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## Real Mex Restaurants Opens new El Torito Grill in Rancho Santa Margarita

### Progressive Mexican concept continues expansion in Orange County.

**Cypress, Calif. (October 13, 2006)** — El Torito Grill, boasting a fusion of traditional and innovative Mexican cuisine and hospitality, today announced the opening of its 8<sup>th</sup> Southern California location in Rancho Santa Margarita. Located at 22322 El Paseo, the newest El Torito Grill showcases warm, sophisticated decor that complements the creative, contemporary Mexican cuisine.

Showing its commitment to growing this upscale Mexican concept, Rancho Santa Margarita is just one of three planned openings for the El Torito Grill in 2006 which includes the first location outside California in Indianapolis, IN. "We are proud to open an upscale El Torito Grill in Rancho Santa Margarita and continue to grow a concept we believe has national potential," said Fred Wolfe, CEO of Real Mex Restaurants, owner and operator of El Torito Grill Restaurants. "We are pleased to become part of the Rancho Santa Margarita community and look forward to serving the local businesses and neighborhoods a heightened culinary experience."

An extension of El Torito Grill's new prototype, the Rancho Santa Margarita location combines copper color palette, amber tones, rich woods, and ultra suede fabrics with traditional Mexican finishes, such as arched walls, wrought iron, and amber toned festoon lighting to deliver a unique dining experience. Another Mexican icon, the agave, showcased in both privately commissioned paintings and custom wrought iron featured on the outdoor patio fireplace, celebrates Mexico's gift of tequila.



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An exhibition kitchen, tortilla comal and signature mesquite-grilling highlight El Torito Grill's commitment to freshness, quality and innovation associated with upscale dining. The restaurant boasts cuisine that is a fusion of Mexican and Pueblo Indian. Real mesquite wood-burning grills impart a signature smoky flavor to meat, poultry, fish and vegetables. El Torito Grill serves contemporary cuisine that blends traditional Mexican ingredients, such as jalapeño and tomatillo with unique ingredients like tamarind and achiote. This

combination of old and new creates bold and distinct flavors, such as jalapeño butter and tamarind barbecue sauce. El Torito Grill enhances familiar and cravable Mexican cuisine, such as quesadillas and chile rellenos, by incorporating unconventional ingredients such as lobster, lamb and goat cheese. From Mexican Shrimp Cocktail prepared tableside, to Lobster Tamale Cake with chipotle and jalapeno butter sauces to Tamarind Barbecue Baby Back Ribs, El Torito Grill places a sophisticated spin on Mexican classics.

#### **About El Torito Grill**

Offering a unique culinary experience, El Torito Grill is dedicated to bringing a sensory experience that is a fusion of the contemporary and native foods of Mexico. Flour tortillas are handmade, prepared fresh throughout the day and served with fresh salsas and signature honey butter. The wood-fired mesquite grill imparts a sweet smokey essence to the food in the traditional Mexican style. The house Margaritas are hand-shaken and made with Premium Jose Cuervo Tequila and Orange Curacao. El Torito Grill specializes in an abundant selection of oak-aged Reposado, Añejo and 100% Blue Agave tequilas made for sipping with citrus or alone in a snifter. Borrowing from Native American and Mexican cultures, they have taken a special brand of cuisine and carefully shaped it to today's contemporary tastes. El Torito Grills are located in Beverly Hills, Brea, Irvine, Newport Beach, Mission Viejo, Torrance, Sherman Oaks and now in Rancho Santa Margarita.

#### **About Real Mex Restaurants**

Headquartered in Cypress, California, Real Mex Restaurants is the largest full-service, casual dining Mexican restaurant chain operator in the United States, with 162 restaurants in California and an additional 35 company-owned restaurants in twelve other states. These include 70 El Torito Restaurants, 69 company-owned Chevys Fresh Mex® Restaurants, 35 Acapulco Mexican Restaurants, 8 El Torito Grill Restaurants, 5 company-owned Fuzio Universal Pasta Restaurants, the Las Brisas Restaurant in Laguna Beach, and several regional restaurant concepts such as Who-Song & Larry's, Casa Gallardo, El Paso Cantina and GuadalaHARRY'S. Real Mex Restaurants is committed to the highest standards and is dedicated to serving the freshest Mexican food with excellent service in a clean, comfortable, and friendly environment. For more information, please visit the company's websites at [www.eltorito.com](http://www.eltorito.com), [www.chevys.com](http://www.chevys.com), or [www.acapulcorestaurants.com](http://www.acapulcorestaurants.com).