

# El Jardin's marvelous mid-day meal

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tional egg dishes. A casserole of tortillas, eggs and spicy sausage was pleasing in both taste and texture. Even better was a wonderful, light version of scrambled eggs with tomatoes, green peppers and onions.

Then it was on to the salad bar for a creamy ceviche with tomato, parsley and onion, an excellent cactus salad, a fine guacamole, and, best of the lot, an unusual salad of onions, oranges and bits of hot, red pepper.

We skipped the tripe soup (not a dish for most American tastes at

any hour), and went for a pleasant bean soup with lots of onion and green pepper.

As far as quantity and variety go, this would be plenty for any brunch, but El Jardin offers an entire table of entrees.

The small meatballs were moderately spicy, and an excellent tomato and potato dish was a bit spicier and better for it. Beef in a tomato sauce was nothing special, easily overshadowed by firm, moist chicken in another tomato sauce, this one denser and richer.

Two dishes based on corn meal—sopas with a green sauce and either sweet or meat tamales—were too doughy for my taste, but pork chops in a spicy, green pepper sauce were good enough to be the best item in an excellent spread.

We finished the brunch off with an unusually wide selection of fresh fruit and a good rice pudding.

El Jardin is a busy, crowded place, with a large outdoor patio and an indoor room that's so full of noise and light that it might as well be outside. The decor is anything but subtle, with pink pinatas hanging everywhere and charro hats and bold serapes on the walls. But somehow all this catches the lively, generous spirit of the place.

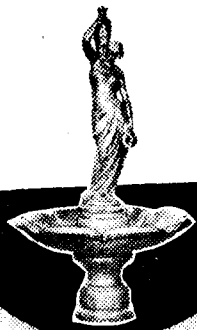
## Soap opera stars will stage show

Soap opera stars Kate Collins and Jean Le Clerc will appear on "Soaps on Stage" at 5 p.m. tomorrow at Marian Central High School, 1001 McHenry Ave. in Woodstock. Both appear on ABC's "All My Children."

Included will be an appearance by comedian Chuck Drager, a question-and-answer session, soap opera trivia and prizes. Tickets are \$5 and \$10. For information, call Robin Lange Productions at 859-8254.

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