

**Bites** 27 | MIAMI BEACH



JUSTIN NAMON/RA-HAUS FOTOGRAFIE

Miso- and tahini-massaged kale, shaved fennel and crisp chickpeas.

## A Global Dinner Party

 New restaurants on and around Ocean Drive in Miami Beach — usually housed in the latest branded boutique hotel with big-name absentee chefs, high-priced fusion menus and '80s décor — are a dime a dozen. Then there's 27, a spot that opened in November just a few steps, but a world away, from that touristy, neon-dotted strip.

The difference in setting is immediately obvious: 27 resides in a classic Art Deco landmark built in the 1930s. Inside, instead of cold marble and garish lighting, the interior design firm Roman & Williams has gone in a much more intimate direction with wood floorboards, candlelit tables and low ceilings that run through interlocking rooms; it feels as if you are visiting a private home for a stylish dinner party. On a recent Sunday night every table was taken and the bar was packed, but the vibe was unpretentious, with groups of young Miamians and couples on dates elbow to elbow on banquettes and benches.

The complex also houses the owners' other big project, Freehand Miami: a hot-spot hostel and a craft cocktail bar, the Broken Shaker. Elad Zvi, an owner, conceived of 27 as a place to capitalize on the region's ethnic diaspora.

"We wanted a restaurant that

reflected Miami and the people who live here, from the Latin American community to the Jewish," he said. "My partner is Colombian and I am from Israel and we wanted to have that sense of eating at home."

Indeed, Jewish, Caribbean and Cuban influences are peppered throughout the menu: potato latkes with homemade sour cream; "Abuela's rabo encendido," with grass-fed oxtail, Cuban rice and chiles; and homemade arepas with ropa vieja and queso de mano. But perhaps the best dish is the local catch of the day — golden tilefish during our meal — with coconut-curry broth, Israeli couscous and avocado.

The cocktail list is also impressive. We sampled the Green Acres, a mix of gin with dry vermouth, fresh citrus and matcha tea infused with celery, and a Yellow Submarine, which pairs tequila with lemon juice and a mustard-turmeric reduction.

A tip: Sample one of those cocktails, before or after dinner, in the restaurant's lovely courtyard. You might just forget the tourists entirely — even if you are one yourself.

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27, 2727 Indian Creek Drive; 305-531-2727; thefreehand.com/miami. An average meal for two, without drinks or tip, is about \$55.