys moved their restaurant down the street to a larger building at the intersection of 11th Street and Western Avenue, where it still operates today.

Despite temporarily closing between 1944 and 1946 as a result of World War II, El Cholo continued to rise in fame, serving the many Hollywood stars and Los Angeles celebrities who frequented the restaurant. In 1962, Ron Salisbury, the son of George and Aurelia, opened a new El Cholo in La Habra, and in 1967, Ron took over full ownership and management of the El Cholo restaurants.

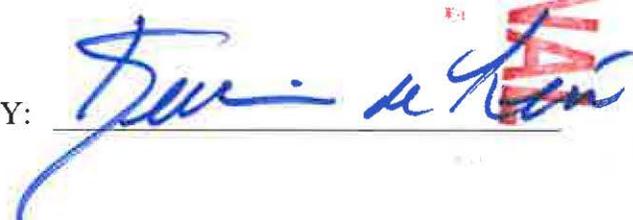
In the early 1970s, the Western El Cholo was further renovated to expand its footprint and feature a full bar, a notable moment for a restaurant opened during Prohibition. The seventies would also see the addition of the burrito to the menu, taking inspiration from East LA’s El Tepeyac Café and joining other famous dishes including El Cholo’s sweet green corn tamales, classic margaritas, and enchiladas.

Under Ron’s ownership, El Cholo would continue to expand, selling their billionth tortilla in 1996 and opening locations throughout Southern California including Santa Monica, Corona Del Mar, Anaheim Hills, and Downtown Los Angeles. El Cholo has been a mainstay of Los Angeles through the decades, weathering the ups and downs of our City’s long history, and 2023 will mark the 100th anniversary of the restaurant, Ron Salisbury’s 90th Birthday, and El Cholo’s first expansion out-of-state to Salt Lake City, Utah.

In recognition of El Cholo’s long culinary history in the City and in anticipation of El Cholo’s centennial anniversary in 2023, it is appropriate that the City name the intersection of 11th Street and Western Avenue, adjacent to the Salisburys’ first El Cholo restaurant, as “El Cholo Square.”

I THEREFORE MOVE that the intersection at 11th Street and Western Avenue be named as “**El Cholo Square**” and that the Department of Transportation be directed to erect permanent ceremonial sign(s) to this effect at this location.

PRESENTED BY: 
HEATHER HUTT
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL

majs

SEP 23 2022
