

So ... What's a Navajo Taco?

By Mildred Hooper
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TRAVELERS IN northern Arizona who find eating places hard to come by, often stop at Tuba City's Nava-Hopi Kitchen, look at the sign advertising shrimp, hamburgers and chicken, step in and order - a Navajo Taco.

It happens like this. The tourist enters the restaurant, readying himself for a nondescript meal of hamburgers and french fries. But around him there is a spicy aroma and other diners are eating a novel, mouth-watering concoction. Querying, "Whazzat?" he is informed that the delectable food item is a Navajo Taco. So - the tourist takes the taco.

Indian fried bread (a dough consisting of flour, baking powder, salt and water, pat-a-caked into a flat circle and deep fried) is the basis for the Navajo Taco. The crusty, piping-hot bread is smothered with home-made chili con carne, topped with cheese and shredded lettuce with a couple of green chili strips added for a final fillip.

A mini-taco, about six inches in diameter, sells for \$1.00. A regular-sized taco, about twice the size of the mini (which tourists refer to as the maxi) sells for \$1.50. (Prices stated were effective during the summer of 1974.)



Travelers having their first taste of a Navajo Taco



Some travelers in Arizona have been known to detour off main Highway 89 and go 12 miles down the road (on Highway 164) to Tuba City just to taste the tantalizing taco. Other tourists journeying to the Hopi villages or following the Navajo Trail to Monument Valley have discovered the Tuba City food rendezvous and plan to route a future trip which will include the Nava-Hopi Kitchen.

The Nava-Hopi Kitchen is open every day during the summer months, except for an occasional day taken off by employees for celebrations. The restaurants generally open six days a week during the winter months.

At the Nava-Hopi Kitchen in Tuba City, Arizona, hamburgers, chicken, shrimp and milk shakes are advertised. But the specialty of the house is a Navajo Taco.