



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Miami's Versailles Restaurant Celebrates its 50th Anniversary  
with a Public Archive of Cuban Heritage and Miami History**

*Announcing a long-term partnership with the HistoryMiami Museum, the Cuban restaurant invites the local community to share their personal stories and visual documentation at the famed landmark.*

**Miami, Florida (August 4, 2021)** Honoring its reputation as a cultural institution, The Valls Group is pleased to announce the 50th Anniversary celebration of its famed Cuban restaurant, Versailles, by asking a simple question: "**WHAT'S YOUR VERSAILLES STORY?**" The restaurant is partnering with the HistoryMiami Museum, inviting the local community and Versailles enthusiasts to submit materials and personal stories to create a public archive of memories related to Versailles and the Cuban exile experience. The partnership with the museum is especially timely now as communities work to legitimize the Cuban voice amid protests against the communist regime on the island of Cuba, and the subsequent solidarity of the Cuban and Latino populations demonstrated at the restaurant and around the world.

"This important benchmark for the restaurant comes at a crucial time for the Cuban people, and we are proud to continue what we do in celebrating our culture and our patrons in this meaningful way," said Felipe Valls Jr., president of the Valls Group.

The official celebration day for the 50th Anniversary will be on November 10. The restaurant will host a public celebratory event (with more details to be disclosed later). It will display submitted materials selected by independent curators. In addition, a coinciding project with EXILE Books will commission local artists to make original work inspired by the Versailles and HistoryMiami Museum's archive.



"It is a great honor to bring Versailles and our local institution, HistoryMiami Museum, together. Aside from gastronomical significance, the restaurant has always served as a place for cultural exchange, not only for the Cuban diaspora but for the international city of Miami and all of its visitors," said Alex Valls, who leads the initiative for Valls Group. "To open this up to the HistoryMiami Museum means giving our community authorship of their own experiences for a legitimate and public platform," she added.

"As we see at this very moment, Versailles is an important hub for the community, and we are excited to be documenting the history of this landmark by creating this new collection at our museum," said Jorge Zamanillo, executive director of the HistoryMiami Museum.

Founded by Felipe Valls in 1971, The Valls group is a family-owned business rooted in their Cuban-American heritage as proud political exiles. They now own several South Florida staples such as the famous La Carreta, the Spanish fine-dining restaurant Casa Juancho, CASACUBA, and of course, Versailles. Over the years, Versailles has become "the" gathering place for the Cuban-American exile community and a destination for worldwide press covering Miami. And of course, Versailles is an essential stop for U.S. presidents, world leaders, tourists, and visiting celebrities searching for an authentic taste of Miami culture.

#### **ABOUT SUBMITTING YOUR STORIES AND MATERIALS:**

The public archive will kick off with the call "**WHAT'S YOUR VERSAILLES STORY?**" making a general invitation to submit materials and personal stories through the HistoryMiami Museum's online platform **from August 4 through November 2021**. In addition, **on Wednesday, August 25, from 1 PM to 7 PM**, the museum will host a collection day at Versailles Restaurant to gather physical objects and stories via their Miami Stories Sound Booth pop-up.

All submissions must be in the form of photos, videos, objects, or written stories and experiences. Submitted items will be reviewed by the Museum staff before being accepted into the Versailles Anniversary Project. If they are accepted, your submitted item or story will belong to the Museum and may be accessed and used at any time for research and educational purposes. Please note that submitted items may be shared with the community through the museum's various media platforms.

#### ***Potential Donation Submission Form:***

<http://www.historymiami.org/potential-donation-form/>

#### ***Online Story Submissions:***

<http://www.historymiami.org/miamistories/>

#### ***Object Collecting Day and Miami Stories Booth Event:***

Day: August 25, 1-7 pm



Address: Versailles Restaurant  
3555 SW 8th St, Miami, FL 33135

### **ABOUT VERSAILLES RESTAURANT**

A Miami tradition, Versailles Restaurant is 100% Cuban – owned by the Valls family. The venue provides an excellent casual family-style restaurant in the heart of Little Havana – right on Calle Ocho. It features a great assortment of traditional Cuban specialties such as Ropa Vieja, the Cuban Sandwich, Arroz *con Pollo* (Chicken with Yellow Rice), house-made Fried Plantains, Churrasco, Picadillo, among other delicious<sup>m</sup> dishes. And let's not forget the famous *cafecito*!

The establishment has become a landmark over the years, and it has come to be a typical hangout for some colorful characters. Its patrons are often loud and full of excitement. Versailles is a great place to take your out-of-town friends for a complete immersion in the Cuban culture. The building itself is adorned with statues and an ornate etched glass designed by Juanito Perez-Cruz, award-winner singer Pitbull's uncle. It also features a bakery and the famous takeout window, La Ventanita.

### **ABOUT HISTORYMIAMI MUSEUM**

HistoryMiami Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate located in downtown Miami safeguards and shares Miami stories to foster learning, inspire a sense of place, and cultivate an engaged community. Now celebrating its 80th Anniversary, the Museum accomplishes this through education, collections, research, exhibitions, publications, and City Tours.

### **ABOUT MIAMI STORIES**

The Miami Stories initiative has been collecting stories about the city's past, present, and future since 2009. HistoryMiami Museum documents life in the Magic City through this history project through written anecdotes, video submissions, and audio recordings preserved in the Museum's archive and shared online and through local media outlets. For more information, visit <http://www.historymiami.org/miamistories/>.

### **ABOUT EXILE BOOKS**

EXILE Books is an experimental artists' bookstore and project space which recently moved to Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood. It produces publications and site-specific events such as exhibitions, performances, lectures, fairs, and workshops to advance circulation and engagement with artists' publications. EXILE seeks to establish a pervasive print culture in Miami by creating hubs for independent publishing to represent and serve diverse communities.



Support for the EXILE + Versailles 50th Collaboration is provided by Locust Projects through WaveMaker Grants, part of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts' Regional Regranting Program.



To learn more about Versailles' 50th Anniversary, visit [VersaillesRestaurant.com](http://VersaillesRestaurant.com) and follow @VersaillesMiami on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#), or use #Versailles50 to continue the conversation on social media.