Kenny Howell

Managing Editor

For 10 years, diners in Middle Tennessee have got to know Don Pancho.

Started by Pancho Jimenez in Clarksville, where it has won Best Mexican Restaurant 10 years in a row, the restaurant made its way to Mt. Juliet over two years ago.

The Don Pancho in Mt. Juliet is by far its most upscale location. The owners said they wanted to match Mt. Juliet, which is a more clientele, but also keep the same great food and prices.

The food is made fresh each day. Don Pancho doesn't even have freezers.

They also don't skimp on what goes into the dishes. While most Mexican restaurants use a flank steak in their dishes, Don Pancho goes with a Ball Tip cut, which is closer to ribeye. They also used Gulf sized shrimp, instead of the smaller Asian shrimp that others use.

Add that to some delicious cheese dip or some guacamole, and you have a fresh, great meal.

Don Pancho tries for authenticity, and that starts with the chefs. At all their locations, the chefs are making recipes from their hometowns in Mexico. The majority of them come from Jesus Maria, Mexico, which is on the southern tip of the country.

If you want a margarita or a mixed drink, Don Pancho has a full bar. The margaritas are $6.99 to $10.99 depending on which tequila you want to use. Don Pancho has 20-25 different types of tequila at any given time.

You can also get a marcorona, which is a margarita with a corona beer that slowly seeps into it.

There are also frozen daiquiris and several types of beer.

Don Pancho has a happy hour Monday and Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Thursday 4 to 9 p.m. Import beers run from $1.59 to $4.25, domestic beers are $1.25 to $3.25 and margaritas are $2.50 to $11.99.

Don Pancho's has specials and events nearly every day of the week. Monday kids eat free all day, Tuesday is a packed house for trivia, and Friday they play Texas Hold 'em, and the winners get gift cards. There is live music Thursday night, and on Sundays if you bring in your church bulletin, you will get 10 percent off your order.

If you have a sporting event you want to see, Don Pancho can get it for you. They even get UFC fights, which many places don't because they are so expensive. If there is an event you want to see, ask the manager, and they will get it on one of the many 60-inch LED TVs.

If you can't get to Don Pancho, then you are in luck because they deliver. Within a five mile radius of the restaurant, Don Pancho will deliver any of their tasty dishes with free chips and salsa in an average of 30-45 minutes.

Don Pancho is located at 300 Pleasant Grove Rd., Suite 365 in the Paddocks shopping center.

You can reach them at (615)732-TACO. They are open Sunday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.