



If I'm looking for sushi, barbecue pork buns, or just a bowl of noodles, I have a hundred choices here in Vancouver, and they could all be good. Mexican, however, is a different story.

When I got back from Los Angeles, I asked friends if they knew a good taco place. I had fallen hard for the tacos there, the fish taco, in particular. So different from what we know up north, with the hard shells, the ground meat, the cheddar cheese; a real Mexican taco is a small bite with so much flavour. Anyone who tried to send me to Taco del Mar was summarily dismissed.

So I had to find La Taqueria on my own. A tiny place, in not the best neighbourhood, but it's colourful inside, even on a Vancouver rainy day. I always want the pescado and carnitas, and this time, I tried the pollo con mole and al pastor. I even loved the pink pickled onions on top, and I don't love pickled things or onions.

Small bites, small plates, small place. Big flavour. That's what I love. –JD

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The General was founded in 2009 by Jess Driscoll and Megan Westerby with an exchange that went something like this:

J: we should open a bakery
M: we should totally open a bakery!

Opening a bakery, it turns out, it really fucking hard to do, especially when you live on either sides of the border.

We started writing the Review instead. Each issue is hyper-focused on a single food noun. Find the archive at:
jessdriscoll.com/thegeneral/

I was heartbroken when the Howard Johnson's in Times Square closed. That was my place that mattered in a part of town I hated.

Apparently Prime is midtown east, which is why I've never been there. I didn't go to the east side above Union Square when I lived in NY. Prime is remarkably similar to three different diners I can remember, only not by name, just by look and memory and taste.

Now I want a tuna melt.

I was in Chinatown buying presents. The place is just up the street. Follow the neon. The customers have changed, more mismatched second-and-thirdhand clothes than men in hats and ladies in gloves.

But the waitresses treat everyone the same. Everyone needs a good breakfast. Everyone deserves a fresh start. –JD

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It's never too late for a fresh start. Just be sure you get a good breakfast. Maybe somewhere new? Rather, somewhere very old.

I keep meaning to go to the Ovaltine Café. You've seen it before, the place with the sweet potato pie in Jose Chung's From Outer Space. It's still there, on Hastings, in the worst neighbourhood in Vancouver, in Canada, probably. Since 1943, the Ovaltine Café has been there, still with the neon, still with the lunch counter, still with the diner classics.

We can't give The General a history that spans centuries but if there's one thing that LA has taught me it's that you don't need to have a long history to have an important history. All it takes is the type of respect that indicates you intend to be around in a century. –MW

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