

This intimate new Japanese restaurant is hidden away in a luxury Miami Beach hotel

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The glamorous El Secreto Omakase, hidden inside the Faena Hotel Miami Beach.

You might have to look around a little to find it, but the luxurious Faena Hotel Miami Beach has a new secret Japanese restaurant.

Hidden away between The Cava, the hotel's 25-seat private dining room in the wine cellar, and the red velvet curtains in Faena Theater is El Secreto Omakase, an intimate new bar. With only six seats and two seating times each night, El Secreto serves omakase, a chef's choice menu that includes Tokyo-style sushi and Kyoto-style kaiseki (which also refers to a multi-course meal of small, intricate bites).

The chef's choice menu will evolve over time, depending on what's available and the imagination of curator Chef Paul Qui, who is also the head chef at Faena's Asian restaurant Pao by Paul Qui, which was recently named [one of two Forbes Four-Star restaurants in the Miami area for 2022](#).

As omakase dining grows in popularity around Miami — like Blind Tiger, which [opened recently in the back of Reunion Ktchn Bar](#) in Aventura — finding a way to stand out is key. What sets El Secreto apart, aside from its onyx black walls, bronze bar and artwork by Juan Gatti and Amaya Bouquet, are its two menus. One features high-quality seafood flown into Miami every day, including sea urchin (uni) from Hokkaido and bluefin tuna from Baja. There's also rare Sanuki Olive Wagyu from Kagawa Prefecture, which Qui, who began his career at Uchi in Austin, Texas, says he dry-ages.

One of his favorite bites, he says, is the uni from Hokkaido and an accompanying four-year aged jamon Iberico (Spanish ham).

In an unusual twist, the second menu features vegetarian options for those who prefer to eat plant-based cuisine. There's also a curated cocktail program that specializes in small-batch sakes.

Qui says he has wanted to create a place for upscale omakase-style dining for years.

“I started my career in the hopes of one day being able to present such a place as El Secreto, where I can serve the best product with the best technique and the best ideas of sushi I’ve had over the years.” he said via email. “Faena gave me the perfect stage to showcase everything in my head that pertains to sushi.”

Other restaurants at the hotel, which earned Forbes Five-Star honors for 2022, also include Los Fuegos by Francis Mallmann, which features open-fire style cooking and was the only other Miami area restaurant to earn a Forbes Four-Star award in 2022.



Another view of the black-and-bronze design of El Secreto, the latest restaurant at Faena Hotel Miami Beach.

