

Grab a taste of modern Mexican

Richard Sandoval, legendary tenor Placido Domingo open restaurant in style

By **JOSHUA WOLPE**
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No expense was spared during Wednesday night's grand opening party celebrating the newest restaurant of restaurateur Richard Sandoval and his partner, Maestro Placido Domingo. La Sandia Mexican Kitchen and Tequila Bar in Park Meadows is the latest in a string of restaurants owned by Sandoval and Domingo.

Revelers were imbibing in every sort of margarita concoction you can think of, enjoying endless plates of colorful appetizers, dancing to two live bands and more than ready to greet Domingo with a digital camera assault.

Sandoval, founder and CEO of Modern Mexican Restaurants, has already enjoyed success in the Denver restaurant scene. In 2001, he opened Tamayo in Larimer Square. Three years later, Sandoval launched the popular Zengo in the Riverfront neighborhood, followed in 2006 by the city's first La Sandia location at Northfield Stapleton.

Decorated and recognized

Sandoval has carved a niche in gourmet Mexican cuisine around the world. In addition to Denver, he



GREAT TENOR OFFERS TASTY FOOD — Placido Domingo at La Sandia's grand opening party Wednesday night. Photo courtesy Marc Piscotty.

now owns and operates more than a dozen different restaurants in Washington, D.C., New York, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Chicago, Mexico City, Acapulco and Dubai. Sandoval was named one of the "Best Chefs of 2003" in New York Magazine in addition to being recognized as Bon Appetit Magazine's 2006 "Restaurateur of the Year."

'Old ways, new hands'

La Sandia meshes familiar dishes with new twists. The Carne Asada features grilled skirt steak over sautéed chile poblano, chimichurri and chile morita salsa. Don't forget the bar, which includes a collection of 100 different tequilas.

"My culinary mantra is 'old ways, new hands' and I aspire to put fresh, modern touches on authentic Mexican dishes," says Sandoval. "I try to make my food more approachable by making the classics more challenging – we're bringing more textures, more flavors and making it more adventurous."

The two-story restaurant makes good use of their ample space, featuring a wood burning fireplace and a year-round open-air rooftop lounge offering a relaxed setting full of couches and tables.

La Sandia Mexican Kitchen and Tequila Bar

WHAT: Modern Mexican cuisine

WHERE: 8419 Park Meadows Center Dr. Lone Tree / 303-586-5511

HOURS AND PRICES: Open for lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Sunday. Lunch entrees \$13 - \$19.50 and dinner entrees \$14 - \$27.