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
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**Brewers Hill Condo**  
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



**Best of Milwaukee 2006**














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## eat/drink

### Tapas of Love

The world of La Merenda

by Sarah Biondich

**June 21, 2007**  
Hey, we're going to check out that new tapas bar in Walker's Point!" When this phrase still elicits visions of one-dollar bills and pole dancing, you know the dawn of a new Milwaukee restaurant featuring small-plate portions of international cuisine is no small thing. Originally hailing from Spain, tapas are typically considered to be snacks or appetizers served with drinks to tide one over between meals. Over the course of time and beyond national boundaries, however, tapas have evolved into a whole new culinary experience.

Just off the beaten path of South 1st Street in a renovated woodworking shop on National Avenue, La Merenda's unassuming exterior does nothing to prepare you for the charming décor and exquisite menu within. The front of the restaurant is devoted to an intimate, softly lit bar area with a concrete bar top and a back bar of rich wood. With mojitos, sangria, caipirinhas, grappa and even their own Lakefront Brewery label, the La Merenda National Avenue Ale, waiting for a table at this burgeoning hot spot is nothing to complain about. Those who like to steer clear of the bar traffic while waiting for a table can take advantage of the small, cozy alcove furnished with a couch and decorated with colorful ceramic tiles.

**Eat/Drink**

**Recent Eat/Drink**

- India's Own  
Jun 14, 2007
- We All Scream for Ice Cream  
Jun 07, 2007
- Thai Classics  
May 31, 2007
- Lusty Moles and More  
May 24, 2007
- Bay View Bistro  
May 17, 2007

**Food**

- 2007-Jun-21 German Legacy
- 2007-Jun-21 Saturday in the Ward
- 2007-Jun-14 Heading South?
- 2007-Jun-14 Shorewood Dining
- 2007-Jun-14 India's Own
- More...

**Extras**

- e-mail this article link to a friend
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- print this article

#### Today In Milwaukee

bands of a certain age, the group barely receives any attention from the music press, even though in recent years they've released a pair of satisfying comeback albums nearly as vital as those they cut in the early '80s. The group headlines an 8 p.m.

#### Sports Shorts

- Brewers**
- Brewers 9, Rangers 6
  - Brewers 3, Rangers 4
  - Brewers 6, Rangers 9
- NBA Playoffs**
- Cleveland 92, San Antonio 103
  - Cleveland 76, San Antonio 85
- NHL Playoffs**
- Anaheim 6, Ottawa 2
  - Anaheim are Stanley Cup Champions

#### Hot Editorial All Time

- **Making Sense of the Georgia Thompson Ruling**  
News Feature
- **The Time Is Now**  
Cover Story
- **"I Deal With Being Black Every Day"**  
Cover Story
- **Best Of Milwaukee 2006**  
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- **Leftyville USA**  
Taking Liberties
- **Why We Hate Local TV News**  
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- **What's Hot?**  
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**For Rent - Apartments 2848 N. Pierce St.**  
 Lower Unit. Very nice, large 3 bedroom, 1 bath unit - hardwood floors, large kitchen, dishwasher, ceiling [more](#)

When you dine at La Merenda, there is no question the restaurant is a labor of love for its four owners, Peter and Sonia Sandroni and Nick and Melissa Cataldo. After years of working in other people's kitchens, Peter recognized that successful restaurants are chef-driven enterprises. That in mind, with Nick as chef and Peter as executive chef, these owners spend more time in their kitchen than out of it—and the proof is in the pancit. La Merenda takes the original notion of tapas and sends it on a world cruise, hitting ports of call from China and Malaysia to North Africa and Peru, stopping in Argentina, Colombia, France, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, the Philippines, Singapore, Spain, Thailand and the United States in between. When the half-size portions arrive at your table, it's clear that each recipe has been well planned, from the fresh ingredients to the meticulous presentation.

Whether you're on a date or out with a group of friends, La Merenda does a stellar job of creating a menu and establishing an ambiance that can be experienced on many different levels. Take a seat at one of the restored antique tables, order one of their reasonably priced bottles of red or white, a few tapas, add some conversation and you've got yourself a romantic dinner for two. If you're out with a group, commandeer a couch, order your first round of the whole menu, take a taste of each and pass it around. No need to order everything all at once—the kitchen is quick and will have the tapas at your table in no time. Service is impeccable—you'll have fresh utensils and plates with each round of tapas and your glass will never be empty.

With lunch and dinner plates ranging from \$4.75 to \$9.95, you can go out on a limb and try dishes you typically wouldn't order. You might find you actually like the perfectly cooked Prince Edward Island mussels steamed with garlic, thyme, lemon juice and white wine, or perhaps you'll love the deliciously subtle, spicy Panang curry cooked in coconut milk with onions, potatoes, green beans and lemongrass. If not, pass it on and sample the next unique, flavorful dish in line.

125 E. National Ave., 389-0125. [www.lamerenda125.com](http://www.lamerenda125.com). Lunch served Monday through Friday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dinner available Monday through Thursday 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday 5 p.m. to 1 a.m.

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**June**

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Keyword

**POLL- Gang Loitering Ordinance**

What do you think the gang loitering ordinance will accomplish?

- It will deter crime and allow law-abiding citizens to feel safer in their neighborhoods
- It will allow police to harass innocent people who are hanging out on street corners
- It will tie up valuable police resources and more nonviolent offenders will end up going to prison because they cannot pay their fine
- It will be used to target and monitor urban minority youths who lack places to hang out in peace

**Quote of the Week**

"Better do a good deed near at home than go far away to burn incense." —Amelia Earhart

**Born June 21st**

**1880:** Arnold Lucius Gesell, psychologist and pediatrician.  
**1882:** Rockwell Kent, artist, book illustrator.  
**1892:** Reinhold Niebuhr, Protestant theologian.  
**1905:** Jean-Paul Sartre, French philosopher and existentialist.  
**1911:** Albert Hirschfeld, illustrator.

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**June 21st in history**

**1863:** In the second day of fighting, Confederate troops fails to dislodge a Union force at the Battle of LaFourche Crossing.  
**1887:** Britain celebrates the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria.  
**1900:** General Arthur MacArthur offers amnesty to Filipinos rebelling against American rule.  
**1908:** Mulai Hafid again proclaims himself the true sultan of Morocco.  
**1911:** Porforio Diaz, the ex-president of Mexico, exiles himself to Paris.

**Translation**

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