



Picante

CREAM's first venture outside of Zurich's nightlife got a little bit spicy with Moroccan flavours and African influences.

by Colin Tivendale, photographs courtesy of Picante

Onto the bar in question which, in this instance, is Picante. Picante is found in the cute cobbled section of Saint Gallen's "city" centre and a very nice location it is too. The building which houses Picante is newly built and the designer (Marco Flury, also the owner of the bar) has done an excellent job in making the building blend seamlessly into the old-town feel of the surrounding area.

Your first impression will undoubtedly mirror my own, and that of my favourite Swissy companion, in that Picante is small but perfectly formed - not unlike the aforementioned Swiss companion-ette incidentally! Flury has certainly pulled out all the stops inside as well as with the exterior. From an imported African wood floor to the stunning ethnic Moroccan sliding doors housing their projection screen, this place has to be seen to be believed. Sounds like one of these bars which tries SO hard to be authentic but reeks of cheap imitation (you know the type, every major tourist

city worldwide is full of them) doesn't it? Fear not socialites, all is well. For me the beauty of Picante lies in the fusion of these foreign imports with the steel and chrome sleekness found in almost every trendy bar worth drinking in these days. Add to this the innovative use of lighting, the chessboard-like mosaic of pastel shaded lighting on the ceiling, which subtly changes in time to the



music, and the sprinkling of exotic greenery throughout, and I am sure you will agree that Mr Flury deserves a standing ovation for his 1 1/2 years of design he put into designing Picante.

Picante livens up after 21:00 when their resident DJ (who has his own little home upstairs) starts spinning a mix of tunes carefully selected from the seventies through to the present day. He also makes use of the projection screen by interjecting snippets of visual delights into his sets. It's a busy little hub of activity and is packed with St Gallen's finest 30 something, young professionals.

Ready for more good news? The drink prices are preferential to those in Zurich with a beer costing a mere CHF6, spirit with mixer circa CHF11 and wine at CHF7 a glass. My tip is the Caipirinha. At CHF9 it's a winner. Worth the trip? Not on it's own but it'll certainly be high on my to-do list next time I am in Ost-Schweiz!

Fantastic: ★★★★★

Very good: ★★★★

Good: ★★★

Average: ★★

Disappointing: ★

Ambience: ★★★★★ **Drinks:** ★★★★★ **Music:** ★★★

Picante, Augustinergasse 25, 9000 St Gallen; tel 071 225 40 33; www.picante.ch

Opening hours – Sun - Wed from 17:00 – Midnight, Thurs-Sat 17:00-02:00