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Cerveteca Downtown LA to Open in Mid-October in Arts District's Former R23 Digs

LOS ANGELES, Calif. October 6, 2014 – Oscar Hermosillo, owner of Venice Beach Wines and Oscar's Cerveteca Venice Beach is bringing his concept of what he calls

"L.A. comfort food" to Downtown's Arts District in mid-October with the opening of Cerveteca Downtown LA.

Cerveteca Downtown LA will offer seating for 96 diners and occupy the former East 3rd Street site of sushi icon, R23, which closed earlier this year after more than two decades in business. As in Venice, Cerveteca's menu will offer a fusion of many of the same elements that drive concepts at his other restaurants, but will feature new dishes that reflect the varying culinary and social appetites delineating Los Angeles food culture.

"We are marrying some of the elements from both restaurants, such as the charcuterie and cheese, crafted beers and carefully selected wines we have at Venice Beach Wines, but will be mainly focused on presenting similar dishes to what we serve at Cerveteca Venice Beach, with some exciting new layers," said Hermosillo. "One of the things that will be new in our downtown location is a fully stocked raw bar with a wide variety of *ceviche*."

The Cerveteca concept, says Hermosillo, pays tribute to what can arguably be considered the original fast-casual L.A. eateries, the latter whose menus read like a culinary world tour offering everything from Greek salad to *carne asada* burritos. At Cerveteca, the menu includes Peruvian *ceviche*, Asian-spiced pulled pork sandwiches, *tacos de barbacoa*, bitter orange chicken wings, and Chinese chicken kale salad.

"I call the kind of food served in those places 'L.A. comfort food,' and anyone who grew up here or has spent a lot of time in L.A. knows what I mean," says Hermosillo, a native of Los Angeles. "These dishes, I think, are reflective of what we are all about here in Los Angeles, which is a melting pot of many cultural influences. And, hey, how much more 'comfort' can you get when my mom makes the homemade sauces for many of the items served in our restaurants?"

Venice Beach Wines and Oscar's Cerveteca wine director and partner Norma Alvarado will continue to oversee the beverage menu at the new downtown location, offering a stellar line up of hand-selected California wines and imports as well as a full range of locally brewed and imported beers and ales.

Hermosillo said there is a strong link between the growing relevance of Downtown Los Angeles, and the Arts District in particular, as a culinary and creative destination, and Venice's artistic eclecticism and the recent revival of Rose Avenue, which his restaurants are credited for having spurred.

"Personally, I think there's wonderful and similar creative and cultural energy between Venice and Downtown's Arts District," said Hermosillo. "The richness and artistic qualities of the two neighborhoods are connected, so being in both locations make perfect sense for Cerveteca."

In homage to R23, Cerveteca Downtown LA is repurposing the old sushi bar with a marble-top raw bar and offering a changing menu of *ceviche*, oysters, and more. The hardwood floors and brick-walled interior remain intact, but the entranceway off of the alley has been altered to bring the outdoors into the dining space.

CERVETECA DOWNTOWN LA: Opening October 17, 2014; located in the Arts District at 923 E. 3rd St. Suite 109; Los Angeles, CA 90013; (213) 805-5862; www.CervetecaDTLA.com

CERVETECA VENICE BEACH: Opened in 2011 at 523 Rose Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (310) 310-8937 www.CervetecaLA.com

VENICE BEACH WINES: Opened in 2006 at 529 Rose Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (310) 606-2529 www.VeniceBeachWines.com