



## A FAMILY LEGACY

It was the year 1959 when Fidel Castro's regime began, that is when my family decided to migrate to the United States. When the revolution in Cuba came to an end, my Dad decided that it was time to leave for a better life.

At that time, Castro Forced big business owners and the rich out of the country and seized all their assets. My Dad had a small poultry business which was taken over by the government. Under Castro's regime the government controlled and owned everything. My father and family's way of life, as they knew it came to an end.

My dad applied for a visa to leave; it took us 10 years to finally get out of Cuba. While our family waited my Dad worked in a work camp. We got the OK from the government for us to leave in 1970. With little more than a pocket full of dreams and our hearts full of wishes, we flew from Havana to Mexico City with only our clothes on our backs.

My dad's sister in Miami send us \$200 so we could get a hotel room, but the money did not last long. With little money left, my dad started to look for work. Since we were Cuban refugees the Mexican government would not allow us as foreigners to work.

We decided to take a bus to the United States border, and in the middle of the night we crossed the Rio Grande River holding hands. We turned ourselves in to the United States immigration department. They processed our paperwork and we received the legal papers to live legally in the United States. "Welcome to America".

We flew to Miami where my dad's sister was waiting for us. My dad and mom started working and my brothers and I went to school. We also took part time work after school.

In 1975 we moved to LA where my dad and mom opened one of the first Cuban Restaurant on the west side where Versailles is now located on Venice Blvd. It was called "The Union" back then. My Mom and Uncle were the cooks, my brothers and I worked in the restaurant taking orders and serving food, and I delivered food in the LA area.



My parents knew that through hard work they would find the freedom and opportunity to pursue their dreams of creating a better life for our family. What began as an overwhelming passion for introducing delicious Cuban food to friends and neighbors, resulted in the creation and birth of La Union Restaurant in Culver City, California. In 1975, we catered to the MGM studios and the Paramount Studios. I remember lots of celebrities dining in the restaurant and filming for Starsky and Hutch, the Mod Squad and many more. Everyone loved our food!

My Dad sold the restaurant and we all decided to start our own new ventures.



In 1997, Havana Mania opened in Redondo Beach, CA. Today, as then, Havana Mania serves only the finest Cuban food, with only the finest ingredients according to my Mom's recipes.

Whatever the occasion, Havana Mania is the perfect spot to gather. And in remembrance to my Mom and Dad, we will continue their passion for great Cuban Food and service.

**Lunch, Dinner and Nightlife served Daily!!**

Till then, we will see you here. Yours Truly, Luis Montesdeoca and Family



*Havana Mania*



*Union Restaurant*



*Mom and Dad*



*La Familia*