

MAY 30, 2012

3 stars for French eats at Villa Mayfair in Coconut Grove

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Ambience: Interior designer Francois Frossard (The Forge, Mansion, Opium) turned the large interior into a glam dining room that feels like a lavish private club on an all-night bender. (Contrary to the name, the restaurant is not part of the Mayfair Hotel across the street.) Ceramic animal heads hang from the wall of the enclosed patio. White and brown padded leather couches mingle with curvy baroque chairs around wood laminate tables. The scrollwork ceiling drips chandeliers over a chic hammered-brass bar and vast stretches of 1930s mosaic [floor tiles \(#\)](#). The opulence is purposely dressed down by an attentive army of wait staff in jeans and black shirts. There isn't a white tablecloth in sight. The eclectic ambience works, except for the all-out assault on your senses from purple and red neon, which lights up the posh décor like a forensic UV light at a crime scene in some aging playboy's chateaux. A house DJ unobtrusively spinning Muzak-like renditions of Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, along with standing wine buckets in the shape of oversized martini glasses, adds to the Euro-cheese factor.