

# Big success story for three brothers

By RHONDA FERRARI CALVERT  
Gazette Writer

When Chef Christian set out to create a family restaurant, things got interesting quickly. Christian Encalada had a unique family dynamic.

His parents Eduardo and Mirza (originally from Lima Perú) moved to Miami Springs in 1989 where their boys were raised.

Time passes..., Christian is living in Peru working as a chef and Eduardo along with his two sons Frank and Richard were employed as aviation mechanics for 15 years.

The time was right! They decided to open their first restaurant in Doral, which followed a second in Coral Gables and a third in Miami. That was when the boys decided to come back to the city, they loved...Miami Springs, where their parents still lived and where they went to high school at Springs High.

"We knew that Miami Springs was a tough city to open a restaurant," said Frank. "It was proof that the concept that we have works. With our franchising right now, we have sold three (Miami Beach, Fort Myers and soon-to-open downtown). We have a commissary kitchen. We give all the products to our other restaurants. Miami Springs is a good location to distribute the food out. We did not want to compete with Ceviches. That is why we opened A-Taco by Divino. It is a new concept. Mexican and Peruvian. So far, it's doing pretty good."

Frank continued by speaking regarding COVID-19 crisis, "We are lucky that we have loyal customers. Miami Springs Ceviches is probably the one that has suffered the least ~ because the sales are the same. What is affecting us is the rates that Uber and Postmates are charging.

"The idea was to open A-Taco by Divino on May 5th. A big Mexican party. But with everything that happened, we were forced to put all our efforts into the other restaurants and this one was on standby. The plan was to open this one with 150 seats and liquor license. Right now, we have five tables outside (20 seats) and we're serving beer and wine."

Come and enjoy some of the best menu items based on the same recipes Christian and his two siblings Frank and Richard devoured as kids – with a chef-inspired twist.

## About the Chef

Christian Encalada is the Executive Chef who has a successful career as his background. He graduated from Cenfutur (School of Peruvian and international gastronomy) in Lima Perú, where he took first place in the final cooking exam. His studies were followed by two years in a prestigious hotel in Spain. He worked for



The Encalada brothers, Richard (l.), Christian and Frank, have been busy opening restaurants in Miami Springs. Here they are behind the bar of their newest restaurant, A-Taco by Divino located at 365 N. Royal Poinciana Blvd., the old Hurricane Bar & Grill location. Gazette Photo/BILL DALEY

Gastón Acurio in "Tanta" for a season and then went back to Spain to improve his culinary style. After going back to Perú, Christian and Frank began the project "Warike" in Chorrillos. Frank was giving his support from Alabama and waiting for the project in Miami to come true.

## Ceviches by Divino

Ceviches by Divino is a Peruvian style Gastropub with an industrial ambiance. The menu has been carefully prepared to highlight the authentic flavors of their cuisine by properly presenting high level Peruvian Tapas, Rolls, Pokes as well as Ceviche's. In addition, a broad variety of the most popular craft beers and exceptional cocktails are available to pair with lunch or dinner.

Their mission is to provide an inviting and relaxed atmosphere perfect to chill with friends and family. Whether you are a foodie, or just down to taste something unique, you can now experience genuine Peruvian flavors in their different locations throughout South Florida.

Bonnie Fullerton (a/k/a Bonnie Buds) said: "The reason why Frank stuck out to me above all the people that wanted that spot was because he was so family oriented. He works with his brother, his father. They live in Miami Springs. He has a beautiful little family. He was so energetic and brought such a different flavor to Miami Springs that I thought we could not do without."

"As it works out, I was right," said Bonnie. "They are fabulous and innovated. Their presentation of Peruvian food is so unique. I love it. They are just going for it. I just love that energy. They are so professional and so honorable in the way they do business. I could not have been

happier to work with them. That was one of the sad parts about selling the building, not seeing him come to full circle because he had just started. I knew he would be great. I knew it. And I was right. I had a vision and I am glad I put him there."

Miami Springs resident Anastasia Yecke Gude and her husband Erik have been longtime fans of Ceviches by Divino, which they consider one of the top ceviche places in all of Miami. Their favorite appetizer is the Crispy Cilantro Rice with Salmon; "It's perfectly fried and goes so well with the fresh sashimi on top."

Anastasia also loves how the hot and crispy seafood complements the texture of the cool, soft ceviche in the Ceviche de Mercado. Erik enjoys their Maracuya Mojitos and the Arroz Chaufa de Pollo, which they can tweak as necessary (he always requests his without scallions).

Get divine Peruvian Cuisine from any of their locations: Divino Ceviche: 2629 N.W. 79th Ave., Doral, FL 33122 (305)-406-2345; Divino Ceviche: 160 Giralda Ave., Coral Gables, FL 33134 (786)-360-3775; and Ceviches by Divino: 46 Curtiss Parkway, Miami Springs, FL 33166 (786)-409-4634.

## A-Taco by Divino

A-Taco by Divino's menu boasts the perfect balance between the traditions of Mexican food and the techniques and flavors of the Peruvian Nikkei dishes.

Guests can enjoy a variety of distinctive dishes, including Mexican - Peruvian favorites, like Tacos or Bao al Pastor Peruano - Anticuchero or Pork Belly Nikkei, Tostada con Ceviche de Tuna, Queso Fundido Amazonico, and churros with ice cream for dessert.

All dishes are bright and uniquely flavorful. They are prepared with the utmost quality ingredients. A cocktail menu is also available to compliment these bold flavors.

A-Taco by Divino, a new Mexican-Peruvian Nikkei restaurant from brothers Christian and Frank Encalada, brings authentic flavors of Mexico and homeland cuisine. The brightly colored interior was created in partnership with Rudolph Castro a Visual Artist from Peru, who lives and works in Mexico.

A-Taco by Divino invites people to explore the Mexican - Peruvian culture and cuisine by creating a new dining experience.

Former Mayor Xavier Garcia, "Besides having delicious unique flavors, at both Ceviches and A-Taco, I am beyond impressed at the way these gentlemen tackled the pandemic issue.

"As soon as they realized residents were having a hard time acquiring sanitary and food essentials, they turned their restaurants into mini markets, sell everything from produce to toilet paper, from their own restaurant's supply, at or below Supermarket prices.

"It didn't stop there... They sold ready-to-cook meals (for a family of 4), that they pre-packaged, then posted instructional videos via Social Media, on how to cook and prepare them, so the meals come out just like in their restaurants.

"Their grit and tenacity remind me of the famous quote by Rocky Balboa, Sylvester Stallone: ...'It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward.'"

"These guys never stopped moving forward!"

Anastasia commented by saying, "We had heard that the Ceviches folks were opening a Mexican-Peruvian fusion restaurant at the old Hurricane. We knew the quality and service would be great, so as soon as we saw they had opened, we went to check it out.

"I have lived in Mexico and admit to being particular when it comes to fusing this amazing cuisine with anything else, but they definitely pulled it off well! What was interesting to me were the Bao's. A Bao is a kind of sticky bun, slightly sweet, and thicker than a tortilla. The last time I had them was with Korean food in San Francisco. To my surprise, it totally worked with the tacos! Particularly with the tacos al pastor which have little sweet chunks of pineapple in them. I'm glad to have this place in Miami Springs; it was delicious, and we will definitely be back!"

A-Taco by Divino is located at 365 N Royal Poinciana Blvd., Miami Springs, FL 33166 ~ (305)-456-5553.

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