

# Miami Herald



Miami Worldcenter Associates

The French restaurant Brasserie Laurel from Chef Michael Beltran was added to the 2023 Michelin Guide, along with seven other Miami-area restaurants, in February.

## Michelin-starred, Miami-born chef Michael Beltran of Ariete opening a Miami cigar bar

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Born in Miami and growing up in Little Havana, Michael Beltran comes by his love for cigars naturally.

The chef, whose Ariete restaurant in Coconut Grove earned a Michelin star in 2022, will demonstrate this affection via the opening of El Vecino, a new cigar and cocktail bar at Miami Worldcenter.

"Cigars are a big part of my heritage," Beltran said in a statement. "Whether it's a backyard barbecue, a holiday with family or just a Friday night, a great cigar is always part of the picture. Cigars are part of the ritual of community that I grew up with, and I want to bring that sense of connection to El Vecino."

El Vecino — "the neighbor" — is Ariete Hospital-

ity Group's third concept at the downtown Miami development, along with the upscale French restaurant Brasserie Laurel and Chug's Express, a fast-casual version of the group's Chug's Diner in Coconut Grove.

Next door to Brasserie Laurel, the 1,600-square-foot space is focused on lounging. You'll find leather, velvet and other vintage design there, as well as a state-of-the-art purification and humidification system.

The cigar menu will cater to cigar aficionados but also aims to make the inexperienced and the curious comfortable.

There will also be a cocktail menu with "unusual selections," according to Ariete Hospitality Group's wine director Adrian Lopez. The menu is still being tweaked, but Lopez reports that ports will play a starring role.

Expect to see Beltran in the news next week as well. While Ariete is likely to retain its Michelin star, two of his other restaurants, Brasserie Laurel and The Gibson Room in Miami, have been added to the Michelin Guide and highlighted as "new," with the idea of urging diners to try them before the 2023 Michelin stars are awarded. The 2023 Michelin awards take place May 11 at LoanDepot Park in Miami.

### EL VECINO

**Where:** 698 NE First Ave., Suite G-172, Miami

**Opening:** May 5

**Hours:** Noon-midnight Sunday-Thursday; noon-2 a.m. Friday and Saturday

**More information:** [www.elvecinomiami.com](http://www.elvecinomiami.com)

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