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Not His First Rodeo: Sylvain Bitton's Culinary Resilience At The Hideaway

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Sylvain Bitton, co-owner of The Hideaway restaurant on Rodeo Drive in California, has successfully ... [+] SYLVAIN BITTON/THE HIDEAWAY

During a recent trip to California and a visit to the Halloween Extravaganza, Nights of the Jack (a can't miss annual immersive

experience in Calabasas), I found myself ensconced in the inviting ambiance of The Hideaway, the only and certainly the best restaurant on Rodeo Drive.

Tucked away on the Garden Level of the Rodeo Collection, The Hideaway offers an escape into a world of culinary bliss and genuine Coastal Mexican hospitality. Sylvain Bitton, Co-Owner and the mastermind behind this gastronomic haven has seamlessly blended the allure of California's vibrant dining scene with a sanctuary for both food aficionados and casual diners.



The menu at The Hideaway showcases culinary innovation with bold flavors. SYLVAIN BITTON/THE HIDEAWAY

In an industry beleaguered by challenges, Bitton shines as a symbol of resilience and progressive thinking. His vision for The Hideaway goes beyond being a mere restaurant; it's a vivid manifestation of his relentless pursuit of excellence and adeptness in harmonizing tradition with innovation.

Restaurants have been irrevocably altered in the wake of the pandemic, with a shortage of experienced talent and surging operational costs, including increases in the minimum wage. Bitton told me, “These factors are making it more expensive to operate during a volatile economic time when customers are extremely budget conscious, compressing margins and operating results.”

Yet, against all odds, Bitton's Hideaway has not only weathered the storm—it has flourished.

KEYS TO SUCCESS



Sylvain Bitton's adaptive strategy at The Hideaway on Rodeo Drive revolves around innovation, smart ... [+] SYLVAIN BITTON/THE HIDEAWAY

In this competitive environment, innovation, smart marketing, and superb customer service sit at the core of Bitton's adaptive strategy. He maintains a keen awareness of the economic strains facing his clientele, responding with the introduction of a well-received prix fixe lunch menu. This initiative ensures that top-notch culinary experiences remain accessible to both shoppers and Rodeo Drive's workforce.

For some time, Bitton extended a generous tradition of offering a complimentary meal to the sales associates on Rodeo Drive — resulting in a constant bustling atmosphere at The Hideaway. “The Rodeo employees not only enjoyed this, but they spread the word and it resulted in great exposure for the brand,” Bitton shares, highlighting the indirect benefits of his altruism.



The Hideaway's menu is a remarkable fusion of Mexican and Asian influences. SYLVAIN BITTON/THE HIDEAWAY

“Beyond financial value, we are doing our best to over-deliver on quality of service and building strong personal relationships with our guests to encourage repeat business and loyalty,” he continued, “we are working on launching a new adjacent brand to offer unique to-go and delivery items that can't be ordered in the restaurant itself to reach a new customer base.”

UNIQUE MENU ITEMS

The menu itself is a testament to c

ulinary innovation, featuring bold flavors and creative pairings like the New York Wagyu steak and the Tuna Tartare with soy and "guacasabi"—a brilliant fusion of Mexican and Asian influences. The dessert flan and the churros with dipping sauce were some of my personal favorites.

OPERATING EFFICIENCY



At The Hideaway, the menu reveals several creative pairings. SYLVAIN BITTON/THE HIDEAWAY

Behind the scenes, The Hideaway operates with precision, supported by a suite of absolutely essential technological tools, including OpenTable and Seven Rooms for reservations, Toast for point-of-sale, and Restaurant365 for accounting. This digital framework ensures a seamless dining experience, allowing Bitton and his team to concentrate on their craft: curating extraordinary moments and exceptional cuisine.

NOT THE LAST

In Sylvain Bitton and The Hideaway, we discover a compelling narrative of resilience, ingenuity, and an unwavering commitment to culinary excellence. Amidst the lingering uncertainties of the post-pandemic landscape, The Hideaway emerges as a beacon on Rodeo Drive, not just serving meals but crafting memorable experiences that resonate long after the final bite. This establishment stands as a testament to the transformative power of passion, innovation, and a steadfast belief in the magic of great food and company, proving that for Sylvain Bitton, this is indeed not his first Rodeo and won't be his last.

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