

## **Waitress in West Chula Vista**

*Melissa Itqeta*

Melissa Itqerta walks in through the small black rimmed dutch door of Mary's downtown plaza. She quickly walks the length to the back room to leave her bag and grab her apron. With a notepad in her hand she strides to the first unattended client she sees to take his order with a smile. Melissa loves where she works, you can see it on her face every morning. Mary's downtown plaza has a vintage style to it, with yellow light dangling from the ceiling and various dried up tree branches arrayed around the room. It also has a relaxed environment in a corner of the room decorated with candles, pearl white tea cups, empty wine bottles and art work. With a beige colored sofa where you can enjoy a good book and a table where two can engage in a battle of chess.

Melissa also liked the variety in food, from ice creams to soups to vegetarian options. It's not like any random Denny's, it has character and for Melissa it has a family atmosphere. Melissa works in Mary's downtown plaza to repay her college debts. She works hard too, her red-dyed hair blazing in the air as she places plates of food on wooden tables. A few hours in and she has sweat beneath her nose and dotting her forehead.

As she works she often glances at the small office in the back and wonders if she has eaten yet. Her boss is always so busy managing being a single mom and owning Mary's downtown plaza. Melissa really admires her boss, who is prone to figuring out minor details. Every week she gives a little pep talk to Melissa and the other employees of the rules. She shares her appreciations and concerns asking her employees if they think Mary's needs any improvements or if any clients complained. She asks for Melissa's positions and works with her. Then she has the day to day responsibility of raising her children and commitment she has to her work. And she has made Mary's downtown plaza a success. Mary's is a cafe, ice cream, shop and deli, that also hosts art and music. People really like it. They say it has great vibes. When people walk in for the first time they seem to breath it all in, astonished to find such a place with the contrast of stores outside. Melissa has lived in Chula Vista her whole life she has seen the many improvements in the community and because of Mary's downtown plaza. She noticed that her community had the potential to become a place where tourists could come to dine shop and celebrate the local economy.

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