

Chipotle a Barely Mexican Experience.

Thanks to the geographical and cultural proximity with Mexico, Chipotle has become one of the major fast-food chain in the US, with almost 2,000 restaurants. In Europe though, the brand is much more discrete with only a dozen of stores, 5 of which are located in Paris.



One of the Parisian restaurants is anchored in the swanky Beaugrenelle shopping mall nearby the Eiffel Tower. Let's explore it through a short video.

What strikes first is the open kitchen right at the entrance that showcases Chipotle's dedication to fresh ingredients. Thanks to a good suction system, no kitchen smell is to be complained about



Chipotle customer path compares to a salad-bar restaurant. Behind the counter, the staff is asking clients to pick up the ingredients they would like to mix in their burritos or plates. Most of the recipes are based on a combination of rice, beans, tomatoes and salad. All of them meet Chipotle strict specifications and comply with sustainable farming requirements.



The end result is satisfactory and quite tasty. Beware of the spicy sauce you eventually add in your dish not to hide the fresh flavors of the tomatoes.



The interior decor is, the least we can say, sober and functional. Raw materials like wood and stainless steel are prominent. The bigger area of the dining room is a bit more comfortable.



As a conclusion, I must admit being a bit disappointed by my first Chipotle experience. Even though food is fresh and tasty, I truly think that Chipotle menu is too restrictive and would prevent a vast majority of customers to eat there several times there in a month.

Moreover, I found the decor and the atmosphere a bit dull. I totally get that Chipotle does not introduce Mexican clichés features in the interior decor such as cactus or adobe walls, but I would have appreciated a more colorful and warm environment. An analogy can be drawn with Cabana, the Brazilian barbecue chain in the UK ([see the article I wrote about the brand](#)) which, in my opinion, has managed to create a more vibrant and coherent connection between food and design.

I think that Chipotle will have to deal with bolder retail design in Europe to achieve its development. And McDonald's has already paved the way. The golden arches did not duplicate a single standardized design throughout Europe but let designers and architects regularly improve both confort and customer experience over time. And the end results were up to expectations.

And, I could not leave you now without mentioning Chipotle's food poisoning issue that hurt its US operations badly in 2015. I would highly recommend you to [read this in-depth insightful article called "Chipotle eats itself" from FastCompany.com](#)

Thanks to share this article

- [Click to share on Twitter \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Facebook \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to print \(Opens in new window\)](#)