

ELEMENTS

Ready to Wear

Diamonds may be a girl's best friend, but the semiprecious stones that jewelry designer Coralia Leets strings together deserve more than a passing acquaintance. The necklace (\$590) features Peruvian opals, citrines and flat coin pearls, with spacer beads of vermeil gold, peridot and moonstone. The quartz enhancer is detachable and can be worn on the cord or a chain. The earrings are coil-cut lemon topaz and Mexican fire opals (\$165), and the trendy ring is a cluster of briolette-cut citrine (\$298). The colors echo the hues of your favorite beach — sun, surf and sand. —D.C.H



● Coralia Leets Fashion Baroque Jewelry, 1620 N. Orange Ave., Orlando; 407.447.0600; msnusers.com/coralias

411

FACT: 850,000 OR MORE FLA. RESIDENTS ARE OF CUBAN DESCENT



The Three Guys from Miami are purists. They say roasted turkey or Serrano ham is OK in *El Cubano*, but Tampa's addition of salami is not.

from Miami," brothers-in-law whose devotion to all things Cuban led to their creation of a popular Web site and most recently a cookbook. The trio are self-made food mavens — Raúl Musibay manages a gas station, Jorge Castillo sells medical supplies, and Glenn Lindgren is a writer.

"The appeal of a Cuban sandwich is to go out to eat it," Castillo says. "It's a cafeteria food. People pick up a sandwich for a couple of bucks when they feel that nos-

SOUND BITES

The Cuban Connection

The Cuban sandwich apparently isn't. Florida's signature grab-and-go meal is the creation of Cuban immigrants in turn-of-the-century Tampa. The bread was created in 1896 at La Joven Francesca by a Sicilian baker. Cigar-factory workers added sliced pork, ham, cheese and pickles. Sandwich shops soon began selling a grilled version for 15 cents.

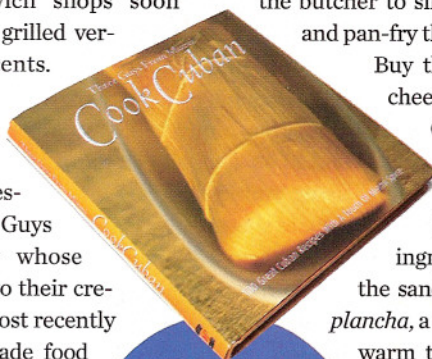
What makes the ultimate Cuban today? We put the question to "Three Guys

talgia for a touch of Cuban culture." The Guys buy most of their Cubans from the Latin American Restaurant-Cafetería, which has outlets throughout the Miami area.

If you can't make it to the restaurant, follow the Guys' guidelines for building your own. Start with fresh pork. "Get a leg, season it, poke holes in it, stick garlic cloves in, and marinate it [overnight] in *mojo*," Castillo says. Cover it with salt and roast it. (Alternatively, ask the butcher to slice boneless pork chops extra thin and pan-fry the meat with a splash of *mojo*.)

Buy thin-sliced boiled ham, baby Swiss cheese and dill pickles. If you can't find Cuban bread, substitute French or Italian bread, but expect the result to be too crispy.

Slice and butter the bread, layer the ingredients between the slices, and heat the sandwich. A cafeteria does this with a *plancha*, a sandwich press. Lacking a *plancha*, warm the sandwich in a greased skillet, pressing it with a foil-wrapped brick or heavy pan. Use a George Foreman grill, panini grill, bacon press or waffle iron if you don't mind inauthentic grill marks. "In Miami, those would cause guffaws," Lindgren cautions but concedes, "It's gonna taste the same." —RUDY LEE



DETAILS
"Three Guys from Miami Cook Cuban" Gibbs Smith, 2004, \$29.95; ICuban.com