

REVVING UP GOURMET DINING

IN A GALLERY OF SUPERCARS

BY ROBIN JAY



Elo sitting in a Bugnotti.

For London-born former model Elo, fast cars and a fast life were destiny. "I was born with gasoline in my veins," he said. His parents named him after the '70s British rock group 'Electric Light Orchestra' (ELO) with the hope that some day he'd get to jam with the band. He never did – but that didn't stop Elo from achieving an electric career of his own.

"During the height of my modeling career, I collected supercars – Ferrari, Maserati, Bugnotti, Rolls-Royce, Shelby and Lamborghini models graced my garage," Elo told *South Florida Opulence*.

But then, in the late '90s when Elo retired from modeling, he found himself with a hangar filled with some 30 collectible luxury automobiles and a \$5,000-a-month garage rent that he wasn't sure how he'd sustain. "My wife, Mai, came up with a brilliant solution," Elo said. "She said, 'Everyone loves to come and see your car collection. Why not create a supercar museum, share them with the public, and create a business at the same time.'"

LAUNCH OF A SUPERCAR MUSEUM

Elo loved Mai's idea. Together, they opened the London Motor Museum. It was a huge hit. In early 2014, they came up with another epiphany. "We decided to host a Valentine's Day dinner in the museum," Elo said. "We posted the opportunity online and within 30 minutes we were sold out. It was a perfect scenario: Women got a romantic gourmet Valentine's Day dinner with their man – and

because the men got to sit next to a Bugatti or Ferrari or other supercar of their dreams, they went happily and willingly."

The stellar success of the culinary supercar event made it obvious to Elo and Mai that scheduling more dinner events at the London Motor Car Museum made great business sense. Problem is, London's licensing authorities didn't agree. "They snubbed their noses at the idea, saying that having a black-tie restaurant in a museum would be as absurd as having one in a hospital." Approval denied.

THE MIAMI DISCOVERY

The disappointed couple wasn't pleased with the decision, but they didn't let their strategic idea die on the vine. In 2015, while on vacation in Miami, Elo and Mai happened to drive through artsy Wynwood. "We saw the painted murals on the buildings, the art galleries, boutiques and eclectic eateries – and we automatically looked at each other and said, 'This is it!'" said Elo. "It was so liberating to see this neighborhood of ultimate, pure creativity. We just knew it was the perfect place for our vision."

BIRTH OF A NOVEL SUPERCAR DINING EXPERIENCE

The couple went to work scouting the ideal space. By the week of Art Basel 2015 last December, the pre-opening dry run of Miami Supercar Rooms – the nation's first Auto Art Gallery and Gourmet Dining Experience – took place at their 15,000 square-foot auto art gallery in the heart of the Wynwood Art District. And then, on February 11, 2016, the inaugural ticketed dinner opened to the public.



"It was an exhilarating supercar-culinary encounter featuring a special Peruvian menu orchestrated by Executive Chef/Owner Rafael Perez Cambana of Wynwood's GK Bistronomie," said Elo, who brought his most popular series of classic, vintage, exotic, sports and custom-made vehicles for the centerpiece of his aesthetically fueled dining concept. "We combine luxury automotive excellence, epicurean hospitality and nightlife entertainment – the first experience of its kind in the country."

The Miami Supercar Dining Experience begins with a spacious open-air patio fea-

turing six dining "pods." Each pod is available to reserve at \$3,000 each for the entire evening – each one seating groups of up to six people. The dining experience within each pod is accompanied by one of the most desirable cars in the world. Upon being seated, an associate welcomes the group with the story and rich history behind the vehicle situated beside them. Each month, Miami Supercar Rooms will partner with a local Miami restaurant, from which the Executive Chef will create a special menu to serve members for the monthlong period.

The Miami Supercar Rooms experience is based on a free guest membership program. *White Membership* provides all access and a priority status for dining reservations, as well as other perks. *Silver Membership* also grants a member with full access inside the Auto Art Gallery along with other special dining privileges. *Black Membership* is for those who wish to enjoy the gallery of vehicles on display while relaxing with friends at the bar.

Within the Auto Art Gallery, members will be able to experience a never-before-seen collection of extremely rare models, such as

the 1955 SL 300 Mercedes Gullwing; 1929 Rolls-Royce Bootch; 1958 450 S Maserati vintage racing car; 1961 196 SP Ferrari vintage racing car and the 2007 Shelby Supercar Ultimate Aero TT – awarded in 2007 with the title of fastest production car in the world. Miami Supercar Rooms also features one-of-a-kind vehicles including a 1935 derivative of the only Bugatti "Atlantic," known as the "Pacific" - built by the famed Terry Cook of Delahaye USA.

Miami Supercar Rooms is located at 2022 NW 1st Court, Miami, and is open from 10 a.m. Wednesday through Monday, with dinner reservations available from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Auto Art Gallery is open daily to the public (except Tuesdays) with free admission from 10 a.m. ●

For further information and to make a reservation, call 305.363.2020, email reservations@miamisupercarrooms.com or visit www.miamisupercarrooms.com

