

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

16 Good and Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!



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What to Expect When Eating in a Typical Almuerzo Restaurant

Some of you may feel that you need to know Spanish to be able to eat out in an Ecuadorian Restaurant but this is not the case at all. Ecuadorians are very welcoming and hospitable people and they welcome everyone into their restaurant. They even welcome us gringos who can't speak a lick of Spanish.

Most Ecuadorians, about 70% of them, do speak some popular phrases in English however. Even so it is still difficult for them to understand everything we say, so make it easy for them by playing charades. When you walk into an almuerzo restaurant hold up your fingers for how many in your party and say "almuerzos porfavor" with a smile and within minutes they will begin serving you fresh cooked food!

In the first part of this guide we list ten restaurants, eight of them being the traditional almuerzo style restaurants. If you want a menu rather than the almuerzo special, ask them for the ala carte.

Most of the restaurants in this guide are owned and operated by Ecuadorians, unless specified... and the service is excellent every time!!

Near the end of this restaurant guide we add some of our *other* favorite Cuenca restaurants that may or may not be typical Ecuadorian almuerzo fare.



La Quinoa Restaurant – serves brown rice!

What is Almuerzo?

(Pronounced: Ahl-moo-air-zoe) accent on the “air”.

Almuerzo means lunch in Spanish. A typical almuerzo consists of several courses, starting with juice, soup, main course, and maybe a small dessert of some sort. The main course usually has white rice, chicken, beef, pork, or fish, and a small mixed salad. Eight out of ten restaurants listed in this ebook are of the traditional Ecuadorian fare of almuerzo.

When we first wrote this restaurant guide, two years ago, we were able to tell you about 10 good almuerzo restaurants in Cuenca for under \$3 dollars. Well, several of the restaurants have upped their almuerzo price since Cuenca has been getting busier with gringos. In fact, the Mexican restaurant upped their price so much that we stopped eating there; it's no big deal because there are plenty of almuerzos to choose from in Cuenca.

When a typical \$2.50 almuerzo increases to \$3.75 for the same amount of food it is not catering to the locals anymore, it is catering directly to the foreigner and well, we are residents and live full time in Cuenca...so why eat an almuerzo at foreigner prices? Besides, it is the same amount of food, so why the big hike in price?

The restaurants listed in this eBook are on our “good list” and we eat lunch in these restaurants time and time again because they are good places to eat! And now we share these restaurants with you.

Some of you may want to know if we have ever gotten sick eating out in Cuenca. The answer to that is a big emphatic “NO”. However, we are very good at discerning a place to eat and once we find a good restaurant we continue to patronize it and tell our friends about it.

We have guidelines we use to decide if we will eat in a new restaurant. We also have guidelines for eating food from [street vendors](#), and so far these simple, common sense guidelines have kept us from getting sick.

Why Choose Almuerzo?

There are few international restaurants to choose from in downtown Cuenca. Most of the restaurants in Cuenca are typical Ecuadorian fare and you won't be looking for very long before you find a restaurant on about every block.

Many of the restaurants are the typical traditional Ecuadorian fare for \$3.50 and under, and some are the typical chicken restaurants or the hamburger and french-fries joint for under \$5 and then there are about four or five International restaurants owned and run by North Americans or Europeans.

If you get tired of white rice and eating the typical almuerzo then there are a few other restaurants we have been quite pleased with, which we mention later on in this restaurant guide.

We Have Some Disappointments with Almuerzo

Before we begin we want to talk a little bit about the typical almuerzo meal. Now there is nothing wrong with eating almuerzo now and again but we have learned that most of the juices are served with sugar. We find this practice to be a complete oxymoron since fruit is already naturally sweet, adding sugar makes it very unhealthy to say the least.

Plus, mix this sugary juice drink with denatured white rice and well, it adds up to being not *that* healthy. However we have found two good restaurants we list in this guide that use brown rice!

When we first came to Cuenca we didn't know where to eat and so we just ate at the touristy restaurants and sometimes we were really disappointed. We were disappointed at the quality of food and the amount of food given to you for such a lofty price. The value was just not there.

We kept walking by the almuerzo lunches that were priced anywhere from \$1.50 to \$3.00 dollars and we would end up in another over-priced eatery. I guess we just couldn't believe that we could actually get a meal that was any good, or that actually filled you up for only \$2.50, but it's very true! It still amazes us sometimes.

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

We've also experienced time and time again the tourist restaurants not only cost more, but they give you less food! And the service is sometimes nonexistent.

We want value when we eat out. We don't know about you but we can sure work up an appetite walking around Cuenca and we like a lot of food and *most* of the almuerzos do have value.

Although some of the restaurants have started serving up smaller portions with the new ownership, such has Nectar Restaurant. But we eat a lot; maybe you don't.



Nectar veggie burger in pita bread

Our Ratings and Guidelines, Why and How

Cleanliness of a restaurant matters a lot to us. It is at the top of our list. We have walked into a restaurant that had dirty walls and tables or no soap in the restrooms and guess what, we walked right back out! In Ecuador, we do a lot of “walking away”!

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

Here's the thing. When going to a new restaurant we always check out the restrooms, first thing sometimes, even before sitting down. After all, we do have to wash our hands before eating and so it gives us a chance to see if the restrooms are clean and if they have soap and tp. If there is no soap it means the help is not soaping up before they go back to work in the kitchen. Ugh! This is one way people get sick.

The good rule of thumb we have always gone by when visiting Mexico and Dominican Republic, and now Ecuador is, *"if the locals eat there, it will be safe to eat there."* We like trying new restaurants where we see a bunch of locals eating in there.

However, when you peek inside a restaurant and all you see is visiting gringos eating there, it makes you wonder, why? Is it way overpriced for local standards? Is the food not that good? Have the locals gotten sick eating there? Always choose a restaurant where more locals eat there than gringos.

In a small community like Cuenca, believe us when we say, if a local has gotten sick in a restaurant it will be all over town, and fast! We've heard of expats getting sick eating out in Cuenca and it is mostly because they are not taking simple precautions that are necessary to stay healthy.

Downtown (El Centro) Cuenca is Old!

Don't let the "old look" fool your appetite!

Keep in mind that downtown Ecuador is old, in fact "very colonial style" old, and many of these restaurants are in colonial buildings. This may give you the feeling of the restaurant being unclean or not up to North American standards. But you must put the "old paint peeling look" or the "pipes sticking out of the ceiling look", or the "old 70's style furniture look" out of your mind or none of your Ecuadorian experience will you enjoy.

Most of you folks from Europe will not have a problem with the "old chipped stucco look, or the paint peeling look" because much of old Europe is like that. But folks from *new* North America may find this as a sign you shouldn't eat

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

there. I've witnessed this first hand from a visiting Canadian lady who we were giving a downtown tour of Cuenca to. She took one look in one of the \$1.80 almuerzo restaurants, made a face, and decided it didn't look good enough to eat in. But looks can be deceiving and especially in colonial downtown Cuenca.

It's so true, some of these restaurants may need a good paint job and newer furniture but this certainly does not make the restaurant unclean. Believe me, if we thought we shouldn't eat in a particular restaurant we will turn around and walk right back out. Like I previously stated, the restaurants we list in this guidebook are the ones we keep going back to!

What Criterion We Use for the Restaurants in this Guide.

- Cleanliness of the restaurant
- Cleanliness of the rest rooms
- Taste of the food
- Value and quality of the food
- Quantity of the food
- Ambiance/environment
- Service / friendliness of staff

We've summed up our seven criteria and did not find the more expensive restaurants to be of any better quality than the almuerzo dining experience. Even the more expensive Ecuadorian lunch restaurants serve white rice and sugary juice.

We cannot and won't compare international style touristy restaurants to the typical lunch time almuerzo because that would be silly. But many times we have found the Ecuadorian style almuerzo to be a much better bargain for the price, taste, quality of food, service, and atmosphere than the more expensive Ecuadorian restaurants! Bottom line: ***Value! You do get what you pay for!***

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

So, how do we decide which almuerzo restaurants we'll eat in? Our rule of thumb holds true...if there's a bunch of locals eating in the establishment during almuerzo hour (1pm to 3pm) then it's a good bet that we'll be satisfied if we just try it out...and that's what we've done. We are also more inclined to eat in an Ecuadorian restaurant if they serve brown rice rather than white.

However, we eat earlier (12pm) than the typical Ecuadorian so we miss the lunch rush, which is nice.

The restaurants we list in this restaurant guide serve lunch at the prices we list—you will not get these prices in the evening hours. For dinner, you'll have to ask for prices and hours.

Ecuadorians typically have their big meal of the day between 1:30pm and 3:00 pm, and then most people just snack around for the rest of the day with vendor type foods such as empanadas and salchipapas, etc. Salchipapas are French fries with hot dogs.

Desayuno means Breakfast

Almuerzo means Lunch

Merienda means Light Dinner or Snack



La Quinoa Restaurant

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

Govindas (Vegetarian)



Govindas has pretty good tasting lentil and soya burgers. The price keeps going up, however. If you want french fries with your veggie/soy/lentil burger expect to be set back \$4. The lasagna is really cheesy and not a very big portion but it is good. They serve brown rice with almuerzo but you'll need to specify you want brown rather than white.

Govindas has a nice atmosphere with rustic built furniture and an old charm feel. It has an Indian theme complete with incense, which can be really strong smelling at times, so we usually eat on the balcony. Service is good and they are always friendly. The bathroom is quite small but it is always clean and always has soap and TP. Sometimes they are out of paper towels.

Price: Almuerzo \$2.50 to \$2.75

Hours: Open Monday through Friday 12pm to 3:00pm

Location: Juan Jaramillo 7-27 y Borrero, Cuenca, Ecuador

[\(See our video of eating at Govindas\)](#)

Good Affinity (Vegetarian)



This is a wonderful Asian restaurant with a nice outdoor atmosphere. It is managed and owned by an Asian family. They are very hospitable folks and run a good restaurant.

Good Affinity has an airy and open feel to it with lots of sliding glass doors and windows so you can see outside. If you want to sit outside, it has outside seating next to growing bamboo and fish fountain.

Good Affinity offers a high quality vegetarian almuerzo with an Asian flair. They have excellent tasting juices to choose from or non-sugar soy milk. The soy beans are non GMO in Ecuador, in case you are wondering.

The most wonderful thing is they serve half brown rice and half white rice with the meal. They dole out a lot of homemade soup before the main meal and serve fair amounts of food for the price. They have a menu if you choose to not have the almuerzo. Service is always good with friendly smiling faces.

Almuerzo Price: was \$2.50 now \$2.75

Hours: 11:30 to 3:00 Monday through Friday

Location: Gran Colombia 1-89 and Capulies (on the corner of Avenida de Las Americas, opposite Banco del Pacifico)

[\(See our video of eating at Good Affinity\)](#)

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

Hostel Carib Inn and Hostal)



Hostel Carib Inn was one of the first almuerzos we ever had in Cuenca and we have been pleased with the food ever since. Value is certainly here with this one as far as the restaurant goes.

The restaurant is not fancy or decorated as nice as some of the others and it is in an old building that needs some painting inside. The nice thing about this place is they serve up a lot of food if you're hungry and the value is there.

The first time we ate here the TV was blaring which was a little annoying but they did turn it down after awhile. It's always busy with locals between 1pm and 3pm.

The first course is fruit juice w/added sugar. Second course is a very large bowl of hearty soup. Third course is a meat dish with rice and a veggie salad of some sort. And finally the fourth course is a small desert, either pudding or small cake. Bottom line is wonderful value for the money. They provide great service with a friendly staff and cook.

Price: Almuerzo was \$2.20 now \$2.75

Hours: 11:30 to 3:00

Location: Gran Colombia 10-51 y Padre Agurre

Cositas



This restaurant doesn't have a typical almuerzo. You can have your choice of chicken, pork, fish, or beef with rice, beans, and plantain for around \$2 to \$2.50 to \$3.50. The chicken plate we ordered had a wonderful tasty sauce. The atmosphere is cozy with faux pause painting on the walls and very old things hanging all over on the wall.

The portions are not too big. If you don't mind not getting raw vegetables or a salad then this is a good bet and for the price, it certainly can't be beat. Service was a little slower here, but it was overall pretty good. Lunch as you see in the photos is around \$2 or so.

Price: Between \$2.00 and \$3.50

Hours: 12:00 to 3:00

Location: East end of Simon Bolivar

[\(See our video of eating at Cositas\)](#)

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

El Nuevo Paraiso Vegetariano Restaurant (The New Vegetarian Paradise)



Here we are once again in a vegetarian restaurant. This wonderful restaurant served us so much food for almuerzo that we could barely eat all the food. This is a great place to eat if you are really hungry. The almuerzo is \$1.50 without soup and \$2.50 with soup. We have not checked the price of almuerzo lately so the price could have gone up \$0.25 cents or so.



If you go for the almuerzo we recommend you get the soup; it's a big hearty bowl of soup with a lot of vegetables and pasta and it tastes great!

This place is always packed with Ecuadorians because of the value you get.

If you're not too hungry the soup and roll will probably fill you up for just \$1. They also serve big slices of pizza for \$2 or so, and they also have on the menu wonderful tasting fruit and yogurt bowls for \$1.90. The staff is friendly and the service is great! You better be hungry!

Cuenca has three or four *Paraiso Vegetariano Restaurants*. The upstairs seating is quaint in the restaurant off of Tomas Ordonez. You will see peeling

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

paint, and the restrooms are old, but clean. They have TP but it is on the outside of the restroom (typical here in many places) and you have to grab it in front of other diners. That's a little odd.

Frank has asked the manager of this particular restaurant, on several different occasions to please serve brown rice for those people who might prefer it, and they have always declined to do so. We do not patronize this restaurant too much anymore since they will not provide brown rice.

It is a little strange that a vegetarian place doesn't serve brown rice.

Price: \$2.50 full almuerzo – price may have gone up a bit.

Hours: 12:00 to 3:00

Location: Tomas Ordoñez 10-40 just south of Gran Colombia

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

Zone Refrescante



Zone Refrescante likes to serve their soup pureed, which is different than the other almuerzos, where usually the soup is full of veggies, beans and pasta. The soup puree (cream of asparagus) on the day we went was fantastic!



This restaurant likes to call their almuerzo “executive lunch”, which translates in Spanish to “almuerzos ejecutivos”. They use the word “executive to charge \$0.50 to \$1.00 more, we are guessing.

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

Just so you know, you're not getting more food for the extra buck. We have noticed that for \$2.75, which is \$0.75 cents cheaper, you still get just as much food in other restaurants, just as nice of an atmosphere and service as in many other almuerzo restaurants. But we kept them in the guide because their price has only gone up \$0.50 cents in two years and they make people feel special by calling their lunch, "executive". :-)

On the day we went (Thursday) the almuerzo was cream of asparagus soup, lasagna, pastry and juice. The pastry was great! The lasagna was just ok. Frank being Italian is quite picky about how his Italian food is made.

Even though we only thought the lasagna was ok, we still want to list this restaurant because they do serve a different almuerzo every day of the week, as do all the typical almuerzo restaurants. Plus, we really liked the pureed cream of asparagus soup and the dessert.

It's a nice clean restaurant with a nice ambiance. The restrooms were very clean. We will go back and try a different almuerzo on a different day when they aren't serving Italian food. Service was good.

Almuerzo Price: was \$3 now \$3.50, we walked by there the other day and the meal was \$4

Hours: 12:00 to 3:00 Monday – Friday

Location: Benigno Malo 9 - 55 just north of Gran Colombia



16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

El Pedregal Azteca Mexican Restaurant



El Pedregal Azteca used to be on my (Angie's) list of favorite almuerzo restaurants in Cuenca but not since the price hike. Even though I love Mexican food and their spicy chicken burrito is good, it is a small burrito for the price hike. The atmosphere is nice however. This restaurant has gone up in price out of all the almuerzo restaurants we list.



The service is always very good here and the restrooms clean. When we used to eat here, before the price hike we would bring our own avocados to help make the meal more complete and healthier. They do serve some wonderful homemade tortilla chips with two spicy sauces before the meal.

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

Price: was \$3.00 was \$3.25 was \$3.50 and now this tiny burrito (see photo above) is \$3.75! Funny thing is, there are no more beans or chicken in this burrito to substantiate the price hike!!

They have a menu but the prices are really high for Ecuador. The menu looks more like it belongs in a Mexican restaurant in North America.

As frugal folks, we no longer patronize the restaurants that cater to the tourist bandwagon. But we left it in this guide to show you the price hike. ..and because there are very few Mexican places in Cuenca. That is a shame.

Almuerzo Price – was \$3 now \$3.75 last time we looked (Let us know if the almuerzo price goes higher.)

Hours: 12:00 to 3:00

Location: Gran Colombia 10-29 at Padre Aguirre

[\(See our video of eating at El Pedregal Azteca\)](#)

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

Sucre Sale Café

(French Bistro)



This darling little restaurant right off of Park Calderon on Louis Cordero has international lunch specials Monday through Friday. The atmosphere is nice and it is located in a wonderful area. The food was good with a French flair to it.

Bathroom was clean, had soap and TP, but they were out of paper towels when we were there. I think this restaurant is owned by family from France. Watch video of Frank and I eating here. <http://youtu.be/bW6AOeN9goI>

Almuerzo Price: \$3.00 to \$3.50

Almuerzo Hours: 12:00 to 3:00PM

Location: Louis Cordero right across the street from Park Calderon

Moliendo Café

(Colombian Fare)



This is a quaint restaurant with nothing really over \$3:00, so the whole menu is almuerzo priced! They have a lot of different Colombian style foods to choose from. The atmosphere is warm and colorful and the food was good. See our video of eating in the Moliendo Café. <http://youtu.be/xWqoVg3e9SI>

Be sure to ring the bell on your way out, if you liked the food!

Menu Prices: \$2:00 to 3:50

Almuerzo Price: \$2.50

Location: Honorato Vasquez y Borerro

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

San Sebas Café

Located in the San Sebastian Square



This is not an almuerzo restaurant but we are listing it in this guide because the food is (was) wonderful here. (See our new update about this restaurant below). They serve a good portion of food and the lunch prices typically start at around \$4:00 and there is nothing over \$6.50. It is expat family run, with good service, smiling faces, and good food. It is packed with Ecuadorians and Gringos all the time but usually more so on the weekends.

That was then....and this is now....

UPDATE: August 2014. We almost took them out of this free guide as they have raised their prices ridiculously. Now there is nothing on the menu for \$4.00 and the food prices start at \$7.50, which is a bit steep for Ecuador.

We're truly sorry to see the old expat family owners leave. Now with the new ownership the prices have gone up and the food quality has gone down. Sorry

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

to report this but we have to tell our readers what is happening to Cuenca and in Cuenca. We are sorry to see the old expat family sell out. When the prices were still okay we'd see lots of Ecuadorians eating in there as well, but now, just a few Ecuadorians eat here and it is mostly gringos, which means they are losing business to the local community.

With the quality of the food being down and the food prices going up this is just an overpriced gringo haunt now. Sorry to report this.

Breakfast/Lunch Menu Prices: \$4:00 to \$6.50 Now \$6.50 to \$8.00

Hours: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner

Location: San Sebastian Plaza off of Mariscal Sucre y Talbot Parque Miguel León

Scroll down for more great restaurants



La Quinoa last almuerzo course of fresh fruit

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

La Quinoa Vegetarian Restaurant

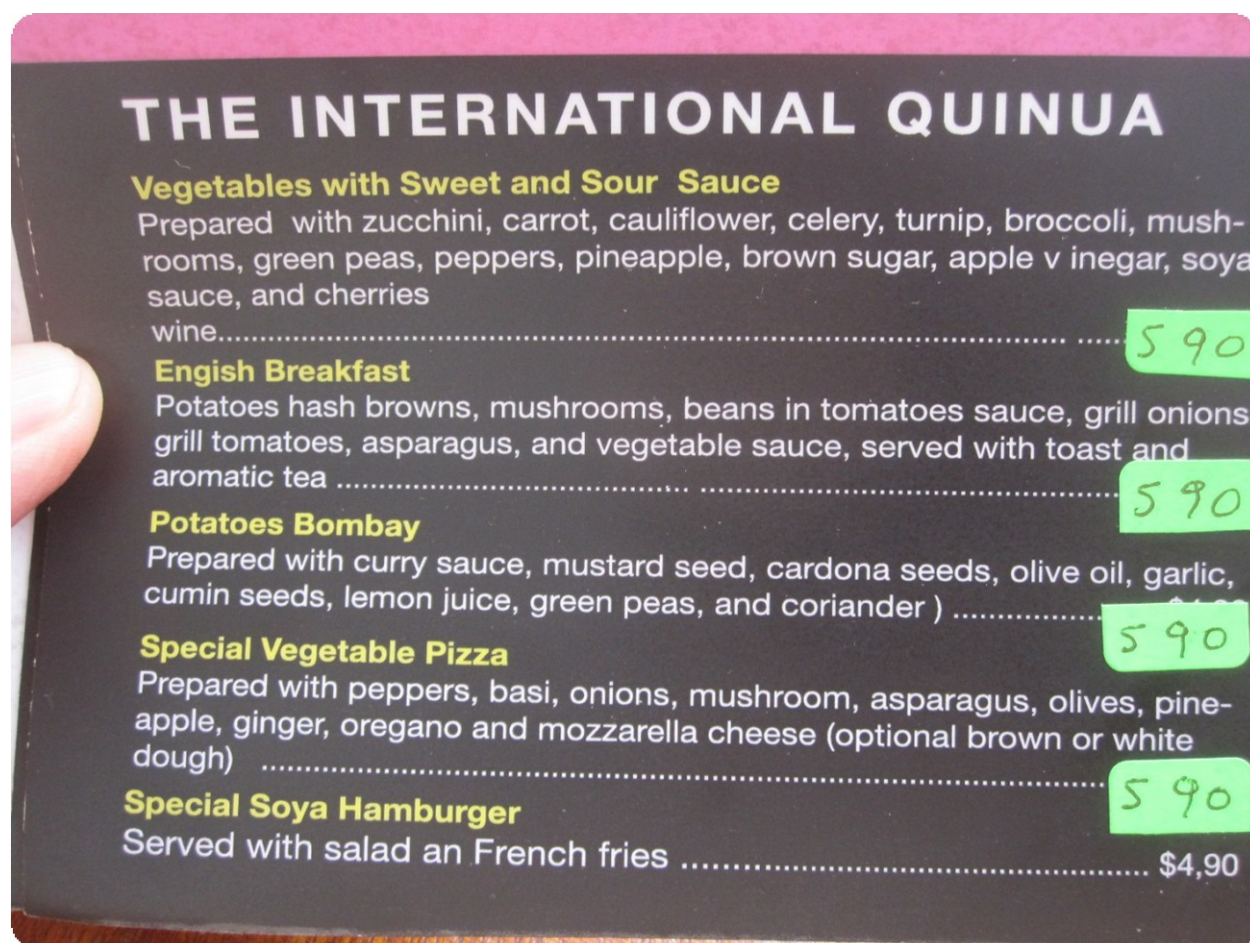


cabbage soup – *La Quinoa* lunch

La Quinoa has a nice ambiance as it is decorated very nice. The seating area is bright and airy. The owner of this restaurant is a pleasant Ecuadorian who sometimes also serves as waiter, and he happens to speak fairly good English. They have a full menu with reasonable prices; we've only eaten the almuerzo and have been satisfied all four times.



La Quinoa Special Aji Sauce



This is only a small portion of the menu. If you want to eat healthy and get up leaving the table with more energy than when you went in, this place is a good choice. They serve brown rice and everything is fresh and *mostly* healthy!

Prices: Almuerzo \$2.50 to \$3 dollar - Menu prices \$4 to \$6

Location: El Centro off of Benigno Malo 12-75

Here is [the video](#) of when we ate [here](#).

6 Things you should know about eating out in Ecuador

- 1) **Coffee:** If you just order coffee you're going to get a big mug of milk with a little bit of coffee. Ask for "tindo" which is black coffee. If you want cream, then ask for a little bit of milk "leche". You may be asked if you want the milk hot, say no to avoid extra charges. Sometimes they still charge like \$0.25 to \$0.50 cents for the milk.

You might also like to know that most of the time they bring you instant coffee. Just letting you know ahead of time what to expect here in Ecuador where coffee is grown in the mountains! Coffee grows here and they give you instant coffee???

- 2) **Check:** You'll have to ask for the check. They feel it is disrespectful to bring you the meal tab in Ecuador. Most Latin American cultures are like this. They don't want to feel they are rushing you out the door. So you'll need to ask the server for the check. "La Quinta Por favor"
- 3) **Tipping:** this brings us to tipping. We never see the locals tip in the almuerzo restaurants. Working in restaurants ourselves when Frank and I were young we find this custom dissatisfactory, especially since the service by Ecuadorian wait staff is outstanding.

We usually tip \$1 for the almuerzo and sometimes we go back in the kitchen and tell the cook "thank you" for a good meal. They love the recognition, and for good reason, they work very hard creating each meal from scratch, from start to finish. Everything is prepared fresh.

NOTE: be sure to hand the tip to your waiter directly. If you put it in the little jars or cans at the cash register, your waiter or waitress will never get it. All tips left in those canister go to the owners/managers.

On another note: We've heard stories where gringos over-tip and unfortunately that sets a precedent with the wait staff expecting BIG

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca Ecuador

TIPS from *the* gringos. This goes contrary to the customary way of tipping.

Then why give even \$1 dollar you may be wondering. Well, because it is appreciated and it is not yelling out "*I'm a rich gringo, and here is a big tip for you*". Instead it is saying, "*thank you for the service, it was appreciated, **BUT**, I'm not rich.*"

You are in a Latin America culture now, which means that gringos need to keep low profiles, not show off they have money. I think flaunting by over-tipping screams 'come and rob me' and causes more problems for foreigners living here in the long run. Attitudes from the locals that all gringos are "rich Americans" will never change if we don't change.

Don't worry, in the more expensive restaurants that cater to tourists, the tip is added to the bill.

- 4) **White Rice:** You will invariably receive white rice 99.9% of the time with your almuerzo, and even when you don't order almuerzo, you'll probably get white rice with the meal, which is not *really* that healthy. Unfortunately, the Ecuadorians don't realize this health factor. White rice is traditional here in Ecuador like refried beans and tortillas are in Mexico.
- 5) **No ice:** Even though the tap water is fine to drink here, for some reason they never give you ice with your juice or cola drink. We're not sure why they don't give you ice, but just don't expect ice with your drink.
- 6) **Aji Sauce:** In the Ecuador run restaurants they each have their own version of aji sauce which is made from tomatillos. Some are spicier than other, some are thicker, and some tastier. You'll probably want to use it on your rice and or other side dishes. Frank and I agree the aji sauce at the "Chicken Plate Restaurant" and at Govindas are both some of the best here in Ecuador.

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

In the next section of this restaurant guide we list some of our other favorite restaurants in Cuenca. Enjoy and don't forget to print out this guide or write down the addresses when you go out and about in Cuenca!

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More Good Places to Eat in Cuenca!

We have eaten in numerous restaurants in Cuenca and only the deserving ones, according to our restaurant criteria will be listed in this restaurant guide. However, we will list others if we think they are merited to the criteria we use for rating a restaurant. Please see previous reading in this guide for our criteria.

Fonda Coopera Organic Food Restaurant in San Joaquin

This huge restaurant claims to be organic and they farm their own fresh water fish, chicken, produce, etc. The dessert was exceptional.

Almuerzo Price: \$2.50 to \$3.50

Location: Take the autopista (highway) from Avenida las America and go about 2 miles and there on the right is the restaurant. You'll know it when you see it by the three thatched roofs. Bus 8 or 19 will take you there, plus most taxi drivers in Cuenca will know how to get to the Fonda Coopera organic restaurant.

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2wp-tds4HA>

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Nectar Vegetarian Tea House Restaurant

This tea house is for the true vegetarian and raw food enthusiast. The owner told us that everything is whole, organic and made to order. This place has new ownership and the quality and quantity of the food has gone down.

If you eat a lot, like us, we'd better tell you they serve up very small portions of food in their almuerzo and other dishes.

Almuerzo: \$2.50 to \$5:00

Location: Benigno Malo 10-42

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaBH2Lflr70>

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Cevecheria Restaurant

We have had encebollado (tuna fish soup) numerous times here. If you like fish you will probably like the fish soup here. It is a meal in itself. They serve it with roasted corn nuts, which goes well with the meal. Try the coconut milk, it is really good here too.

Price for tuna soup: (encebollada) is \$1.75

Almuerzo: \$2.50 to \$3:50

Location: Hermano Miguel y Gran Columbia (NE corner)

video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHVTkixWItk>

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16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

Tutto Freddo's



Tutto Freddo's is a great place to get a personal, four slice pizza that tastes good in Cuenca. Tutto's has the best ice cream we've ever had so far in Cuenca. Their desserts are all good. There are a few other places that have good ice cream, a bit less expensive but the ice cream is still better at Tutto's.

Location of Tutto Freddo's: Off of Park Calderon on Benigno Malo y Bolívar

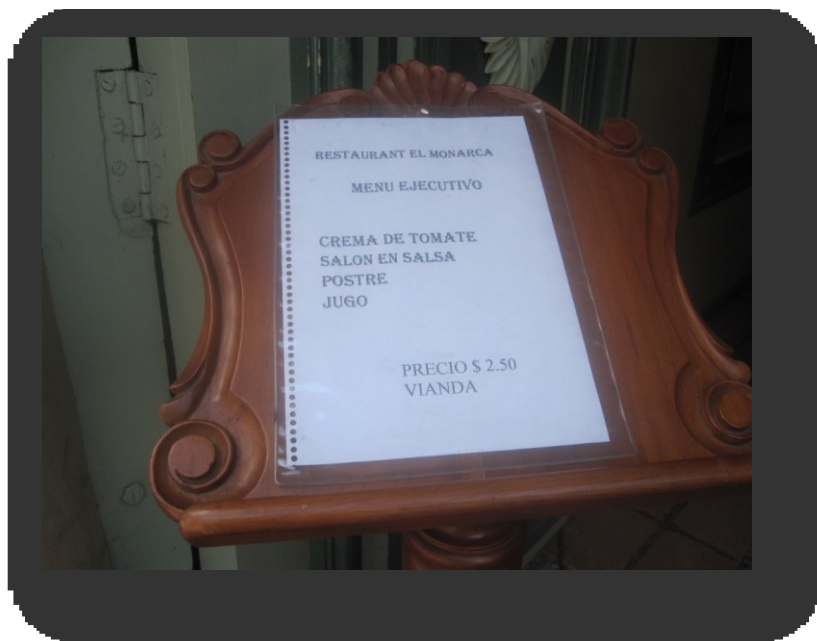
2nd Location of Tutto Freddo's: San Blas Plaza, not to be confused with San SebasPlaza.

3rd Location of Tutto Freddo's dessert only: Avenida Loja y 12 of Abril

There is also a Dessert only Tutto's in MALL Del Rio.

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfy6jTrYi_U

Restaurant El Monarca en Cuenca



The atmosphere in El Monarca restaurant is nice. It is enjoyable to eat a \$2.50 almuerzo on linen table cloths and using linen napkins. The ambiance is old world charm of yester year. We continue to dine out in this typical Ecuadorian style lunch restaurant because the setting is beautiful with hand-painted murals covering the wall in a lovingly restored colonial. There is also a hotel in this beautiful building called Hotel Príncipe.

Almuerzo: \$2.50 – prices may have gone up a bit since the writing of this guide.

Location: Louis Cordero y Juan Jaramillo

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## 16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

### Grilled Chicken Plate Restaurant



If you're in the mood for chicken then this is probably the best tasting grilled chicken in Cuenca. The name above is not the real name because (sorry folks ☹️) I can't remember the name because it is so long and so Spanish. But the location is easy to find as you'll see below. Seriously, this place has some great tasting chicken. And, they have good aji sauce.

**Price:** \$3.50 now \$3.75 for a quarter of a grilled chicken with plantains, and salad.

**Location:** Right across the street from Coral Central on Avenida las Americas

**Hours:** 12:00 noon to evening hours.

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## Fabiano's Pizza

The Ecuadorian restaurant owners lived in Connecticut for 17 years and owned a pizza shop. Now they are back in their home town of Cuenca running their pizza shop. We met Fabians wife who served us at our table; very sweet lady and gives out great service! She speaks good English.

**Food is good, wait staff is great, and prices are excellent.** Not a whole lot of seating, but the atmosphere is interesting. The pizza is thin crust and pretty good. Other items on the menu are also good. **Fabians has the best prices for good Italian food in Cuenca.** All the other Italian restaurants in Cuenca are way overpriced.

**Prices:** \$3.50 to \$6 entrée – the only entree that cost over \$6 is their one shellfish and fish dish. Pizzas start at around \$5.70 for the personal and \$13 to \$16 for the larges and extra large.

Fabiano's Pizza, please, we would appreciate it if you keep your prices in-line for Ecuador so the whole community of Cuenca can continue to enjoy your good food and service! -- Thanks Frank, Angie, and sons at [Discover Cuenca Ecuador](#).

We have witnessed that once a restaurant gets busy with foreigners they just raise the prices, just like San Sebas has done; and it is not principled business practice. They can raise their prices all they want but they might lose customers over it.

**Location:** President Cordova 4-84 y Mariano Cueva

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We hope you will enjoy this Cuenca Ecuador restaurant guide! And continue to reference it often when eating out for lunch. Maybe we'll see you sometime having lunch in one of these restaurants. Remember, we don't know what you look like, but we're sure you know what we look like, so be sure to say, "Hello".

We appreciate your readership and support of *Discover Cuenca Ecuador*!

16 Good Inexpensive Restaurants in Cuenca!

PS: If you think a restaurant should be listed in this guide, let us know by contacting us off the Discover Cuenca Ecuador blog and we'll check it out.

Enjoy Cuenca!

Frank, Angie, Brandon,
Angelo, and Alessandro

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