

HAUTE LIVING

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HAUTE PARTNERS

BY CASEY FAIRFAX

Q&A WITH ALEJANDRO MUGUERZA OF LE BASQUE



THE PRESIDENT AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF LE BASQUE, Alejandro Muguerza, is extremely passionate about food. He often travels back to the Basque region to stay current on the culinary destination's newest gastronomy and techniques. This way, he can be sure to bring Miamians the most exciting catering and event experience money can buy.

HL: What makes Basque cuisine unique?

AM: As you know, the Basque Country and San Sebastian in particular has more Michelin Stars per capita than any other region in the world. Basque cuisine is simple and ingredient-driven with fish, vegetables, lamb, pork, and game, along with wild foraged mushrooms being the stars. Three regions, Rioja Alta, Navarre and Iroulegy produce good wines, so that is very important too. Not too many ingredients, not too many garnishes, just make the main ingredient of the dish its star.

HL: Is there French influence on Basque cuisine?

AM: Yes, half of the Basque Country is in France and half in Spain. The Basques are the oldest inhabitants of Europe. They were there since prehistory, or any Indo-European invasion; before the Greeks, Romans or even the idea that a nation called France or Spain would exist in the future. Basque is considered the oldest language spoken in the world, so who influenced who and when is the question.

HL: Pintxos are famous small dishes from the Basque region. Do you serve a lot of them?

AM: We serve a small variation of the pintxos, since in a typical bar, they are a three-bite delicacy. We adapt the flavors and technique to a one-bite morsel.

HL: Is it hard to give large groups of people really quality food?

AM: It's a question of adapting products and techniques that work well for that situation, and Basque cuisine is perfect because it is about high-quality staples prepared simply.

HL: Has the popularity of Spanish cuisine helped your company?

AM: Yes, of course. Spain is a mecca and the Basque Country a culinary mecca within.

HL: Do a lot of people request Spanish, or native Basque food?

AM: Spanish yes, Basque a bit less, only the well versed in culinary experiences demand it. We just simply suggest Basque dishes, and when the clients try them, they love them.

HL: What is the most important thing for a catering and event company to be able to do?

AM: Be totally consistent and offer impeccable service.