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Enrique Olvera Is Opening Cosme in the Flatiron District

By **FLORENCE FABRICANT**OCT. 28, 2014

COSME
The innovative Mexican chef Enrique Olvera is opening his New York restaurant with a contemporary look and a menu that veers away from tradition. “Too often Mexican food is perceived as casual and inexpensive,” he said. “I also love the tradition but like to do my own thing.” His shopping list will take him to Union Square as much as possible, he said. The menu is frequently changing and à la carte, with no prix fixe tasting as at Pujol, his Mexico City restaurant that is ranked among the world’s best. Two dishes that are likely to appear on the menu are mussels atop a Russian salad and duck carnitas. “We’ll adapt to the ingredients and to our customers,” he said. “But Mexican food has to go beyond the clichés, the way Italian has.” He is splitting his time between New York and Mexico and has put one of his sous-chefs, Daniela Soto-Innes, in charge of the kitchen, and has assigned the management side to the other one, Mariana Villegas. The deep gray setting is enlivened with warm, burnished white oak furnishings and provides a backdrop for a selection of drawings by the muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros. The front half of the space is a bar and lounge with a cluster of cafe tables, with a dining room beyond. Shelves along the walls hold service items like glassware and wine. In the basement kitchen, there’s a state-of-the-art mill for grinding the heirloom corn for use in tortillas and other preparations: *35 East 21st Street, 212-913-9659, cosmenyc.com*.