

Los Angeles Times

A chateau-style XIV to feature chef Michael Mina

SBE's latest project revealed

By Betty Hallock
April 23, 2008

THERE'S A new chateau rising on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood. SBE Group is opening a restaurant named XIV with chef Michael Mina this fall in the space that once housed the entertainment company's nightclub Privilege (just down the street from [Chateau Marmont](#)). A multimillion-dollar renovation will evoke a "European chateau" -- designed, of course, by Philippe Starck.

Mina, who heads a mini-empire of restaurants including the Michelin two-star Michael Mina in San Francisco and Stonehill Tavern in Dana Point, says XIV ("Fourteen") will open in early October, showcasing the "modern American style that I like to cook, with a lot of European techniques." Mina and SBE are marketing it as "social dining," a design-your-own-tasting-menu idea that is a sort of deconstruction of Mina's signature "trio" menus -- three small, single-themed dishes served on one plate. "It would be as if you were to take those and break them up into individual dishes," Mina says.

Don't call it "small plates"; it's more like very tiny plates -- not meant for sharing. "You would choose five or six dishes that would come out [one after the other] on beautiful little silver trays," he says.



Yet it's all meant to be relaxed (it's a laid-back kind of a chateau - this was once the location of the Coconut Teaszer). "There's not the intrusiveness of servers pre-setting six courses, or four servers dropping plates at the same time."

Mina calls SBE chief executive Sam Nazarian "a master of setting social scenes." Nazarian has been on a restaurant tear in the last year, with one Starck-designed [Katsuya](#) sushi restaurant after another and [Foxytail](#) supper club, which opened in March. A project with chef José Andres also is planned.

Nazarian has long sought a pedigreed chef for the planned restaurant, and Mina (whose other restaurants are operated by Mina Group) says he has been working on opening a restaurant in L.A. for years but was "waiting to get it right."

Expect the Sunset Strip set to storm the chateau walls.

-- Betty Hallock