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EPICURE

At Last... POR FIN

By Claudia Forestieri

“We want people to feel

Tuna Tartar



AT LAST, a Spanish-Mediterranean restaurant with French and Italian influences has come along. Por Fin, which means “finally” in Spanish, is the new kid on the crowded restaurant blocks of downtown Coral Gables.

The restaurant has been four years in the making, and it shows.

The built-from-scratch establishment commands your attention even before you step inside. The stunning Mediterranean-style,

white-washed two-story structure looks as if it had been plucked from a European sea side town then affixed to the street corner.

Once inside, the main dining room—an elegant yet casual space painted white with mahogany furniture and accents—greet guests. The upstairs lounge and dining area, as well as the outdoor balconies, provide cozy alternatives to the main room. “We want people to feel that this is their house,” says Por Fin’s general manager, Taka Nishimura.

Once seated, your first preview of the cuisine arrives via the bread basket—filled with hearty, crusty bread and accompanied by three sauces: olive oil, tomato puree and romesco (a mix of

Images courtesy of Por Fin

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nuts, garlic, olive oil and red pepper). The appetizer selection ranges from buñuelos de bacalao (cod fritters, Spanish style), to the creative tuna tartar which is cubed and mixed with mango, avocado and caviar. The rice and pasta dish selection features arroz negro—dark-stained rice flavored with squid ink and topped with calamari.

For the main course, Nishimura recommends one of two fan favorites—the braised short ribs or the sea bass. Por Fin's version of the Chilean delicacy is thick, tender, pan-seared and topped with black olive drizzle. Grouper, scallops, salmon, oven-roasted chicken, filet mignon and lamb round-out the entrées.

For the last course, Por Fin's selection infuses traditional treats with modern twists. The Caribbean Passion—passion fruit cream, shaved mint and coconut foam—cools the palette and entertains the eye with its bright yellow, white and green ingredients. Spanish staples like crema catalana and torrijas are also given flavor-enhancing adjustments.

The inspiration for Por Fin's dishes and decor, as well as Executive Chef Marc Vidal, hail from Catalonia, Spain. "There's a great food culture there," says Nishimura of his and owner's Carlos Centurion decision to hone in on the region's culinary treasures. SA

*Por Fin is located at 2500 Ponce de Leon Blvd. in Coral Gables. For reservations call please 305.441.0107.
For more information visit www.porfinrestaurant.com.*