

WELCOMING PRINCETON

Recognizing the contributions made by newcomers and immigrants

CHAPIN



Tucked into a tiny space on Witherspoon Street we found the most amazing Guatemalan and Mexican food! Edgar Castro, a Princeton High School grad and Guatemalan native is the owner of Chapin. Mr. Castro followed his parents to New York City when he was seven years old. The cold climate forced his return to Guatemala to help his asthma condition but he and his sisters returned to the United States a few years later. They eventually moved to Princeton, following other family members. In 2005, Mr. Castro's mother purchased the Mexican restaurant, Alicia's which was in the same location as the current restaurant. Health

issues later forced her to give up the business and Mr. Castro stepped in. Together, they renamed the restaurant Chapin which is the informal name used for people from Guatemala. His mother was always his biggest help but he admits that the first four years were very difficult. One day, when sitting on one of the restaurant's signature bar stools an idea came to him. He reworked the menu, lowered the prices and charted a new course all within a week's time. Mr. Castro has a strong faith and thanks God for seeing him through this difficult period of change and renewal. Mr. Castro says their biggest seller is the Churrasco Tipico which is steak with chirmol sauce and comes with avocado, rice, beans, salad, tortilla and a drink. We went home with an assortment of take-out dishes and thought they were all delicious! We asked Mr. Castro about his advice to other immigrants trying to find their path to the American dream. He said "Our country has a lot to give and it's important to have the right mentality and desire to make your community your permanent home." Mr. Castro also said that it is important to have an education behind you. Right now, he's helping his daughter to navigate college/work decisions. Finally, we asked Mr. Castro how we as members of the Princeton community can help others who wish to make their home here. He suggested we all open our doors to each other, go to town meetings and be involved. We could not agree more!

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