



january 27, 2009

los angeles | homecoming king.

during the holidays, home is where the heart is. now that the festivities are over, trade one abode for another at [casa](#) (that's "home" in spanish, duh).

designed by frank gehry protégé, ana henton, this mod hacienda is dominated by curved lines, smooth adobe stucco, and south-of-the-border antiques. outside, a bar and rounded booths called "casitas" overlook the dramatic water fixture while inside, the space, like the menu, transforms nightly. by day, chef kris morningstar, from blue velvet and grace, oversees a quick-service taqueria menu where light mexican fair is the main flave. and since this is 2009, each entrée is interactive: pick a filling (like pollo guajillo or baja fish), and a vehicle (tacos, huarache, ensalada or burrito) for your own bespoke bites. by night, a chef's table and exhibition kitchen turn this cantina into a luxurious antojitos lounge; share the pulpo asado (don't be afraid, it's grilled octopus) and conejo (braised rabbit with chestnuts, roasted cauliflower, cinnamon, ancho chile, and almonds). or, try the hurachitos (flatbread with conchinita pibil, black bean puree, citrus marinated onions and cilantro). wash it down with the "hibiscus mar tea' ni," mexico's answer to a cosmo, made with grand marnier and hibiscus tea syrup. and when you wanna mex it up late-night, look for the taco truck menu.

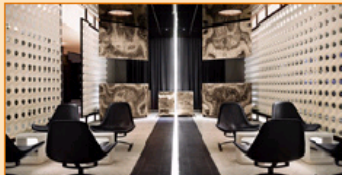
go ahead, make yourself at home. [casa](#). 350 south grand avenue between third and fourth downtown. 213.621.2249. now open. www.casadowntown.com



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